

Correspondence By Mystwriter

Summary: A personals club is started at Hogwarts and Harry begins to have feelings for the anonymous person he writes to.

This is number one in the "Correspondence Series"

Part One--Hogwarts

Harry Potter looked at the post on the bulletin board outside the Great Hall and read with interest. Hogwarts was starting a personals club for students only: witch to wizard, wizard to witch. But what peaked Harry's particular interest was the witch to witch and *wizard to wizard* personals. And best of all, it was anonymous. Neither would know which student they were writing to unless they wanted to reveal it. And Harry Potter, only just having discovered reluctantly that he was probably gay, had no interest whatsoever in revealing his preferences.

He took down the information hastily and abruptly turned to leave when he bumped into Draco Malfoy. "Well, well," drawled Draco, looking him up and down. "Look who's looking for a little love interest. What's the matter, Potter? Tired of sharpening your own quill?"

"Shut it, Malfoy," he said, trying to get out of his way, but Draco kept getting in front of him.

"Maybe you're just tired of dipping it alone. Funny that the Famous Harry Potter can't get a date. Some lucky little witch won't even get to know she's scratching your parchment in all the right places."

"You're pretty disgusting, Malfoy."

"Am I? Well, maybe it's not a witch you're looking for, eh, Potter? Rumour has it you'd rather ride a nice hard broom than a witch."

Harry's face flared with heat. Was Malfoy only bluffing or did he know something? No, he couldn't possibly know. Harry had never told anyone. Had no intention of telling anyone.

"A broom's better than pug-faced Parkinson, Malfoy. Or is that the best you can do?"

Draco frowned. "Purebloods stick together, Mr. Muggle-Lover."

"Yeah, yeah. Whatever, Malfoy." He finally shouldered his way past him and made for the stairs. He climbed until he arrived at Gryffindor tower, passed through the portrait hole, and trotted up to the dorm without anyone stopping him. Thankfully, no one was there, and he grabbed a quill, some ink, a piece of parchment, and a large book to use as a writing desk. He sat on his bed and almost drew the curtains, but thought it might look suspicious in the middle of the day, so left them open. The instructions said he should fill out a form and drop it into the urn by the bulletin board. Names would be magically matched with preferences and school owls would be used to deliver the letters. It all looked simple. Harry only had to come up with a pen name.

“Let’s see. *Quidditch Boy*? No, too close to the mark. So *Firebolt*’s out as well. Blimey, this is hard.” Harry scribbled down several ideas, all of which seemed to point right to him. “*Greeneyes*...No! Too obvious.” He started going through the list of Honeydukes sweets, but that all sounded too gay. Hell, he’d never even snogged a boy. Yet. And there were a few he’d like to. He wondered idly about them as he swept the quill’s soft feathery end against his lips. Of course, maybe those blokes weren’t gay. How does one tell, anyway? One or two boys were obvious. Talk about your swish and flick! But Harry didn’t think *he* was obvious. And he froze for a second, heart hammering. Was he? Naw. He shook his head. He wasn’t swishy. No one would know unless he told them, and they all certainly thought that he was straight. “Sorry to disappoint, girls,” he said with a sigh.

He looked down at his parchment. So far he had:

Gryffindor (uninspired)
CuddlyCannon (lame)
CauldronCake (too gay)
Sugarquill (ditto)
Owltreat (weird)
Mugglenot (sounds like a cleaning product)
GobletofFire (too desperate)
SortingHat (made no sense whatsoever)
Floo4U (daft)

He sneered and wadded up the parchment. No, it had to be something simple, something plain, something that said who he was without giving away too much. He scribbled *LonelyQuill*. Yes, he supposed he was. He’d really known he was gay for about a year and had done nothing about it. What could he do? Out himself and really get the mickey taken out of him everywhere he went? No thanks. He was famous enough on his own without that dropped on top of it. *LonelyQuill*. Yeah. He liked that. And so he wrote:

I’ve never done anything like this before. I only just found out I was gay...

He looked at it for a moment and quickly glanced toward the closed door. He’d never admitted this before and to have it in print in his own hand was certainly a big step. He turned back to the parchment.

...so I hope this doesn’t come off too stupid. Whoever you are, whoever I’m paired with, I’m hoping it won’t be too tiresome for you to hear me groan about it. I can’t really come out. Too much baggage, you know? But I’d like to talk to someone and maybe...well. I guess I don’t know what else. Make a friend?

This has been really stupid, I know. Sorry. But I hope you’ll write back. I’m a fifth year and I guess that’s all I’ll say. I don’t suppose we should be mentioning houses. I don’t know. Anyway.

Sincerely, LonelyQuill

Harry looked at the parchment and read it again. He shook his head. No matter how long he worked on it, it simply wasn’t going to get any better, so he decided to fold it up and take it down to the urn as soon as he could do so unobserved.

* * *

The next morning at breakfast the owls arrived. Hedwig brought a letter from Remus Lupin who started keeping tabs on him ever since his hearing in August. It was really nice of his old professor to write. He really was his favorite teacher at Hogwarts. When he finished reading it, another letter dropped onto his cereal bowl from an unfamiliar owl.

Harry picked up the letter with trembling hands. Ron and Hermione were busy chatting with Neville and Seamus and didn't notice. Harry angled away from them and tore open the parchment. His heart flushed with excitement. It was from his quill pal.

Dear LonelyQuill,

I didn't think your letter was stupid at all. I know how tough it is suddenly coming out to yourself when you can't to anyone else. I wish I could. But I think we are in the same boat, yeah? So we'll talk. About whatever we need to say. I'm a fifth year, too.

Write me back soon.

*Yours,
StormEyes*

StormEyes? That sounded promising. Harry read the short note through again and folded it carefully before stuffing it in his pocket. This was a little exciting. A secret friend. And another gay boy. Of course he knew they were here. And StormEyes couldn't out himself either. He couldn't wait to get a moment alone to write another letter.

Dear StormEyes,

I was so glad to get your letter. I knew there had to be someone else here like me. It is a bit lonely, isn't it? I keep thinking how fun it would be to go to Hogsmeade with someone I really cared for and not pretend to be with some girl. I don't like hurting people's feelings and I know I've already hurt one girl's. Why does everything have to be so difficult?

When did you first know you were gay?

LonelyQuill

Dear LonelyQuill,

I know what you mean about pretending. It would absolutely devastate my family. I mean, what a mess! No way can I talk to them about this. And yeah, Hogsmeade would be fun with someone. What do you like best about Hogsmeade? I like Zonko's and Honeydukes, of course. Who doesn't? But did you know there are quiet little spots in the woods to just sit and feel like part of the place? Sometimes I think I would like to live in a little village like Hogsmeade where there are only wizards

and witches, but then I sometimes think London would be fun surrounded by Muggles. A little scary, maybe, but fun.

When did I first know I was gay? Ages ago. I was just living in denial. I always liked blokes. There's a few cute blokes here at Hogwarts, aren't there? I wonder if you're one of the boys I think about sometimes. I know you can't tell me what you look like, but do you think you look good? I'm not judging you by it, you understand... Merlin. That was just rude. Forget I said anything. I mean, what are you going to say? 'Sorry, StormEyes. I am an absolute hippogriff, so best stay clear of me.'

Sorry.

Blimey, this is hard asking you questions. If you answer, it inevitably means I'll try and guess who you are. Like if I asked if you played Quidditch, that narrows it down, doesn't it? Or if you're in this class or that class. Although I guess it's safe to talk about Defense and Potions since all four houses have that, and since you are a fifth year...well damn. It still narrows it down, doesn't it?

Oh well. Your turn to come up with a topic.

StormEyes

Dear StormEyes,

*Wow, what a great letter. I loved it! You had so much to say. And it's all so true. But we **can't** say too much, can we?*

Well, Hogsmeade. Yeah, I like Zonko's and Honeydukes. Don't like the tea shop at all. Too girly for me. I didn't know about those little spots you talked about in the woods. Sounds...well, romantic, I guess. A nice spot to bring someone you cared about.

I think I'd like to live in London. In a city. I live in the suburbs and I hate it. A city that's moving and with lots of things to do, yeah. I'd like that, I think.

*It's all right to ask what I look like. I think I look pretty average overall. Maybe a bit shorter than most. Only a bit. I guess I can't say what my hair colour is or...anything else. And there **are** a lot of cute blokes here. Probably not the gay ones, though. Maybe I'm cute. I don't know. I'm not a good judge of those sorts of things. God, this is embarrassing!*

Well, which is your favorite class? Potions or Defense? Mine is Defense. I really enjoy it. Usually. Not too keen on it this year.

I only found out I was gay about a year ago. Came across some pictures in a magazine and found myself rather interested, if you know what I mean. Oh Merlin, this is embarrassing, too. I'm really glad I'm writing this down instead of talking to you face to face! I never would have been able to do that.

I'd better sign off now. I hope you continue to write. I'm really enjoying this.

LonelyQuill

Dear LonelyQuill,

*Speak for yourself. I happen to think I'm very cute! But you know. Acting straight. Even sort of have a girlfriend. I know you wouldn't approve, but a bloke's got to get by somehow. And I bet you aren't as average as you think you are. I bet **you're** pretty cute. Oh Merlin! I wish I could ask you! Okay, just one feature. Can you tell me at least what colour your hair is? Or your eyes? One or the other. I suppose you can guess that I have grey eyes. But that's all I'll say!*

My favorite class is Potions. Oh I know Snape is a pain in the arse sometimes, but I really like potions and all the intricacies of them. I often wonder who came up with some of these in the first place. I mean, do you start out thinking, 'I want to make a transfigurations potion' and start throwing things in a cauldron or do you just start throwing things in a cauldron, brew it, and say, 'well look at that! Polyjuice!'

I live in the country. I like it well enough, but sometimes I think it would be fun just to have my own flat, you know?

StormEyes

StormEyes,

That was a pretty funny letter. I laughed out loud. And I can't believe you have a girlfriend. I admit, I tried it this year, too, but it just didn't work out. I wanted to see if I couldn't get over it, you know. But she didn't do it for me.

Well, if you really want to know, I have black hair. Okay? And that's all I'll say!

I guess when you put it that way, potions do sound more interesting. But I don't really like it all that well. I'm not too good at it. Too many things to know.

I debated with myself about this next bit, whether I should say anything or not. But you really sound like a nice bloke. I wish I could meet you. Maybe we'd hit it off. Of course, maybe we wouldn't. It's really hard to know in just a few letters, isn't it? Of course, I guess everyone's all right deep down, aren't they? So it would still be okay. Oh none of this is making sense. Sorry. Forget it.

I think it would be brilliant to have my own flat. I can't wait, in fact. Only two more years!

I hope this Voldemort thing is over soon. It will sure be easier when no one has to worry over it anymore.

LQ

LQ: hey I like that.

I guess I shouldn't have let you tell me what colour your hair is 'cause now I find myself trying to decide who you are.

It was nice what you said in your last letter, that you thought I sounded like a nice bloke. Thanks. I happen to think I am a nice bloke. But I think you sort of gave a bit of yourself away. I'm willing to wager you are either in Gryffindor or Hufflepuff. It was what you said about everyone being all right deep down. Am I right?

The Dark Lord certainly hasn't made life easy for anyone, has he? Sometimes I wish he'd never returned. People are scared again, but it does make things interesting, doesn't it?

There's a Hogsmeade trip in a fortnight. I wonder if you'll be there. I wonder if I'll see you and not know it. I bet you won't be able to tell you're looking at me, either. Tell you what, if you go to Hogsmeade, go to the street between the tea shop and the stationery shop. There's a tree stump there. I'll leave something for you in the knot.

SE

Harry read the letter over carefully, frowning his brow. Something was odd. Obviously, this boy was not from Gryffindor or Hufflepuff. Harry had looked carefully the other day at all their eyes, and only a few girls from either house had grey eyes. Unless he was lying about the colour. But why would he do that?

So if he wasn't Gryffindor or Hufflepuff, that left Ravenclaw or Slytherin. He immediately wanted to eliminate Slytherin for obvious reasons but something about mention of Voldemort sounded a bit Slytherin. He decided he'd rather concentrate on Ravenclaw. Yes, there was a boy or two there who might fit this description. And they were cute. Harry's heart thumped. Suddenly, he really wanted to know who this boy was!

He dipped his quill and hastily wrote,

*Okay, now I'm curious, too. I will go to Hogsmeade and check out that stump. But there was something in your last letter that kind of disturbed me. You said that "sometimes you wish the Dark Lord had never returned." Does that mean that sometimes you like the fact that he's **back**? I mean, you couldn't have meant that really, could you? He's horrible!*

LQ

Dear LQ,

Well, it's not like you met him face to face. Who knows what he's really like? Maybe there's a lot of twaddle on both sides of it.

I can't wait till we go to Hogsmeade.

SE

Harry read the letter and lowered it to his lap. Not like he *met* him? Wasn't that the trouble? He couldn't *stop* running into Voldemort. And he sure wanted to. But he couldn't very well say that in a letter or it would be a dead give-away.

Who was this boy?

Harry studied the Ravenclaws with more attention than he gave his studies. Grey eyes. There were two boys and he kept a close eye on them, looking for more little clues. He even ended up in the boys bathroom standing next to one of them one day; Titus Anderson. The boy looked up from his business and gave a friendly nod and said, "Potter."

Harry nodded back. "Anderson." They stood a while and Harry looked up at the tiled wall, wondering how the hell one could approach someone and not get a bloody nose trying. "So, Ravenclaw's done really well in Quidditch this year," he said casually.

"Yeah. Not too bad. If *you* don't kill us, that is."

"Well, I must do my proper job." Speaking of seeking...

Titus finished, tucked himself in, and pulled up his zip. "So what do you think of this Umbridge woman?" He leaned over the tap and washed his hands.

Harry got himself in order and turned around. This was the most he'd ever talked to Titus. Might he be...?

He ran his hands under the water and shook them out. "I don't think much of her."

"I swear. If she clears her throat in that mousy way one more time, I'll shove a bludger in it."

Harry chuckled. "I think I'd like to see that."

Titus looked at Harry. Harry looked back. Titus was pretty attractive. Dark hair, dark grey eyes. He had a sort of Cedric Diggory way about him. Harry tried not to feel guilty at that thought.

"So, Potter, I saw you at the bulletin board when they put up that personals post."

Harry reddened and turned away, trying to hide it by adjusting his book bag. "Yeah, well..."

"It's okay. I signed up, too. Got in contact with some perky little witch. God, I hope it's not Parkinson. Wouldn't that be a disappointment?"

Harry's heart fell. "Yeah. A disappointment."

"Have you guessed yet what witch you've got?"

"Oh...er...no. Haven't a clue."

"Funny if it were Granger, eh? Probably wouldn't be able to look each other in the face."

