### Three Is a Magic Number

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#### Summary

Hermione never expected to become a domme, and she certainly never expected it to lead her down this path in life.

#### Notes

See the end of the work for notes.

Hermione pulled the boot's zip up the last few inches and stood. She loved the way that the soft black leather hugged her legs from ankle to thigh, and she turned in front of the mirror to admire the look. The tops of the boots would be hidden by her skirt, but above that the tightly laced corset accentuated her cleavage. She smoothed on her gloves, buttoning each tiny button with care, then picked up the valise that held her equipment and prepared to Apparate to the club.

Later that night, she sat on a padded stool in the bar at Brands, her legs parted, with Damien kneeling between them, his tongue flickering over her clit. Around them other couples engaged in their own embraces. Hermione used her left hand to lift her wineglass and take a sip. Her right arm was tired; she had spent the better part of an hour with Damien tied to a pillar in front of her, using a series of paddles and floggers on him. Now the high heel of one of her boots pressed against his cock, and he trembled as he ate her. She had promised that if he did it well enough, she would let him come.

He was doing an excellent job so far, she thought, setting down her glass and tipping his head slightly to shift his tongue a fraction downward. Every few seconds she felt another spasm, and as soon as he put his first two fingers inside her cunt and began to pump them, she knew that she would...
have a major orgasm. For now, though, she held off signalling him to do so, enjoying the slow rising tension that his tongue provoked instead.

Glancing around the room, she saw several people that she recognised. Some she had played with before, others she had merely seen repeatedly in passing over the past couple of years. Hermione had no fear that any of them would attempt to presume on this knowledge elsewhere, however. Brands catered to a wizarding clientele who wanted to ensure discretion in their encounters. Anyone who betrayed another person's presence at the club would find himself or herself not only banned from going there in the future, but would also suffer more direct consequences, not dissimilar to the hex Hermione herself had once set up and which had caught Marietta Edgecombe.

A blond man in the far corner caught her eye. There was something familiar about the angle of his head, an almost arrogant tilt despite his kneeling position, but he was too far away for Hermione to identify him. Perhaps it was someone she had played with early on, before she had established herself with the three semi-regular partners she maintained now, whose preferences were varied enough to keep her interested.

She stroked Damien's hair, then at last tapped his shoulder. He immediately began to finger-fuck her, just the way she liked, his mouth still clamped tightly over her clit. Hermione groaned and grabbed his hair hard, holding him still as she shook. When she had finished, she made him sit back and rubbed her booted foot over his denim-encased cock.

"Now," she commanded, and he clutched at himself and at her as he came, rubbing frantically against the hard leather.

"In a fortnight you'll be here?" he asked pleadingly when she rose to leave.

Hermione shrugged. "Perhaps." Not allowing him to feel secure was part of her way of establishing sexual authority. She could feel his eyes on her as she left.

A healthy bout of domination over the weekend generally put Hermione in a good mood to start off the week. She had plans to meet Harry at the Leaky Cauldron for lunch on Monday, and she looked forward to that.

"Do anything interesting this weekend?" Harry asked cheerfully when Hermione found him at the bar.

"Oh, the usual sort of thing." Hermione knew that Harry would assume she'd cleaned her flat, or done something equally dull. She waved down Tom the barman and ordered a ploughman's lunch and a pint of cider, which she preferred to beer; the Leaky's wine selection was less than stellar. "How about you?"

"Not much," said Harry, now looking a little less animated. "I kind of miss Ginny, you know? Not so much her, though, as having someone... if that makes sense. Do you feel the same about Ron?"

"Sometimes, I suppose," Hermione said, "but we didn't have that much in common, in the end. I'd rather not be with someone just to be with anyone at all. I'm happier alone."

"Ah." Harry's expression turned wistful. "You always have been independent, haven't you?"

"Not so independent that I don't care about my friends," Hermione said, taking his hand and squeezing it.

That seemed to brighten Harry's mood, and the rest of the hour passed in pleasant conversation,
mostly Harry waxing enthusiastic about the new Beater that the Cannons had brought in for the season, but he also listened as she talked about the negotiations she was involved in to try to reach some international agreements on prosecuting those who traded restricted potions ingredients. When Hermione left, she gave him a quick kiss on the cheek, and thought to herself that really, she and Harry had a closer friendship than she and Ron had had. And now they were both unattached... but she had been telling the truth when she’d said that she was content with things as they were, and Harry had never made a move, after all. Better perhaps not to do anything that might disturb their friendship.

