Divinity

by Gryff_inTheGame

Summary

*W.I.P*

A little polyjuice potion never hurt anybody… Right?

What happens when Blaise and Theo create a secret society of well connected witches and wizards? The formation of the elite goes far beyond blood status and money. A cocktail of underworld proceedings and debauchery can only equate to a club misguided by power and lust. The sanctity of the club complicates reality with fantasy. Divinity's hooks in the Deity run deep, but at what cost? For some, the polyjuice brothel is what dreams are made of. For others it's a nightmare. What happens in Divinity—is supposed to stay in Divinity. When matters of the heart are concerned, that's not always the case.

JK Rowling owns. The plot is mine.

Notes

Here we are again! This is based on a O/s rewrite from my Bittersweet collection, with an
added suggestion submitted to me by my dear friend Autumn Lily. She begged me for a polyjuice brothel fic, so fuck. Here it is. I hope I deliver. As always, if you enjoy it I'd love to know. It keeps my muse flowing ;)

This is an A/U which can mean the possibility of OOC. Multiple pairings will happen. Sexually explicit content. Drug use. Dramione is endgame! So yes, she will be paired with others. You can expect Hermaise + Dramione.

No slut-shaming my characters, thanks! Triggers include stalking, creepiness and possessive behaviour with a possibility of more to be added. Expect explicit content.

I'd also like to state that Divinity is original. Anything written in this story that isn't canon is most likely made up by me unless I say otherwise, in which I'll always touch base with a writer if they've inspired an idea of mine, and I'll make note of that in an AN. I don't wish to have any original elements of my story recreated without my permission. I can be reached via my fb page Gryff_inthegame, tumbler gryff-in-the-game if you wish to reach me.

Much love to my beta: "Mr Benzedrine." If you happen to notice mistakes please realise that I'm no professional. This is a hobby, and MrB gives me her time for free. If you're looking for a polished fic, you probably won't get that, sorry.

If you enjoy my story, please tell me. My muse thrives off it!

GiTG x
Cormac is admiring the view of her fine arse while he fucks her from behind. Her peach has those cute little dimples on her cheeks, and the way she arches her back to accentuate her curves makes his dick so hard, he thinks he's going to explode after three thrusts.

“Fuck, yes princess!” he puffs as he glides in and out of her pussy.

He watches their reflection in the mirror, grinning at the sight before him. Her wild curls are swept to her left shoulder, but they have a mind of their own, so he grabs hold of as much hair as he can, yanking back her head so she arches more.

“You are...oh-ah...a fine specimen, Granger, you know that?” moans Cormac breathlessly.

The girl before him groans through the tie he's using as a gag. He is hungry for her in ways that can never be satisfied. His fist unclenches her hair, and he uses his hands to push her forward while continuing to grind against her. His hands reach around to fondle her delicate tits. The feel of their skin is like ecstasy, and he finds himself coming after what feels like only a few minutes of fucking her.

His burst is short and sweet, leaving him puffed and well spent. Call him a selfish lover, but when you're pounding a girl like that, the old saying “ladies first” goes out the window. Cormac is impatient and far from controlled in the bedroom department. Once he was on his way, that was that, and he didn't really give a fuck about being a gentleman. It's not like she can complain anyway. The transaction is about his needs, not hers, and that is the beauty of poly brothel at Divinity.

The girl before him rolls onto her back as her hair begins to change from untamed curls to straight blonde locks. It isn't long before her body shape and facial features twist and contort to reveal the naturally beautiful Daphne Greengrass.

“Alright love, that's your cue...parties over,” says Cormac with a smirk. He taps the side of her thigh as he hastily chucks a robe at her. He hates when the effects of the juice wears off and he can't bare to face reality.

He magically removes her gag, cringing as he does.

“As always, my terms are absolute.”

Daphne bows her head slightly, knowing the drill. Cormac summons his wand, flashing a pearly grin and a not-so-subtle wink.

“You're always a decent fuck Daph. Obliviate.”

Draco paces back and forth in front of his lavish fireplace, his fingers clasped firmly around an empty
glass. He's been pacing for so long the ice cubes have melted, and the dregs of his firewhiskey looks like watered-down apple juice. He didn't sign up for this shit. Marriage. Unfortunately, in pureblood society, many families pick and choose from birth and have solid contracts developed with the coming of age, so, like everything else in his life so far, he lacked the choice and was forced in holy matrimony to Astoria Greengrass.

Draco understands perfectly well what is expected of him as a pure blooded husband. He isn't struggling with that. But there are things he won't stand for...things he absolutely refuses. Astoria is a nightmare on legs and he now appreciates the need to live a happy life. He needs out of this union; no longer giving a fuck about bloodlines and purity.

Slamming his glass down on the ledge above the fireplace the glass shatters. Draco glances at the time and he's already late. Fuck. He hastily enters the fireplace using the floo to get to Nott Manor.

Draco arrives, stepping into Theo’s drawing room. Both Theo and Blaise are chugging the remainder of their drinks. Theo gives Draco a curious turn of his head before reprimanding his tardiness.

“Nice of you to finally join us, Draco. Luckily Zabini and I own the club, so it doesn't matter that we're late.”

Draco gives a curt nod to Blaise and returns to acknowledge Theo with a sneer.

“Fuck off, Nott. If you married a Greengrass, you'd be fucking late, too.”

Theo’s lips curl into a wicked smile, “I was going to be a smartass, but I have to agree with you on that.” He proceeds, “Anyway—enough of that. You want a night off. We are here to help.”

*I need more than a night off,* thinks Draco.

Theo and Blaise share a look between each other that Draco hasn't seen before, and it’s clear they are up to something. Before he can question their motives, they drag him into the floo and are arriving in the office of the club, “Divinity.”

With this being the first time Draco’s attended their club, and not knowing much about it, he can’t help but ask questions.

“So, tell me—what makes your Gentlemen's club better than the rest?”

Blaise sneers, but with no hint of malice. It's sly and mischievous—the type of look he gives when he’s confessing a dirty little secret. Draco admits to himself he’s intrigued.

Blaise is the first the answer.

“*Divinity* isn't exactly what one would call a gentlemen's club,” he explains casually.

Theo smirks and adds, “It's a secret society of well-connected witches and wizards.”
Draco raises his brows with interest and motions them to carry on.

Blaise continues.

“All members are a ‘Deity.’” There are pretty much no rules. However, all deities sign a blood oath—what happens in Divinity stays in Divinity. Basically, we collectively run the underworld through our club. Obviously, that means some unsavoury characters may be seen here from time to time... We're strict on the few rules we have.”

Theo interjects, “Membership is by invitation. And we only accept the elite. This goes far beyond blood status and money. We’re talking connections here,” says Theo as he sweeps his hand through his dark locks before explaining further.

“The oath protects the sanctity of the club and also acts as a sort of gag order. Meaning that you could very well see the Minister of Magic partaking in the club’s activities, but you're forbidden to discuss it outside these walls.

Blaise strides across the office, halting in a small sitting area. He motions for Draco and Theo to join him.

Draco follows suite and accedes to the comfort of a luxurious deep-green leather chaise. As if disregarding years of friendship, Blaise addresses Draco with a sense of formality reserved for business transactions. His mannerisms are demanding, so Draco gives his undivided attention.

“So basically, you want to divorce Astoria without the chaos, correct?” He tilts his head looking to Draco for confirmation of his assumption.

Draco acknowledges the truth, nodding with an inch of annoyance at how apparent his failing marriage is to everyone. Blaise is unsympathetic; he displays nothing but calm and collected, and it reminds Draco of what it's like to be in the company of wizards he can actually trust.

Blaise summons three glasses full of ice and pours each of them a scotch. Who would have thought the three of them would be sitting down to enjoy a muggle beverage? Times are truly changing.

Blaise sips his drink and continues to converse. “Handle your business with one of our deities. We have access to the best lawyers. I highly recommend Granger.”

"Granger!?” repeats Draco at his shocking suggestion.

Theo starts using wild hand movements; it's obvious he's spent far too much time with Blaise. “She’s the best as far as we're concerned. Granger solely defends, protects, and represents the club. Her deity clientele list alone is rather extensive already. She works wonders at breaking magical contracts,” he explains. “Before we can continue, you need to take the oath.”

Draco understands that what they have here is unique, so he accepts their terms.

“Very well then.”

“Oh and Draco,” interjects Blaise, “Disagreements amongst the Deity do not exist. All outside problems are left at the door. Any altercations with a fellow deity in the club risk torture and loss of admission. As well as several other things—mainly to do with one's status and connections. We run deep here, and we have a lot of power at our disposal.”

The statement sparks Draco’s interest because he feels Blaise is directing it at him with reason. As Theo shuffles forward to explain, the realisation is apparent.
“We mean this, Draco. If you see Potter, there's no conflict within these walls. Don't put us in the position where we have to intervene with your ‘standing.’ We're working on a disclaimer for the poly brothel.”

Draco's eyebrows are raised in surprise. “Poly Brothel. Are you saying what I think you're saying?”

“Yes,” respond Theo and Blaise in unison.

Draco nods in agreement, secretly shocked at the latest revelation. More so, he's impressed by the support of these two, and it leaves so many questions unanswered.

Blaise stands to smooth out his robes with his hands. “So, for obvious legalities, Granger must be present during your initiation. If you wish to converse with her about personal matters, I highly suggest ordering her an apple martini and joining her for a beverage before discussing business. Makes things a bit more pleasant, given your history.”

Draco responds a little sharply, but he knows they understand this is a big change. He accepts the advice, and replies, “noted.”

Blaise and Theo nod at each other before Blaise announces, “Right. Let's get to proceedings then.”

Blaise disapparated and reappears with Hermione linked on his arm seconds later. Draco is pleasantly surprised. She is a smouldering vision in a glittering slinky black dress and strappy stilettos. Beauty has really become her. Her lips look luscious and plump, like a delectable strawberry, tinted in a seductive shade of red. She looks a little nervous, biting her bottom lip at the sight of him. Draco can't help but think of how he would like to nibble on her lips. Her hair is a wave of soft luscious curls swept over her shoulder - exposing her alabaster neck. His mouth waters at the sight of her bare skin.

Surprisingly, she approaches him, snapping out of her brief lack of confidence, greeting him with a warm welcoming smile. “Evening, Malfoy.”

It's something she's never given him before. She's so inviting. Hermione dips her head to nod courteously, and he's impressed by her manners.

Hermione speaks with the type of confidence he hasn't seen in a witch and it enlightens him. He already understands why Blaise and Theo have grown to trust her. His mind fills with more questions. Who invited her to Divinity? Has either of them been tempted to mix business with pleasure? Do they attend the poly brothel?

Draco finds himself briefly interested in exploring all of his options with her. She stands in front of him, so he cordially takes her hand kissing the back of it politely, keen to return her kind gesture with the same respect. He's never wanted to be single as much as he does now, but given his impending divorce, he feels no guilt or remorse about momentary fantasies with her.

Draco finds Hermione's presence commanding as she summons an ancient looking scroll out of thin air with a click of her fingers. Her hips sway as she walks over to a peculiar painting on the wall. Opening the portrait, she reveals a hidden box in the wall and retrieves from it a velvet case containing a strange looking quill.

Hermione motions him to Theo's desk, and Draco moves to sit before her in compliance, captivated by her in every sense. She walks out from behind the desk, signalling something to Blaise and Theo, causing them to leave. Draco refuses to let on that he's curious and somewhat relaxed in her presence.
Hermione stands behind Draco, causing a jolt of nerves to course through his body as his heart rate increases ten-fold. He harshly exhales as she places her hand on top of his shoulder. Her actions cause him to stiffen at her unsuspecting touch. He doesn't know what to expect from here as her hand sweeps from his shoulder to his arm while her delicate fingers brush down to his hand. She grasps the top of it. With unparalleled ease, she peels his hand away from the arm of the chair.

Her intense gaze pierces him, and for a minute Draco is frozen by her influence. Not wanting the moment to end, but too proud to implicate otherwise, he stays still, waiting for her next move. She holds the strange quill at his pointed digit, and he notices it's inscribed with ancient runes...the end of the quill is sharp. Without warning, Hermione penetrates his skin with the pointed blade, and it's apparent the quill is using Draco’s blood as its source of an inkwell. Once she removes the quill, she guides his finger to the enchanted scroll and smears his bloody fingerprint on it. Hermione hands him the quill and urges Draco to sign it.

Draco steadily plants his finger on the scroll, and it leaves him feeling as though he is signing his life away - but nothing can be worse than his marriage to Astoria, so he puts his faith in the club. Puts his trust in Hermione.

Her demeanour has a calming effect on his nerves. He doesn’t realised the initiation is over until she swivels his chair around and he finds himself almost nose-to-nose with her. In most cases he would feel uncomfortable, but in this instance, he doesn't. His nerves try to get the better of him, but he ignores the urge to gulp.

Hermione smiles, and Draco feels an unwarranted flutter in his chest. Suddenly, this feeling is a bit more bearable, so he smiles back at her - not a smirk, not a sneer, but a genuine smile, and she radiates something that just pulls him in.

She speaks clear as ever, and what she says astounds him. “So, Malfoy. I believe you have a predicament regarding the impending divorce of your wife.”

Draco can't find the words, so he merely nods - a positive response to the obvious.

For a time, Draco hears nothing, but he see’s seduction oozing from her lips as she says innocently, “I can take care of that for you.”

The way her lips move to form each word beckons him. The delicate swipe of her tongue is unnerving and threatens to challenge him in ways he's never known possible. He didn't know he needed her until now. He imagines her unexpectedly taking his bloody finger, edging it toward her mouth.

Draco’s face is flushed as he feels a raging pulse in his cock at the thought.

Hermione licks her lips nervously as they remain silent.

Draco’s daydream continues...

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*Hermione slips his finger into her mouth—her tongue swirling around it. The inside of her cheeks envelope his finger.*
Draco exhales a long breath. *Fuck, Granger, that'd be so fucking hot,* he thinks to himself.

He is completely caught up in the pleasantries of his thoughts. She was never one for sly innuendos, and he feels himself wanting to lose control, all because of some fucking fantasy. He envisions how dirty she’d look sucking his finger and chuckles aloud in response. *Keep doing that, Granger, and you'll have something else thrust into your mouth. I don't think that's the kind of business we came to discuss,* he says to himself silently.

Hermione is a little confused in his silence. She tilts her head questionly.

“Private joke,” says Draco with a smirk.

“Let me fix that for you,” suggests Hermione, looking at his bleeding finger.