"Oh it's not Hermione. I'm pretty sure of that."

"That's good. Well, Potter. See you 'round."

"Yeah. Bye." Harry leaned against the wall and watched him go. That was a close one. What if he had said? What if he had hinted? It would have been all over the school. He could just imagine what Malfoy would say to that. "Potter's molesting boys in the bathroom now. Better find a nice tree somewhere, men."

He dropped his face in his hands. Oh God. What was he going to do? He was so hard all the time. And so lonely. There was no one to talk to but StormEyes. Who was he?

* * *

Dear LonelyQuill,

*I haven't heard from you in a while. What's wrong? I've been thinking a lot about you lately. And I've been wondering. Have you ever...you know. **Done** anything? I kissed a boy once and it was great. But I'd sure like to do it again. Maybe with you. What do you think? Or do we have to see what each other looks like first? At first I thought so. But the more I got to know you in your letters, the less it seems to matter to me.*

I wish I could talk to my parents about this. My parents are all right, though. I mean, my father has a lot of expectations about me. He pushes a lot, but only because he cares, you know. But sometimes it's a bit too much. I worry that I'll never be the son he really wanted. And especially being gay and all, well. My mother would probably be okay with it. She's really great. And really beautiful. Funny how your parents can live with you all this time and love you, but when it comes to something like this, something so fundamental to who you are, they can't deal with it. Why not? It's as if they didn't love you anymore just because your hair colour is different from theirs.

But I guess you can change the colour of your hair.

Write to me.

StormEyes

Dear StormEyes,

Sorry I haven't written. There's just been a lot of "things" going on. I'm sorry about your parents...

Harry lifted the quill from the parchment. What should he say about *his* parents? If he said they were both dead it was another giveaway. If he just said "family" maybe that would suffice. He didn't really want to lie to StormEyes. It seemed important not to.

...My family is just too hard to get along with. They don't like anything I do. And if they found out I was gay, they'd probably chuck me out. Not that I would mind all that much. I can't wait till the day I can move out.

And I guess I've been thinking a lot about you, too. This is really hard. I don't know you, but the more you write, the more I feel I do. Is it possible to have feelings for someone you've never met?

Sorry. Just ignore that last bit. I wasn't gushing or anything. I'm not in love. Don't mean to scare you. Oh, this is such rubbish!

LonelyQuill

Dear LonelyQuill,

*I'm not scared off. And I know what you mean. I feel closer to you sometimes than my friends. Do **your** friends know you're gay? Mine don't. And I want to keep it that way.*

*Can I make a confession to you? Yesterday morning, while lying in my bed, I fantasized about you. All I could conjure was some vague boy with dark hair, but I was hard, so I pushed my pajama bottoms down and took my prick in my hand. And with you in mind, I made a long leisurely pull on it. Gave it a good tight stroke, you know. I stroked my cock a few times more and then lowered my other hand to my bollocks and rolled my testicles in my fingers. It felt so good. Imagining you doing it to me. **Wanting** you to do it to me.*

Is this all right to talk this way?

I stroked my cock again and ran my palm over the head. It glistened with a bit of pre-cum and I smeared it all over the blunt tip, pulling the wetness down my shaft and squeezed as I went. Yeah. That was good. I started fisting it faster now. I kept my fingers clenched tight over my prick. I wanted to imagine it was your mouth. Or maybe your arse. Oh God! Makes me hard again just thinking that. Do you think you are a bottom or a top? I think I'd like to top you. It felt so good to touch myself and think of you. I pumped my cock hard, then, going faster until I felt the ache well up from my balls into my belly and out my cock, and I shot cum all over my hand and chest. When I laid back, I rubbed my spunk slowly over my torso, picturing you licking it off.

*Did this letter bother you? I hope not. Do you think about me when you get off? **Will** you think about me the next time you do?*

StormEyes

Dear StormEyes

That letter was so hot! I couldn't believe it! I started reading it at the table in the Great Hall but had to jump up right in the middle of breakfast and return to my dorm. I was so hard. I hoped no one noticed. Good thing for the robes, eh?

You can think about me all you want. Seriously. Because now I'm thinking about you. I've got the curtains closed around my bed as I write this and I've taken my prick out. Your letter is lying next to me and I read the choice bits and it's getting me even harder, if that's possible. My cock aches. The head is dark, almost purple, and my shaft is red. I'm taking it in my hand now and it feels so hot in my palm. I'm thinking of you. Blimey! I give it a stroke and I just feels so bloody good. I imagine it's your hand. You stroke it hard and slow until I can't stand it. I reach a hand up under my shirt to my chest and squeeze a nipple between my fingers, wishing it was your teeth. Oh! That makes me buck my hips. I pump harder into your hand. You squeeze it tighter and I shag myself in your palm. Faster and faster. My cock is rock hard and my hips get into it now. My hand drops to my balls and I squeeze just as...

Sorry about that. I tried to wipe the parchment but I only ended up smearing the ink. I thought of writing this out again on a new parchment but decided you may like it as it is. Is that too naughty? I think I would like to bottom, but also think I would like to top. Do boys do both? I don't know anything about being gay, I'm afraid. Maybe I should get a magazine, but how to get one without everyone seeing the owl deliver it? So I guess you can tell I've never done anything. With a girl or a boy. Well actually, I kissed a girl once, but it wasn't much.

Hogsmeade is in a few days. I'm looking forward to it. I'll sneak away from my friends and find that stump. You'll still write to me, won't you?

LonelyQuill

A little embarrassed, Harry slipped the parchment into an envelope and trotted to the Owlry. He'd never in his whole life ever written anything like that. And he'd certainly never told a boy before how he wanked. He was hard again thinking about it and what StormEyes would think while he read it. He giggled. This was getting cool. Now he really wanted to meet this bloke. It was true. He didn't care what he looked like either. Unless he looked like Crabbe. That would be a bit hard to take, but even so. Harry knew he could put that aside. It really wouldn't matter who it was. He wanted to meet him.

He walked through the door and Malfoy was just coming out. "Potter," he said in that way that sounded more like spitting. "Writing to your boyfriend?"

"Stealing other people's letters, Malfoy, because no one will write to you?"

Malfoy smiled. The insult seemed to wash over him. "Oh I have someone to write to. Great letters, in fact. Something you wouldn't understand, being illiterate."

"Whatever, Malfoy."

“Always with the clever comeback, Potter. You must stay up all night coming up with them. Of course, you’ve got nothing better to do at night except let your hand service you.”

“You sure spend a lot of time thinking about my prick, Malfoy. Sure *you* haven’t got a boyfriend?”

“Shut up, Potter!”

“Ooh. Struck a chord, did I? Or *is* it my prick you’re thinking about?”

Out of the corner of his eye, Harry saw Malfoy draw his wand. Harry rolled out of the way, pulled his wand, and aimed it. “*Expelliarmus!*” Malfoy’s wand flew from his hand and landed in a particularly squishy patch of bird droppings. Harry looked at it and laughed. “Dear, dear,” he said, giving the letter to an owl who flew off with it. “That’s not going to be pretty.” He gave Malfoy a wide smile, and chuckling to himself, left him there.

* * *

Hogsmeade weekend was finally here, and Harry tried his best not to be nervous.

“What’s the matter, Harry?” asked Hermione. “You seem nervous.”

So much for that. “No. I’m not nervous. Just, you know. Anxious to get going.”

“Yes. Term is almost over, isn’t it? What are your plans for the summer, Harry?”

“Same old thing. Hope to wangle an invitation to the Burrow.”

“Oh I’m sure they’ll invite you. You probably don’t need an invitation anyway.”

“Will you be going, too, Hermione?”

“I expect so. Ginny and I are fast friends.”

“Oh yeah. *Ginny.*” He smiled at her as she reddened. Everyone but Ron and Hermione knew that Ron and Hermione had a thing for one another.

They waited in companionable silence in the common room for Ron. Harry glanced at the face of his friend and wondered for the hundredth time if he should tell her. She’d probably be all right with it. It was just Ron he worried about. Harry gamely chuckled along when Ron and Seamus made those remarks boys are always making. But what if Harry told Ron and Ron didn’t want to be his friend anymore?

He kept silent, and it was a good thing, because Ron suddenly appeared. “Ready to go?”

They strode into the June sunshine. A soft breeze blew up from the lake in the other direction, and Hogsmeade was soon in view.

“What’s first?” asked Ron.

“Hmm?” Harry’s mind had been on that tree stump

“Zonko’s? Honeydukes?”

Harry caught the look on Hermione’s face. “Let’s go to Honeydukes. We can go to Zonko’s later when Hermione can’t stand it one minute more and *has* to go to the bookshop.”

Hermione slapped his shoulder playfully, and they laughed and headed toward the sweet shop.

No matter where they went, Harry was distracted. He kept looking over his shoulder expecting to see his secret quill pal, whatever it is he looked like. Of course there was no one there, because they didn’t know it was Harry they were writing to.

Finally, Hermione excused herself to the book shop and Harry and Ron headed toward Zonko’s. Ron took one step in and Harry hung back. “Er...Ron. I’ll catch up with you in a minute. I just remembered something I have to do.”

Ron shrugged and turned back to the shop.

Harry sprinted down the high street and found the tea shop and the stationers. He ducked down the shadowed alleyway to where the lane ended at the woods and saw what must be the stump. He looked around and didn’t see anyone. StormEyes had said he would leave something in a knot for Harry and Harry quickly approached. He reached the stump and looked all around it, reaching with his fingers into all the crevices...There! He pulled it out and looked at it. A heart-shaped chocolate with a small note attached. “Something sweet for you, LonelyQuill. Yours, StormEyes.” Harry smiled, somehow deeply touched. He brought the wrapped chocolate to his nose and inhaled the rich, sweet fragrance. He didn’t know whether to eat it or save it forever. It was his first love token. Then he blushed. That was certainly a girly attitude, wanting to keep the thing instead of eat it.

“What the hell are you doing!”

Harry spun. Draco Malfoy was glaring at him, a deep scowl etched into his face. Harry quickly hid the chocolate behind his back. “What’s it to you, Malfoy? Are you following me?”

Malfoy’s eyes scanned the little clearing, from the backs of the shops to the forest. He looked nervous. “I don’t give a damn about you, Potter. Haven’t you figured that out? Why don’t you mind your own business?”

“Me? I was here first.”

“No you weren’t. I was waiting for someone.”

“Well there’s no one here and it’s a free forest, you know.”

He pulled the chocolate and note from behind his back and stuffed it in his pocket.

Malfoy noticed it and his eyes widened. “What are you doing? That’s not yours!”

“What are you talking about?”

“You stole that!” Malfoy pointed toward Harry’s pocket.

He glared up at Malfoy until something hard struck him, right between the eyes. It took his breath away and filled his stomach with a sick feeling. “Y-you...didn’t leave something here...did you?”

Malfoy’s scowl slowly ebbed away as realization spread over his face. He looked at Harry and Harry looked at him.

“Oh SHIT!” they said at the same time.

Malfoy staggered backwards and Harry sat hard on the stump. They merely stared at one another, horror sweeping over their faces until Malfoy spoke haltingly. “This is a Gryffindor trick.”

Harry dropped his face in his hands. “No,” he said, shaking his head from side to side. “It’s not a trick. I swear.”

Malfoy was panting. He looked quickly over his shoulder. “I’m not admitting to anything.”

“It’s a little late for that.”

“I don’t know what you’re talking about,” he said hoarsely.

“Oh come *on!*” said Harry, raising his flushed face. He’d never been so embarrassed and sickened in his life. How could it be Malfoy, of all people! How?

Malfoy babbled. “I just—I was waiting—I—”

“I know it’s you...*StormEyes*. Oh God! I should have known! ‘*Sometimes* you wish Voldemort hadn’t come back’? I’m such an idiot!”

Malfoy began to shake and he clutched his arms, hugging himself. “It can’t be you,” he said in a small voice.

Harry jolted to his feet. “If you EVER say anything, Malfoy--!”

“What about you? You better not breathe a word of this.”

“I’m sure as hell not going to say anything. In fact, I rather think I’m going to be sick about now.”

“Fine. Then keep it to yourself, Mr. LonelyQuill. I don’t want any more letters, is that clear?”

“Don’t worry! As if I’d write to *you* again!”

“Too right. I don’t want some ponce letter from *you*, Potter!”

“Who are *you* calling a ponce?”

Malfoy motioned for Harry to keep it quiet. His voice had risen nearly to a shout. So far no one had noticed them. “All right, all right! Shit! Harry-frigging-Potter. It figures.”

“I didn’t ask for this.”

“I didn’t either!”

They fell silent and merely glared. “So...it’s agreed,” said Malfoy after a pause. “We both don’t say anything.”

“Agreed.”

They looked at each other a moment longer, eyes traveling from head to foot as if seeing each other for the first time. “Okay,” said Malfoy softly. Was there a regretful tone in there? Harry wasn’t certain. But Malfoy turned then, and walked with slumped shoulders back toward the high street. Harry watched him go, confused feelings roiling inside him.

Harry stood there a long time well after Malfoy departed, wondering what happened to all his happy and excited feelings, and just wishing he was back in bed in Gryffindor tower.

* * *

Harry avoided breakfast for the next few days. It wouldn’t feel so bad missing the owls from his quill pal if he wasn’t there to see other people’s owls, or so he told himself. He told Ron and Hermione he had a stomachache, and that was partly true. Ever since his horrific discovery at Hogsmeade last weekend, he felt ill.

He hadn’t touched the letters he still kept under the mattress. What was he to do with them? Burn them? Now that he knew they were from Malfoy, what was the alternative?

Malfoy! Oh God! Why had it been him? Of all the boys in the school, why did it have to be him? He had *loved* those letters. They were his lifeline. That someone else understood him. Now what was he left with but a bitter taste in his mouth?

Typical Harry Potter good luck, he told himself. Crap.

He had to go to class, and he moaned when he realized it was Potions. Malfoy would be there. But at least they didn’t sit together. They sat as far away from one another as possible.

Harry dragged himself to Potions. Not that he liked it anyway. He sat far in the back and when he looked he saw that white blond head at the front of the class. StormEyes. Gods.

The class was typical Snape. Snape growled at Harry for no discernable reason and praised Malfoy with a slithering smile. Once, Malfoy turned back to look behind him, but never turned his head all the way. Harry sunk in his seat as if that would make him invisible.

When class was over, he was still putting his things away when Draco came up the aisle. His grey eyes flicked once at Harry before drawing down again. Harry kicked himself for spending the energy to observe him go, watching the back of that blond head draw into the shadows of the corridor.

Wait a minute. Had he just thought of him as *Draco*?