On Tuesday Hermione found that she needed to go to the British Library to do some research. It was not often that anyone in the Department of Magical Law Enforcement had to look up Muggle references, but when there was some need, Hermione was generally the one who went, since she rather enjoyed interacting with Muggles and could do so without arousing any suspicions by her manner or her way of dressing.

She worked most of the morning, stopped for a quick sandwich and a cup of tea around noon, and had just settled in again happily to work through the afternoon when someone sat down next to her. Reflexively she looked up, not expecting to recognise the person, but to her astonishment she did.

"Draco Malfoy?" she whispered incredulously. Of all the places in the world she might imagine him, this was not one that would ever have suggested itself to her.

He leaned close – she could smell a hint of cologne, something woody and spicy – and murmured in her ear, "Do you remember the day that you hit me?"

Of course she remembered it. Hermione fumbled for her wand, suddenly sure that Draco was going to break all wizarding law and try to take some kind of revenge on her right here.

But he continued, "Would you like to do it again?"

Hermione felt dizzy. Draco Malfoy in the British Library was shock enough; Draco Malfoy in the British Library asking if she would like to beat him was so far beyond all probability that she had trouble taking it in. She was not going to discuss the matter here, however.

"Not now," she said. "There's a café. I'll meet you at five-thirty." And she gave him the name and street number.

Draco nodded. Hermione could see the way that his eyes flickered over her, hungrily, lingering on her hands. "Five-thirty."

In a welter of confusion, she managed to finish the research she had come for by half past four, and after packing up her bag, she sat and thought about what she might say to Draco.

She didn't despise him or hate him any longer. Understanding a little bit why he had acted as he had done, the family pressures that had been brought to bear, had made it possible for her to forgive, though not forget. The fact that he had sought her out here in the Muggle world spoke to his sincerity. Yes, she decided, she might be willing to take Draco up on his offer, although she would need to hear more explicitly from him just what it was he wanted.

He was already waiting when she arrived, a litter of crumbs on the table suggesting that he had probably been there all afternoon. Hermione let him buy her a cup of tea, and as she was stirring in milk and one sugar she asked in a quiet voice, "Why did you come to me?"
Draco gnawed at his lip. "I've seen you at Brands a few times. Including last weekend."

"You have?" Hermione regarded him carefully. "I've never seen... no, wait. I did see you, in the bar, I think."

"Yes. I haven't ever been on display the way that some are, like the bloke you were with last Saturday," admitted Draco. "I know that there are various precautions, but at first I didn't want to be recognised, and since then – well, I'm still learning all this, you see. But I've been watching you. You have a very good reputation. One of the best, for the things you do. I want to work with the best."

"My ancestry is less important than the strength of my arm?" jibed Hermione.

Draco had the grace to flush. "I suppose. Look, if what happened in the past is too bad for you to be willing to try this, I'll understand. But I'm not asking to be friends. I'm asking if you would take me on as one of your subs."

He scowled down at the table. She could tell that he didn't really enjoy asking for favours from her... it might be rather rewarding to teach him to submit, actually, to acknowledge his weaknesses, his needs.

"This isn't the place for detailed discussion," said Hermione, "but as there's no one sitting too close, let me just ask you a question or two."

"All right."

Hermione watched Draco as she spoke, gauging his reaction not just by what he said, but by his body language. "Do you prefer simply to have someone else in control, or do you genuinely enjoy pain?"

"I haven't gone very far with pain, to be honest. So more domination, but I'd like to find out more about both." Draco had laced his fingers together, resting his hands on the table. He stroked his left wrist with his right thumb. "Er. I should maybe tell you that the people I've –" his eyes darted around the room, and his voice grew softer, "– I've worked with, so to speak, have been both men and women."

"I see." Hermione tapped her fingers on the table. "You've had no preferences there?"

"No. Either one could be satisfactory for me." Blood stained his cheeks as he spoke. Odd that he would be more embarrassed by admitting that he liked men as well as women than by offering himself as a submissive and asking her to beat him.

There was no reason why she should turn him down. Certainly if he were anyone but Draco Malfoy she would not hesitate, and she found him surprisingly attractive physically. His face was a little fuller than it had been ten years ago, more relaxed, and it suited him. Under the Muggle clothes that he had chosen to wear, she guessed from the way that he moved and held himself that he was quite fit, and she found herself curious to see that body.