Draco quirks his brow at the offer, agreeing to let her fix it, though he wishes she was doing something else. He focuses on her lips as she repairs his finger and escapes to his fantasy once more.

He imagines how the hollow of her cheeks would look if she pulled his finger from her mouth. How her wet lips would smack against his finger in doing so. She would lean over him, clear her throat and say something seductive like, “I handle all of my business with the best intentions—to the *best* of my ability.

*I know you do, Granger,* he muses to himself.

Draco’s lips curl into a wicked smile. His stomach is in knots but his head feels fuzzy. He could swear what is happening in his mind is real. Everything she said is real. She just sang, and it was music to his ears.

Feeling a little daring, Draco pulls her onto his lap and she straddles him willingly. He allows his hand to grip her neck, holding her in place while his lips brush her earlobes; hovering for a moment, Draco allows his breath to echo in her ears. And he feels a magnetic pull to her, it's unapologetically—overwhelming.

Before he gets a chance to act, she whips her arm around, swiping his grip away from her neck.
Hermione pins Draco with her body, so he indulges her. This is new territory for the both of them, but Draco cannot deny he's more than mildly enjoying it. He feels her lips graze his cheek. and a rush of air brushes his face as she whispers, “We own you now, Malfoy.”

Draco feels her breath on his face and he forces his eyes open.

“What?” he asks, feeling a little discombobulated.

“Umm, you smiled all of sudden and then fainted. It was only a little bit of blood,” she chuckles.

Draco attempts to get up, but she quickly pushes him down.

“Oh, no you don't. Let me help you,” orders Hermione.

Draco feels confused and light headed. What the Hell just happened in my head? From that moment on, Draco isn’t sure exactly what he's gotten into. And if it has anything to do with Hermione, he sure as Hell is going to have fun finding out.
I am now uploading to both A03 + FFN!!!

Some people seem to be ignoring my previous a/n and are whining about how OOC Divinity is. Fyi I don't recall claiming to be JK Rowling. These are not my characters. This is fan fiction. It is art, a recreation. There is nothing canon about a poly brothel fic. So with that said, please enjoy my story that I've created for your enjoyment as it is, or if it's not your thing, don't read it. This story is unique, and if I'd attempted to write this like they were all going to have tea with Hagrid, it'd be batshit boring.

Shoutout to my girl SaintDionysus who has given me her blessing to use her idea Drugdealer!Luna and High!Theo. I'm sure it's been done before, but I've only seen it in her story “Hot mess,” which is amazing by the way! This will be completely my own take on how I portray Dd!Luna and in the future H!Theo, but if you're interested in seeing how she wrote them, you can find her on A03 and FFN under the name SaintDionysus X

Much love to my readers for showing support and can appreciate something different. If you're familiar with my works, it's what I like to do! ;)

A friendly reminder Dramione is endgame.
Beta-love to Mr Benzedrine X

GiTG x

Blaise and Theo chuckle as they reenter the office. Hermione has Draco lying on a leather chaise with his feet elevated and a damp towel on his head. Every time he tries to get up, she embarrassingly forces him back down, waiting for the effects of a sleeping draught to kick in.

“You!” shouts Hermione.

Blaise and Theo jump apart, looking equally guilty, but both wear the expression “he did it.”

“I didn.-” mumbles Theo.

“ -Every time one of your Slytherin buddies gets initiated, you pull the same shit. Stop doing it! Please. I'm always the one putting up with the fainting.”

Blaise flashes a charming grin at Hermione.

“Come on now, it's just a little initiation ritual we've come to enjoy. Harmless fun!”
“What did you slip him?” she asks calmly.

“We aren’t at liberty to say,” says Theo cheekily with a wink.

Hermione stands with her arms crossed, foot tapping on the floor. She is laced with annoyance and concern.

“It worries me that this substance could fall into the wrong hands.”

“One: that’s above your paygrade, Granger. Two: we don’t just dish this stuff out ‘willy nilly.’ And three: I trust the maker of the substance explicitly, as do you,” quips Blaise.

Hermione gets snarky in response to his wit.

“One: You don’t pay me; this is an ‘after-hours’ society. Two: you just used a muggle phrase. Three: I might just chat to Luna myself and find out what she’s put in there. Does it even have a name?”

“Ah, Granger, you never fail to amaze me. It’s called delirium. I can tell you what's in it... It's a concoction of things, mainly datura stramonium - which belongs to the nightshade family and, evidently, is a form of devil’s snare. Except with powerful hallucinogenic properties. Its primary effect causes delirium, hence the name, and as such, can produce some intense visions.”

Hermione gasps, appearing to be lost for words.

“Next time you want to shut her up…” chuckles Theo playfully.

Hermione's head snaps in his direction.

“Don't test me, Nott. Or do, if you have the balls. Your memory must fail you after last time.”

Theo stopped laughing immediately and awkwardly readjusts his pants. Last time Hermione was pissed off at him, she hexed his balls off and he spoke like a girl for a week, among other things. Growing them back wasn't enjoyable, to say the least.

“Blaise. You said concoction - what else is in that?” questions Hermione, and she looks over her shoulder to see a sleeping Draco. Judging by the “don't fuck with me” attitude and the mention of Theo’s balls, Blaise figures it's in his best interest to tell her. He raises his brows, clears his throat, and tries to deliver the next lot of information as smooth as possible.

“Well, I believe a drop or two of elixir to induce euphoria adds to the high. There may or may not be equal parts of umm hem-hem ...amortentia. Now, I know what you’re thinking,” says Blaise defensively, putting his hands up as if to calm her gesturing a further explanation.

“The person under the effect of amortentia normally holds an obsession with the person who administers it. Which, in that case, would be me since I made him drink it. But we didn't want that. So, Luna’s found a way for the drinker to experience visions based on desires. All they need is someone to ‘trigger’ them, and they are on their way to a very happy place in their head for awhile.”

“I can't believe you.”

“Are you sure about that?” asks Blaise.

“No,” states Hermione bluntly as she rolls her eyes.

“If anything, it's a compliment to you. You seem to get everyone going,” says Blaise with a not-so-subtle wink. “Speaking of that, how's Draco?”
“He’s in a forced sleep at the moment... *sleeping draught.*”

“Good. He’s going to lose his shit when he finds out,” pipes Blaise, slightly amused with a hint of concern.

“You mean if he finds out,” says Theo suggestively. “Do you really want to tell Draco we drugged him with a homemade hallucinogenic, and the effects of it were triggered by Hermione?”

“No. But Draco’s not stupid,” states Blaise.

“No, I’m fucking not. You fucking drugged me? What the fuck is wrong with you?” drawls Draco. Their heads snap in his direction.

“You’re supposed to be sleeping that off,” expresses Hermione. Her sass is threatening.

“I was merely resting my eyes, listening to these dipshits. I was drugged. Obviously, it'll be in effect for some time. Get me the antidote, Zabini.”

“We know you’ve been going through some shit. We wanted to help. That sleeping draught will do nothing,” adds Theo cautiously, trying to play the innocent card.

“Don’t bullshit me, Nott. The antidote.”

“We’d love to offer you one. But-”

“Think about you next sentence very fucking carefully,” threatens Draco.

Blaise interrupts.

“It is what it is, Draco. Unfortunately, you have to let it run its course as there isn't one, yet. We're still in the trial and error stages.”

“What? You’ve been giving this to people all week without a fucking antidote?”

“Come on, it’s not that bad. To be honest, most enjoy the ride. Should have seen McLaggen afterwards. He was only initiated three days ago... Ginny said he’s here everyday. He was quite taken with Granger. Old crushes die hard, apparently.”

Hermione rolls her eyes and huffs, exasperated.

“This isn't how I pictured my night,” she quips.

“Can’t say I expected to be spending my night drugged in their office,” states Draco in agreement.

“Go and experience the club, Draco. Ride it out. Relax...have a few drinks,” suggests Blaise. “We need to discuss arrangements for our official opening shindig.”

Shaking his head in protest, Draco leaves the comfort of the lounge, strolling towards the fireplace. “I’ll see you two tomorrow. In future, I decide when I’ll be taking substances.”

Theo chuckles, and Blaise nods in understanding. Hermione, although amused, suppresses her smile. An awkward silence fills the room before she interjects.

“As your attorney, I feel the need to mention you can't go around unknowingly drugging people like that.”
Blaise is calm and collected.

“As our attorney, it's your job to protect the club,” argues Blaise blankly. “Do you honestly think people would be interested in what we have here if we didn't? We'd be just another club. People don't want that. They want exclusivity with no boundaries. They want to feel apart of something unique. They want to explore things that their boring everyday lives would find immoral without being reprimanded for it.”

“This is a dangerous web you're weaving, Blaise. Theo.”

“As sensible as they come, aren't you, Granger?” assess Blaise with one brow raised and his head tilted curiously. “It's not your job to give me your opinion, though I know you can't help it. And, for the record...you are being paid. We have your Gringotts information, and you'll find your services are heavily funded. I'm sure you'll be kept quite busy here.”

Hermione isn't one to take things sitting down and just get on with it, but she's perceptive. And judging by Blaise’s tone, she doesn't want to press him further. They can discuss this later.

“We'll be expecting you to attend the grand opening, regardless of if you want to participate or not. You're here because you're brilliant. But you could do with a bit of loosening up every now and then, Granger,” says Blaise in a way that makes her sound as if she doesn't have a choice, knowing that he knows exactly how to loosen her up. She's always so diplomatic in a professional environment.

“That's the beauty of free will. I'll be here. As to what I participate in is at my disposal. You don't own me like you own everyone else. I made my contract,” rebukes Hermione point blank.

“That's what you think,” mutters Blaise under his breath, nodding curtly to dismiss her. He smirks deviously, remembering all the things he did to get her onboard with Divinity. There was nothing innocent about it but, he doesn't dwell on the past. They were fucking on the regular now, and he doesn't doubt she cares about him. He knows that while she cares, he owns her in ways she doesn't even recognise yet, and that's perfectly okay with him. Sure, he may have had some help persuading her, but he is Slytherin, after all. Any means to achieve their ends.

Hermione leaves rather abruptly. How she got involved in this mess is partly her own fault, but still, Blaise has the ability to irk her and turn her on in the simplest of terms...they didn't always agree. He knew it too. Tonight, they'll be having epic hate sex after some drawn out argument, and while she feels wickedly sinful at the thought, she can't help it. The truth is, sure, she can be uptight. But when it comes to Blaise, nothing is more thrilling, engaging, and satisfying. She hates that he has this kind of control over her. She'd be lying if she said she hadn't experimented with him in the first place. That's how she ended up here...a flirtatious night of risks and regret. Hermione remembers like it was yesterday.

Feeling the need to be surrounded by strangers and desperate to indulge in a wine or two, Hermione entered the muggle bar and found herself a booth in the corner. It was chilly out, so she'd
worn a thick black knee-length coat over her red, strappy top that was cut low enough to display an immodest amount of cleavage. She wore tight fitted jeans with red kitten heels to dress it up, with the addition of some more simple accessories: a red clutch, a pop of red lipstick, and a single drop necklace that fell not-so-discretely between her breasts. Admittedly, she felt she looked great, so she was comfortable.

Hermione could have easily spent the night there alone soaking up the atmosphere, but when unsuspecting company found her, although reluctant, she didn’t refuse good conversation and some eye candy.

Blaise was looking as sharp as ever in a luxurious navy suit, black collared shirt, and navy tie. She'd never seen him in blue before.

“Care to join me, Blaise? Or are you just going to stand their ogling?” she asked seductively. The three previous glasses of cabernet sauvignon had given her a fiery confidence. Not that she wasn't assertive, it just assisted her courage in the current situation.

“Always so astute, Granger. But for tonight, may I have the pleasure in addressing you as Hermione?”

She smirked in response to his question.

“Always the gentleman, Zabini,” she mocked. “You may.”

Blaise joined her in the seclusion of the booth, signalling a waiter to bring them more wine and hors d'oeuvres. They enjoyed each other's company inexplicably...intelligent conversation, subtly flirting with the innocent brush of a hand on an arm or the swipe of a curl out of her face. The tension was building at an exponential rate.

As the night went on, it was obvious they were heavily intoxicated. The conversation slowed. Their bodies drew closer, craving the slightest touch.

Blaise tested the waters, letting his hand rest on top of her knee.

“I've, actually, really enjoyed your company tonight, Hermione.”

“And I you,” she said with a gleam in her eyes that clearly gave him the impression she welcomed the intimacy.

Hermione shifted her hair to the opposite side of him, exposing her neck. She smelt sweet: floral, fresh. It was the kind of scent that she knew drove men wild. The effect it was having on him, with the addition of their shoulders touching and his hand now wandering from her knee to the inner of her thigh - just south of her honey pot, was triggering the Italian beast in him. He wanted the night ending in many ways. Firstly, with them bailing and fucking each others brains out. Secondly, with her moaning his name. And thirdly, leaving her so satisfied that when he propositioned her in the morning, she wouldn’t know how to say no.

Blaise absentmindedly massaged her inner thigh. Hermione, caught up in the want of it all, gently spread her legs. She regretted wearing jeans that night. The invitation was open, and she felt no shame in suggesting it. “What's a little night of risky behaviour,” she said to herself. She excused the common sense in her head telling her not to do it. Yes, she knew she’d become inebriated fast. Yes, she saw Blaise pour a phial of liquid into her drink as she returned from the restroom. But no, she didn’t question it. Instead, she foolishly risked it, enticed by the enjoyable company of the sneaky snake, internally high on the effects of whatever he’d slipped her. She wasn't going to pretend she
didn't know. But for tonight, she was eager to be different. Tonight, she was letting uptight Hermione go, and carefree, experimental Hermione was here to make regretful decisions about a man who had hated her in school. All so she could give into some hormones and have crazy sex with the practicality of a stranger.

Impatient, she took the reigns. “Your place or mine?”

It was unexpected to Blaise, and he undeniably wasted no time in telling her, “Mine.”

Of course, it'd be his place. She doubted Blaise Zabini lounged around other women's homes when he had a bachelor pad in his manor at his disposal. “Another way for him to show off, albeit,” she thought.

Blaise helped her out of the booth, draping her coat over her shoulders. He Apparated them out of there without drawing any attention. It had gone better than he’d planned, and he wondered why she didn't speak up when she saw him slip something in her drink. He settled on the notion that she was asking for it, and he was only happy to oblige.

Their evening had only just begun as they arrived in his formal sitting room, though he knew there would be nothing formal about their evening’s ministrations. Blaise took the liberty of pouring them more drinks as she made herself more comfortable.