* * *

Another term was over and Harry, Hermione, and Ron boarded the Hogwarts Express to return to London. Harry had fallen into a bit of a depression ever since Hogsmeade, but of course, he couldn't tell his friends why. They just owed it to his problems with Voldemort. But Voldemort seemed like a small thing compared with how Harry was feeling these days. He had been so hopeful. At last, maybe he was going to have a boyfriend of sorts. Someone! But it had all been dashed to bits. So Malfoy was a poufter. It made more sense the more Harry thought about it. So that's what was wrong with him. That's why he was so intolerable all the time. He was a closet case. *Look who's talking, Potter*, he scolded himself. *Typical closet case here, too*. He sighed. Oh well. At least he had good friends.

He looked at them sitting across from him in their compartment. Hermione and Ron were going on about something as the train lurched, starting off. Harry looked out the window for a while, watching Hogwarts castle grow smaller and smaller until it disappeared behind a hill. Another summer at the Dursleys. Another two months of listening to Uncle Vernon harangue him, of Aunt Petunia complaining about him, of Dudley pushing him to the brink (and him not able to hex him). The only thing to look forward to was the Burrow, and Ron had said that in three weeks Harry could go. That was a relief, at least. He loved spending the summer there and then going on to Diagon Alley with the Weasleys. It was the only thing he could look forward to now.

Harry felt restless and decided to stroll the train a bit. Hermione and Ron barely noticed when he left the compartment. He staggered down the jostling train and weaved into the corridor between the carriages.

Suddenly, hands grabbed him and dragged him bodily into the loo.

"What the hell--!"

It was Malfoy.

The Slytherin had Harry trapped between the tiny sink and the door, which he locked with a charm.

"What the hell are you doing, Malfoy?"

Malfoy just stared at him in a strange way. And then he edged closer. Harry tried to move back but his bum was already against the sink.

In a very unfamiliar voice, Draco said, "I can't stand it anymore."

Harry's eyes locked with Malfoy's. "Can't...stand what anymore?" he asked softly. His heart began to pound.

Malfoy leaned closer. He didn't say anything. But his hand lifted, hovered, and slowly descended onto Harry's shoulder. Harry turned his eyes toward it and just looked at the long white fingers against his black robes. "How can you stand it?" whispered Draco.

Harry looked at him again. Draco's mouth hung open slightly, his lips moist and red. His eyes, those stormy grey eyes, looked at Harry pleadingly. Harry's breath caught. *Oh God*. His prick suddenly hardened just as Malfoy slid up against him, his body covering Harry's length. Harry felt something hard press against his thigh. He turned his head slightly, and Malfoy's face was there. He smelled his breath—those harsh rasps pelting his cheek—and turned his face further until his lips brushed across Draco's.

Draco pressed against Harry and took his lips hungrily. A tongue licked at Harry's mouth and Harry opened his lips, sucking it in. Draco's expert tongue explored, seeking out Harry's and caressing it. His lips moved smoothly and sucked on Harry's mouth while their tongues played. His hands weren't idle either, and while one clutched his shoulder, the other slid around Harry's waist. It stayed at his hip for only a moment before it traveled around and down, cupping an arse cheek and squeezing. Then he mashed himself into Harry, slamming their pelvises together.

Harry turned his head and pressed his lips even more fervently to Draco's. There was no question of pulling away. He wanted this as badly as Draco did. His arms wrapped around him tightly until there wasn't a centimeter left between them. Harry ground his pelvis into Draco's and he felt the blond moan in his mouth. Harry responded with a moan of his own and deepened their kiss, savouring his taste.

Fingers reached up under his shirt, and Harry wanted to laugh with pleasure. Draco's hands glided over Harry's sensitive skin, exploring the feel of him. Harry held him tighter, kissed and kissed him, never wanting to let him go. But soon, they both drew back, gasping, but still clutching one another.

"I don't care that you're Harry Potter, do you hear me?" he panted over Harry's lips.

Harry shook his head. "And I don't care that you're Draco Malfoy. I want this."

"Me, too." He kissed Harry abruptly again, but before Harry could sink into another long kiss, Draco pulled his face away. "Harry, it will be all right, won't it? This isn't just...I don't know."

Reluctantly, Draco stepped back. Harry tried to catch his breath and stared at Draco. The Slytherin was really very attractive. His mouth was swollen now from kissing, but his eyes smoldered. His blond fringe hung damply over his eyes with sweat.

"Hormones, you mean?" said Harry when he could speak again.

"Yeah."

He shrugged. "Well. We're fifteen. We're nothing but hormones, aren't we?"

Draco laughed a little. "Yeah, but. You know what I mean. We've hated each other for years. How could we possibly consider...*this!*"

Harry ran his hand up over his hair. It was a mess, he was sure of it. "I don't know. All I know is I was falling for the boy in those letters. And if all of that was the truth, then I guess..." He hadn't wanted to admit that. But it seemed to be true. He was falling for StormEyes. For Draco. Was that possible?

"'Falling for'?" asked Draco with a quirky smile. "Really?"

"Well, I didn't know it was *you*."

Malfoy snorted. "And I didn't know it was you when I started getting feelings—" He drew himself up. "Well."

Harry smiled shyly. "We're doomed."

Draco chuckled. "Too right."

"Might as well be doomed together, then."

Draco took a deep breath. "It's got to be a secret."

"No kidding."

"I mean it, Harry. If my father got wind of it—"

Harry shuddered. "I know. There's no love lost between your father and me."

"I know." He looked at Harry meaningfully. Then he struck out with, "Damn! And now it's summer and we won't see each other."

Harry's heart sank. Only moments ago, Draco was the one person besides Voldemort that he wouldn't have minded never seeing again, and now Harry wanted more than anything to be with him. "I know," he moaned.

"I'll write to you. Will you write back? We can keep writing, okay?"

"Okay." Harry slid into Draco's arms again. Draco reached up and kissed Harry's forehead.

"But don't send your owl, Harry. It's too recognizable. I'll send you an owl and you'll just have to send a reply with it. Okay?"

"Good idea," he said. Slytherins were good for something. He nuzzled Draco's eyebrow.

"So...so we'll keep writing."

"Yes," Harry whispered, lips trailing down Draco's face. He kissed his cheek, the side of his mouth, his chin. It felt so good to *kiss* someone!

Draco's hands caressed Harry every place they fell. "God, you feel so good," he groaned.

“I loved your letters,” rasped Harry. “I’ve kept all of them.”

“Me, too.” He kissed Harry again and pulled quickly away. “We have to get back or people will wonder.”

“Right.” Harry slowly edged back and frowned. “Our timing is just perfect, isn’t it?”

“Yeah. Couldn’t be better.”

Harry knew that statement encompassed so many things.

Draco released Harry and straightened his tie. He smoothed down his hair where it got ruffled in Harry's embrace and cleared his throat. “So. I’ll write to you as soon as I get home. Okay?”

“Okay.” He shook his head. “Geez, Draco. I can’t believe we’re doing this.”

He made an attempt at a chuckle. “Neither can I. Seems inevitable though, doesn’t it?”

“In a weird way, yes.”

He fastened a smirk to his face. “Don’t come out right away. See that the coast is clear first.” He took the charm off the door and slowly pulled it open. He peered out the door and slipped out. “See you, Potter,” he whispered in parting.

Harry slumped against the sink and sighed. Suddenly, the summer holidays looked much brighter. Stranger, but brighter.

Part Two—Summer

Harry paced in front of his window and looked out across the rain-slicked pavement for the hundredth time. Draco said he'd write as soon as he got home, but since he had no idea where Draco lived it could take him hours.

When Uncle Vernon picked him up from the train station they hadn't dawdled at all, and Harry strained back, looking behind him, trying to get one last glimpse of Draco on the platform.

Draco. Who would have thought? Who would have believed? Not Harry. But now the Slytherin was all Harry could think about. On the drive home, he stared out the window feeling the blonde's arms around him, his lips on him, his sighs. *Oh my God*. Harry couldn't believe the depth of his feelings for the boy, a boy he had hated with just as much vehemence only a few short hours previous.

Uncle Vernon was yelling at him as usual when they got to Privet Drive, but Harry really wasn't listening. He dragged his trunk upstairs and Aunt Petunia snapped at him to mind the paint. He stuffed it through his doorway just as Dudley sauntered by to sneer at him. But when he closed the door and closed the Muggle world out, he was back on the Hogwarts Express, his senses full of Draco Malfoy.

He waited for several more hours. Aunt Petunia called to him, telling him if he didn't come down this minute he'd miss dinner. But Harry didn't care. He ate a pumpkin pastie he bought on the train and sat at the window, his chin resting on his hand.

Night fell and darkness enveloped Privet Drive. The streetlights winked on and cast flat shadows of automobiles and bushes across the dark surface of the street. Harry sighed. This was nutters. He couldn't do this all summer, staring out a window waiting for a—Wait! What was that?

He jumped to his feet. In the distant sky, a dark shape swooped and veered toward his window. He stepped back, and the dark owl landed neatly on his desk. Hedwig squawked indignantly from her cage but Harry ignored her. The owl turned its yellow eyes around the room imperiously, a little like Lucius Malfoy might, Harry thought, and finally extended its leg.

Harry snatched the rolled parchment and sat down on his bed, unfurling it. He adjusted the lamp to aim down at it.

Harry,

Nice to say your name after all this time. Harry. I still can't believe it, can you? I'm all tingly just thinking about the train. I'm so glad I plucked up the courage. Damned if I know where that came from.

I miss you already. Damn. This is going to be hell. We've got two months without seeing each other and just a little snog on the train to sustain us. How will we manage? Well, one way for certain will be a good wank. Or two. Or three. Now I have a face to wank to. And from what I felt while rubbing against you in the loo, there's a very good piece of Potter I can think about as well.

Sorry the owl took so long. Bet you don't know where I live, do you? Malfoy Manor is in Wiltshire, so we had to get to a floo and...well. Can't really give away any secrets, but you can't floo here directly. Then Mother wanted to talk about...things. I can't say much there either, but I'm sure you can guess. And I'm sorry about that. I'm sorry about last year when the Dark Lord returned. Father told us about it. Told me...everything. And I'm sorry. Mostly, I'm sorry for not being sorry at the time. I know this is hindsight and all, but it's the best I can do.

I really care about you now. Mad, I know. Stupid. A couple of letters and we fall to pieces. But what's done is done. I won't help them to hurt you anymore. Not even my father. I'll let you know what I can. But it isn't easy as you may well imagine.

Are your relatives really as bad as they say? You didn't seem to like them in one of your letters. I'm sorry you have to stay there. But it's only two months. And then we're back together. Any thoughts on how we're to do that? Must keep it a secret, remember? I can't start being nice to you all of a sudden. Everyone will think I've lost my mind. 'Course I have, haven't I? Crabbe and Goyle would have puppies. Skrewts, more like.

Even though I hated you, I always admired your flying ability. You were fantastic in the Tri-Wizard Tournament. And in Quidditch, even though you beat me, and I still hate you for that, by the way. Is there anything you admire about me? Strike that. Don't answer. Because I bet there isn't.

What are we to do, Harry? Everything we know about the other has been a lie or distortion. Maybe we just have to start again. Pretend we're back on the Hogwarts Express in our first year.

Hello there. My name is Draco Malfoy. And you must be Harry Potter. Want to be friends? Wank buddies? . . . Lovers?

*Very much yours,
Draco*

Harry breathed. He read it through again, smiling at the funny bits. Another great letter. He wanted to give it a long reply, so he fed the bird some owl treats, scooted up to the desk, and pulled out a parchment and quill.

Dear Draco,

I'm glad you wrote a long letter. I can live off that until the next one. I want to try to answer some of your questions, because it is true that we don't know much about each other.

First of all, we've really only got three weeks to write because that's how long I'm staying in Little Whinging. After that I go to the Weasley's and I don't think it would be wise sending your owl there. I know. That means seven long weeks until we see or hear from each other. But three weeks is better than the "nothing" I expected to begin with, so there is that.

Thanks for saying you're sorry. It means a lot to me. So much has happened to me over the last five years I can scarce catch my breath. I don't understand it all but I have a very bad feeling about it.

Voldemort wants to kill me. I suppose you gathered that. I can't really tell you why, though I expect your father may have already told you. And, well. I'm sorry about him being arrested and all. For you, that is. The truth of it is I'm not sorry he was sent to Azkaban. He **has** tried to kill me.

Blimey. We **are** a pair, aren't we?

I really care about you, too. And if you ever need protection, we can go to Dumbledore together. He **will** protect you, Draco. Even from your father if he has to. Please believe this.

And yes, my relatives are really as bad as everyone says. They're Muggles, you know. Not that that's a reason or anything, but they just hate wizards. I mean, this is my mother's sister and she even knew what happened to her own flesh and blood and she doesn't care. What does that say? My stupid cousin Dudley is this fat pig of a boy. A real bully. Of course, I used to think that about you, being a bully. Maybe it's just frustration? Anyway, that's why I always wore those really big Muggle clothes, because they wouldn't buy anything for me. I had to wear Dudley's hand-me-downs. Things really only got a bit better when they discovered I was a wizard (I didn't know anything about the Wizarding world growing up. They didn't tell me. So I wasn't stuck up like you thought, okay?) I have my own room now and they mostly leave me alone. They're a little afraid of me so I guess I sort of know how good it feels to you when you push around the little kids. Except that that isn't very nice, Draco, and you probably shouldn't do that anymore.

That's really nice of you to say about my flying. I didn't know you felt that way. And I admire your cleverness. And you're really good at potions, even without Snape playing to you. So there. There's two compliments.

When we get back to Hogwarts we'll just have to be careful. I have my father's invisibility cloak and you're clever enough to get around. You'll probably be Prefect again, right? So we can find a place. I think I even know of the perfect place to meet. Maybe two. But I have secrets as well, so I can't tell you about them now or how I know about them.

Yes, I want to be your friend. And certainly this summer we'll be wank buddies (you make me laugh, you know that!)

Lovers? Wow. There's always that for when we see each other again. I want to, but it makes me really nervous. I don't know anything about it. I don't want to disappoint you. But I'll try. I'll do my best. If you'll be patient with me, it will be fine.

I better finish. Your owl looks impatient. What's his name, by the way?

Very much yours too,
Harry

Harry lived his life during the day merely staying in his room unless he was commanded to do this chore or that. Mutely, he would obey, but at night, back in his room, he looked to the skies, hoping to see Draco's owl.

The third night it came.

There was a large package attached to the bird and after being relieved of its burden, it pecked at the owl treats Harry had left for it on his desk. Curious, Harry unwrapped the parcel, and a letter fluttered out. But when he removed the brown paper of the package, he found several magazines. And what magazines! His face flushed with heat. They were gay wizard's magazines. One was called "Broomsticks", another "Magic Wand Monthly", and the last one "Wanking Wizards". The moving pictures on the covers made Harry wince in embarrassment, but he knew it wouldn't take him long to get over it. He set them aside and picked up the letter.