"All right," said Hermione finally, sipping the last of her tea. "I'm willing to try this. Nothing exclusive, you understand; there are several other men with whom I have regular interactions."

"I know. I've seen them all, I think."

Draco must have been attending Brands quite regularly if that was the case, Hermione realised. "Very well, then. At the club. This Saturday. Nine o'clock. I'll expect you to be prompt."
"Thank you." Draco's voice held a trace of the old hauteur, now that he had secured her agreement.

"Remember, this is just a trial, we may not suit each other, and if not, then no hard feelings."

On that note, she rose to go. Draco stood politely and walked out to the street with her, but made no move to try to escort her home, which Hermione appreciated. Perhaps this would work out, but she had never yet taken home any of her men from Brands, and she had no intention of doing so with Draco.

When she reached her flat, she lay down on the bed and masturbated, imagining how she might begin with Draco by inflicting only minor and subtle forms of pain: tormenting his nipples, perhaps, or arousing him and then refusing him leave to come until he was desperate and begging for it.

For the rest of the week Hermione used her spare moments to think about whether she had made the right decision in telling Draco that she would take him on. One thing she had learned was that it could be dangerous to have certain sorts of emotional connections with one's submissive partner. If the dominant was genuinely angry, for instance, he or she might not be able to maintain the appropriate control during a scene. When she and Ron had been together, there had been one occasion on which that had very nearly been a problem for Hermione, and she didn't want to risk it happening again.

The trouble was that there was really no one she could talk to about the situation. Ron and now Draco were the only people who knew of her inclinations, and for very different reasons, neither of them was suitable.

On Thursday, however, Hermione was meeting Harry for lunch again, and she decided to bring up Draco as a general topic, just mention that she'd run into him without explaining where, and see how Harry reacted. The two of them had never gotten on at school either, but if Harry didn't seem to have a strong dislike for Draco anymore, then perhaps Hermione could trust her own emotions.

"Draco?" Harry took a large bite of his egg and cress sandwich and spoke through his mouthful, to Hermione's internal sigh. "I've seen him oh, maybe a handful of times in the last year or two. In Diagon Alley in passing, mostly, and once or maybe twice at Quidditch matches. Although he could have been there more often; I don't see that much from up in the air, you know."

"He seemed changed to me," said Hermione. "Not that I talked to him for all that long."

"Planning to ask our Mr. Malfoy out, then?" Harry asked in a teasing voice, although Hermione thought that his flush hadn't diminished. "I will say that the last time I saw him in Quality Quidditch Supplies he was quite attractive, or so I imagine witches would think."

Hermione filed that statement mentally for future contemplation. Since Harry and Ginny had broken up the previous year, Harry hadn't dated anyone at all that Hermione knew of, and perhaps there was a good explanation why. She changed the subject then and got Harry to talk about the prospects of the various British teams for the next Quidditch World Cup. She cared no more for the game than she ever had, but she did care about Harry and he liked to talk about the league, so she let him.
Again when they were saying their goodbyes, on impulse Hermione rose onto her tiptoes and kissed his cheek, thinking as she did so that she almost wished it had been *Harry*, not Draco, who had come to her with such an incredible proposal.

The choice of nine o'clock as the hour to meet Draco had been deliberately on the early side. Hermione intended to make it clear that she was spending that evening with Draco before any of her other three regulars – especially Damien, who tended to be pushy – turned up at Brands. She arrived promptly, but Draco was already there, looking eager.

"I've claimed one of the private rooms," he told her. "I wasn't sure what you might want."

Hermione tapped her lips with her forefinger thoughtfully. If Draco really did not have much experience, perhaps a private room would be better this time. Any poor behaviour by a submissive reflected upon the dominant, after all, and Hermione had a reputation to maintain.

"That will be fine," she answered. "I'm going to have a drink first, however."

As she had expected, Draco immediately said that he would fetch it for her. He returned promptly with a glass of red wine – the same as she had been drinking the previous week when he had seen her but she had not recognised him – and without prompting, knelt beside her to await her next directions.

She stroked his head, enjoying the way that his fine, fair hair felt beneath her fingertips, as she sipped at her wine. When she had finished, she had him lead her to the room he had reserved, carrying her valise.

"Undress," she told him.

Slim fingers went to his throat and made short work of unbuttoning the finely tailored white cotton shirt he wore. He hung it from one of the many hooks that jutted from the walls before removing his shoes and socks, and then his trousers, which he also hung up.