Hermione excused herself to the restroom, wanting to freshen up. As she returned she was greeted by Blaise’s bare chest; he was a vision as he waltzed around the room in sweatpants, no shirt, swirling the contents of his drink before finishing it. His chest was an iron playground of abs, and her breath hitched at the sight of him. He was aesthetically pleasing - there was no doubt about it. She couldn't wait to play her favourite game: “hide and seek” on the cocoa express. His body was a wonderland, and she was all aboard to play a piece in the game adults like to play between the sheets. She wasn’t one for reservations in the bedroom, being a woman of independence and adventure. Sure, she was a sucker for rules and things, but anything to do with sex and she was quite the devil. The fact that people always expected her to be premeditated and boring...they really had no idea, but she supposed she liked it that way.

That night, they'd arrived at a destination separately and left it together. The rest of the night was a blissful blur of ecstasy: body on body.

The sunrise was bright. It's rays shone through a small gap in the curtains and was just enough light to wake her. Upon waking, she gasped at the limbs holding her in a tight embrace. Her head pounded with regret from the night before. “Fuck,” she said aloud in disbelief.

She was now well acquainted with the man spooning her. Hermione tried to peel herself out of his grip, but he intensified it.

Groggily, Blaise leaned in to nibble affectionately on her ear, his voice holding that manly morning husk that tickled her senses.

“Mmm - morning, Hermione. Going so soon? You're not going anywhere just yet.”

“The nights over...so it's Granger to you,” she said sharply, but she relished the physical contact.
“Ahh, back to formalities,” he quipped.

Blaise nuzzled into her neck momentarily, already having anticipated she was going to be uptight the morning after, but he didn’t think she could be so snarky in the afterglow. She was just too embarrassed to accept reality. He wordlessly summoned two small phials from his dresser draw, offering her one and taking the other for himself.

Hermione stared at the liquid. It wasn’t known to her, and although she was feeling experimental last night, it was a new day, and she was reluctant to accept it.

“What is it?” she asks cautiously.

“Now you ask? You weren’t too worried about what I slipped you last night,” he mused knowing perfectly well she saw him do it. He’d planned it that way to see how she’d react. To his relief, she let it slide and from that moment he knew it was fair game.

He responded casually, addressing her concern. “It’s nothing - just a little something to help come down. Speaking of last night… It was obvious to me we both thoroughly enjoyed ourselves.”

Hermione rolled her eyes. She’d forgotten how well he could balance being a gentleman with being an arrogant, cocky arse. She didn’t want to admit anything, but she couldn’t deny the truth, so she plays it cool. Whatever he wanted, she would make him sweat a little bit.

“Supposedly, we did… But it was a one night stand, Blaise.”

He spoke casually to hide the disappointment he felt, but he had no intention of giving up.

“It’s a shame you see it that way.”

Blaise left the comfort of his bed, naked - a little bit of skin to make her blush and help the persuasion.

Hermione looked away… Not out of respect or even embarrassment, but for strength. She didn’t want or need the temptation.

Blaise was buck naked as he turned to face her, and he couldn’t ignore her flushed cheeks. She modestly pulled the sheets to her chest and clung onto them for dear life. He felt a small victory. He conversed with her naturally, as though they were old friends wearing clothing.

“I have a proposition for you. What do say to mixing a little business with pleasure? You’re a wild animal, Granger. One that's been locked in a cage far too long.”

Hermione scoffed. There was too much truth in his words, but she didn’t want him to know it. For the first time in her life, she appeared to be short of words to express herself.

Blaise took the silence as an invitation to continue to explain, so he did.

“I see the devil sitting on your shoulder, Granger. I know you’re intrigued. Girls like you don’t fuck like that for no reason.” He walked towards her, still naked, basking in his morning glory. “We don’t have to be official. Being with me would be as easy as breathing. Not to mention, I can give you things no one else can.”

Hermione dropped the sheet she was holding, allowing the top half of her naked body to be exposed. Two could play this game.
“I can’t be bought.”

“I know that. Bad habit. My apologies.”

Hermione couldn’t believe she was actually entertaining the idea, and for some strange reason - she found herself agreeing. The words spilled from her mouth before she could control herself.

“I agree to coming to some sort of an arrangement…”

A satisfied grin spread across his lips; it was easier than he'd expected which only validated what he'd always thought: there's more to Hermione Granger that meets the eye. He relished in the thought of being right.

“I always knew you had it in you, Granger.”

The past twelve hours had been a whirlwind mix of dangerous liaisons and guilty pleasure. That night, Hermione satisfied the craving for darkness in her she didn't know she had. Even the most sensible people crave to break personal boundaries. Some do it alone. Some in public. She did it with a Slytherin in a bedroom. The night reminded her of the muggle saying: “Once you go black, you never go back,” however, swap that with the darkness being so alluring, and it ironically loses it's original meaning.

That night changed it all.

That night, she admittedly plunged herself into a world of unknown - for fun.

That night shaped a future of lust, love and chaos.

It was also “that night” that Divinity dug its hooks in her… deep.
The moment Draco arrives in the comfort of his fireplace, he feels nauseated. His face feels like it's on fire, and he feels dizzy. How he managed to get home in this state is beyond him, given the way delirium is affecting him now. What ever that moment of clarity was, call it adrenalin, if you will...it's gone now. Hallucinations wash over him again, and he's unable to differentiate from the real world. His heart is palpitating, visions blurred…He barely makes it to the couch before he collapses into an unconscious heap.

Hermione and Blaise are having a rough night. They argue for what seems like mere seconds before Blaise is alerted by Theo that Astoria has found Draco unconscious, and that he is sending for Luna and Neville to help. St Mungo’s can't get involved. If they do, it’ll be the demise of *Divinity*.
Blaise’s elbow is resting confidently on the ledge above his fireplace. Hermione is pacing, angrily.

“Why can’t you just take my advice? You wanted a partnership. Well, the business aspect of this… partnership is being diplomatic and taking it in your stride when I challenge you!” chastises Hermione.

“You call it a challenge, I call it nagging,” rebukes Blaise argumentatively.

“Don't say that you... Urgh! You're impossible! Why can't you just be understanding or at least just be open enough to receive my suggestions? You don't have to take them on board. Just listen to me from time to time. Please, it's all I ask,” she pleads.

“I respect what you're saying, sweetheart, I do, I just don't like it. Just being honest.”

“You're not being honest. You're being an insensitive, pretentious, egotistical - *toss*er! Malfoy is a friend. He didn't deserve that,” she yells passionately. Blaise merely acknowledges it with a blink before his rebuttal, choosing his words wisely but still giving her bite.

“I'll have Luna review the potion. But no-one else has reacted this way...and for the record, you're being an overbearing, pushy, opinionated, ball-breaking, hot-as-fuck minx.”

“Will you shut-up, you're a pompous wanker! Why don't you understand how serious this is?”

“Is this how you pictured your night when you came here? Us arguing about someone insignificant to you?” asks Blaise sincerely. Though he knows it will trigger her - him being so careless about a friend when she'd give anything for hers.

Hermione slams her hands to her sides in frustration as she yells, “He's your friend! You should fucking care!”

“I never said I didn't. You assumed that one,” retorts Blaise calmly.

Hermione scoffs, exasperated by the way he just stands there, brushing everything off like it's no big deal. He's so domineering. So... condescending. It makes her angry - frustratingly so, and yet, it drives her to distractions at the same time. Of course it would, he's trying to manipulate her, and she knows it.

“You should go to him,” she suggests matter-of-factly, as if he has no other option, with the kind of sass even Mcgonagall herself would be proud of.

“He'll be alright. It's Draco - he's made of more than blood and water, I can tell you that.”

“His life is at risk, and you slipped up. Blood oaths, contracts and disclaimers aside… Do you really want his death, or anyone else's for that matter, on your conscience? Don't act all haughty, high, and mighty like you don't have one, because I know you do,” she tries to reason, but she doesn't appear to convince him otherwise.

“You don't have to be so hard and serious all the time, Granger,” modulates Blaise. He wants to go to her, calm her down and make it okay, but he doesn't.

Hermione flashes a look of superiority any aristocrat would be proud of as she gathers her things. She turns to him as their fight concludes; she is ready to leave.

“I'm not. It's just my moral compass is better than yours, obviously, and that saddens me. You know what? Today has been a long day. I can't be bothered doing this tonight.”
“Doing this or dealing with me?” asks Blaise fearfully, already knowing the answer.

“Both,” she states flatly as though all the air her left her lungs. She's not only deflated, but defeated.

“Don't. Don't do that. Don't say that…wait,” pleads Blaise gravelly, his expression is one she's never seen before.

“I say what I mean Blaise. Call it honesty,” she sasses. “Maybe I'll see you tomorrow to check on how Malfoy's doing,” she says cryptically.

Hermione turns on the spot as Blaise is asking, “What do you mean maybe?” But she is gone by the time he finishes his sentence.

**What the fuck did she mean by maybe? She works for me...why was she so angry? I mean, she gets angry, but normally I make it better. She didn't even give me a chance to try. Did I push her too far? Since when does that happen? She normally plays along and then concocts some alluring, sassy way of getting us in the sack. When did this change?**

Blaise pouts in disbelief, his mind is running rampant. He feels the sheer pain of his blue balls and a lump of guilt growing in the pit of his stomach. In defeat, before straightening his robes, he apparates to the Malfoy Manor to see if Draco’s alright.

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Blaise arrives at Malfoy Manor to a somewhat chaotic scene unfolding. Astoria is in hysterics, ordering elves to retrieve even things as simple as a bowl of cold water and a flannel. Theo, glaze-eyed, is devouring stack number four of cucumber sandwiches, all the while watching Luna and Neville converse about botanics.

Luna is half-baked but still unapologetically herself, and Neville is trying to keep on a brave face while cautiously looking around the contents of the room, well aware that he’s in Malfoy Manor, and he isn’t sure it's a place he wants to be.

Neville pauses before speaking to Luna. Even though she's wearing ripped jeans and a long flowy t-shirt, she still looks as beautiful as ever. She is wearing some intricately hand-woven headband of daisies and wears them on her head like a crown. Her hair is braided, hanging to one side. Her eyes are somewhat sleepy, but she's stills as cognitive as ever.

“It hit him so quickly,” mutters Neville. “In most instances the *datura stramonium* alone wouldn't affect him for at least 2 hours. I think it'd be presumptuous to assume his body weight and metabolism played part in it. It's possible, but I believe it's something more. He didn't vomit?” questions Neville.

“No, he wouldn't have. You see, I added the purple halves of puking pastels to my most recent batch. It had upset my stomach in the testing phases. They were hard to decipher, but my notes are a work of art. I think I might frame them,” muses Luna dreamily.

“So, the purple half suppress the vomit from erupting but doesn't take away from from the nausea? I suppose it's expected, but not always possible to remove all side effects,” discusses Neville coolly, trying to focus on anything but her natural beauty; *mimulus mimbletonia*...*mandrake cries… Snape*, but she's still distracting him.
“What are you doing with all the orange halves?” he asks absentmindedly.

“Saving them,” she says as her lips curl into a subtle smile. “I have this theory that the nargles might collect them.”

Neville shifts awkwardly. *Of course she's still going on about nargles. Her random burst of words snap him out of his daze.*

“Oh, there is one thing I thought *may* have contributed to Draco’s instant bliss and unsettling awakening,” she says thoughtfully, recounting what appears to be a memory.

Neville has an epiphany and doesn't hesitate to share it.

“Let me guess. *Wormwood* in the *Elixir to induce Euphoria*?”

Luna begins to nod her head in recognition as she responds.

“Yes. It's possible it can temper or eliminate side-effects of the ingredients it was mixed with, depending on the compound.”

Neville contributes, “Not to mention, if we add in the factors such as body weight and metabolism...”

Luna agrees wholeheartedly, offering a friendly smile that piques his senses. Neville goes on a mini tangent.

“Or the fact that the *wormwood* in the *Elixir of Euphoria* clashes with the *datura stramonium*, causing the hallucinogenic effects to speed up. It would also explain Draco’s oddly lax behaviour with Hermione and the intense visions he had before fainting. It's most likely he was experiencing the side-effects in stages. *Artemisia absinthium, or wormwood*, would have been the first stage. *Datura stramonium* has more of a delayed onset... The *wormwood* would have filled the void and produced the first symptoms before he came home and started the second wave of effects.”

“I think we need to revise and reevaluate *delirium* in that case. Anyone else that's taken it successfully is merely lucky,” concludes Luna.

Blaise interrupts, head tilted, eyes wide and full of superiority.

“I hate to interrupt your little skull session, but isn't Draco dying?”

Luna gasps momentarily.

“Oh, sure. We just needed to be sure before knowing what he needs.”

She turns to wink at Neville, smiling whimsically.

Neville, suddenly feeling rather important. Hurriedly, he removes a small pouch from his pocket, opening it gingerly. His arm disappears into the pouch as he searches for something. He pulls from the pouch a bezoar.

“Are you telling me the antidote is as simple as bezoar?” quips Blaise as he attempts to hold back a scowl.

“Yes and no,” answers Neville problematically. “It's a bezoar soaked in *physostigma venenosum*.”

“English, please.”
Neville speaks quickly, almost as if frustrated Blaise didn’t know.

“It’s a draught of crushed calabar seeds infused in water.”

“Oh,” finishes Blaise uninterested.

“Potent stuff. Can kill if you don’t know what you’re doing with it,” mentions Neville precariously.

“Lucky we have Longbottom around to save the day,” muses Blaise sarcastically.

“Yeah you are,” he retorts “Just like you’re lucky Luna is clever and inherited a thrill for experimental methods from her mother…As you are lucky to have a Hogwarts professor supplying your club with all of its herbal needs on a professional level.”

“Professor Longbottom’s got bite.”

“I don’t just bite mate, I can chew you up and spit you out if I want to. You’d be surprised at how many plants can kill you and how many of them I grow in my personal stores. You can never underestimate the power of nature.”

Feeling surprised at Neville’s confidence and knowledge, Blaise responds simply.

“Understood, mate.”

After shoving the bezoar into Draco’s mouth, he recovers instantaneously, looking a little worse for wear and coughing uncontrollably. Before he can even get a word in, everyone is being shooed by Astoria as she desperately seeks to assist her husband.

“My love, I was so worried.”

“I’m fine.”

“No, you’re not. You almost died. Do you understand that?”

“Clear as crystal.”