Harry,

Thought you might find these useful, since you said you had no experience. I think they will provide many of the answers to your questions. (I wish I could see your face right now!)

So you have secrets, do you? A Slytherin likes nothing better than to discover secrets. But those aren't the secrets I'm really interested in right now. Mostly I'm wondering about your broomstick, and I'm not talking about your Firebolt. Tell me, Harry. How big are you? I'm imagining something rather large but that still fits comfortably in the hand. In my hand, that is. Are you getting hard reading this? I hope so.

I've got a good sized package if I do say so myself. You'd enjoy it.

Do you know I spend a good deal of my day just thinking about you? And a good deal of my nights as well? For instance, want to know what I thought of last night?...

Harry scooted up on the bed and got comfortable. He undid the button to his trousers and lowered the zip. He had a feeling Draco's description could do him wonders.

...I was lying in my bed in Malfoy Manor. When I'm at home, I don't wear pajamas at all. That's right, little Harry. I'm starkers on my cotton sheets. Flying free, as it were. So I'm lying there thinking about you, of course, and I push the sheets away from my body so I'm lying in the cool air of my room. Slowly, very slowly, I run the flat of my hand down my torso from my erect nipples down my stomach and to my cock. I give it a squeeze. I'm thinking, "Oh Harry. This is your hand touching me there." Can you feel it?

"Yes," Harry breathed, stroking his own cock, stiff with arousal.

My other hand needs something to do, so I palm my balls, rolling them. That's something I'd like to do to you. Would you like that?

"Yes," Harry moaned, writhing against the duvet, his trousers and pants down around his knees. He reached down and cupped his sac.

But here's something you may not have tried. I lay back, spread my legs wide, and raise them up, rolling my spine. If you were kneeling in front of me, Harry, between my legs like I'm imagining you, you could easily see my hole.

"Oh fuck!" said Harry. His hips bucked involuntarily and he squeezed through a stroke of his prick.

While I'm stroking myself—and it is so good, Harry—I raise my other hand to my mouth and suck hard on my finger. You'd probably like to see that. It's a precursor for similar events to come. But that's not why I'm doing it now. I'm lubing it, you see, because I lower it to my arse, stroke over my little puckered hole, and push it in.

“Oh God!” Harry came in spurting bursts all over the duvet. He couldn't stop himself. Not when picturing Draco doing those things to himself and wishing it were Harry. His body gave a few more jerks before the sparkles in his eyes settled down and he could breathe again. His stiffened legs relaxed and he lay back against the wall. He picked up the letter again and continued reading, smiling at the Slytherin. Lazily, he toyed with his spent cock, smearing the cum over the shaft.

Now I'm shagging myself with my finger and it feels delicious. At the same time, I'm fisting my cock and giving it a good workout. But it's all you, Harry. I'm imagining that it's you doing it all to me. And I come so hard I shout out loud. Did you come yet? I hope so. I'd like to think we came at the same time. How about this? Can you get up at 7 o'clock tomorrow morning and come at exactly 7:30? Then we really will be coming at the same time. Won't that be wicked?

I hope you like the mags, Harry. Write back.

Your Draco

Harry did as instructed the next morning, anxious to actually wank at the same time as Draco, and when he came as close to 7:30 as his fifteen-year-old libido would allow, he lay back, with a sated smile on his face. “That's for you, Draco.”

And so it went. Draco's letters arrived every other day and Harry anxiously wrote back. Sometimes Draco wrote pensively, philosophizing about the future, worrying about it, and Harry shared some of his fears, some he hadn't even confided with Hermione or Ron.

But as the days turned to weeks, it was getting closer to the time when Harry would go on to the Burrow and he was almost sorry to go.

The owl arrived and Harry smiled as he took the parchment. “There you go, Fergus,” he said to the bird, leaving a pile of treats for him.

Dear Harry,

Can you get yourself to the Leaky Cauldron tomorrow night around eight? And wear a cloak and hood.

Draco

Harry stared at the sparse parchment. He turned it over, looking for the rest, but that's all there was. Why did Draco want him to go to the Leaky Cauldron? A strange feeling swam in his belly. Was this a trap? No. Draco was on his side now. He wouldn't do anything like that.

But what if it wasn't Draco sending this letter?

Harry bit his lip. He wished Draco had a telephone and then he could ask him. It looked like Draco's writing but a simple spell could probably change it. If only he could do magic and then he could test it to see if it really was from Draco.

Maybe it was just a matter of trust. Draco was maybe excited about something and just dashed off this quick note. Yes, that was probably it.

Harry wrote an equally quick note of ascent and tied it to Fergus' leg. The owl looked disconcerted that he was done so quickly, but he gave one hoot and launched himself from the window sill.

Now all Harry had to do tomorrow was sneak out of the house and somehow get to the Leaky Cauldron.

* * *

Harry climbed carefully out his window and hung by his hands along the sill. Hedwig squawked at him but he hissed at her. "Shush! You want them to catch me? I'll be fine." But as he looked down, he wondered if that were true. He slid along the sill and swung his leg toward the drainpipe. When he managed to wrap his legs around it, he reached and grabbed it. He paused a moment, expecting the metal to groan and collapse, but when it didn't, he slid down to the ground.

Privet Drive was quiet as was Magnolia Crescent when he turned onto it. Even though it was still fairly early, no one was about. And that was good, because the last thing Harry wanted to do was cause a commotion amongst the Muggles. He hoped Mr. Tibbles or Mrs. Figg weren't out spying on him.

He stood at the kerb, took a deep breath, and stuck out his wand.

Appearing out of nowhere from the mist, the purple Knight Bus screeched to a halt in front of him. He waved to Stan Shunpike the conductor and boarded before the boy could launch into his speech. "I need to get to the Leaky Cauldron."

"Arry Potter. Look, Ern. It's 'Arry Potter."

"Yeah," said Harry uncomfortably. "Could we just go?"

The driver didn't hesitate. Off they went, zooming through Little Whinging, out to the highway, and quick as a wink into London. Harry barely had time to pay for his fare when it screeched to a halt.

"The Leaky Cauldron, as ordered," said Stan. Harry thanked him and dropped off the step of the bus. He watched it drive away and disappear and looked up at the tavern sign. Reaching under his cloak, he clutched his wand. If this was a trap, he wanted to be ready. He put up the hood of his school cloak, and ducked inside.

Patrons sat in the dim room, smoke hovering just above their heads. Nothing looked out of the ordinary, but then again, it was a Wizarding place, and Harry wasn't yet familiar enough with those kinds of establishments to know the difference.

He looked around and wondered what he was supposed to do now.

Someone tapped him on his shoulder. Harry spun, his wand up. Draco's eyes were wide, staring down at the tip of it. "Steady on, Potter," he hissed, pushing it away from his face.

Harry dropped it to his side. "Draco, what—?"

Draco put a finger to his lips. He took Harry's arm and dragged him to a dark corner. He looked both ways under his sheltering hood and faced Harry, leaning close. "I couldn't stand it anymore," he whispered. "I wanted to meet with you before you left. I have a room here."

"You have a r-room?" Harry's heart hammered in his chest. He was certain Draco would be able to hear it.

"Yeah. For the night. Want to come up?"

Harry gazed into those grey eyes that had haunted him for so many nights now and slowly nodded. Draco gave him a smile. A real smile. Not one of those mocking Slytherin things Draco was so good at. Harry melted and followed him up the stairs.

Draco snatched a look or two behind him to make sure Harry was there, and led him to a room at the end of the corridor. He unlocked the door, and ushered Harry in.

"So, Draco. What—" But his mouth was suddenly covered by another's lips. Draco was all over him. His hands traveled everywhere, his mouth chewed on Harry's lips, his tongue plundered his mouth. Harry was shoved against the bed post and just grabbed what he could, which turned out to be Draco's arse. He squeezed both cheeks hard and kissed back for all he was worth.

"Harry," Draco whispered, his mouth now licking a trail down Harry's neck.

Harry did his best to stay upright, but he felt as if he was hit with a jelly-legs curse. His hands left Draco's very fine arse and rose to his hair, carding his fingers through the soft strands.

Draco found Harry's lips again and mouthed them until he pulled away with a pop. He gazed at Harry under drowsy lids. "Oh Harry. I have been so wanting to do that."

"And I've wanted you to. But what are we doing here? I thought it might be a trap or something."

Draco stared at him incomprehendingly for a moment before his eyes widened in horror. "Oh Merlin! I'm sorry. It sure must have looked like that—but hang on. Why are you here, then?"

"Well. In case it wasn't and you needed my help."

"And I suppose you didn't tell anyone where you'd gone. What if it *had* been a trap, you imbecile?" He pushed Harry away in frustration.

"But it wasn't."

“But you didn’t know that! Good Lord. I see now how you’ve managed to escape the Dark Lord all this time. Dumb luck!”

“It *wasn't* a trap! It turned out okay. Are you going to yell at me all night or are you going to tell me what this is about?”

Draco clamped his arms over his chest. “No wonder you weren’t made a Prefect. You just go looking for danger, don’t you?”

Harry sighed and sat on the bed. “Draco.”

Draco blew out a breath and finally relented, moving to sit beside Harry. “I just wanted you all to myself for a bit. Mother is busy, I have the galleons, so I figured ‘why not?’”

Harry looked around. It was a bigger room than the one he had the last time he stayed here his third year when he blew up his Aunt Marge. “Nice room.”

“Yeah.” Draco peeled his cloak off and tossed it aside. He carefully reached for Harry’s cloak and undid the buttons. “Why don’t you get comfortable?”

Harry swallowed. His throat suddenly felt constricted. “Oh. Okay.” He dragged the cloak off his shoulders and tossed it toward a chair.

Draco watched him with a feral expression. “Actually, Harry. Truth be told, I’d really like to…” His fingers started to drag down the zip on Harry’s jacket. “I thought that this was a good opportunity for us to…you know. Shag. No distractions. No school. No parents. Just us. All night. What do you think?”

“Oh.” Harry watched Draco’s hand pull the zip the rest of the way. The jacket fell open revealing his black T-shirt.

Draco’s fingers found the hem of his shirt and slid underneath, touching flesh. Harry’s breath hitched. Okay. So he was going to actually do it. With a boy. With Draco Malfoy. And he suddenly felt very inadequate.

But he also had a raging erection, and his body convinced his brain he could learn.

Draco pushed the jacket down Harry’s arms and pulled it free. Wrapping his arms around Harry’s neck, he kissed him, smothering Harry’s breath with his lips and tongue. *Draco really knows how to kiss*, thought Harry, doing his best to catch up. While they kissed, Draco pushed up Harry’s shirt until it was bunched under his arms. Draco drew back enough to pull Harry’s shirt off over his head. He quickly unbuttoned his own, threw it aside, and pressed his chest to Harry’s, flesh to flesh.

That was nice. More than nice. It was warm. Hot. Draco felt good against him. He sank his face to the juncture of Draco’s neck and shoulder and opened his lips to it, nuzzling, mouthing, licking. Draco moaned a delicious sound.

There was something going on at the button of his trousers. Draco's hands were working down there to open them and Harry shifted back, alarmed. Lips kissed his chin reassuringly. And then his button was open and his zip down. Draco tugged, pulling the jeans to his knees.

"Um...aren't we going a bit fast?"

Draco froze. His eyes searched Harry's. "Are we?" His hand descended to his own bulging crotch and he squeezed it. "I really want you, Harry. Can't you tell?"

Harry had a hard time dragging his gaze away from the spectacle of Draco handling his own package, but he did look up into his eyes at last. "Yeah. I can tell."

"Don't you want me?" The hand that so recently touched himself, dropped onto Harry's stiff erection that was tenting his shorts. Draco didn't just rub it with the flat of his hand as he had done on himself. His fingers actually closed around the shaft through the cloth, mapping it out. Harry jerked upright.

"I do," gasped Harry.

"Then what's the hold up? Afraid you'll get pregnant?" Draco smiled.

"No!...er...wizards can't, can they?"

"No, you idiot. Gods, Potter!"

"Oh. It's just that—"

"I know. You're a virgin. So am I. Do you *want* to wait?" His hand rubbed hard on Harry's prick, rolling it back and forth over Harry's belly.

There was no way Harry was going to say 'no' now.

Instead, he reached over and drew Draco's mouth in for a kiss. Harry felt the boy's hand rest on his cheek, thumb stroking. When he pulled back, Draco was smiling at him. A very sexy smile.

"Can I take down your underwear, Harry?"

Harry's breath hitched and he could only nod. Draco grasped the waistband and tugged, revealing Harry's unmistakable erection. Draco worked quickly on his own trousers and underwear. Harry took that opportunity to wriggle all the way out of his trousers and pants, toeing his shoes off and slipping off his socks. He was naked and sitting on the edge of Draco Malfoy's bed in Draco's room at the Leaky Cauldron, watching the Slytherin get out of the rest of his clothes. It couldn't get any more surreal than that, as far as Harry was concerned.

Draco tossed the last sock aside and turned to Harry. He was standing in front of him and his flushed erection was almost at Harry's eye level. "Wow, Draco," he said softly. "You are really good-looking."

“So are you, Harry. I knew you would be.”

Harry reached out tentatively, and touched his fingertips to the velvety skin of Draco’s cock. He’d never touched another boy’s prick before. It was oddly familiar but also strange because it wasn’t his own.

Draco’s face was flushed, his lids hanging low. He slowly lowered himself to Harry’s thighs, straddling them. When he shoved forward both cocks slid along side the other. Harry gasped. “That feels good, doesn’t it?” purred Draco.

“It’s brilliant,” Harry breathed. His arms embraced Draco—all that white skin—and he bestowed several sloppy kisses to his lips.

Draco’s cheek slid along Harry’s until his lips caressed the shell of Harry’s ear. “I want to shag you, Harry. Be inside you. But I want to suck you first. Is that all right?”

Harry wasn’t certain about the ‘being inside’ him part, but he was pretty enthusiastic about the sucking thing. He nodded anyway. They could negotiate after the blowjob.

Draco eased back off of Harry’s legs. “Did you find those magazines instructive?”

Harry smiled lazily. “Yeah. *Very* instructive.”

“I only buy them myself for the articles, of course,” said Draco, sinking to his knees.

Harry chuckled...until that point. Draco, naked and on his knees in front of an equally naked Harry just was no laughing matter. It was definitely a panting matter, and he was doing that in abundance.

Draco looked up at Harry and rested his hands on his thighs. They felt hot there, burning even. With a little pressure applied to them, he opened Harry’s legs wider and lowered his face to kiss the inside flesh of one thigh. He opened his mouth and bit. “You smell so great, Harry. Like sweat, and arousal...and Harry.” Draco ran his nose along the hairs, inhaling deeply before raising his head only slightly and inhaling the scent of Harry’s hard prick.