"Pants too," said Hermione, and Draco slipped them off to reveal his erect cock. Hermione stroked it, just once, with her fingernails, and he quivered.

"We had better agree on a safe word before anything else," she murmured. "Would you like to choose it?"

"Badger," said Draco promptly. Either he'd used that word before, or he'd thought about this in advance. Either way it spoke to his seriousness of purpose, and Hermione approved.

"Badger it is," She opened her valise and pulled out a paddle. "Tell me, Draco, is there some reason why I should use this on you? Have you been naughty?"

Draco's eyes went round as he watched her take a couple of swings to loosen up her arm. "Yes. I have."

"Yes, ma'am," Hermione corrected him.

"Yes, ma'am," Draco repeated.

It always felt awkward to Hermione, this kind of talk, but especially with someone new, it was necessary to find out what turned them on. She decided to simply begin and see what happened.
"Turn around and stand there, facing the wall." She pointed at the spot in question. "Raise your arms and put your hands flat against the wall."

Draco obeyed, his upper body now angled, feet braced a little way apart as Hermione stepped up behind him and raised the paddle.

"Count," she told him, and as the first blow struck his buttocks, he said, "One," in a tone that sounded like a prayer.

Hermione took the paddling up to a count of thirty. Most of the blows landed on Draco's buttocks, although she marked his thighs a few times as well.

"Had you ever been struck before you came to Brands?" she asked when she had completed the set.

Draco shook his head. "It was a threat, no more."

His arse was nicely reddened. Hermione stroked it, hearing the hiss of Draco's breath. She didn't think she wanted to use a whip or a flogger on him tonight; she would rather work up to that, with someone inexperienced. Besides, although she was able and willing to administer pain in this sort of context, she didn't find it in and of itself especially arousing for her. It was more the reaction that her partner had that she enjoyed, and she wondered if Draco might not react equally strongly to other forms of dominance.

"Have you ever been restrained?"

"Do you mean with handcuffs or ropes or something like that?" Draco asked warily.

"Those, possibly, or a cock ring, or nipple clamps." Hermione pulled a pair of clamps from her valise. "You may stand up straight and turn around," she told Draco.

She didn't need to give more than a glance at his crotch to learn that he had enjoyed the paddling very much. The pinch of the clamps might suit him very well. They were, coincidentally, most appropriate for Draco, being fashioned in the form of tiny silver dragons with green eyes. Hermione brushed a fingertip over the head of one, and it yawned. Quickly she brought it to Draco's chest and let the metal jaws close over his left nipple. Then she fastened on the second clamp and stepped back to admire the way they looked. Draco glanced down and swallowed.

"Now." Hermione smiled. "I'm going to undress, and then you're going to fuck me, but you're not to come until I give you permission, you understand?"

He nodded. "Do you want me to undress you?"

"Not this time. Just watch." She began peeling off her garments one by one, until she was down to boots and panties, the latter already soaked through. She sat on the edge of the mattress to unzip the boots and ease them off. "Come here."

Draco crossed the room. She took his arm and pulled him down to the bed, straddling him and rubbing her silk-clad cunt against his cock.

"You may take these off," she murmured.

Rather to her surprise he didn't remove the panties by hand, but instead used a non-verbal wandless spell, so that between one moment and the next they vanished. His cock slipped smoothly into her as she moved, and he gave a little grunt that she interpreted as satisfaction.
"All right then." Hermione held still with Draco's cock fully seated, put her hands on his shoulders and rolled them over so that he was above her. "Fuck me, nice and slow," she instructed.

He began to move immediately, slowly as she had told him, his gray eyes intent on her face. Hermione raised her knees a bit higher and tilted her hips so that with each stroke he gave, he pressed against her clit. Orgasm hit her almost instantly, rolling through her in wave after wave. The pleasure was not as intensely focussed as when she masturbated, but she could sustain an orgasm for minutes this way.

Draco's face was flushed. Doubtless he felt the rippling clench off her inner muscles as she spasmed around his cock. He kept control, however, and continued his leisurely thrusting.

When Hermione had decided that she had obtained sufficient pleasure, she told Draco to stop. He bit his lip, but did as he was told, grasping the base of his cock firmly as he pulled away.

He kept his eyes fixed on her, waiting to be told what to do next. Hermione stroked the pale springy hair of his chest, trailing her fingers down to the soft skin around his navel. She tapped his hand. "Masturbate," she ordered. "Don't come until I tell you."