“Don’t be a stubborn prude. Let me do my duty to you as your wife, ‘in sickness and in health’ remember? Let me dote on you. Let me watch over you,” she pleads desperately, aching to touch her husband and have him accept her concern. But Draco is Draco, cold as ice and as distant as ever.

“I don’t want the fuss,” he affirms. “I want peace and quiet. If I need something I’ll summon an elf.”

Astoria continues to cling to their moment of interaction.

“Today you nearly got that peace and quiet… Six feet deep in a wooden casket in our backyard next to your father.”

She’s always like this, annoying, he thinks to himself. Why he married a Slytherin is beyond him. She plays her part in society so convincingly, she serves confidently as the matriarch of the Malfoy manor with great honour and pride. If only he felt the same love and adoration for her, but he could never.
Hermione retreats to the comforts of her flat, shutting off her floo network. Knowing Blaise, he'd show up to grovel and then narcissistically convince her otherwise. It was the same inconvenient cycle. They matched in intelligence. They were in sync in the bedroom, but everything else about them was as opposite as they come. Sure, opposites attract. But some attractions lack depth, ignoring the irony of him him being more than occasionally “balls deep” in her. They lack a deep connection, and that is what she craves. The thing they share is a ticking time bomb. She knows it. He knows it. Still, he always tries to cling onto her in his own way. He doesn't admit much to her, but she senses it when they are alone in the dead of the night, when he's supposed to be sleeping but instead his eyes are on her. Piercing her soul through the darkness.

Hermione has never feared Blaise. But the thought of having a clean breakaway from him is beginning to feel impossible. They’ve had some great times together. But the bad outweighs the good. At first, she stuck around for what it purely was: fuck buddies and work colleagues. Throughout the process of officiating the club and building it from nothing, it's been a personal tug of war between each other. Draining, utterly intense, and somewhat crazy. But now, after 6 months of playing treacherous games and thrill seeking, the exhaustion of their dirty little secret is veracious and taking its toll on her. She doesn't know when, or even how, but she knows they have to stop with the pleasure side of their agreement, for there is nothing pleasurable about everything that they stand for separately while trying to be together, even though it's been discreet.

Wanting to unwind, Hermione decides a soak in a hot bath is just what she needs. She insists on pouring herself a glass of sauvignon blanc, given her mood, and taking it with her to the bathroom. She summons a book on the way for good measure. Trashy romance. Perfect.

He's been waiting some time for her to get home. Watching...on standby in the shadows outside her house. He's been here before. In fact, he comes here often. It annoys him when she doesn't come home, but tonight she did and here she is, so for that he is grateful.

Hermione enters her bathroom, placing her wine glass on the ledge of the tub and turning on the water as she does. While the bathtub is filling, she walks over to the basin, peering in the mirror. She takes a hair tie, twisting her hair into a bun and securing it with the elastic. From the cupboard under the basin, she grabs bath salts and liquid soap.

She lights a few candles to set the mood - after all, relaxation is key here. Hermione casts a levitation charm...several rose scented candles float effortlessly around her bathroom, enveloping it in a beautiful floral musk aroma.
How he wishes he could smell her. Hell, he wishes he could be in there with her!

She turns to add the bath salts to the water before following with a decent amount of liquid soap. The bathtub is frothing with bubbles as the water level rises just the way she likes it. She sits on the side of the tub, swirling her hand in the water to check its temperature. Once satisfied with its warmth, Hermione stands, sweeping her shirt overhead before hastily unbuttoning her jeans and stripping them off.

He tilts his head in great interest, admiring every inch of skin he see’s. His eyes start to dry out at the sight of her because she looks so good he refuses to blink. He likes that she wears lace and how her fine arse has eaten half her knickers. Oh, how he would like to eat her arse! He wants...needs to get closer to her. After looking over his shoulder, he steps forward, accidentally stumbling over a tree truck. “Fuck!” he mutters as he retreats into a bush.

A noise outside startles her so she pauses for a moment, glancing over her shoulder to the window. With nothing in sight but the black of the night, she removes her bra, underwear...stepping into the tub. From the moment the water surrounds her body, she sinks into total relaxation, feeling the situation that was bothering her defusing with the steam.

His eyes are practically falling out of his head. They've never witnessed such beauty, never seen such perfection in a woman. He briefly fantasises about getting naked with her; dreams can come true, princess. Just wait, I'll show you, he thinks while ogling her.

Hermione dumps her head underwater for a few seconds before erupting like a fish out of water. The bath salts relax her tense shoulders, so she rests her head back, closes her eyes, and hums along to the song that's been stuck in her head for a week, “Shape of you” by Ed Sheeran. Her head bobs back and forth to the beat as she continues to sink further into a state of relaxation.

As time ticks on, Hermione’s skin starts to wrinkle, and she knows it's been too long. Before getting
out, she ponders what Blaise is doing. Tonight was a missed opportunity to blow off some steam, so
now that she is totally relaxed, she thinks there's no better way to finish the night off then by
“finishing” herself.

She allows her hands to explore her body. The thumb and forefinger of her left hand is playing with
her nipple, gently pinching and lightly twisting. The upper half of her body is out of the water, so her
nipples are stiff from the light breeze coming in through the window.

His hands shake as he threatens to lose his cool. He runs his fingers through his hair and grits his
teeth. Cormac can't believe his luck. He's got the best seat in the house to the “Hermione Granger”
show, and this exquisite woman is practically presented on a platter for his eyes only. He needs her,
and her needs her now.

Her right hand is making it's way south of her bellybutton past her hips, settling at the mound
between her legs. She thinks of a more recent rendezvous with Blaise.

He’d hired out a restaurant so they could be alone. They ended up skipping entrees and went straight
for dessert. Blaise had instructed that no waiters were to interrupt them unless he summoned them.
The only time interruption occurred was when they broke the table he was fucking her on.

Hermione exhales, feeling aroused by the memories of that night. Despite them not being in the best
of circumstances, she was attracted to the arrogant prick. He knows how to get her going, and he
knows exactly how she likes it. Regrettably, she cares for the wanker. Her level of understanding on
the care factor is somewhat unclear, though.

Mentally preparing to please herself, her clit is already pounding with anticipation. She allows her
middle finger to slip between her ridge so she can flick her bean. She finds it already hard, just
aching to be touched. Her finger gets to work as she begins massaging her clit. The moment her
finger makes contact, she exhaled a long breath. Giving in to what she wants never felt so good, and
all she did was touch it. Working that familiar rhythm really gets her going. As she becomes more
and more desperate by her arousal, her breathing increases; panting, she slowly grinds her hips
against the finger that is working her to the brink.

Cormac is mesmerised by the way she touches her body, especially the way she confidently touches
herself. He never wants to forget this moment in life or death. This is what his dreams are made of,
though he wishes he was in on the action. As she touches herself, he fumbles to unbutton his pants
and zip. His pants are around his ankles quicker than you can say Quidditch...he doesn't want to miss
experiencing any of this.

His hands slip inside his boxers, retrieving his hard cock. His fellow friend is already up for some
action. He muses at the thought, feeling every bit of satisfaction with the current events. Muttering a lubrication charm, his hand glides up and down the length of his lordly lion. He tries to contain his low groans as he watches on.

The water from the tub is slapping out the side of it as she grinds harder, her eager finger working circular motions as her hips continue to gyrate. She feels the familiar build of anticipation in the pit of her stomach getting closer and closer. She almost comes undone. She increases the pressure on her clit...just enough to take her all the way. As she finds her bliss, her body trembles at its release. Her bathroom is an amphitheatre of her heavy breaths as she basks in pleasure of her self-made orgasm. She did it with Blaise’s help, and he had no idea he had anything to do with it. This amuses her greatly.

Chuckling to herself and feeling spent, Hermione pulls herself out of the bathtub. After drying off, she makes her way to her bedroom so she can fall into a deep slumber.

After that exciting visual, he follows through shortly after. He has to lean on a tree for support because he is so wrapped up in it. Even though she isn't with him partaking in his activities, just her being there, doing the same things he's doing to himself, at the same time, is, for the time being, “enough.” How he's going to satisfy his hunger for her, he'll never know.

He watches her exit the tub, and her wet skin glistens with a healthy glow. If he was in there right now, he'd be doing a whole lot more than watching, that's for sure. He walks around the other side of the house, being sure to stay concealed as he does. He see’s her again in her room, obviously, preparing to go to bed, her robes slipping from her shoulders as she climbs in. He's pleasantly surprised she sleeps naked - such a minx, Granger.

He doesn't want to leave, but when the lights go out, he knows it's game over - for tonight.

Feeling pleased with himself and eager to get home, he Disapparates. Landing in the comfort of his muggle home on the same street as her, he heads upstairs to run a bath. Bath time is much more fun now.
Blaise has had this feeling in his stomach since their fight last night. Normally it would be *no big deal*. Usually, his day could go on as normal. At the realisation that everything isn't okay...well, let's just say: Blaise is definitely not liking the feeling.

He's laying back on the couch with his arms tucked behind his head, legs resting on the arm of the chair. He's actually been staring at the same spot in the ceiling in some sort of daze, over thinking the most ridiculous things, and they all have to do with *her*. He huffs in exasperation at the thought of her.

Affection, lust, obsession...Love. To Blaise, they all seemed to be packaged up into one person: Hermione. He's never felt greedy when it comes to witches. He does who he pleases when he wants...and they come and go like the rain. But the good old saying “when it rains, it pours” has never held merritt - until now. He knows she said *maybe* she’d see him tomorrow. Well, it's tomorrow, midday to be exact, and she's hasn't shown up yet. Technically, the only business they have to tend to at the moment is *Divinity’s* opening. But still, he expected her to come over regardless.

Blaise swings himself off the couch to fetch a drink -a little something to take off the edge. He browses his collection of the finest beverages, settling on “Blishen’s scotch firewhiskey,” aged for thirty-nine years, proclaiming to be “The King of Whiskies.” He pours a generous amount of the amber liquid, using a chilling charm to cool the glass and adding ice. He sips the scotch, allowing the
flavours to envelope him in its rich, mouth-coating, warmth as it rolls down his throat. Given Blaise's mood, even the taste of alcohol isn't masking his feelings. This is fucked, Granger.

He swirls the ice cubes around his already empty glass. Not even “The King of Whiskies” can drown his sorrows. He needs something stronger.

Blaise is better than this...self-wallowing. It's embarrassing really. He's grateful they've been somewhat discreet, because he doesn't think he would appreciate something like this being blown up publicly if they're on the rocks. And by definition, things are really rocky between them. He stares at the ice cubes absentmindedly. Since when does Blaise Zabini get burned by a witch? Since when does Blaise Zabini let a girl get him down? She's not just any witch, that's why.

One thing about Blaise: he doesn't wait around for anyone. He's a firm believer in seizing the day. So, that's exactly what's he's going to do. Planting his glass firmly on the shelf, he decides that if she wants to skip their business meeting, he'll take the meeting to her. And with that made, Blaise pours himself another firewhiskey and downs it, exhaling loudly as the liquid momentarily burns his esophagus. It almost feels as though the fire in his throat soothes the ache.

Smoothing down his collared shirt and summoning his robes, he throws it on swiftly before apparating in search of Hermione. Nothing ends unless it's on his terms. Lovers or not, they still have business to tend to. He'll use “work colleagues” to his every advantage. He will get this girl. She will be his in every sense of the word - and more.

Hermione isn't the type of girl to be late for anything, especially meetings. But if she is honest with herself, she doesn't know what do about Blaise. Well, more like “how” to deal with ending things with Blaise. If his feelings mirror anything her thoughts suggest, he'll want to end her or hold her hostage for burning the snake.

Hermione boils the kettle, adding a teabag and sugar to the mug. She needs the extra sweetening today. As the kettle whistles, she tops the mug with boiling water and a dash of milk, absentmindedly stirring her tea, a weird trait of hers when she is concentrating on her thoughts.

For the most part, she wants to cooperate and remain on good terms. A part of her questions if she is capable of doing such. Not the ending, but continuing with friendship. Are they even capable of being friend's now? How can you go from being enemies in school...to grown adults spending a night together...being business associates while casually fucking on the sidelines...semi-lovers...awkward post-fucking friend-zoned friends and still work together in somewhat dodgy proceedings with hopes of their flames fizzling out? It all seems too much, doesn't? And she only says post-fucking friend-zoned friends, because she doubts she has the stability to stay away from his bed. A ridiculous thought, but a notion that is true. He's been a comfort to her on those lonely nights, and although she doesn't “need” anyone, she's grown to like having someone. Convenience.

Urgh! thinks Hermione in frustration. She stops stirring her tea, pushes it aside, and brings her head to her hands. She holds her face while her elbows lean on her kitchen bench. The steam from her cup of tea dissipates.

She squeezes her eyes shut while resting her face in her hands. “This is why I'm technically single,” she says out aloud to Crookshanks. Crookshanks meows at her feet until she bends down to pet him. “I'm just not ‘good’ at this - dating...I don't know - is it even dating?” she asks the ginger feline.
Crookshanks purrs at the friendly stroke of Hermione's hand against his fur.

Even her cat knows she isn't good at this stuff.

Friendship is easy. It's what she knows; it's what she's good at...she understands how to be a good friend. But how to be a friend to a guy that has fucked every hole you have, and then some, and you more than mildly enjoy it...Well, picturing him naked certainly won't do. This is utter turmoil.

Hermione is already flustered by the thought. It's too much considering what they have isn't even a real, “sure” thing. It's creating just as much angst for her as a real “thing.”

Deciding that enough is enough, Hermione needs a distraction. What could be more distracting than planning the grand opening of a club? Even if it's connected to the wizard currently mind fucking her.

She takes her now cold tea, pouring it down the sink, and makes her way to her bedroom. A bit of freshening up and a cheeky champagne to help with the plans will suffice… Hermione has just the place in mind.

Sitting on the edge of her bed, she slides her foot into one side of her stockings, rolling the sheer material up her calves, over her knee, and further travelling above her thigh. She is going back to the place where it all began to mould things over in the muggle atmosphere. It's now approaching one O’clock in the afternoon, and the pub in particular will more than likely draw in a crowd of muggle workers having late lunches or early knock-off drinks.

She completes her outfit: a dark emerald-green blouse tucked into a short, black, fitted-skirt, black sheer stockings and a pair of simple, black, pointy, high-heels. She drapes a thick, dark grey coat over her shoulders before taking a glance at herself in the mirror. Hermione sighs before pinching her cheeks and summoning a rose-pink shade of lipstick. *Simple, yet classy.*

Hermione sweeps her hair into a bun, adds her finishing touches to her outfit, and is leaving her place in mere minutes. She arrives at the muggle bar, leather briefcase in tow, in search of a secluded spot where she won't be bothered. Her eyes scan the room, and she halts at the recognition of a familiar head of hair sitting in “their” regular booth.