Harry couldn’t believe how hard he was. It ached and throbbed. He could feel Draco’s breath on him and he wasn’t certain if he would last at all if he touched it.

But Draco did touch it. With his tongue. And Harry nearly leaped from the bed. Draco clamped his hands down on his waist, holding him in place. “Whoa there,” he said, as if coaxing a jumpy horse. “Keep still, Harry. I’m new at this, too, you know. But you taste so good. I’m going in for more.”

That tongue stretched out again and dragged up his shaft, and a strangled noise flowed up Harry’s throat, a noise he’d never made before. Of course, no one had ever put their tongue on his cock before and so some unusual things were bound to happen.

Draco licked all over Harry’s cock as if it were a lolly until he finally opened his mouth and sucked the whole thing in.

Harry tried not to buck, he really did, but he wasn't as successful at it as he wanted to be. Draco didn't seem to mind, because his lips closed tightly over his flesh even while his tongue slithered all over it.

Harry was not going to last much longer. And when Draco pulled back on his cock, sucking suddenly with all his might, Harry could offer no warning. His orgasm exploded from his prick and pumped into Draco's mouth. He looked down at Draco's face, eyes closed tight, cheeks hollowed with sucking, and watched him do his best to swallow. Some cum leaked out at the corner of his mouth and trickled a white streak down to his chin. That was so hot! Harry thought he'd never seen anything as brilliant as that.

Draco let his cock go with a pop and sat back, his tongue searching for that line of cum dribbling down his face. "You taste bloody amazing, mate," he said to Harry.

"Well you *felt* bloody amazing."

Draco smiled and gave his own stiff cock a pull. Harry's suddenly sated feeling dissipated in a wash of heat. Now they'd gotten to the "inside" part. "Er...Draco..."

"Just lay back, Harry."

Harry didn't want to seem like a baby, worrying over something blokes did all the time, so he scooted back up the bed and lay down. Draco was suddenly above him. He had a small bottle of some clear liquid in his hand. "Do you know how long I've been thinking about this?" Harry didn't answer him. Draco licked his lips. "Well, thinking about doing it with anyone, really. But ever since I found out my quill pal was you, I wanted so badly to shag you. Even after that first day we found out."

"Th-the first day?" Harry wasn't able to stand the idea until Draco had accosted him so completely in the train loo. "You got over that pretty quick."

"I may have hated you for years, but it doesn't mean I didn't find you shaggable."

Harry's brows rose at that. "You mean, had there been an opportunity, you would have...um...shagged me before? And then hexed me?"

Draco considered and then finally nodded. "Probably... What?"

"Well that's not...I mean..." He gave up and shrugged. What difference did it make now? Draco wasn't going to hex him. And looking at his long, lean body, the white-blond pubic hair, and that really remarkable erection, Harry thought Draco was pretty shaggable, too.

But it wasn't Draco lying on his back.

Harry looked up nervously again.

"Give us your legs, Harry. Put them over my shoulders."

Yes, Harry had seen that in the magazines. When men shagged face to face, some put their legs up over their partner's shoulders so that their...entrances...were accessible to...

Oh Merlin.

Harry spread his legs to allow Draco up against him and he felt the blond grasp him by the back of his knees and hoist his legs up. It felt very vulnerable in this position, especially when Draco's prick slid up along Harry's crack under his balls.

"You look great like this," said Draco, licking his lips again. He leaned over and gave Harry a quick kiss.

Harry tried to relax. He understood the mechanics of it. If he didn't relax it was only going to hurt more. He frankly couldn't even imagine Draco shoving that thick cock of his inside his tiny hole, but he tried not to think that, and instead repeated the mantra in his head, *Relax, relax...*

Draco popped the lid off the little bottle with his thumb and lowered it. Harry felt a stream of cold liquid dribbling down his crack. Draco lubed his cock and Harry felt the blunt end press at his entrance. *This is it. Here I am*, he thought. *Harry Potter. Lying in Draco Malfoy's bed, with my feet in the air and his cock at my arse. At any other time in my life this would not have boded well.*

Draco's eyes locked on Harry's and he was suddenly pushing. Harry felt great pressure at his arse and then something huge tore through him. He clenched his teeth and hissed through them. "God, Draco! It hurts!"

But Draco said nothing. Like a machine, he steadily skewered Harry, despite his trying to wriggle away, despite his pleas, until he was fully seated. Then Draco stopped and threw his head back. "Oh! That feels bloody marvelous. So tight." Then, as an afterthought, he lowered his gaze again. "Are you all right?"

"Spectacular," grunted Harry. But the truth of it was, the pain had lessened after that initial assault, and just having Draco inside him wasn't all that bad now. It felt really full, but not bad. He breathed, relaxing now that the worst was over.

"There's more, you know," said Draco, voice low and seductive.

"More?" Wasn't Draco in all the way? "How big are you?"

"I don't mean *me*...but thanks. I mean, there's moving now. Are you ready?"

"Yes. I guess so."

Draco planted a smile on his face and rocked his hips. His cock slid out and then back in. That wasn't so bad, Harry thought. Draco did this a few times before he pulled out further and slammed in hard. Harry's whole body jostled, scooting him further up the bed. Even that wasn't so bad, and Draco repeated it a few times. It was nice, in fact, having Draco inside. It was warm and filling and intimate.

But then Draco moved, angled himself differently and slammed in again and Harry opened his eyes wide. "Oh! What was *that*?" A decidedly pleasant sensation vibrated through him, awakening his slumbering prick.

Draco's eyes narrowed with passion. His smile was positively reptilian. "What? You mean...that?" And he thrust into the same spot again.

Harry gasped and arched his back. "Oh God! What was that?"

"That, my love, is your prostate."

"My what?" How could something deep inside Harry fill him with so much aching pleasure? But explanations were rapidly becoming unnecessary as Draco hit that spot a third time.

"Oh Draco!" Harry raised his hips into the thrusts, trying to take more. And Draco's thrusts were coming faster. Harry was trying to keep pace. They were shagging! He and Draco were actually shagging! And it felt wonderful!

Draco was moving faster and he suddenly grabbed Harry's renewed erection and pumped it along with his thrusts. Abruptly he froze, squeezing Harry's cock almost painfully. But with jerking thrusts, he spurt hard into Harry, panting his orgasm. Harry came almost at once, covering Draco's hand with spunk and lifting his hips, feeling the twin sensations of being filled and emptying himself. He didn't ever want these feelings to stop, but slowly, Draco's thrusts lessened, and his own pulsing orgasm dwindled to a warm glow.

Draco stayed above him for another long moment before he slipped free of Harry and tumbled to the bed beside him. He dragged him into a sloppy embrace and kissed his mouth. "Oh Potter! You were bloody brilliant! So tight and hot. I knew you would be. I just knew it."

"I loved it," Harry said, somewhat surprised. "The way it felt when you filled me and then that prostate thing. That was amazing!"

"We'll have a little anatomy lesson later. Right now I'm knackered. Shall we sleep a little and start again? Or is your arse too sore?"

Harry moved to find a more comfortable spot. His arse was pretty sore but it didn't deter him from wanting to give it another go. "No. I'll be all right," he said and sighed. He snuggled into Draco's neck and kissed it. "We had sex," he said, proud of it suddenly.

Draco chuckled, quite the seductive sound with Harry's ear pressed against Draco's chest. "Yes. We sure did."

"We're not virgins anymore."

"Thank God."

"Yeah." Harry kissed him again and settled down for a nap. He wanted to shag all night and all morning before he had to leave Draco again. And they did their best to accomplish this.

Part Three—Hogwarts Again

Harry spent the rest of the summer at the Burrow and it would have been all very well if he wasn't constantly thinking of Draco. He brought the letters with him and kept them carefully spelled to be undetectable as to what they really were, but he had no private time to read them or use them for wanking. He bunked with Ron and the twins, and there simply wasn't any opportunity.

They were all by the Weasley's small lake and Harry was sitting on a wooden swing, idly swaying back and forth and staring at the sparkle of sunlight on the water while the others were swimming and frolicking along the reeds at the banks. Hermione and Ron were strolling together and the twins were making mischief as usual. It was Ginny who approached him and sat on a bench under the same tree as the swing. He didn't notice here until she spoke.

"You're very quiet this time, Harry. Who is it?"

He stopped swinging and looked at her. "What do you mean?"

"Come on, Harry." Ginny edged closer. She glanced back at Hermione and Ron who were too far away to hear them and at the twins too much involved with tormenting gnomes to pay attention. Quietly she said, "I can tell. So who is he?"

"Well..." His head snapped up and stared at her. Did she say 'who is *he*?' "*What?*" he hissed.

She glanced around again before facing him. "No one knows. I figured it out last year. Ron would never in a million years suspect and Hermione is too wrapped up in Ron right now."

His face felt hot. "But Ginny..." This was a disaster. Did she really know?

"It's all right. I noticed because...well. Because I've always had a crush on you, so I've always kept close tabs. You know." She blushed and shrugged. "But last year with Cho, I just put a lot of things together. It doesn't bother me. At least I know no other girl will get you."

Harry slid from the swing and knelt next her. His heart was pounding loudly. "Ginny. Please. You can't tell anyone."

"I know. But if you ever need a friend, I'm here. Okay, Harry?"

Slowly, his fear receded and a smile lit on his face. "Thanks, Ginny."

"But you have to tell me who it is?"

He frowned. "I don't think that's a good idea."

"Come on, Harry. You know I'd never tell."

Boy, did he want to tell her. Tell someone! "Ginny, I mean it. If I tell you, you can't tell a living soul. Or even a dead one. It's really important. Lives depend on it."

“You’re kidding.”

“No, I’m not.”

“Merlin, Harry. It’s not a Death Eater, is it?”

Harry said nothing, trying to decide what to say when Ginny’s face changed in the ensuing silence. “No way, Harry. It can’t be.”

“And he’s not a Death Eater.”

“Not Malfoy!”

“What’s not Malfoy?”

Harry snapped up his head and stared into Ron’s lazy eyes. He and Hermione had returned from their sojourn around the little lake.

“We were just hoping he wouldn’t be a Prefect again,” said Ginny quickly. Harry’s face had flushed with heat.

Ron sat and secured the hook on his fishing pole before setting it aside. “Why Dumbledore chose him I’ll never know.”

Harry flicked his gaze at Ginny and gave her a grateful look. She smiled back. At least Harry had *someone* to confide in.

* * *

The Hogwarts Express jostled them as he, Hermione, Ron, and Ginny settled into their compartment. Another term beginning, Harry thought. He felt a surge of excitement just below his skin. He’d have the whole year to be with Draco. But it wasn’t going to be easy. He shot a glance at Ginny. He had been glad she knew but there was always that kernel of doubt that it had been a mistake to tell her.

Hermione, Ron, and Ginny were chatting animatedly about the new term, but Harry wasn’t listening. He looked out the window instead, thinking—naturally enough—about Draco, when the door slid open with a bang.

“Well, well. Look at all the little Gryffindors all in a row,” said the familiar lazy drawl of Draco Malfoy. Harry smiled at his reflection in the glass but suppressed it when he turned to face the Slytherin. Draco was leaning on the doorframe, his arms crossed over his chest. For once, Crabbe and Goyle weren’t with him.

“What do you want, Malfoy?” Harry said before the others could.

“Don’t get shirty with me, Potter.” He thumbed the badge on his robes. “I’m a Prefect, you know. I’ll have you writing lines.”

“But who will you get to read them, since *you* can’t?”

“That’s it, Potter! On your feet.”

“What? I will not!”

“I want to have a little chat with you.”

Hermione bounced to her feet. “He’s not going anywhere with you! I’m a Prefect too, you know.”

Harry tried not to seem too anxious. He calmly turned to Hermione. “It’s all right, Hermione. I’ll go along with the git and see what he wants.”

“Harry! Don’t!”

“Worried about little Potty, Mudblood? I’m sure he’ll be fine. You’ve got your wand, haven’t you, Potter? Remember how to use it?”

“Oh, I remember,” he said, eyes locked on Draco’s. It was the only way he could keep from laughing. Draco played it with a straight face. He was Slytherin through and through.

Draco rolled out of the doorframe and strode purposefully toward the end of the carriage. Harry followed, giving a reassuring smile to Hermione and Ron as he left the compartment. He dared not look at Ginny’s smug expression. Draco looked both ways down the corridor before he ducked into the loo. Harry did the same and locked the door behind him.

And then Draco’s lips covered his. He lapped hungrily at Harry’s mouth and Harry opened wide to take in Draco’s tongue. He gripped his robes as if his life depended on it and held the Slytherin as tightly as he could. Draco’s hand dropped to Harry’s crotch and gave his hardening cock a squeeze. “I think you remember well how to use your wand, eh Harry?” He giggled into Harry’s cheek.

Harry smiled, nuzzling the white throat. “So do you.”

“Brave enough to give it a go in here?”

“Give it a—what? You mean shag in the loo?”

Draco smiled. He was already undoing his fly. “Yeah. One for the road.”

Harry looked around in shock. But he wasn’t about to be undone by a Slytherin. “I’m a Gryffindor, dammit. ‘Course I’m brave enough.” He grabbed his own trousers and flipped open the button, lowered the zip, and pushed down trousers and drawers. He turned around to face the sink, though there was precious little room to do that with the two of them crammed in the tight space.

Harry tried to bend over to give Draco the advantage, but he couldn’t. As it was, Draco compensated. He bent his knees and shoved up from below. Harry grunted as his head hit the mirror with Draco’s first thrust. “Sorry,” gasped Draco, but continued pumping into him. Harry

pushed back against him as much as he could, savouring the feeling. They had shagged over and over that one night together in all sorts of positions and he felt fairly experienced now, but he couldn't believe how much he had forgotten how good this felt. "Oh Draco," he moaned.

"Keep it down, Potter. I forgot to use a silencing charm."

Harry was about to close his eyes when he spied himself and Draco in the mirror. Draco noticed it, too. "We look spectacular," said Harry. Draco's hands grasped both Harry's naked hips and his white skin was visible just above the swell of Harry's arse and below his bunched up shirt. His face was red from pumping into Harry, and so was Harry's. His glasses were slightly askew.

"I think next time," said Draco between thrusts, "we'll need a bigger mirror."

"Too right," said Harry, suddenly closing his eyes from the intense sensations fluttering up inside of him. He felt his orgasm rise and he hadn't even touched his cock. It seemed Draco managed to do it to him regardless of his touching Harry or not. Harry pushed harder back at Draco and he could tell that the Slytherin was close, too.

Draco's fingers suddenly clawed into him and he came with a silent hiss, his hips doing the shouting for him. Harry unleashed himself into the pleasure and shot his stream onto the floor. Draco continued some dry thrusts until he finally stilled and leaned on Harry's back.