Obediently Draco stroked himself, massaging her lingering juices into the skin of his reddened prick. His other hand caressed his bollocks, tight in their lightly-furred pouch. His eyes never left Hermione's face as he waited for her command.

She let the minutes pass by, one by one, gauging the level of Draco's desperation by the raggedness of his breathing and the drops of sweat that broke out on his skin. When she judged that he was reaching the point where he felt nearly as much pain as pleasure, she put her hand over his and whispered, "Now."

Draco's mouth opened in a wordless groan, his eyes squeezing shut as he wetted her fingers, a few drops splashing up to his chest. Hermione took delight in his long-delayed satisfaction, so evidently intense, just as she had hoped. Pain was not the only way to dominate him, she concluded.

After they had cleaned up, Hermione led Draco back to the bar where he bought her another drink. She sipped it as he knelt at her feet.

"Remain still," she told him, but whether it was lingering excitement from the scene or merely lack of training, Draco kept shifting his weight, turning his head from side to side as he tried to observe the room – or perhaps sought to see who noticed that he was with Hermione, tonight.

She tapped his cheek. "Still, I said."

"Sorry," said Draco, although he didn't sound especially sorry, and continued to move restlessly, if less obviously so.

Enough was enough. Hermione set down her nearly-empty wineglass, picked up her valise, and walked toward the door.

"Wait!" It took Draco a moment to struggle to his feet and hurry after her. "I wanted to know if you'd be willing to do this again."

Hermione looked him up and down coolly. "You need to learn obedience outside the bedroom if you want to find satisfaction within it."

"I do!" Draco's expression was suddenly stricken as he realised her anger. "I won't disappoint you."
She considered. It had been quite satisfactory for an initial encounter, after all. She didn't want to neglect her other men, but she had no real hesitation about adding Draco to the roster. *If* he was willing to submit to a proper discipline.

"See that you don't," she said at last, and swept out, leaving Draco gaping after her – she hoped with sufficient incentive to behave better in the future.

He did. Over the next ten months, in fact, Draco gradually became her preferred partner. He couldn't have helped but be aware of that, but he never presumed upon it either. That honesty made Hermione even more pleased with him, so much so that when he asked if she would like to meet him for dinner at an ordinary restaurant, not at Brands, she accepted the invitation.

The dinner began awkwardly. Draco had chosen a Muggle restaurant and was clearly somewhat ill at ease, although doubtless to any observer it appeared that his nervousness was from the fact of the date rather than unfamiliarity of culture. At least general manners amongst both wizards and Muggles were similar; the only real hitch came when Draco was presented with the cheque and Hermione had to ensure that he paid the correct amount in Muggle notes.

The food, however, was excellent, and so was the wine. By the time they left Hermione was having to be careful not to giggle too much. She had always hated that particular overly-feminine reaction to male conversation. The cooler air outside helped sober her up a little, to her relief. Draco took her elbow to guide her along the pavement.

"Would you like to come to my flat?"

Hermione nodded. She had never gone to the home of any other man with whom she indulged her sexual proclivities at Brands before, although one or two had asked. But for reasons she could not pin down, she felt comfortable doing so with Draco.

"I'm so glad," Draco said. "I... well. What I want to say isn't really something for a public conversation."

He would say nothing more, and so Hermione had to contain her curiosity until they had reached Draco's flat, which was sumptuously furnished, yet somehow sterile. Draco noticed her expression as she gazed around the rooms.

"My mother decorated it," he said with a shrug. "She insisted, and it was easier to let her, since I didn't really care that much." He crossed the room and disappeared through a doorway, calling out, "A glass of wine?"

"Lovely, thank you," Hermione responded. She took off her coat and tucked her gloves into the pocket, laying it over the arm of the sofa before sitting down. It was upholstered in a buttery-soft ivory leather; highly impractical, Hermione thought, but extremely comfortable.

Draco returned with two glasses of wine. "Cheers."

Sipping, Hermione found that this vintage was even better than what they had drunk at the restaurant. She savoured it for a moment before turning slightly to look at Draco.

"What were you going to say earlier, then?"

"I don't know if there's a proper etiquette for this," said Draco slowly. "It's hardly the sort of thing learned at one's mother's knee. I have very much enjoyed our arrangement at Brands, but —" he took a mouthful of wine, swallowed, and continued, "— I find that I want to know you better, and not just
in sexual ways. I'm not sure how well I'll be able to reconcile knowing you as a person and having you as a mistress at the club, though. That is, if you're even interested in the same thing. If you aren't, I'll understand, and I hope it won't make a difference to how you treat me at Brands."