Hermione was dreading their next confrontation, but she had no idea it would be so soon. She was hoping to lay low - at least for a few more hours. She couldn't go days, because Blaise would hunt her down and make her talk. An unfortunate expectation, but also one that holds merit because it means he cares - in a possessive, infatuated, kind of way. She relishes the attention despite feeling guilty for it. It was never something Hermione wanted from a man, especially a Slytherin. But in some ways, she feels as though they are wrapped around each other's fingers. They both have this craving to possess each other. It's volatile. It's obsessive. It's toxic.

Blaise is poised, smoking a cigar, appearing to be reading a muggle newspaper in an attempt to “blend.”
Hermione walks up behind him, steadying her breathing as she readies herself to face him. Her courage always wins despite the reservations in her mind.

“Am I really this predictable?” she questions calmly, already knowing what he's going to say.

Blaise puts out his cigar immediately, waving an open palm at the seat opposite him. Hermione doesn't wait for a clearer invitation, so she joins him, sliding into the chair across from him. She removes her laptop from the briefcase, setting it up. It's almost as though they'd planned a meeting here.

Internally, Blaise is smiling like the cheshire cat at being right that she would come. On the outside he is as smooth as ever.

“You're always predictable when you're mad. More specifically: the day after,” Blaise muses smugly.

Hermione attempts to call a waiter, but Blaise interrupts her.

“Don't. That's hardly the job of a lady.”

“Lady or not, I'm quite capable of ordering a drink, Blaise.”

“Not in my company you're not,” he states matter-of-factly. His tone has the kind of finality that she recognises it's not worth starting another fight over.

Hermione huffs, knowing it's chivalry at its finest, but she can't help but feel Blaise’s fangs steadily piercing her skin, injecting her with his venom. His poison is seeping through her veins, her independence unable to be sucked out of her to save life.

Blaise orders champagne. They have nothing to celebrate, but it's as if he can tell just by her mood what she wants. She hates it when he does that, leaks little signs that he pays attention to things and files it away for later, summoning the information at times like this. It can’t always be for personal gain, can it?

Hermione accepts a glass as Blaise shoos the waiter. He knows he should say something about last night, but he doesn't know where to begin. The start is always a good place, but he finds himself ignoring the obvious.

“Draco is fine, by the way,” he says dryly. Now he's playing the serious, tough card too.

Hermione subtly sticks her nose in the air, a defence mechanism at the recognition of his tone, but she is satisfied that he took her advice for once. She feels like it's a small victory in the scheme of things.

“I'm really glad to hear that,” she says sincerely as she looks down her nose.

“Lovegood and Longbottom are reviewing some things…”

“That's good to know,” says adds, a little more softly now. She dips her head and relaxes her shoulders a bit more. Her fingers are wrapped around the stem of her champagne glass as she casually brings it to her lips to take a sip.

Blaise decides it's now or never. This is a recovery mission after all. Puckering up the courage from god-knows-where, he tries to soften his intense, overpowering gaze.
“About last night.”

Hermione starts typing on her laptop, an obvious distraction from whatever truths are about to be revealed. She waits a few seconds before her mind goes elsewhere. *It's now or never. Say something now and be done with it. Just say something before he does.*

An awkward silence is between them - It can't be more deafening.

“I want to apologise for my behaviour,” mutters Blaise.

“Excuse me?” questions Hermione in shock.

Blaise clears his throat, raising his glass to his mouth before taking another swig of champagne.

“You heard me. I won't say it again.”

Hermione smiles subtly, pressing her lips together to try hide it.

“I accept your apology,” she muses, feeling victorious.

Blaise feels instant relief at her reaction, and he smirks back. He was worried she wouldn't come around.

Somewhere in the past five minutes of her being there, Hermione has changed her mind. Sometime during the past five minutes, he’s managed to slither his way back in causing her to forgive him…To forgive isn't being weak. Weakness is lacking the courage to do what you want. And right now, she is more certain than ever that she still wants to “do” Blaise. Call it small minded or sacrilegious. Hermione simply thinks of it as life experience. She'll live and learn from it all one day. For now, her mind is sick of thinking about how she came to this conclusion when less than ten minutes ago she wanted to end things.

Hermione is well on the way with plans for Divinity’s official opening - without Blaise or Theo’s help...she knows exactly what to expect and how to deliver. Blaise has been watching her closely throughout the day, happy to leave her to it. No expense is spared. All he wants to take care of is the “entertainment.”

Throughout the course of the afternoon, the general mood between them is pleasant. Once it's crunch time and they work on something with the same focus, they work together synonymously. It's as though last night never happened. It's as though all is forgiven and forgotten.

As tensions rise in between a flirtatious glance or the subtle nudge under the table, it's clear where the night is taking them. For once, Blaise welcomes the notion of going to Hermione's place. Whether it be an attempt at sucking up or him submitting, she isn't going to argue about it, enjoying the idea of having him in her bed for once. The last person she had in her bed was Draco Malfoy, the night of his stag do. It wasn't planned. It wasn't appropriate, but she can't deny it happened. She still has a soft
spot for him, considering they shared an exhilarating night. While her and Blaise are firecrackers, her and Draco were uncontrollable, passionate and intense. It was fun until she felt the guilt of their indiscretion the next morning. They parted ways and haven't had contact since, that is, until his initiation into Divinity.

Hermione hasn't really given Draco much thought to be honest. She wasn’t sure if she was trying to avoid the memories or if she was genuinely distracted. What she did know is when Blaise said to her: “Is this how you pictured your night when you came here? Us arguing about someone insignificant to you?” he couldn't have been more wrong. The history was there, and although it was only one night, it left a lasting impression on her. Probably because it was his stag do, and the fact that she avoided processing it all until now…

The moment is lost when Blaise seeks her attention.

After a solid afternoon of planning the final details of the grand event and too much champagne, Hermione finds herself Apparating them straight to her bedroom.

A combination of last nights frustrations and tonight's desperation lingers as Hermione kicks off her heels. She is slipping Blaise’s robes off his shoulders immediately before fumbling to unbutton his shirt; yearning for his lips.

Blaise is very much trying to do the same to her, but his patience is wearing thin. In a brazen attempt, he skips undoing her buttons, untucking her blouse from her skirt, slipping it straight over her head. He's pleased to see she has matched her undergarments with her shirt. Slytherin green and lace, his favourite combination. He figures it's a silent nod to him. Apparently, her subconscious dressed her this afternoon. He pulls her body into him, his lips slightly teasing hers, but he's aching to have a taste. His teeth lightly tug her bottom lip before his mouth connects with hers, kissing her fiercely.

Hermione has removed his shirt...the buckle of his pants is now undone while they kiss. His pants are down around his ankles in a flash. Blaise hops out, kicking them to the side. His hands are all over her, traveling from the small of her back down the back of her skirt. His hands meet her arse that is delicately wrapped in the sheer material of her pantyhose. He personally finds stockings sexy - the fact that she appears to be wearing practically nothing underneath them excites him greatly. It's like he gets to unwrap a present, and what's underneath is his favourite gift of all. Blaise stops kissing her lips and moves to her neck, biting and sucking the sweet spot between the top of her shoulder and the base of her throat. She lets out a gasp, shuddering for a moment while he does this. Blaise grunts in satisfaction at her reaction.

Feeling rather urgent now, he slips his hands out from her skirt and makes way for the zip. He has her unzipped and out of her skirt just as quickly as she got him out of his pants. He admires the way see-through material makes her skin look so complicated, like a maze - yet, so inviting.

“Damn, Granger, you know what stockings do to me,” he says darkly as he ceases the attention to her neck for a moment.

His left hand is sitting snug at the base of her back. He leans forward more, re intensifying the work he's doing on her neck as his right hand slips down the back of her thigh. He rests his grip behind her knee, just enough of a hold to pull her leg up - he guides it to wrap around his hip.
Blaise’s right hand glides from her knees to hip, following her curves to the front of her lower stomach. His fingers trail south so he can slip his hand between her legs. Upon getting there, he's pleased to find her dripping with anticipation.

“So wet,” he mutters in between nipping the thin skin of her neck.

He lets a finger penetrate her...enough for a tease but not enough to get her off. He can feel her want in his ministrations.

“I don't have much patience tonight, Blaise,” mutters Hermione breathlessly.

Wanting a closer look at what's underneath those stockings, Blaise withdraws his finger from her and stops paying attention to her neck. He resumes kissing her lips, guiding her back to the bed. As she reaches the edge of her mattress, he picks her up, tossing her backwards onto it in a not-so-gentle throw.

Hermione laughs as her body collides with the mattress. Blaise joins her, practically jumping on her playfully to straddle her legs. His hands hover at the top of her stockings but they don’t stay for long. His impatient fingers are hooking into the sheer material...one hefty tug is enough to rip them open: exposing the triangle of a very snug-fit g-string.

Blaise doesn't waste any more time, using magic to rid her of her underwear. His head dives between her legs shortly after to let his mouth and tongue do all the talking between their bodies. He could happily spend hours buried down there and not really give a fuck if she was tired. He never wants to tire of her. He never wants to stop.

His tongue works her clit as his fingers slip back into her cunt so he can pummel her. It's only a matter of time between the workings of his tongue and the come-hither motion of his fingers that he is sending her to the brink.

Her laboured breaths and not-so-innocent moans of appreciation have his cock so full of life, he's ready to venture into her pussy.

Blaise repositions himself on top of her. Hermione welcomes him with open arms and spread legs. As his dick drives into her, she gasps at the feel of his snake; it never ceases to amaze her how something as simple as a cock entering her could be so damn satisfying. Yet, here she is, trembling in his presence as he glides in and out of her.

Hermione's legs wrap around his waist as her hips roll into him. They find rhythm to the familiar push-pull of their bodies as they synonymously thrust and grind. As the night rolls on they find their bliss in each other. As they drift off to sleep they find comfort in each other. When they wake, who knows what tumultuous turn their relationship will take?
Cowardice is a Slytherin’s curse

Chapter Notes

There's a flashback in this chapter so characterisations will seem different. They're younger, a bit more naive… However, this is the moment that changes them.

Happy reading! Club opening is coming soon. I can't wait to write it!!! I've invented things ;) If you're enjoying Divinity, let me know. Thanks!

Beta-love to MrBenzedrine X

GiTG x

Hermione can't sleep. Her head is resting on his chest. She can feel the rise and fall of it...the steady rhythm of his heartbeat pounding beneath his caged ribs, beating to it's own rhythm of his breathing...He appears to be out of it.

As of late, living a double life isn't as exhausting as she thought it would be, but with saying that, her workload hasn't been too hectic at the moment. The club hasn't been open long, and although members are being initiated left, right, and centre, the need for an attorney isn't generally needed as of yet. The club is fresh, the Deity are excited, and much of the “other” proceedings have been kept to a minimum. She isn't entirely sure of what Blaise and Theo are capable of, but being Slytherins, she knows they are a team capable of great things.

In a Wizarding world with strict curfews and rules for everyday life, she understands people's need for release...it's only natural after all - she knows it too well. Even the Ministry has her on a leash. Too much conforming. Too many boundaries...it's only going to be a matter of time before people get restless, and if that happens...she can only imagine the widespread damage and chaos it will cause. In that sense, Divinity is kind of the savior. It'll give people what they need: balance. It may not be ethical, but even she admits to feeling the pressures of the Ministry’s rules. Just another contributing factor to why she got involved in with Divinity and Blaise in the first place.

She rolls off his chest, watching him for a moment. There's a light breeze coming in through the window, and each time a gust of wind blows the curtains flutter, causing the moonlight to light to dance across his face. He looks so peaceful like this. No arrogance, no pride...just him, stripped back to nakedness. She wonders what he dreams about to look so relaxed.

Hermione rolls out of bed, walking over to the window to close it. As she does, a peculiar looking owl swoops down towards her. She looks over her shoulder to check on Blaise and glances at the clock beside her bed. It's eleven P.M.

Finding it odd to be receiving an owl at such a time, she figures it's of importance...most likely from
someone who wants to be discreet. Upon receiving the scroll, she notices the green and silver “M” emblem wax seal, and her stomach drops. Opening it, she is somewhat relieved to see Draco just wants to set up a meeting to discuss his divorce. Hermione replies, giving him the address of the muggle bar her and Blaise frequent, opting for an early afternoon meeting of two P.M., notifying him of the dress code even though it’s not really an issue, considering who he is. And with that, she sends the owl on its way before returning to bed, finally wanting to sleep...

Draco was inebriated but he still had the ability to appear “put together.” It was his stag do, yet he was the one trying to leave. He wasn’t in the mood for celebrating. He didn’t want this to be his last night as a “bachelor.” He did, however, want to forget the whole thing for at least a few hours more. He wanted the distraction. He needed to forget his responsibilities for one night. He had no idea his actions would make the night unforgettable, and as such, would suffer the consequences of his actions for some time.

He wasn’t expecting anything when he bumped into her as he tried not to stumble out of the club.

“Granger,” he said in surprise.

“Malfoy, are you - umm, okay?” she asked with concern.

He replied sarcastically, “Never fucking better.”

Hermione didn’t know whether to laugh or scowl. She decided to ignore her better judgement and help him, despite her reservations.

“Are you trying to get somewhere? You can’t Apparate in this condition.”

“Honestly, Granger, I don’t want to go home. Regardless, I have to. I just can’t stumble in like this, though.”

“You seem to have a predicament then, don’t you? What about Zabini? Nott? Can’t they help?”

“They both have company.”

Hermione nodded, understanding exactly what he was implying.

“Some stag do, right? Well, look...I’ve got a floo connection at home. I can Apparate us there - I have some sobering-up potions brewed, you can take one and be on your way.”

Draco tilted his head in shock at her offering to help him. He was a proud man, but given the current situation, he wasn’t in the position to turn down help when it presented itself as easily as it had.

“I’d actually really appreciate that, Granger.”

Hermione nodded. “It’s no trouble, really,” she said as she extended her hand. He paused before he took it.

Upon touching her arm, they disappeared immediately, arriving in her flat.

Hermione instructed him to sit at the bench in her kitchen while she fetched the potion. She was kind
enough to offer him some water as well. Being a great judge of character and having the ability to feel people's vibes, she could tell something was wrong.

“Is everything okay, Malfoy?”