"God, Draco, I love this!"

"So do I," he gasped in Harry's ear. He pushed himself up and released from Harry. He examined Harry's exposed backside and ran a hand down the rounded flesh. "I always thought of you as an arse, Potter, but I never knew I'd enjoy yours so much."

"Thanks. I think." He rose with a wince. He certainly enjoyed Draco shagging him but it was not without a price. He was sore again, and sticky. "Got your wand handy? How about a *Scourgify*?"

"My wand's always handy for you, Harry." His reflection smiled at Harry as he raised his wand. Harry felt the stickiness vanish but the burning soreness remained. He liked that. It was a satisfying reminder of what they had done.

"I guess we'd better get back. Don't want Granger to come looking for you for a rescue."

Harry pulled up his pants and trousers. "I know you're playing a scene, but would you mind not calling her a Mudblood anymore?"

"Just because I'm carrying on with you doesn't mean I have to be nice to them. I mean, are you going to start chumming around with Crabbe and Goyle?"

"No. But you could do it for me, couldn't you?"

Draco rolled his eyes and checked his tie once more in the mirror. His gaze flicked toward Harry's reflection. He sighed melodramatically. "Since you put it *that* way," he said sulkily. "That's a woman's trick, you know."

“Is not.”

“Is too.” But before Harry could object again, Draco grabbed him and planted a solid kiss to his lips. Harry sighed and leaned into Draco, relishing the contact. Draco pulled back slightly and stroked his cheek.

“When can we get together again?”

“Tomorrow night.” Harry had been thinking about this all summer at the Burrow. He had it all planned out. “Meet me near the Whomping Willow at sunset.”

“The Whomping Willow? Why?”

“You’ll see. Just meet me there. You won’t be sorry.” And he kissed him softly, trailing his lips along Malfoy’s cheek.

Draco hugged him tighter. “I can’t believe how much I enjoy this. With you!”

“Likewise.” He smiled. He couldn’t believe how attractive he found Draco. But when he wasn’t being a mean git he was really sexy and really cute. “We’ve got to go.”

“Okay,” Malfoy said dejectedly. He gave Harry one more grope on his bum. “Hope you enjoy the rest of the train ride,” and he smiled wickedly.

Harry smiled back sheepishly. “It will be on my mind, I assure you.”

Draco gave him one last glance before opening the door a tiny bit, spying on the corridor. He opened it and slipped out. Harry waited a few moments to do the same and returned—walking a little funny—back to his compartment.

When he slid open the door, Hermione and Ron met him there. “Harry! You were gone so long! We were just about to go after you.”

“I’m all right.”

“What did Malfoy do?” asked Ron angrily.

Harry sidled past them and gingerly sat by the window again. What did Malfoy do? What *didn’t* he do? Harry shrugged. “Nothing. Made a lot of noise and threats with nothing behind it. The usual.”

“You’ve got to watch out for Malfoy, Harry,” said Hermione in her sincerest tone. “I think he may prove very dangerous this year with his father in Azkaban.”

“I’m not going to worry too much over Draco Malfoy any more than I ever have,” said Harry.

“I think Hermione’s right, mate,” said Ron. “He may get a little desperate this year.”

But I know what he's desperate for, thought Harry, furiously suppressing a smile. He tried not to look at Ginny who was doing her best not to look at Harry.

* * *

Harry settled into his dorm, readied for bed, and slipped between the bed curtains, when he spied the folded parchment lying on his pillow. Curious, he snatched it up and opened it.

Dear Harry,

Guess who? I couldn't go to sleep tonight without sending you this note. You are so bloody brilliant, so sexy, so amazing! Who would have thought it? Us. I wanted to wish you sweet dreams and to say that I can't wait till tomorrow night. What secrets will you open for me, I wonder?

So, so yours,

D

P.S. Before you go all mental, I charmed this parchment to only be opened by you. You git.

Harry smiled warmly, folded it again, and slipped it under his pillow.

* * *

Draco was already waiting in the shadows by the Whomping Willow when Harry approached. Harry greeted him with a smile. But Draco wasn't smiling. "I almost got myself whomped already, Potter. This better be good."

"Trust me." Harry moved past him into the foliage and rummaged around, looking for a nice long stick. "Ah!" He found a good-sized limb and hoisted it toward the willow which was whirling its branches at Harry's approach.

"Potter! What are you doing!" cried Draco.

Harry ignored him and pushed the limb forward until the tip touched the large knot. At once, the tree froze and its branches sagged. Harry tossed the limb back toward the brush. "Hurry up, Malfoy." He didn't hesitate moving forward and ducking into the hollow at the base of the tree. When he got inside he looked back, but Draco hadn't followed. "Draco!" he hissed. "Get in here!"

He heard the Slytherin grumble and finally saw his shadow approach. He ducked under and when he looked up his face was bright with surprise. Harry led him up the steps and finally into a dusty room, a lounge.

"What's this? Potter, where are we?"

“This way, Malfoy.” Harry further led him up a rickety stairwell and into another room. But this room wasn’t dusty. There was a nice little fourposter with a settee, a squishy chair, a small table, lit candles, and a cozy fire in the hearth.

Draco was still puzzled as he looked around. “Are we still in Hogwarts?”

“No.” Harry came up to him and wrapped his arms around his waist. “We’re in the Shrieking Shack.”

Fear washed over Draco’s face and he tried to wriggle free. “What! Are you mad? This is the most haunted building in Britain!”

Harry clenched him tighter. “No it isn’t. It isn’t haunted at all. I told you to trust me.”

He searched desperately across Harry’s face, no doubt looking for signs of insanity. “What do you mean it isn’t haunted? What are you playing at?”

“It isn’t haunted. It was put here to *look* like a haunted house to keep people away. But...I can’t really tell you why. You’ll just have to trust me.”

Draco calmed a bit in Harry’s arms, especially when Harry began to nuzzle his cheek and moved on to his ear. The blond offered in a somewhat distracted voice, “I don’t know if I can trust you. You’re always getting into trouble.”

“Oh, and who caused me to get into trouble most of the time? Could it be you, perhaps?”

“Maybe.” He turned his head and pressed his mouth to Harry’s in a soft kiss. He rubbed Harry’s back gently, absently. “Did you fix it up?”

“Yep. Just waiting for you.”

“Our little love nest, eh?” And Draco was himself again, one brow raised seductively.

Harry smiled, but it faded as Draco began unbuttoning Harry’s shirt and pulled off the tie. Harry let him take his shirt off entirely before he unbuttoned Draco’s shirt. “Wait, Draco,” he said, holding the boy’s hands as he went for Harry’s trousers. “I want to take off *your* trousers first.”

“Oh? Whatever do you have in mind, Mr. Potter?”

Harry tangled his fingers at Draco’s belt and fly. “I have in mind to suck your cock, Mr. Malfoy.”

Draco’s eyes widened. “Oh. Carry on, then.”

Harry pulled Draco’s trousers and shorts down. Draco pushed his feet out of them and Harry helped, and then he stepped back and just looked at his blond lover. His shirt was open and hung loosely around his naked hips. Harry licked his lips. “I didn’t get to do this before the last time we were together, so I might be a bit sloppy.”

“I’m sure it will be fine.”

Harry kept his eyes on Draco's and slowly sunk to his knees. Draco's cock bobbed in front of his face. He could feel the heat from it, feel it close to his lips. Draco was breathing raggedly and froze just as Harry's mouth closed over the head of his prick. Hands grabbed Harry's hair; fingers clutched. Harry sucked Draco deep into his mouth, trying to get in as much as he could down his throat. While Draco held his head firmly in place, Harry's hands slid up his lover's thighs and circled around to his arse. Each hand had a round cheek to clasp. Draco bucked and began shagging Harry's mouth and Harry kept thinking how bloody amazing this whole thing was. How good Draco tasted. How wonderful it made him feel to do this to Draco, to make Draco putty in his hands...or mouth.

Harry dropped one hand to his own cock and fisted his way to a quick orgasm. He wanted nothing to distract him from Draco's orgasm. And when Draco did finally come, that, too, was wonderful, because Draco surrendered so completely to Harry. He came so unabashedly and passionately that Harry felt as if he were the most important person in the world. He could forget Voldemort, forget school, forget Lucius Malfoy. Draco was everything. Draco was his breath and pulse.

I'm so in love with you, he thought helplessly, resting his face against Draco's thigh. But no way could he ever say that out loud.

* * *

They frequented the Shrieking Shack as often as they dared, still trying to fit in homework assignments and Quidditch. It was painful to see couples pairing off and free to hold hands as they walked together to Hogsmeade or around the lake. These others would sit together in study hall and kiss in secluded corners. But there was none of that for Harry. And he so wanted to do the same with Draco. It was very hard seeing him in class and having to insult him instead of snog him like he wanted to do.

Draco never said anything about how he might feel about Harry just as Harry never voiced his love, but Harry got the impression Draco felt pretty strongly for Harry. When their trysts in the Shrieking Shack were over in an exhausted collapse of sweat and panting, they would lie together for an hour or so, stroking the other, touching, kissing, and speaking in soft whispers. But it was silly things, even about Quidditch and school, but not quite about their feelings, because Harry somehow felt that this would almost be more dangerous than their meetings. Admitting to certain things would create too much of a longing, too much disappointment when the real world would finally intrude, and they knew it was certain to do so. He was Draco Malfoy, after all, and Harry had no delusions that Voldemort did not want to recruit him. Draco had said he would not consciously hurt Harry, but Voldemort's influence was strong as was the influence of Lucius Malfoy, even in prison as he was. What sort of future did either of them have together? Even if Harry could dispatch Voldemort, was the world ready for a Potter/Malfoy match?

The constant strain of having to keep it all a secret, of having to lie to his best friends, was wearing at Harry's nerves. He was often short with them when all he wanted to do was confide. He apologized a lot and then felt guilty for having to apologize in the first place.

And so it went almost all the way through the school year. He and Draco were already making plans for owling one another with maybe a few visits to the Leaky Cauldron, when it happened.

Harry was studying in the Gryffindor common room, or pretending to. Mostly he was looking into the leaping flames in the hearth and thinking of Draco. He wondered if Draco was equally distracted all day thinking of Harry and then he threw that thought away. Of course he didn't. The Slytherin always seemed in more control than that. He might be a coward and a sneak, but he could get his priorities straight. He sought the pleasure Harry offered him, enjoyed his company or seemed to do so, and then left it behind just as Harry should be doing but couldn't somehow manage to do, what with being in love with him and all. He sighed.

Ginny burst through the portrait hole with a wild look on her face. "Harry!" she exclaimed.

Harry slowly rose. She and Ginny were the only occupants of the common room but that would soon change with the ending of the last class of the day. "What's wrong, Ginny?"

"Oh, Harry. I'm so sorry."

His insides began to roil. "What do you mean?"

"I didn't mean to do it. Oh Harry." She sat on the sofa and twisted her hands together. Tears glistened on her lashes. "I was in Potions and Snape was teaching us about truth serums."

"He didn't have you brew any, did he?"

"No, no. He said he wasn't allowed to show us, but he had some and took volunteers to try some Veritaserum. I wasn't thinking, Harry, and I...I volunteered."

Harry didn't like at all how this was going. His heart began to pound. "Ginny, what did you do?"

"I was doing fine—I forgot I had this secret—and then they asked me who I fancied and—it slipped out. About you...and Draco."

Harry stared at her unable to speak. "The...the whole class heard?"

She nodded miserably. "Snape tried to stop it as soon as he reckoned what was going on but it was too late. Oh Harry! What are we going to do?"

The only thing that clicked in his mind was Draco. "We've got to warn Draco."

Harry moved toward the door but Ginny jumped up and grabbed his arm. "You can't go looking for him. That will make things worse. I'll go." She gave Harry one more apologetic look before she sprinted for the portrait hole.

Harry watched her leave, unable to move. All his fears were suddenly caving in on him. What in blazes were they going to do?

The portrait hole opened again and students began coming through. They looked up at Harry and he could tell. They knew. They all knew and none of them were the least bit happy about it.

They clustered in little groups and whispered, looking back at Harry. This was much worse than the other times last year when they thought he lied about Voldemort returning. This was much worse than when they shunned him when they thought he'd opened the Chamber of Secrets. This was Draco's life in danger this time and there was nothing amusing about it at all.

The portrait hole burst open again but this time it was Ron, Hermione, and Neville. They looked stricken and Harry felt the blood drain from his face. "We need to talk," said Hermione, and grabbed Harry's arm and dragged him to the boy's dorm. When they closed the door she aimed her wand at it and said, "*Colloportus!*" They sat Harry down on his bed and gathered around it.

"Harry," Hermione began. "Did you hear what happened in Potions?"

Harry nodded.

"I don't understand it at all," she said, looking from Ron's white face to Neville's. "But of course it will be denied. What in the world made Ginny believe that I'll never know?"

"I'll kill her," said Ron. "She's had a crush on you forever, mate. I can't believe she'd do something like this out of some mixed-up jealousy."

"It's not her fault," Harry heard himself say.

"It bloody well is!" he shot back. "Why would she do this?"

The last thing Harry wanted to do right now was out himself but he couldn't let his friends think that Ginny was out for some sort of vendetta. "Er...it isn't her fault. It was an accident. She told me so. It just...came out."

"But how could it?" asked Neville, looking whey-faced. "She was supposed to be under veritaserum."

"That's right," said Hermione, thinking. "I wonder how she was able to overcome it's effects."

"She didn't," Harry said wearily.

"What do you mean she didn't?" said Ron. "She'd have to have in order to say those things."

"Not...not if it's the truth," said Harry meekly.

The others fell silent. He didn't want to look up at them, but he forced himself to. Their mouths all hung open, and Ron had gotten even paler.

"No," said Ron in a hoarse voice. "You couldn't be. I mean, I'd a known it, wouldn't I. Right, Neville? We both would."

Neville looked at Ron and then slowly turned toward Harry. "A-actually," replied Neville, "I always sort of suspected."

“What? Have you all gone mental!” Ron’s face wasn’t pale anymore. It had flushed an uncomfortable shade of red. “Harry’s not a poufter! It’s just some sort of game, right Harry?”

Harry bit his lip and gazed up at Hermione, whose face he had a hard time reading. “Well...actually. Um...I guess I am. I prefer ‘gay’, though.”

That silenced Ron, but Hermione, quiet until this moment, drew herself up. “It doesn’t matter what Harry is. We still love and respect him, don’t we? I just wished you would have told us sooner. But I’m glad you admitted it now.”

“I’m sorry,” he said, not looking at Ron. “I just couldn’t seem to tell you. I thought that maybe *you’d* be all right with it, but I didn’t know about—” He flicked his gaze toward Ron.