"It's been a long time since I've been emotionally involved with anyone," admitted Hermione. "It would be a real change for me to try that again. I've been quite satisfied with having strictly sexual relationships at Brands and friendship elsewhere, but not mingling the two."

She chewed at her lower lip for a moment, realised she was doing it, and stopped. "I wouldn't want a romance to always have the same dynamics that we maintain at the club," she said. "I like dominance in a sexual context, but I couldn't maintain it all the time in a relationship, if that's what you were hoping for."

"No," Glints of light caught in Draco's hair as he shook his head. "That's not what I want. I know how much it takes out of me – I enjoy it very much, obviously, but it can be draining, and I'm sure the same is true from your side. Besides, I don't want to share that part of myself with everyone anyway."

"Fair enough." Hermione thought about it. "I suppose, then, that I'm willing to see what happens if we try dating for a while, outside the club, getting to know each other better in other ways. I think maybe we shouldn't get physical here for a while, though. It would be too confusing, trying to figure out how to behave."

Draco agreed to that condition. He talked with Hermione about her work, what she did in her spare time when she wasn't at Brands, what sort of music and films and books she liked. Hermione had never really had such a conversation before. She and Ron had known each other too well to need to ask such questions, and the men she'd been involved with at Brands had never delved into personal preferences except those that related directly to the business at hand. The way that Draco asked, though, didn't seem intrusive. He wasn't merely running down some mental checklist of questions, but rather seemed to move from one to the next out of genuine curiosity and sympathetic interest.

"How did you find out you enjoyed domination?" Draco inquired. "I mean, you were always intellectually aggressive, but that's hardly the same thing."

"Ron suggested trying it, when we were dating. I guess he'd heard about it from someone – maybe his brother Charlie? – and thought it might be fun." Hermione shrugged and sipped her wine. "It turned out that he just didn't care much for acting as either a dom or a sub, after we'd tried it both ways a few times."

"But you did."

Hermione nodded. "Yes. More than I would ever have imagined. So after we broke up – which was for other reasons – I made some discreet inquiries to find a place where it would be safe to explore that part of my sexuality. I've learned that it's not inflicting pain itself that I enjoy, more the control that engenders, so although I have a fair bit of experience with various types of whips and paddles and so forth, I'm equally happy if my partner wants to obey without the need for force. Does that make sense?"

"It does," said Draco thoughtfully. "That's why I've enjoyed having you as a domme. It's not just about physical domination, but mental too."

He didn't elaborate further that night, and it wasn't until their third "regular" date that Hermione had much chance to ask Draco about his personal history in the same way that he had been inquiring into hers.
Draco told her what it was like growing up in his family. As an only child with wealthy and ambitious parents, and moreover with intact bloodlines, he had been indulged, even spoiled, and he freely admitted that. The pressures upon him, however, were great as well. From the cradle he had known that it was his duty to continue the family line and preserve its purity at virtually any cost.

"I never questioned that assumption," he said over a glass of a very fine brandy. "You wouldn't have, either, I don't think. When everything in your entire world fits together and makes sense, you don't ask if any bits of it are perhaps not what they should be by someone else's standards."

Hermione had to agree to that, having over the years learned quite a lot about Muggle history which demonstrated exactly that attitude over and over again. She kicked off her shoes and tucked her feet up under her on the sofa, moving a little closer to Draco.

"When did you start to question what your parents taught you, then?" she asked. "Because obviously you began to eventually."

"A little bit in my sixth year at Hogwarts, when I was trying to come up with a way to kill Professor Dumbledore." He had the grace to turn red when he mentioned the late Headmaster. "I tried to pretend to myself that being given that order proved that V-Voldemort trusted me, but inside I knew it was really a strategy to ensure that I would be eliminated with no trouble to himself or blame from any of his supporters. Aunt Bella, for instance, would have only seen it as my chance of glory, not the almost certainty of my failure."

His stumble over Voldemort's name touched Hermione, and she took his hand. "Go on."

"Realising that I was dispensable, regardless of my family, and that even my own kin couldn't or wouldn't, or at any rate, didn't try to protect me – well, I learned later that my mother had asked Professor Snape to look out for me, but I didn't know that then – realising that put the first seed of doubt into my mind. And for all that I'd been trying to figure out ways to get rid of Dumbledore, when he actually died it was awful."