Draco gave her a peculiar look. First, he was shocked she picked up on his mood. Secondly, he was a little bit embarrassed he was feeling compelled to open up to her. And thirdly, he realised he found her much more attractive than what she was in school. Could he really talk to her? He questioned himself.

He popped the cork off the phial, knocking back the sober-up potion in one gulp. He wished it was something stronger. He ran his fingers through his hair; he wasn't one to talk to anyone about things. Normally, it'd be a snide remark here with a side of sarcasm there...he likes to keep guarded. But he was tired of being so self-absorbed. Just once, he craved something real. No ulterior motives. No fear for who he was. Just him.

Draco opened his mouth, preparing to say the words he hadn't even had the balls to say out aloud to himself.

“I'm sick of being a Malfoy,” he said without looking at her. “People always expect so much. I'm being forced into this marriage because of my name...do you ever wish that you could have lived your life in another person's shoes? Just to see what it's like to have a somewhat, normal upbringing?” he asked seriously.

Hermione didn't realise she'd opened a can of worms, but he was sober now. This was Malfoy, actually talking and wanting to confide in her. It was a strange thing, but one she wasn't about to turn her back on. She pulled up a stool next to him and joined him at the bench.

“Sometimes, I wonder how different my life would be if I was a pureblood,” she confessed.

“You don't want to know,” mused Draco as he shook his head. “You should be thankful you never had the upbringing I did. I figured things out for myself, eventually, but my parents...my father in particular - his values are far from my own.”

Hermione didn't know what to say, but she knew what to do. She put her hand on his shoulder to offer some comfort, as if she understood, but she really didn't. She could never fully comprehend how he was raised. She'd never thought about how hard it really would have been for him.

“That's a part of life. Learning, evaluating, and becoming the best version of you that you can be, isn't it? It's not always a walk in the park, but the sun will rise again, no matter how hard you've been hit by storms.”

Draco looked at her, really looked at her - his eyes searched for something in the depths of hers. He could see so much layered behind the brilliance of her honey-brown eyes. There's this warm, kind-hearted soul that beckoned him, and her intelligence had always appealed to him despite competing against her his whole life. He never thought in his wildest dreams that he'd want to be appealing to her, but right here - right now, he did.

He cleared his throat.

“Don't let anyone tell you that you can't do something, that you can't be someone better, or force you to be with someone because it'll look good on a document and in social circles.”

“I would - I would never. Is that how you really feel? Malfoy, you have every right to put a stop to it if that's what you want. You don't have to do this.”
“You don’t understand. I have to.”

Hermione didn’t understand why he couldn’t just stand up to his family and say no.

“The Malfoy I knew in school could manipulate anyone to get what he wanted. You don’t have to have a backbone. You just have to be smart about it.”

Draco chuckled nervously.

“It’s too late for that. This contract has been in effect since my known existence.”

“Break the contract.”

Draco scoffed. “It’s not that simple; you can’t just break this sort of contract.”

“I may not understand the way you were raised, but I happen to know that Slytherins can be an unstoppable force when the ambition to succeed outweighs their fears.”

“Pft. I’m not scared, Granger.”

“Then what’s holding you back?”

“Don’t worry about it, I shouldn't have said anything. It's not like I respected you in the past - you don't owe me anything, Granger.”

“It’s one thing to owe someone, but it's another to be a decent human being. Not everyone that lends an ear is out to get something from you, you know.”

“In my experience, it's all I've ever known.”

“I’m really sorry to hear that,” offered Hermione apologetically.

“Don’t be...It’s nothing to do with you.”

“Why did you wait so long? Why didn't you try and do something about it sooner?” she asked.

“Cowardice is a Slytherin’s curse. My father is a prick - end of, really.”

“I could try and help you. I'm only an intern, but I could take a look at the contract.”

“While I appreciate the offer, Granger, there's really no more time. It's inevitable.”

“I'm sorry…”

“Don’t be.”

Hermione felt helpless. She wanted to assist, but all her suggestions were proving fruitless in her attempt. Her kitchen remained silent for a while. She didn't know how else to comfort him, and he didn’t want to go home yet. She couldn't exactly just kick him out. Well, she could, but her conscience wouldn’t allow it.

He avoided her eyes again.

“This is probably a strange request, but would you object to having my company for a little bit longer? I don’t want to deal with—”

“I get it. You want to escape reality a little while longer. It's okay. Have you ever watched a movie
before?"

“What the fuck is a movie?”

“I'll show you.”

Hermione opened her cupboard to fetch some popcorn, placing the bag straight into the microwave.

“We need a snack to watch a movie?” questioned Draco.

Hermione laughed as she nodded.

“Snacks are ideal with a movie.”

Draco seemed a bit hesitant, but he came around. Given the current circumstances, this was much better option. As the microwave beeped, signaling its contents was ready, Hermione removed the popcorn from it and levitated two glasses of water into the lounge room as she led the way.

Hermione motioned him to sit on her couch. She didn't often have company, so it was a simple two-seater lounge, which meant they had to sit together but Draco chose a side and made himself comfortable. While Hermione was getting the movie ready, he made a start on the popcorn, obviously famished from his night out. As she turned on the t.v, he was startled by the little pictures moving on the screen.

“So it's actually a muggle job to hang around in that box all day? What kind of magic is this?” he perplexed.

Hermione started patting her chest lightly as she choked on a piece of popcorn - she nearly snorted it up through the back of her throat. She tried to suppress a giggle, not wanting to make fun of him for not knowing. It was so innocent of him the way he said it.

“Muggles don't have magic, Malfoy, you already know this. It's technology.”

“Techno-what?”

“I'll explain later. Just shut up and watch the movie,” she rebuked.

The moment the movie started, Draco criticised everything.

“What could possibly be manly about a bunch of muggle men dancing in tights? Why does he sing like a girl? He's carrying on like a fucking Gryffindor, I don't like this Robin lad.”

Hermione was practically in fits the entire film. Robin hood: Men in Tights was considered one of the classics. She had no idea one could draw so many conclusions from a comedy, but of course, Malfoy wasn't a regular person. He had a curious mind, much like hers. If there was one thing she understood about him, it was his curiosity, because she had it too.

The movie finished, and they talked about it for some time. Draco had found it far more entertaining than she'd imagined, and she was pleased it seemed to brighten his mood a bit. She didn't know when exactly it was that they fell asleep, but her living room lights woke her a couple of hours later. She was curled up into his shoulder, feet tucked under his legs. He had his head resting on the back of the chair and an arm around her waist, pulling her into him.

At the realisation of just how snug they were, she tried to subtly remove his arm from around her waist. She leaned forward, accidentally startling him; his head came forward as hers moved back,
and their heads collided.

“Fuck, Granger, what are you doing?” he said while holding a hand against his forehead.

“Ouch!” whined Hermione in pain while she held the back of her head. “What do you mean what am I doing? What were you doing with your arm wrapped around my waist?”

Draco’s head snapped down to look at his arm that was still, very clearly, wrapped around her waist. He looked unsure of what to do next.

“Well, why are you feet tucked under my legs? Do you know how cold your feet were when you did that?”

“If you were awake when I did it, why didn't you wake me?”

Draco didn't have an answer. Truth be told, he didn't mind it, and he was only carrying on in response to her reaction of his arm being around her waist.

“In order for me to remove my arm, you’re kind of going to have to get off me and move your damn feet.”

Hermione was tired, and her response time lacked efficiency.

“That’s not a problem with me,” she said as she went to get up. She attempted to stand and felt a painful throb in the back of her head where she’d collided with his. The pain of it caused her to stumble. She lost her balance as her vision blurred. She felt light headed. Hermione tried to stand, but she was unbalanced...vertigo took hold of her. As she fell, Draco caught her.

“Hey! Granger, are you okay?” he asked giving her a gentle face slap.

“I'm-ow, I'm fine...it's just my head hurts, and I'm a bit dizzy.”

“Where's your potions storage?”

“I'll be fine.”

“Granger, just tell me so I can help you,” insisted Draco.

Hermione held on to Draco, still feeling off balance. Draco pulled her into him tighter to ensure she was well supported.

“If you won't tell me, I'll levitate you to the kitchen and look for it myself.”

Hermione chuckled. “Take me to my damn kitchen, but don't levitate me. I can shuffle if you're prepared to help.”

Draco rolled his eyes.

“You're still so fucking stubborn, you know that?”

“I do, and I happen to pride myself on it.”

Draco helped her to the kitchen. Instead of helping her to a stool, he picked her up and sat her on the bench.

“You're not going to faint on me, are you?”
Hermione laughed.

“Not on purpose. Just hurry up, will you? The pantry over there. Second-shelf, green phial.”

He did as she instructed and even removed the cork before giving it to her.

“Who would’ve thought Draco Malfoy would be a gentleman?” she mocked light-heartedly.

Draco took offence to her assumption that he was far from gentlemanly.

“I'll have you know mother raised a gentleman - and if I refused to help a lady in need, she would have hexed me. You'd never want to be on the wrong side of mother. Trust me.”

Hermione agreed, thinking she’d never want to be on the wrong side of any Malfoy.

“It appears we've both had an eventful night. I helped you. You've helped me. We're even now,” admitted Hermione, accepting the phial from him. The moment the liquid touched her lips, her head felt better.

She attempted to jump down of the bench; at the same time, he gripped her waist to assist. When her feet touch the floor, she stumbled to get her footing, and he pushed her back against the bench to help stabilize her.

“When did you get so clumsy, Granger?”

Hermione huffed.

“I'm not clumsy. You've just practically concussed me with that gigantic forehead of yours. Don't you think you've over-stayed here?” she suggested innocently. She didn't really mean it though. She'd grown to enjoy his company.

“I assure you my head is big where it counts,” he proclaimed with a wink. “I have. Thanks for reminding me so eloquently,” he rebuked sarcastically. “Thank you for everything,” he added sincerely.

He stood facing her as her back was hard up against the bench. He still had hold of her waist - only she now had a hold of his. Their eyes locked.

“You sure you're okay now?” he asked, genuinely concerned for her.

“I am. Thank you.”

Draco didn’t want to let go of her. He wanted another reason to stay. He liked her company. He’d enjoyed the movie. He’d liked helping her when she was hurt. It was nice to be truly needed without any other intentions. He appreciated her a whole lot more than he did before, that was for sure.

Her hair fell down the sides of her face, blocking her left eye. His hand automatically swooped up to tuck it behind her ear. His fingers lingered, brushing her face on the way down, and she exhaled a shaky breath at their intimacy. Neither knew what was being exchanged between them in that moment, but it was clear it wasn't just any exchange. Instead of leaving like he was suppose to, his fingers gently fluttered from her cheek to her neck. He guided her face forward, pulling her in for a kiss.
Hermione wakes early, and Blaise is gone. She should have expected he wouldn't stick around in the morning.

She remembers her late night delivery. “Looks like I have a meeting with Malfoy,” she says to Crookshanks. He meows back at her as he jumps up on the bed to greet her.

“I know what you're thinking, Crookshanks, but the truth is - we've never even spoken about that night. It ended as quick as it had started.

She pets Crookshanks as he attempts to snuggle up to the side of her thigh. He nudges her hand affectionately as she speaks.

‘It's fine, I mean - it was years ago. Besides he's getting divorced. And I'm seeing Blaise, anyway. It's not going to be like that. It's just business.”

But what Hermione fails to realise is that business was never just *business*. And pleasure was never just *pleasure*. Her secrets are slowly unravelling around her, threatening to come undone. And she has no idea just how much the gravity of these connections would really cause her in the future...One night stands are never just one night. Once the history is there, history can always have a way of repeating itself. And things in her life are about to get a whole lot more complicated for it.
My muse is on fire!

Some people are wanting Dramione spoon fed to them from a platter. I get it. I love them, too! Ahaha. However, Dramione endgame doesn't mean there won't be a struggle. Trust in my storytelling process; let me take you for a ride. Enjoy!

Beta-love to MrBenzedrine + thank you to her for slotting in the line: “Well, I don't fuck girls, so…” heh heh heh ;)

GiTG x

Blaise swept her hand off his chest, bringing it slowly towards his face. He kissed the back of her palm tenderly; he had no words to express himself. He's not experienced with “feelings.” Is it wrong for him to leave while she's asleep? He didn't want to disturb her, but he also had an appointment with Luna, and he needed to confirm something before the opening. Pushing aside his confusion, he decided Hermione will understand business comes first, and with that, he scooted off the bed, got dressed, and apparated out of there.

Blaise had woken in the morning and left.

He’d lingered long enough to watch her rest peacefully in his arms. His heartbeat didn't slow, not once, in her state of calmness. But still, he feels a little foolish spending the night there. And he’s uneasy with the confessions he’d made to himself about her. He isn't okay with being dependant on her. He isn't okay with wanting so much more.

He's conflicted, torn between giving into his heart or letting himself be guided by his head. He can trust his head - his mind has been a faithful friend his entire life. His heart... well to be honest, he is only just starting to get acquainted with his heart. The heart is a fickle thing. His strength and loyalty rely on his mind.

Draco is apprehensive, though he'd never dare to admit it. Sure, five years has passed...but the past always has a way of coming back. He didn't intend on avoiding her forever, but the truth is, they'd
both fucked up majorly that night. He is still a human with a conscience, despite the solid foundation of sarcasm and arrogance he's built himself on. Mainly, it’s due to his upbringing. That night with Hermione changed something in him. He'd opened a part of himself up to her that is buried deep within him. He's noticed a change in her, too. There's something devilish about the muggleborn now. The essence of innocence is gone. She is still intelligent as Hell, but he can tell she’s learnt how to play in the snake pit. Either way, he's interested in learning more about the Hermione she is now, but he hopes there's still a piece of the old her in there somewhere.

“Love-Long Lab” is located in a private section at the back of Luna’s house. She named it so, because she collaborated with Neville often and wanted to pay homage to him. It's just one of the many little things she does to show she appreciates him. She's gifted exotic plants found on her travels, collected sands from all over the world for him. She’s indebted to his friendship. He has a kind soul that makes her heart happy, and her spirit always finds ways to appreciate him.

Luna opens up the greenhouse section of their lab in order to promote positive airflow and let some light in. Since Blaise placed his order, she's been busy in preparation for Divinity’s opening. With two days to go, she's flat-out. Neville offered to help, so she’s found comfort in that. He's a good person.

Her thoughts are interrupted by familiar, mischievous tone.

“Lovegood, you're looking rather revitalised. Antidote success?”

“Indeed. You see, everyone always thinks of the sun as the devil when hung over or coming down. Concentrated Vitamin D appears to work wonders in antidotes,” she gleams.