Neville placed a hand on his shoulder. “Like I said, Harry. I sort of guessed before. But I’m sure anyone who’s a real friend won’t have a problem with it,” and they all looked at Ron meaningfully.

“Why are you all looking at me?” But he was studiously avoiding Harry’s gaze. “I guess it’s not the sort of thing a bloke can easily tell another bloke, even if that bloke is his best friend.” And he looked a little hurt. Harry rose.

“I would have told you, but I was afraid how you’d react. But I guess it’s okay.” He felt a little relief, but not much.

“But hang on!” said Ron. “Ginny talked about you and...Malfoy? That *can’t* be true!”

“Yes, Harry,” said Hermione moving forward. “That’s the really strange part.”

He shrugged. “Veritaserum, remember?”

Hermione gasped and covered her mouth. “Then it *is* true!”

“Oh, I can take you’re being a pouft—er...gay, but with *Malfoy*! Harry! Are you mad?”

“No, we just...It’s hard to explain. We both joined that quill pal thing and got to know each other anonymously before we accidentally found out who we were. But we’d already developed this relationship and we...well, didn’t want it to stop.”

“Harry,” said Hermione, voice soft, “You aren’t having a...a physical relationship with him, are you?”

Harry clenched his fists. “So what if I were? We’re of age. It’s consensual. He’s really nice when we’re alone. We just pretend all that bad stuff in public. You might have noticed that he doesn’t call you names anymore, Hermione, or make fun of your family, Ron. He did that to please *me*. So I guess you’ll just have to get over it.”

“Take it easy, Harry,” said Hermione. “This has all been a bit of a shock.”

“I know. But it’s worse than that. Draco could really be in trouble. This is sure to get to Voldemort and Draco might be in real danger now.”

Hermione looked from one to the other. “Where is Draco now?”

“I don’t know. But Ginny’s gone to warn him.”

They looked silently at one another. Harry couldn’t even imagine what was going through their heads.

Hermione spoke first. “I suppose he’ll deny it.”

Harry nodded. “Probably. It’s the safest route.”

“And so you will, too.”

“Except now all anyone has to do is a little Legilimency or pop us all some veritaserum and it’s all out.”

“Then what should we do?” asked Neville.

Harry sat again and pulled his hand through his already messy hair. “Haven’t got a clue.”

Someone knocked furiously on the door. Everyone froze.

“It’s me! Ginny!”

“*Alohomora!*” said Hermione, waving her wand.

Ginny tumbled in a looked around before finally looking at Harry inquiringly.

“Yeah,” he said wearily. “They all know now.”

“Why did you tell Ginny?” Ron accused.

“She sort of guessed it. Like Neville. And I really did need someone else to talk to about it. And I know she would never have told.”

“I never *would* have, Harry. I swear.”

“Did you find Draco?”

“Yes. He was quite shocked. Slytherin hadn’t heard yet but it hasn’t taken long. Harry, I think it’s all over the school by now.”

“Of course it is. We were just trying to figure out what to do.”

“Well Malfoy is denying it. He was even denying it to me.”

“Typical,” he said, nodding.

“But maybe it’s better making a clean breast of it.”

“I can’t. I don’t care about myself. Draco’s the one in danger.”

“Oh yeah.”

It was decided that they would proceed as normal, admitting nothing unless confronted. Harry even thought of talking to Dumbledore but dismissed the idea as too embarrassing. They broke up, but before Harry could leave his dorm, Ginny pulled him aside. “Draco told me that you were to meet him tonight at ‘the place’. That’s what he said. You know what he means?”

“Yes, I know what he means.”

She looked at him sorrowfully again. “I’m really sorry, Harry.”

“That’s okay. I think it was bound to come out eventually.”

The one good thing was that it was the end of the day so there were no classes, but the rest of the Gryffindors made a study of avoiding Harry. Seamus and Dean wouldn’t even approach, though they whispered together until Ron purposely came up to them with a scowl on his face and they stopped. Harry pretended to read in his favorite chair by the fire, and Hermione, Ron, Neville, and Ginny positioned themselves all around him like a barrier. He appreciated it and wondered what he had been so worried about. It was sort of a relief finally telling the truth, though he wished it all wasn't so dire.

It was getting later and most of the Gryffindor’s were drifting to their dorms. Harry pulled his invisibility cloak from under his jumper and stood up.

“Where are you going?” asked Ron with a squeak to his voice.

“I’m going to meet Draco. We’ve got to talk.”

Ron approached, hands firmly stuffed in his trouser pockets. “So. You and Malfoy, eh? And he’s really nice to you?”

“Yeah. He’s...he’s my boyfriend, I guess.”

“Wow.” Ron toed the worn edge of the carpet. “I mean...*Malfoy!*”

“I wish you’d quit saying it like that.”

“Sorry, Harry. But you have to admit—”

“I think he’ll be a really good ally,” said Hermione practically. “He’s quite an accomplished wizard and he knows a lot about the opposition.”

“Yeah. Well his spying days are over. Not that he spied for us or anything. But he did say he would have warned me of anything.”

“That was nice of him.”

“Well. You know. We’re together. What else was he to do? Let Voldemort kill me?”

“He could have. He could easily have just gotten from you...well...what he wanted and cut you loose.”

“Yeah, I have thought of that. You don’t know him, though. He’d never do that. Though, I suspect he’ll be doing something of the kind tonight.”

She clutched his arm. “You don’t think he’d break up with you over something like this?”

“He might,” said Harry miserably.

“But he can’t! You tell him, Harry. It would be far too dangerous. He’s much better off with you.”

“I’ll try to convince him of that in any case,” he said softly.

* * *

When Harry arrived at the Whomping Willow, it was already immobile so he knew Draco must be waiting for him in the Shrieking Shack.

Harry emerged into their room and whisked off the cloak. Draco was there, sitting in front of the fire. He didn’t turn around. The first words out of his mouth were, “You told Ginny Weasley.”

Harry set his cloak aside and slowly approached the sofa. “Yes. Actually, she guessed about me.”

“You promised you wouldn’t tell anybody.”

“I know. But she guessed. Well, truthfully, she only guessed about me, not about us.”

“*Truthfully?*” he threw back at him.

“I *did* tell you the truth. I know I promised— Is this really the point anymore? The real problem is what are we to do about it?”

Draco finally turned and Harry was hit with the full force of his sneer. “What are we going to do about it? I think that’s plain. We won’t be seeing each other any more. That’s the safest route.”

“Hermione thought you would say that.”

“Oh, so now they *all* know?”

“Draco, *everyone* knows.”

“Have you ever heard of a little thing called ‘denial’, Potter?”

“Is there really a point in that?”

“Yes, dammit!” He shot to his feet. “My effing life is on the line! When my father hears about this—”

“What can he do in Azkaban?”

“He has ways, Potter. And there is Crabbe and Goyle. Their fathers aren’t in Azkaban and you know who they follow, right?”

“D-do you think they’d hurt you?”

He squared off with Harry. “Haven’t you been listening to me? Danger, Potter. Me.”

“I know. And we’ll work this out together.”

“No. You’ve already proven you can’t be trusted.”

“Come on, Draco. Why are you being like this? We can work together.”

“I don’t want to work with you. I thought you cared about me. I thought you cared what happens to me.”

“I do!” He grabbed his arms and forced him to face him. “Draco. Please! Let’s just sit as calmly as we can and work something out, okay?”

Draco scowled and stared at Harry’s feet before he brought up his eyes. The Slytherin stared at Harry’s face a long time before his expression softened. Almost self-consciously, he leaned forward and kissed Harry softly. “Okay,” he whispered.

Harry dragged him down to the sofa and they sat, holding each other’s hand. “First,” said Harry, “how bad is it?”

“I don’t know yet. By the time Ginny got the message to me, it had started in Slytherin.”

“I’m sure the whole school knows at this point.”

“Okay. That’s granted. What of the teachers?”

Harry sighed. “She said Snape tried to stop it when she started talking, so I’m sure the whole staff knows, too.”

“I have a feeling we shouldn’t be here very long as our heads will probably want a little ‘talk’ with us.”

“No doubt.”

“Well, this is a right proper mess thanks to your girlfriend.”

Harry laughed and Draco stared at him. “Yeah, that’s the funny part. Had I had her as my girlfriend, none of this would have happened.”

“Going straight on me now, are you?”

“Not a chance.” He squeezed Draco’s hand.

Draco stared at Harry’s tanned hand in his white one. “You...aren’t regretting this, are you?”

“Are you kidding? I’ve never been happier in my life!” Harry suddenly reddened at that admission, especially when Draco looked up at him incredulously.

“Are you serious?”

Harry nodded.

“Well...I suppose you make *me* happy, too.”

Smiling, Harry said, “I do?”

“Yes.” He kissed Harry’s mouth and stroked his cheek. “I know we have to get back, but do you think we have time—”

“Draco!”

“Why waste this opportunity? We may not get another.”

“True.” And as Harry said it, Draco was already unbuttoning his shirt.

* * *

Later than he planned, Harry returned to Gryffindor tower. But Professor McGonagall was already waiting for him and looked as if she’d been there a long time. He whipped off his cloak and stood before her.

“Looking for me, Professor?”

“Out of your dorm after curfew, Potter. Ten points from Gryffindor.” Then she stood and laid a hand on his shoulder. “Are you doing all right, Potter?”

He shrugged. He didn’t quite know what to say. It was strange talking to his head of house after he had just been shagged. His arse itched, in fact, but he bravely endured it.

“I think we need to have a little chat. Come with me.”

Harry sighed and followed her out to her study and sat in the chair before her desk as she instructed. She folded her hands and merely looked at him until he squirmed with discomfort.

“Now Potter. Of course you’ve heard the rumours—”

“They aren’t rumours.” He had decided at once to tell the truth. It was the only way to keep Draco safe. “It’s true. I *am* gay and I *am* with Draco Malfoy.” *Glad that was over.*

McGonagall’s face whitened. “I see,” she said after a pause. “I take it you have just returned from being with him?”

“Yes. We needed to...talk.”

“Understandable. Well then. I trust you understand a few points.” And she proceeded—through a high blush in her cheeks—to explain to him about the birds and the bees, about sexually transmitted diseases, about possible medical repercussions of anal sex—until Harry was as red as his Gryffindor scarf. Never in a million years did he dream of having this kind of discussion with any teacher let alone the prim Professor McGonagall. Harry slumped further and further into his seat, just wishing she’d be done soon. When at last she was, she asked, “Do you have any questions?”

“No!” And he hid his eyes under his hand.

“Good.” She seemed as relieved by that as he did. “I think, Potter, you may experience some ramifications amongst the students.”

“No kidding.”

“I just hope you are prepared. Since this is an unusual case, I can, if necessary, excuse you from classes.”

“What? No! I won’t need to—”

“Tomorrow, Potter, you may be singing a different tune. It’s going to be difficult.”

“I know. But Ron and Hermione are on my side. As well as Ginny and Neville. I won’t feel alone.”

“That’s excellent. That makes me very proud to call myself a Gryffindor. In fact, twenty points to Gryffindor for courage.”

She looked at Harry and Harry looked at her.

“I...would have hoped you might have chosen someone more suitable.”

“You can’t help who you like,” said Harry defensively.

“No, indeed. And what’s done is done.”

Again, there was silence.

“May I go now?”

“Unless you have anything else you wish to tell me.”

“No. I think I’d just like to get to bed.”

“Very well, then, Potter. Off with you.”

“Good night, Professor.” And when he reached the door, he thought it prudent to add,
“And...ah...thank you.”

* * *

But the next morning, he could see how right McGonagall was. Scarcely any of the Gryffindors would talk to him and those in the other houses whispered in hissing noises as he passed. He also noticed Draco at the Slytherin table, and there was space on either side of him.

Harry didn’t much feel like eating breakfast, and when the owls started arriving, Harry heard giggling behind him. He twisted around to look, and caught Draco dashing from the hall with a smoldering red envelope in his hand. A Howler. Probably from his mother. He could just imagine what it said: “*HOW COULD YOU ASSOCIATE WITH A HALF-BLOOD LIKE THAT! IT DISGUSTS ME, AND WITH HARRY POTTER, THE BOY RESPONSIBLE FOR PUTTING YOUR FATHER IN PRISON? NOT ONLY IS THAT UNGRATEFUL, IT IS VERY UNMALFOY!*”

As it was, he heard the vague screaming down the corridor. He was glad Draco made it outside. No one could actually hear the words.

But it was much later when things got more dire. In Potions, the other Slytherins tried to sabotage Draco’s potion, and not just for him to lose points, but in dangerous ways that could have done him real harm had Snape not caught it in time. But Snape didn’t say anything to the Slytherins and instead told Draco to stay after.

Harry tried to concentrate on his potion, but even in the best of times he couldn’t do well. Yet even so, his potion didn’t turn out half-bad, so it didn’t really seem like a decent excuse to hold him after either, until it occurred to Harry that maybe Snape wanted to talk to the two of them.

As everyone filed out of class, Snape motioned for Harry and Draco to enter his study. He pointed to two chairs and they both sat, scarcely looking at one another.

Snape paced before the fire, his hands stiff behind his back. Finally he stopped, glared down at them, and sighed heavily. “Well, well, well,” he said, voice dark as smoke. “Mr. Potter and Mr. Malfoy. Two young men who don’t have enough on their plates and thought to add a pinch more controversy.”

“It’s not as if we planned it, sir,” said Draco. Harry was unaccountably relieved that he didn’t deny it.

“No, Mr. Malfoy. It seems you plan very little. You seldom consider the consequences of your actions. So in this case, it would seem you are a perfect match for Mr. Potter.”

Draco’s shoulders drooped.

“What do you two plan to do about it?”

“Do?” said Harry. Snape whipped his head toward him, his black hair flailing. It was as if he didn’t expect Harry to address him. “What *can* we do?”

“Have you considered denying it all?” was the cold rejoinder.

“It’s a bit too late for that.”

Snape sneered. “I see. All that Gryffindor courage bubbling to the surface. Made a speech to your whole house, did you Potter?”

“No... Sir. I’m just tired of lying.”

He turned to Draco. “Are *you* tired of lying, Mr. Malfoy?”

“No. Of course not. It’s just that Harry...well. It’s no good. They all believe it.” Petulantly, he added, “Perhaps not the wisest of choices to offer truth serum in class. Sir.”

“It is not for you to make judgments about my teaching methods, Mr. Malfoy.” But before he turned his back on them and concentrated on the fire, Harry was certain he saw two red spots flush Snape’s cheeks. “We’ve only got a week left of term. I don’t think it entirely safe for you any more, Mr. Malfoy. Even as head of your house I do not know that I can protect you from...outside forces. The both of you are to report to Headmaster Dumbledore’s office. Now.”

He and Harry hesitated before they rose. Had they been dismissed?