"Why?" Hermione kept her voice gentle. What was past was past, after all.

"Well, he was a pureblood himself. I'm not proud that I thought like that, nor that it took his death to really make me ask whether what I was doing, what I had always assumed was right, really was the right thing to do."

Draco sighed and was quiet for a while, sipping his brandy moodily. Hermione watched his chest rise and fall, wondering if he'd go on, but eventually he did.

"Seventh year – I did what was expected of me, but inside I was frightened. I tried not too think about my doubts, though. I'm not that skilled at Occlumency and it wasn't safe to show anything but complete loyalty in front of Voldemort."

"I've always wondered something," said Hermione. "Harry told us that you refused to positively identify him when we were captured and brought to your parents' house. Why didn't you?"

"It was the most I dared to do," Draco replied. "The jinxes that had hit him had made him very difficult to recognise, so I was fairly certain I could get away with it, and by then I was just so tired of it all. I didn't want to be involved any more. I'm not brave, Hermione. I didn't have the courage to say no when I knew that was likely to mean my own death and probably my parents' also. The best I could manage was evasion in small ways."

"I see." It was more or less what she had expected to hear. She had always thought that the younger
Draco was a coward, but she found herself admiring his ability and willingness now to recognise and admit to that weakness.

"What sealed my change of heart was Greg's death. I couldn't believe he would use Fiendfyre. But that was so typical of the Death Eater approach; use whatever it takes, no matter how horrible, no matter how easily it could injure those on your own side. Greg was a fool, but he'd been my friend, or as near to one as I'd had. His death brought home just how stupid the whole thing was. I'd like to think that even if our side had won the Battle of Hogwarts after all, if it had been Harry who'd lost in the end, I would still have finally turned to the other side and begun to think for myself about what was right and what kind of person I wanted to be."

Draco's voice broke on the last words and he took a large swallow of brandy.

"Do you really think you would have dared?" Hermione asked.

"Let's just say that I hope I would have done. There's no way to know for sure. But if you're looking at my actions since then..." Draco shrugged. "I stood trial and had my use of magic restricted for two years, and then I went into training to become a healer at St Mungo's. It seemed like the best way to make some sort of reparation. My parents didn't understand; they think that I broke under pressure and will never amount to anything, but I've decided that I can't be guided by their judgment any longer."

Hermione had to ask the question. "Is all of this connected with the reason why you enjoy submission?"

"Probably. At least in part." Draco settled himself more comfortably into the cushions of the sofa. "Although I don't know that it's entirely so. I had bondage fantasies from quite a young age, actually. Like thirteen or fourteen, long before I was involved in anything directly, political or sexual."

"Interesting. I never had any sort of kinky fantasies at all until after the war," Hermione said. "I did things before I fantasised about them, in fact."

"You didn't read about them first?"

Draco was trying to joke with her, Hermione realised, and so she smiled. "I was too busy reading *Hogwarts, a History* to have time to read dirty novels," she said.

Other, later conversations would add greater detail to Hermione's understanding of how Draco had changed from the supercilious, bullying boy he had been to the more self-reflective and thoughtful man he was now, but Draco didn't often want to talk about it.

"That's all in the past, Hermione," he would say. "The whole point is that I want to leave the past behind. It has imprisoned my parents in ways of thought that no longer make any sense, don't you see?"

And she did see, and she no longer pressed him about it, instead taking the morsels of information that he dropped and fitting them together as best she could to create a more-or-less complete picture of a Draco Malfoy who was very different from the one she'd known in her teens.

Just as she had grown surprisingly fond of Draco in their sexual encounters at Brands, so she found herself becoming closer to him outside the club as well over the course of several months. She had meant what she said about not wanting to confuse the two aspects of their relationship, however, and so she decided that she would wait for Draco to make the first move toward bringing a physical component into their growing emotional involvement.
In the meantime, she continued to see not only Draco but Damien, Thomas, and Lloyd at the club. She earned a promotion at the Ministry, and she socialized with old friends from school and newer friends from work. Harry was the first one to guess that she was seeing someone, but she wouldn't tell him who it was.

It wasn't that she was *ashamed* of dating Draco Malfoy, she told herself, nor had Draco ever asked her to keep their relationship quiet, but rather that she knew that people like Harry or Ron or Ginny would make a big deal out of it, and she didn't want that unless there was something serious enough going on to be worth the hassle. So when Harry tried to tease her boyfriend's name out of her, she smilingly resisted until he gave up.