“Something so obvious, yet simple. You're good, you know that?”

“So they say. I'm finishing up on your request. It'll be complete in time for the opening.”

“Wonderful,” responds Blaise with a smirk of satisfaction.

“I've had some help. It wasn't a realistic timeframe. Neville can't always be around to help, so in the future, I require at least a month's notice.”

“Understood. I didn't mean to put you out. I'll throw you an extra sweetener for your conscientious effort to fulfill my request. Speaking of Longbottom, if he's been helping out, where is he?”

“I haven't seen him today, so I really don't know. I imagine him frolicking in a field of plants, basking in the sun, drinking in the scent of delicious daisies.”

“Of course, you do. Very well then, great work. And I look forward to trying the goods!”

“You won't be disappointed.”

“I hope you know I expect to see you there, reaping the benefits of your work,” he mutters with a wink. His voice is mysterious as it is inviting.

Luna’s bright eyes twinkle as she nods to accept his invitation.
“You'll see me floating around at some point,” she muses dreamily.

“Always a pleasure doing buisness with you.”

Neville is nervous. He doesn't know where he got the idea from, but he woke up with a boner so hard the pain of it is agony. The Longbottom name holds a special significance to his family's traits. It was rumoured Longbottom men had big dicks and an insatiable sexual appetite. He is the odd one out. There is no lack of “long” -goods, no doubt about it. But in general, his sexual appetite has been suppressed for the most part of his adult life. Probably because he finds far too much excitement and gratification in botanics than he does women. Sometimes he thinks that there is something wrong with him. That was, until Luna took his fancy and he realised he’s only been seeking a witch with his common love and knowledge of plants.

He's often fantasised about burying himself into her heavenly divine garden, tasting her earth.

Neville’s lust for Luna is becoming unbearable. Unable to get her off his mind and needing more than a self-fix, he reluctantly ventures into Divinity to see how his needs can be satisfied. He feels if he doesn't do this, he'll embarrass himself around her, and he needs a release. He is going to experience the Poly-brothel for the first time. He isn't a virgin. He'd regrettably lost his virginity to the Patils - at the same time. One would think a lad blessed to lose his V-card to twins would find it an exhilarating, hormone-triggering experience. But for him, no. He never wanted to be responsible for the pleasure of two women again. He'll be happy with the task of pleasing just one. With saying that, he isn't sure that's what goes on there. He's the customer.

Not wanting to be seen, Neville hurries through the side entrance, tapping the knocker three times before it reveals a door handle. He twists the knob anxiously, opening the large, ebony door and stepping into the opulence of the Poly-brothel. He not-so-calmly paces in front of the main desk, waiting for the Madam.

“Good afternoon, sir, how may Divinity be of service to you today?”

Nevilles head whips around at the sound of a familiar, feminine voice.

“Ginny?”

“Oh, hello Neville. Sorry - sir. Blaise is all about formalities here for discretion and comfort.”

“That's...well, that's good to know.”

“There's no need to be nervous. We all took the oath. No one outside these walls can talk about you being here. Besides, you'd be surprised the kind of crowd this section attracts,” states Ginny with the kind of tone that suggests it's really no big deal.

Her chill attitude calms him, but the attractive Weasley is pleasing on the eyes in a slinky black dress and red pumps.

“Professionally speaking, do you have a strand of hair of the person in question? Or are you wanting to purchase from our stores? We have a large variety in stock. We aim to meet the needs of many.”

“Gee, umm...you say it like it's a catalogue. I have what I need. I-I just need-”
“No problem, just had to ask. That's an easy enough request. I have two girls available at the moment. It's your choice. You can know who they are and make a selection, or they can take the potion and greet you as whoever you want them to be. It does make your time shorter, though, because some like them to leave before the juice wears off.”

“I'd prefer to know who I'm technically balls deep in.”

“You've made a wise decision. My girls, in question are fantastic in the sack. Before I reveal them to you, are you requiring any additional conditions?”

“No, I'm okay with the protection of the oath, and I trust you.”

“Good. I've two Slytherins available.”

Neville gasps. He wasn't sure what to expect, but the realisation of fucking a Slytherin is too much.

“I know what you're thinking. But Pansy and Daphne are great. Pansy is a rarity here. She doesn't much like giving up her time. Normally, she comes here to blow off some steam.”

Neville feels sick with nerves. This being his first time for anything of this nature, he doesn't really know what to say or do.

“Would you like to see them?” asks Ginny.

“Is that a thing? You can - okay, umm sure.”

Ginny chuckles at his awkwardness.

“Relax. You'll be hooked once this is over with.”

Neville shifts awkwardly with his hands in his pockets while Ginny disappears out back. She reappears with Pansy and Daphne in tow.

Pansy is dressed in a seductive, red-laced babydoll dress. Her hair is to one side in loose waves. He's drawn to her immediately. *Who knew a Slytherin could look so good in red?* he thinks, appreciating her in a totally new light. Daphne is wearing a green corseted bodice with minimal material covering the front of her V. He’s intrigued by her too, but his dick throb is pulling him toward Pansy.

He clears his throat bashfully, speaking in a hushed tone, “Parkinson.”

Ginnys eyes widen for a split second before she speaks.

“Enjoy.”

Ginny turns to wink at Pansy, exiting the room with Daphne. Neville is left alone to his own devices with Pansy.

“Follow me, Gryffindork,” she sasses.

“Aren't you supposed to be all about the customer? Calling one Gryffindork is hardly professional.”

“Ease up, Longbottom. It’s Gryffindork or Professor, up to you. And for the record, nothing I'll be doing to you in the next hour is formal, that I can assure you.”

Neville gulps. He begins to question if he made the right choice.
Pansy opens the door to a room colour coordinated with her outfit. Neville curiously enquires about her choice of colour.

"Channeling Gryffindor are we? Trying to fulfill some desire?"

"Don't be ridiculous. I like to change it up. Red is an alluring colour, and it happens to make my skin look amazing...I'll leave you a few minutes to get situated while I change. The hair?"

Neville passes Luna’s hair to Pansy.

“Oh, yeah sure. Here.”

“Oh, a blonde! I haven't been blonde yet, surprisingly. Your blonde will be with you in just a few short minutes. I hope you don't mind if we have a drink first? Helps to reduce the tension, if you know what I mean. Makes it a bit easier to go through with it.”

Neville feels relieved by her suggestion and nods in acceptance. Pansy exits briefly, leaving him alone to ready himself. He feels uncomfortable already, so he sits on the edge of the bed, fully clothed, and decides to wait for her return. Pansy almost seems half decent.

She is a vision in red: Luna that is. Well, it's Pansy, but she looks like Luna. Luna’s periwinkle eyes. Luna’s white blonde tresses cascading down her shoulders. Luna’s pale skin.

The blonde crosses the room, taking a seat beside him.

“Hello, Neville,” she says innocently. “Why don't you make yourself comfortable?”

Neville is feeling like a...well, a pansy at the moment. He's either really out of practise or incompetent, because he doesn't remember getting naked being such a difficult task.

The “Luna” version of Pansy asks, “Is there a problem? Or do you just want to sit and talk, Gryffindork?”

Neville knows he's going to regret saying this, but he can't warm up to the idea of fucking Pansy in Luna’s body. He opts to just talk, which ends up being perfectly okay with her, too. Who would have thought the Slytherin princess would be capable of pleasant conversation? Quippy jokes, snotty-sarcastic remarks laced with venom, but served up in a way that is utterly captivating. Underneath the surface, under all the hard, haughty-toity, self-righteousness is something more.

She's surprisingly intelligent and admits to being particularly fond of her garden, despite not having an ounce of a green thumb. They reminisce and reflect on Hogwarts and discuss how much The Wizarding World has changed now. He offers a few tips for her gardener.

The hour passes quickly, and he's almost disappointed by it; he hasn't been talking to Luna for the past hour. It's been Pansy the whole time.

As her white blonde locks start changing to ebony, he thanks her, bids her adew, and walks out of Divinity, unsure if he'll return. But he can't shake Pansy from his mind; the lady in red has left a lasting impression on him.
It's one-thirty in the afternoon, and Draco is ready to meet her. He doesn't want to be too punctual, but the reality of it is - he only has a short window to disappear without raising suspicion from Astoria, and that's the last thing he wants. He has to plan this right. He knows their divorce won't be an easy task, but it'll be ten times harder if she's onto him before his affairs are in order. He married a Slytherin witch after all. They generally have a reputation of being difficult to deal with, if not more conniving than their male counterparts.

Against his better judgment, he opts for an early arrival of one-thirty. As he arrives at the muggle bar, he's surprised to see Hermione's already there, her hands wrapped around a steaming-hot beverage.

Draco approaches her. She's facing him, so it's no surprise when she looks up to greet him.

“Malfoy,” she articulates with a subtle smirk. There’s a little twinkle in her eyes that makes him think she's happy to see him. “Please, do join me.”

He nods pleasantly, accepting her invitation.

“You can drop the professional act, Granger.”

Hermione looks at him in a way that is unreadable. Probably because only he knows what he learnt about her five years ago. That she enjoys watching muggle men in tights while devouring buttery treats. He knows that she hates having cold feet. And she loved it when he fucked her on her kitchen table.

His thoughts elicit a chuckle.

“Something amusing you, Malfoy?” she enquires curiously.

Not wanting to dive into the replaying of their history in his thoughts, especially in such a public place, he looks for the first thing to wind her up.

“You've destroyed the feng shui of this bar simply by what you’ve done to that mug, Granger.”

The porcelain cup she’s drinking from has a layer of pink lipstick evenly spaced around the lip of the mug. She supposes it does look horrendous, but what she does to the mug has absolutely nothing to do with the feng shui of the bar. How he knows what “feng shui” is, astounds her. Hermione is almost offended by his observation, but she agrees it looks pretty disgusting. She subtly scourgifies the cup.

“Feeling more balanced now, Malfoy?” she asks smugly.

Draco smirks at her, enjoying her slight annoyance with him for pointing it out. He notices a small bite mark on the nape of her neck and realises the twinkle in her eye mustn't be for him. She's got that after sex glow about her.

“Much more,” he modulates. “Well, someone forgot to do a glamour,” he interjects with the raise of his brows.

“Excuse me?”

“Did you not look in the mirror before you came here?”

Hermione blushing, placing the palm of her hand over her neck after following his direction of sight.
“You're still a jerk when pointing out the obvious,” she snaps.

“I thought you were a bit more reserved with that stuff when it comes to public reflection,” articulates Draco, laced with a hint of jealousy despite having no ownership of her.

“I still am. I was just...distracted while getting ready to come here.”

Draco insists on helping her disguise it.

“Would you like some help with that, Granger?”

“Is it really that distracting to you?”

“Of course, it is. Someone's marked you as their territory, I didn't think anyone would be capable of holding such a claim on you.”

“It's just a bite. It means nothing.”

“It means more than you think it does, depending on the person who gave it to you,” asserts Draco. “Now then, what's distracting you so much that you can't even remember to hide a hickey?”

Hermione’s hands fiddle with her now empty mug. Her focus is flawed.

“Well, umm - you, this meeting, our past...obviously,” she confesses.

Draco is surprised by her honestly, but she has always had a reputation for being bold and fearless. He isn't prepared to have this conversation, but that doesn't mean he doesn't want to have it.

“I see. Look, we don't owe each other anything. We don't have to talk about it,” he counters.

“Well, see that's the thing. I think we need to,” she suggests, biting her lip. She drags her teeth over the bottom of her mouth. To Draco, the seductive scene is playing for him much more slowly than in real time.

“Do you regret it?” she questions quietly. It's as though she is treading water, unsure of how to keep afloat in the uncertainty of their situation.

Draco is getting more from this meeting than he bargained for. He should have expected their past would come up. He should have known she'd want to discuss it to some degree. He swipes his hand through his hair, sits back, leaning casually into the chair, as if to suggest that the conversation they are having is nothing short of a big deal.

“No...no I don't. I regret going through with my marriage. But it is what it is, and we're here now to fix it.”

Draco is still distracted by the fact some guy has left his mark on her; he wouldn't be Draco if he didn't feel the need to ask her more on the subject. Despite it being years since their rendezvous, he still feels somewhat protective of her. But not in the way of nurturing. It's the kind of possessive protection you feel for a loved one.

Interrupting her speech, Draco demands more answers, though he has no leg to stand on by making demands of her.

“Is the man who gave you that hickey of importance to you?”

Hermione is almost confused by the abrupt change of topic, but it’s more out of shock. It's like he's
her father, demanding to know about her private life.

She stutters in response, unsure of how much to say, but she answers his question, nonetheless.

“Y-yes and no. We've been seeing each other for a while, but we're nothing official, if that makes sense.”

Draco rolls his eyes.

“Oh, it's one of those things.”

Hermione frowns.

“What is that supposed to mean? Quiet, you! Don't make judgement...you'll be back on the dating scene soon.”

“I don't even know how to date, to be honest,” confesses Draco. “And it means exactly what you think it means.”

Hermione glares at him for a moment, but not long enough to bite her tongue. She puts the focus back on him.

“Well, I'd offer advice, but the truth is I'm not good at it either.”

Draco feels reminiscent of the night they conversed before they hooked up five years ago. He's eager to erect any kind of friendship with her.

“Sounds like a good excuse to divulge in a popcorn session with muggle men dancing around in tights playing in the background while you confess to me all your dirty secrets,” he muses.

“I'm not sure it's something we should discuss. But I won't say no to the popcorn and your witty remarks. You can be pleasant and entertaining when you want to be,” she says through a smirk.

“You don't think we should talk about it? That's a dead giveaway that I know the person, and you're ashamed of him.”

“I'm not ashamed,” replies Hermione in horror at his accusation. “It's just incredibly complicated.”

“Why?”

“Why are you pressing this? I don't know. I don't have the answers you want.”

“I'm guessing by your emotive response that it's serious.”

Hermione clears her throat and shifts her focus from his left eye to his right.

Draco can read her like an open book.

“You know, Gryffindors are shit at lying to Slytherins.”

“I happen to be great at misleading Slytherins. Just not you,” she quips.

“I'm brighter than you think, Hermione. Your body language is easy to read. Stop dancing around the subject. Who? Blaise or Theo?”

“Always one to go straight to the point,” she admits.
“Well?”

“Blaise.”

“...I didn't see that coming.”

“Neither did I, to be honest.”

Draco can't even comprehend the thoughts going through his mind right now. He can't get past the fact that Blaise is fucking her. The jealous streak in him ignites to a full blown inferno.