Snape twisted toward them. “Well? Do you need an engraved invitation?”

“No, sir!” they said in unison, and scrambled out of his office.

They walked briskly down the corridor. Harry felt it a good idea after what Snape said to keep his wand in his hand.

“Aren’t you being a bit paranoid, Potter?”

“You can’t be too careful. And you’re the one in danger for a change, Malfoy. I’d appreciate it if you’d take a precaution or two.”

“Gone woman on me, Potter?”

“And what’s with all the ‘Potters’? You call me ‘Harry’ enough when you want a shag.”

“This is hardly the same circumstances.”

“Yeah, but you’re supposed to be my boyfriend.”

“Where’d you get that impression?”

Harry grabbed his arm and stopped. “No you don’t! You are not pulling this on me. Did you or did you not declare your devotion to me?”

He shook Harry’s hand free of him. “Don’t get all squishy on me. I didn’t say I was in love with you or anything.”

Harry’s spirits fell. “I know,” he said sulkily.

“Oh no. Do you mean to tell me *you’re* in love with *me*?”

“I didn’t say that.”

Draco rolled his eyes. “Get a grip, Potter. *Harry*. We don’t have time for this. Let’s just get to Dumbledore’s office and see what crackpot scheme he’s got planned this time.”

Harry fell silent. He didn’t much feel like talking to Draco right now. He thought he could be positively hateful sometimes. And this was definitely one of those times.

They reached the gargoyle statue and Harry said, “Peppermint Toad!” The gargoyle slid aside revealing the griffin stair. They both took a step and allowed the stairwell to carry them to the top. It was Harry who knocked on the door, and they heard the voice of Dumbledore bid them enter.

They walked across the strange tower room with his high book shelves and odd knick-knacks. Dumbledore was looking out his window and finally turned when the two were at his desk. “Do sit down, gentlemen,” he said, and two squishy armchairs appeared. Draco and Harry looked once at one another before easing into the chairs. Dumbledore slowly approached with a thoughtful air. He did not sit at his desk as Harry thought he might but walked around it to their side of it and leaned on the edge. He smiled congenially at each in turn. “Harry. Draco. You certainly got into it this time, didn’t you?”

It seemed unnecessary to reply. The both of them reddened.

“I just had a most interesting discussion with your mother, Draco.”

Draco snapped his head up. “Yeah? Well, I got an interesting letter from her, too.”

Dumbledore chuckled. “No doubt. But that was in the heat of the moment; a mother lashing out at the impossibility of protecting her son, a son who is growing to manhood. No, the discussion I had with her was of a far different nature than your Howler.” He turned to Harry and suddenly asked, “Harry, you of course understand why you must return to the Dursley’s every summer?”

He looked at Draco and licked his suddenly dry lips. “Yes. You explained it to me.”

“Why don’t you explain it to Draco.”

“Um...all right.” He looked at Draco who seemed curious about this little secret. “Well...when Voldemort killed my mother, he didn’t realize that it created this special protection for me. My mother’s love, because she was willing to sacrifice herself for me, created a magical protection that lingers today. And because I live with my aunt—my mother’s sister—that protection stays as long as I can call that place home. Voldemort can’t touch me there. So it’s safe.” He turned back to Dumbledore and stared into his smiling blue eyes. “Is that right, sir?”

“Well said, Harry. Now. Your mother made it plain to me, Draco, that your life is in danger now that this interesting news is out. That Voldemort wished to use you against Harry, but now that he can’t he isn’t pleased. Harry, has your scar been hurting?”

“Yes, sir. Sort of a constant buzz. I just thought it was because he’s out and about doing mischief.”

“Mischief, yes.”

Draco stared at Harry. “Wait a moment. Your scar tells you how Voldemort is *feeling*?”

“Yeah. It always has done.”

“Why didn’t you tell me that?”

Harry looked sheepishly at the floor. “It was one of those secrets I couldn’t tell you.”

“Oh, but it was all right to tell Ginny Weasley that the two of us are shag buddies!”

“I told you—!”

“Gentlemen! Please. It is useless to assign blame. Please, let me explain what Narcissa Malfoy shared with me.”

Harry snorted. Draco was being a right git about it all. But Harry was curious as to what Narcissa had to say.

Dumbledore settled. He drew a bowl forward filled with multi-colored candies. “Confect-charms?”

Harry shook his head. His stomach was too busy roiling about for sweets. Draco also declined. Dumbledore looked as if he would take one, but he decided against it and set the bowl aside. “Well then. Narcissa told me more about the Death Eaters that...well. I don’t think I can share all of it with you, but essentially, she asked me to keep Draco safe and I have vowed to do that. You and Harry now share a special bond, do you not? It may even be akin to that which Harry shares with his family. It is therefore prudent to keep you away from Malfoy Manor for the summer—”

“What! I’m not going home?”

“Your mother insists it is not safe. She worries that you will be abducted and subjected to great horrors.”

Draco sat back. He looked sick. Harry longed to take him in his arms but he didn’t want to do that in front of the Headmaster.

Draco was silent for a moment. “So...so I have to stay at Hogwarts?”

“No. Actually, I had a better idea. I think this summer, you should go home with Harry.”

There was a deep silence following this pronouncement. Draco edged forward. “Sir? Did you say I’d be going home with...Harry?”

Harry couldn’t breathe, couldn’t swallow. Was his ardent fantasy coming true? This had to be a dream.

“Yes, Mr. Malfoy. I think it the safest place for you. Since you share this bond with Harry and Harry shares a similar bond with his family, the protection blankets you as well. I do not believe Voldemort will be able to touch you if you stay at the Dursleys. And, of course, we do have guards around the house at Privet Drive, as Harry will attest to.”

Harry sent a warm look at Draco. “He’ll be staying with me?”

“Yes, I know this is highly unusual, but the circumstances themselves are highly unusual. And so. What do you think, Draco?”

Draco was speechless. He kept looking at his lap. But before he could answer, Harry got a sinking feeling. “Professor, the Dursleys will never take in another wizard. They hate our kind.”

“Don’t worry about the Dursleys, Harry. I have already taken care of that.” Harry remembered the Howler Dumbledore had sent Aunt Petunia last year and wondered if he’d sent another. Or something worse.

Draco lifted his face. “I guess it’s all right. If my mother wants me to.”

“It’s for the best, Draco. Now. I think you should both get your things together. You will be leaving tomorrow morning.”

“Tomorrow?” said Harry. “What about our classes?”

“The assignments will be sent home with you. I think it best you go right away while the news is still fresh and before the Death Eaters can make a move.”

“Sir,” asked Harry tentatively. “Will...will you say anything to the school?”

Dumbledore leaned forward. “What is it you would have me say, Harry?”

“I don’t know. That it’s okay for two blokes to—” He sighed. “That even two people who appear to be opposites can—” He finally shrugged. “I don’t know, sir.”

The headmaster smiled. “Oh, I believe I can think of something to put everyone in their places. Now. It’s late. The two of you need to go off to your dorms, pack, and say good-bye to your friends. Be ready to go at eight o’clock sharp. We’ll be flooing to the Leaky Cauldron and from there obtain a taxicab to Little Whinging. The Durselys will be expecting you.”

“Are you going with us, sir?” asked Harry.

“Yes. I want to make certain you get to Privet Drive safely. But I won’t be staying. Good night, you two.”

They rose. Once they were back in the dim corridor they looked at one another. “This isn’t how I wanted it,” said Harry, unsure of his feelings. He was overjoyed Draco would be with him for the summer, but it didn’t look as if Draco was very pleased. After all, he was being exiled from his home. He must feel pretty bad about now. Harry leaned over and kissed his cheek, thinking that was probably all the blond would take from him at the moment. But Draco turned his face, and instead took Harry’s lips. He kissed him for a long interval before pulling back. His eyes searched Harry’s face.

“I’m scared.”

Harry nodded. “I know. So am I. It will be all right, though. Dumbledore’s handling it. You can trust him, Draco.” Harry thought Draco might shoot back “like I could trust you!” But he didn’t. He didn’t say anything. He merely turned away and headed down toward the dungeons.

* * *

Harry had said his good-byes last night, but he got hugs from Hermione and Ginny again in the morning. Ron and Neville shook his hand while Dean and Seamus stood off a little ways. Sullenly, they moved forward. “We’re sorry for acting like gits,” said Seamus. “This Malfoy business was a bit of a shock on two counts. You being a pouf and all and your being with Malfoy. Not a nice bit of news. But. We reckon you know what you’re doing. And love is love, isn’t it? Me mam is always saying rubbish like that.”

Harry shook his hand and then Dean’s. He felt better that his friends were all on his side. He took Hedwig’s cage with him to Dumbledore’s office where he met Draco with his owl Fergus in a cage. They said nothing as Dumbledore sidled into the cramped fireplace with them and yelled, “The Leaky Cauldron!” They spun and Harry closed his eyes as he always did when traveling by floo.

Hardly anyone was in the tavern that early in the morning. Tom the barkeep just nodded to Dumbledore and the two of them found their trunks waiting. They dragged them outside and soon a cab arrived. The trunks were stuffed into the boot and the three of them took what Harry felt was one of the more surreal excursions so far of his life as a wizard.

Finally Harry recognized the outskirts of Little Whinging and his heart began to flutter. How he hated the Dursleys, but it wouldn't be so bad this year with Draco. If only Draco would be sweet to him again as he had been all year.

The cab pulled up in front of the kerb and they disembarked, dragging their trunks to the front step. Dumbledore pressed the doorbell. He seemed anxious to do so, like a little kid. The door swung open and they were greeted by the red face of his uncle. His walrus mustache twitched. "Oh. It's you lot," he said rudely. "Get in, get in before the neighbors see you."

"Thank you, Mr. Dursley," said Dumbledore with the utmost politeness, lifting the hem of his robe as he entered over the threshold. Aunt Petunia was there in the lounge as was Dudley, looking as fat as always and a little frightened.

"Well now. Introductions are in order. This is Vernon Dursley, his delightful wife Petunia, and their son Dudley. This is Draco Malfoy."

"*Draco Malfoy?*" said Uncle Vernon, appalled. "What sort of mad name is that?"

Draco scowled. There was one thing people learned quickly not to do, and that was insult Draco's name. "It's a very old family name," he snapped. "Better than some ponce name like Vernon!" He whipped his head toward Harry's cousin. "Or Dudley."

"Now, gentlemen. May I remind you, Draco, that you are a guest in this house."

"That's right!" said Uncle Vernon, his nose in the air.

"And may I remind you, sir," said Dumbledore to him, "that since he is a guest in your house he must be given the utmost courtesy. I will check in from time to time to make certain this is so."

Uncle Vernon paled. Everyone was afraid of Dumbledore. Harry was glad the old wizard was on his side.

"Well, I think it time I take my leave. Harry, Draco. Be good. The summer will be over before you know it. Get some studying done and you will be ready for your last year at Hogwarts. I will see you both soon." He nodded to the Dursleys, strode toward the door, and closed it behind him.

Harry and Draco were now alone with Harry's family and they all looked each other up and down. "Your *headmaster*," and Uncle Vernon said this title rather dubiously, "didn't tell us any details. Just that we had to take in another effing wizard. So I don't want any trouble from you two. And just because that Dumbledore forced you down our throats," he said, pointing a stubby finger at Draco, "doesn't mean you get special privileges. There's no room for you here so you will just have to sleep in Potter's room."

To Draco's credit, his face did not alter one iota. "Fine!" he said, sensing the lay of the land. "If that's the way you treat guests! Where the hell is it?"

"I'll beg you to keep your damned language to a civilized tone. There is a lady present."

Draco slid his heavy-lidded gaze toward Dudley. “Oh. Sorry.”

Dudley fumed.

“Come on, Malfoy. I’ll show you where I sleep.” They both dragged their trunks up the stairs. Draco made certain to hit every baluster as he went. Dudley huffed up the stairs after them and stood at Harry’s doorway.

“This one looks as scrawny as you, Potter. I can’t wait to make his life just as miserable as I make yours.”

Draco turned to Dudley and leaned in making Dudley draw back. “I’ve heard of you, Dursley. And unlike Harry here, I’m not afraid to use magic on you. So just stay out of our way.” And he brandished his wand to make the point.

Dudley’s face whitened and he began to run down the corridor before he seemed to think better of turning his back on a wizard. He crept backwards, keeping his hands on his bum.

Draco rolled his eyes and pulled his trunk and owl the rest of the way into Harry’s cramped room.

Harry stood in the centre as Draco closed the door. “This is it, I’m afraid. The bathroom’s down the hall. Nothing like Malfoy Manor, probably.”

But Draco was looking at Harry, not the room. And Harry’s throat suddenly went dry. Slowly, Draco crossed the space and slid his arms around Harry’s waist pulling Harry’s pelvis against his own. Draco had an erection. “So I’m stuck in this tiny little room with you all summer?”

Harry’s face was close to Draco’s and he lost his breath. “Yeah. And they won’t be bothering us because they hate us.”

Draco looked at the small bed. “That’s a tiny bed, Potter.”

“There’s always the floor.”

Draco smiled at Harry and leaned in for a kiss, when Harry pushed him back. “Yeah. Well. You haven’t treated me very well about all this. It seems my feelings aren’t very important in the scheme of things.”

Draco’s fists rested on his hips. “Where’d you get that idea, you git?”

“You. You said, ‘Don’t get all squishy on me. I didn’t say I was in love with you or anything.’ When I said I thought you were my boyfriend you dismissed it. I’m just a shag partner to you. So isn’t this perfect?”

Draco rolled his eyes again. “You’re not just a shag partner.”

“But you act like that.”

“You’ve never said you love *me*.”

Harry kicked a sock aside. “I was afraid you’d make fun of me.”

Draco smiled and took Harry in his arms again. “Dear Harry; I hope this letter finds you well. How glad I am that I’ve moved in with you. True, the events of the last two days haven’t made things easy but who knew we’d get a reward for our stupidity. I do hope you will write to me soon as I have truly enjoyed all of your letters and fully intend to keep them till the day I die. Love, Draco.”

Harry looked at him curiously, until he realized what Draco was doing. And then his last words reached his foggy brain. “Love’?”

Draco nodded and kissed the side of Harry’s mouth very gently. “Love. So I’m a bit of a git, too.” He kissed the other side of his mouth. “I love you, Harry. Is that what you wanted to hear?”

“Yes,” he said and kissed Draco back, lips gliding over lips. He licked Draco’s lower lip and sucked it into his mouth. “And I love you, too,” he murmured.

“Then we’re all right...boyfriend?”

Harry couldn’t suppress a wide smile. “You’re only saying that so I’ll let you shag me.”

“I’m only saying this because it’s true. *And* because I want to shag you.”

“Well,” said Harry, looking at the bed, “we do have all summer.”

The End

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