“Hermione, I hate to say this, but Blaise isn't the type to settle. Especially running a club like Divinity. He might be my mate, but he's shit at dating.”

Hermione is a little defeated, finding the topic draining.

“That's kind of why we work. I'm shit at it, too. We have an understanding.”

“Does this understanding include multiple partners? Are you exclusive?” asks Draco, desperate to know more.

Hermione shakes her head.

“I don't know. I've been exclusive. We've never really spoken about it.”

“What does that tell you?”

“Why are you being so pushy about it?”

“Truthfully, if you found out your mate is fucking a girl you fucked first, don't you think you'd be acting the same?” interjects Draco.

“Well, I don't fuck girls, so…” muses Hermione.

“We fought about you, you know?” she confesses with caution, eager to see if his possessiveness is triggered by a deeper meaning. He is fire, and she is dancing in his flames.

“What? Wait...he doesn't know about-” he says with an ounce of concern.

“No, of course not. Just about the way your initiation happened.”

Draco feels a sinking disappoint, but he supposes it's for the best. Besides, they were going to be around each other a lot more. He has a divorce to finalise. They'll have time to bond. He can suss out this Zabini/Granger thing and see how deep it is. He'll bide his time, and when the moment presents itself, he'll swoop in and seize the opportunity to sweep her of her feet. Hermione isn't property to own; she isn't a prize to keep. But she will most definitely be his. He is more deserving of her than Blaise. And so he sets the solid foundation of pursuing her.
The meeting with Draco proved to be more thought provoking than ever. The discussion regarding her relationship with Blaise, although brief, has triggered a rollercoaster of emotions. She feels a cloud of doubt in the pit of her stomach, and the lump in her throat is like a ball of heartache. She can't swallow it; it's just sitting there as her angst grows...she’s feeling physically weakened by emotions. If she didn’t know any better, it’s as though Dementors are attacking her well being. It's never crossed her mind to ask about the exclusivity of their arrangement, and she feels foolish for that. They were never public about things, which is fine with her. But the fact that Blaise may or may not be exclusive with her just makes her feel sick. She cares too much.

The rest of the afternoon is a blur as she wrestles with her woes. Her mind is her enemy as her struggles continue well into the night.
Hermione doesn’t get much sleep that night. She was controlled by the turmoil of her thoughts.

The next morning, she wakes to the tapping of a little beak on her window. Upon letting the owl in, she receives a piece of parchment wrapped with red and gold ribbon, sealed by an unknown wax seal. She opens it to discover that someone has either forgotten to include who they are, or it's from someone who wishes to remain anonymous. Whoever it's from is generous. They’ve organised a spa treatment at a salon including a full body massage, manicure, pedicure, facial, full body scrub, head massage, and a haircut. She wonders if it's from Blaise. She hasn't made any beauty appointments as of late; a day at the spa to relax will be just what she needs to unwind.

Delighted by the generosity of the anonymous gift, she gladly readies herself for total and utter bliss.

Hermione arrives at a bustling day spa in muggle London. A petite brunette welcomes her upon entry, ushering her into a private room and instructing her to shower, redressing only in the robe and slippers provided. Her first treatment will be the full body massage followed by the body scrub.

Eager to commence her pampering session, Hermione does as instructed and is now on a massage table with only a light sheet covering her naked body. Her head is tucked comfortably, face-down in the slot provided while she awaits her masseuse. The door creaks slightly, and the soft, controlled voice of a woman speaks to her.

“Pardon, Miss Granger, but unfortunately there was a glitch with our booking system, and I was double booked. We only have one other masseuse available for your massage today, but he is male. Do you object? It's not a problem if that's so. We will be happy to reschedule your treatment. I'm so sorry for the inconvenience.”

“No, no that's fine. I'm here, and I'm sure he'll be capable of doing just as good of a job as you. Send him in.”

“No problem, Miss Granger. And once again, we are so sorry for the mix up. He isn't much of a talker. He wants his clients in a state of total relaxation.”

“That's not a problem, I didn't come here for conversation. I'm sure he'll be more than adequate, thank you.”

Hermione waves her hand to signal everything is fine, a habit she picked up from Blaise regrettably, while she mentally prepares herself for a good massage. She feels bad at how she casually shooed the employee, but she needs this time to reflect, reevaluate, and relax. The gender of her masseuse is no big deal. Or is it?

Hermione's thoughts are interrupted once more, this time by the sound of a cupboard being opened, some sort of liquid being poured into something, and the sound of hands lathering the liquid.

Hermione relaxes as she feels strong hands slip under the sheet, peeling it away to expose her back. Before long, she is being warmed by the oils soaking into her body. The scent in the room is of
manuka honey and fresh frangipanis.

“Oh, oh that's amazing. A little harder there, please. Yes, just like that.”

The masseuse’s hands are like magic, following the curve of her spine and kneading her shoulders, paying special attention to the top of them and the base of her neck. His thumbs roll in circles as he increases his pressure to work out all her knots. He's hitting just the right spot; the aroma in the room, mixed with the way he’s touching her, stirs something in Hermione. She's in such a state of ease as his hands gently glide to her lower back...he starts massaging the base of her hips, just above the buttocks. His thumbs are working the top of her back while his fingers grip the sides of her hips. Just the feel of his fingertips in that vicinity has her slightly on edge, but she allows it as he hovers there for some time to make her comfortable.

Once her hips are free of knots, his hands boldly glide over her arse cheeks and finish at her glutes, pulling the sheet further down in the process. Hermione jumps at the sudden change. This asshole just exposed her and is being highly inappropriate!

“That's enough! I'm done here,” says Hermione with her voice raised. She didn't come here for anything other than her massage, and this creep was far too comfortable touching clients. ”Get out!”

She hears the sound of footsteps and the door closing. When she is certain she's alone, she hastily gets up to dress herself. She won’t be taking her clothes off here again. Hermione feels compelled to march out to the front desk and demand to see the manager, however, with the rest of her treatment being given to her by others, she stays against her better judgement. She'll pen a letter of dissatisfaction this evening.

With that, she moves on to her pedicure and manicure and follows it with a hair treatment and fresh cut.

Hermione is sitting in front of a large mirror while a hairdresser trims her ends. She's oblivious to the fact that Cormac is lurking nearby, waiting to retrieve the cutoffs of hair he so desperately sought. He’s still dressed as an employee to blend; using the imperius curse on muggles was far too easy. Last time he was lucky. He’d plucked a hair straight off the jacket hanging in her office. He hasn't been fortunate enough to be able to get close to her since. Everytime he follows her, she is with a Slytherin. He hates the fact that her and Blaise appear to have a “thing,” but in all honesty, it means nothing to him. Rules of moral fibre are for peasants. He does whatever the fuck he wants with no consequences in mind.

He watches on, waiting for the right moment to sweep in. At the conclusion of her appointment, she is ushered toward an exit. Cormac can’t hide his glee as he fills a phial with Hermione’s hair. Cut off’s just for him - she’s at his disposal, and with that, he Apparates to Divinity to see Daphne.

Theo can’t recall the past couple of days. Shit. He knows this week is important for the club, but whatever he trialed with Luna the other day really fucked him up. Fuck. Daph is going to be pissed at me. He rummages through his bedroom trying to find something, anything, that will help him recover. He’s all out and settles on a visit to Luna, but before this, he needs to go face reality and see his girlfriend. Daphne can be hard to keep happy, and lately he’s been walking on eggshells. He doesn’t have a problem with her new found side-line occupation. He just needs to be better at keeping her happy so she’ll be there less.
Theo doesn’t need to sneak in through the side entrance. While he respects the Deity, he owns Divinity - so really, he can do what he wants. Considering he’s been MIA for a few days, he needs to make some appearances. Now that he’s back in the land of the conscience, he needs to do some serious grovelling to Daphne and touch base with Blaise. He’d done his best to clean himself up, but he’s feeling rough. It’s amazing how a good shower and a sharp suit can make you look.

Upon opening her dressing room door, his eyes rake the young women in front him. She is dressed in a seductive little black number - french knickers tucked snug in between her arse cheeks. Currently, she’s lacing the front of a bone-lined corseted bodice that hugs her curves in all the right places. Divinity has a selection of fine women situated throughout, but of all the women he’s ever laid his eye’s on...he is only interested in one of them. Her.

“Looking good, Daph,” he says with a husky voice. He finds her alluring, mesmerised by her in every sense. His eyes feast on the delectable woman before him.

Daphne has finished lacing her bodice, re adjusting everything to ensure she is well put together. Cormac had called ahead and booked her for a session. Glancing at the reflection of her boyfriend, behind her through the mirror, she scoffs.

“What are you doing here?” she asks flatly. She’s unimpressed by him being in her personal space. She acts as if she doesn’t care any less, but she’s pissed off at him. He’s been spending so much time getting caught up in the clubs ministrations that she’s beginning to feel like being with him is something that she no longer wants.

Theo is anything but entertained.

“Daph, I’m sorry,” he apologises. Judging by her body language, she isn’t receptive.

“Are you done? Because I have a client arriving soon.”

“You’re kidding me? I’m your fucking boss. I’ve been gone for days, and you’re ditching me for the Deity?”

“Business before pleasure,” she quips.

“Look, I said I was -”

“I don’t want to hear it.”

“If you’re playing hard to get, can you stop? Because I’m having trouble reading you right now. Just talk to me,” he pleads.

“I’m not playing anything. If you want to talk - check my schedule and make an appointment like the professional businessman you are,” she sasses sarcastically.

“You can’t be serious?”

Daphne looks at him with the kind of resting bitch face that Pansy had nailed in their second year. She doesn’t know when she became bored of him, but recent experiences have led her believe she’s
more open to trying different things; she’s open to exploring her sexuality. Her interest in Theo has dissolved pretty rapidly. When they got together the music had stopped, and they just decided to find temporary comfort in each other, but now the music is playing again, and she is seeking new notes.

Daphne continues readying herself for Cormac, shifting her hair to one side so she can bend over to slip on her stilettos. Theo has come to realise just how much he missed the witch. An action as innocent as slipping on some heels has him seeing nothing but seduction. Who can blame him for thinking wild thoughts when his woman is parading around in sexy lingerie? He approaches her, wanting to touch her, needing to taste her, but her energy toward him is off.

Daphne cops a whiff of his aftershave, noticing the closeness of him. She feels a slight pang of guilt by her evasion of Theo. After slipping on her shoes, she turns toward him, ready to exit her dressing room. Approaching the door, she brushes past him. He reaches for her, grabbing hold of her to stop her, but she is colder than the Slytherin dungeons.

“I really don’t have time for this, Theo.”

Theo pulls her into him, his lips making their way towards hers. Daphne diverts his lips to her cheek.

“You can’t stay mad at me forever.”

“I never said I was mad,” she interjects.

“You didn’t have to, Daphne. It’s obvious.”

Daphne suppresses an eye roll, trying to be sensitive to his feelings. “Maybe I’m not being obvious enough.”

“Wait, what’s that supposed to mean?” pleads Theo while perplexed.

Daphne doesn’t let another word leave her lips as she walks away. Theo has this dull ache in his chest. Why does it feel like goodbye? Why does he feel like this over? He’s irrational, plagued by his confusion of the situation. In a burst of anger, he curls his hand into a fist and strikes her dressing room door. He doesn’t care about the splinters in his knuckles, or the fact that he damaged the fucking door. He’s clueless as to how to “fix” his relationship. He won’t let heartbreak get the best of him - Daphne can’t win.

Theo makes his way to his office to “climb up Blaise’s arse” so to speak. Upon entry, he finds Blaise pouring himself a drink early in the morning.

“Spirits at nine? Money? Or matters of the heart?” asks Theo while taking the initiative to pour himself a water. He actually wants to be conscious for the opening of their club tomorrow, so he’s placing himself on a substance abuse ban until then. A clear head he should do him some good.

“Nott, you’re alive!” drawls Blaise arrogantly. “Where have you been?”

“I wish I had an answer for you, but Luna needed a hand with an experiment, and well, let's just say it was out of this world. Eh - sorry.”

“No problem here, just glad you’re alright. Hermione and I held the fort. Was starting to worry about
“Aww Zabini, I’m touched. Is that the real reason you’re drowning your sorrows?”


“Does this have anything to do with you and Hermione ‘holding the fort’? Do I detect some tension - or conflict? Because I find your choice of words intriguing.”

“Something like that.”

“Don’t be curt with me. You’re acting like you’re having your period or something. My actual heart has been ripped from my chest, and I’m getting by. When did you get so soft?”

“Fucksake Nott, stop being so fucking dramatic.”

“Can’t a mate express his concerns and the woes of his broken heart? What the fuck has got your wand in a knot? And yeah, if it’s any comparison, I think Daph just dumped me, so my drama is warranted.”

“Unlucky. You alright?”

“Yeah, I mean...it hurts...right here,” he places his hands on his chest where his heart is located, underneath a cage of ribs, almost comically. “Feels like it’s been shattered into a million pieces. She didn’t say the words, but it was strongly implied.”

“What are you going to do?”

“Well, obviously, I’m going to act as though I completely missed her point.”

“It won’t do you any good to play stupid. She won’t take you for a fool. Besides, do you really want to be that wizard? The clingy emotional one that refuses to let go? It’ll drive her nuts.”

“Hey! Witches like being chased! It’s okay to be in touch with one’s feelings. You should try it sometime instead of bottling it up. I think Hermione probably agrees; that strained look doesn’t suit your pretty, aristocratic face. I’m not oblivious to what’s been going on.”

“When did you get so fucking annoying? If I wanted to talk about it, I would.”

“Ahh, Blaise. The key to overcoming addiction is admission. I sense the dependency is strong.”

“If you’re not here to do anything constructive, fuck off. Go get yourself cleaned up for tomorrow night, and stay clear of Luna in the meantime. Save yourself for the opening.”

“Don’t have to tell me twice. Adios, Zabini! Chin up. Just tell her whatevers on your mind.”

“Bye, Nott!”

He exists with a little spring in his step. So much for heartbreak, Nott.

Theo can be an annoying prick when he wants to be, but everything he said has struck a chord with Blaise. He’s going to tell her. He doesn’t know when, how, or what he’s going to say, but he’ll tell her. He hasn’t entertained another witch in his bed since he started seeing her. The possibility of her being able to see another wizard make his skin crawl. The afternoon presses, and before long, the view outside his office is dimmed by the sun setting. He should go see Hermione, but he’s “not
ready.” A bit more time to process things is what he needs. He settles on an evening meal in the comfort of his Mansion before drifting to sleep on his luxurious chaise.

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