"I'll find out eventually, though," he said, with a wry expression.

"If it's important, yes, you will," said Hermione.

Some sixteen months after Draco had first come to Hermione in the British Library, he kissed her for the first time outside the context of their dominant-submissive roles. And for all that she loved the experiences she had had as a dominant, Hermione recognised that with Draco, she could also find great pleasure in less fixed roles. She let him take her to bed and take charge there in a way that she hadn't permitted anyone in years, and afterward, she told him for the first time that she loved him.

"I love you, too. You know that, right?" Draco asked with a hint of anxiety, and she laughed and kissed and said that yes, of course she did.

"Good. Because I want to take you to meet my parents soon."

"Are you sure about that?"

"They won't be wildly happy, I know," Draco admitted, "but I'd say things are pretty serious between us, and they really ought to be aware of that. Before we start to live together or anything."

"Live together?" Hermione's voice spiralled upward, and she fought to control it. "Isn't that rushing things a little, given that this was the first time we've slept together that wasn't part of a strictly sexual arrangement?"

"We've known each other for quite a long while now," Draco pointed out in the tone he used when he thought he was being entirely reasonable. "Why waste any more time?"

"And had you thought about who was going to move in with whom?"

Draco shrugged. "My flat is larger than yours, so I supposed you'd move into mine, but I don't really care."

"That's something, at least," Hermione muttered. "I don't think I'm ready for this yet, Draco. Meeting your parents, yes, I can handle that even if I'm not exactly overjoyed about it, but I like having my own flat, my own space. I'm not sure I'm ready to give it up yet. And what about Brands? Were you going to ask me to give that up, too?"

"Not exactly."

"So you just hoped I would only see you there now, is that it?" Hermione allowed a little sarcasm into her voice.

"Well, yes, that doesn't seem totally unreasonable to me, if we're going to make things serious between us. But if it's important to you to keep your freedom, then you should have it."
Perversely, that nearly made Hermione willing to offer to give up her other men, although still not to say that she would move in with Draco, but she held her tongue until the impulse passed, just sighing and leaning her head against his shoulder.

"I'm sorry. I didn't mean for us to quarrel over that," Draco said after a few moments of silence. "But will you come meet my parents a week from Sunday?"

To that, Hermione agreed.

When the Sunday in question arrived, she found herself pacing in a welter of nerves before Draco arrived at her flat to Apparate them together to his parents' house.

Neither the senior Malfoys nor Hermione made any allusion to the previous time that Hermione had been on the premises. It was all very civilised, in fact, except for the way that Draco's parents kept telegraphing their astonishment to each other and to their son whenever they thought Hermione wasn't looking.

"I understand you work at the Ministry?" said Narcissa Malfoy. She gestured, which confused Hermione for a moment until a house-elf appeared to hand around a tray of canapes.

She ignored the house-elf – resolving to have a word with Draco about that later – and said, "Yes, in the Department for Magical Law Enforcement."

"How very exciting that must be. I never worked myself; I've never needed to." Narcissa's smile didn't quite reach her eyes.

"I quite enjoy it, actually. I feel that I'm doing something meaningful with my life there," said Hermione as politely as she could.

"I must confess that I was somewhat surprised when Draco told us that he wanted us to meet you, dear," Narcissa said, the endearment ringing falsely. "Where did the two of you meet?"

Hermione suppressed a mad desire to say, "He came to a Muggle library and asked me to beat him," just to see the look on Narcissa's face, and instead replied, "At school, of course."

Narcissa's smile was so brittle that it looked as though her face might crack. "Of course, but I meant more recently."

"We have some similar interests." Hermione flicked a glance at Draco, who was making what appeared to be equally strained conversation with his father. "Films. Books. Politics. That sort of thing. It's been quite a gradual development, from having mutual interests to being mutually interested, if you see what I mean."

"Certainly," Narcissa professed, although she remained plainly confused as to what her son could possibly have in common with Hermione Granger. "Draco, darling, you didn't tell us that your Hermione was interested in politics."

Draco raised his eyebrows at Hermione, who gave him a tiny shrug, as if to say, "What could I do?"

"We both want to see the wizarding world survive and thrive, Mother," he said. "Since she works in the Ministry, Hermione has a good sense for what's going on. You know how people talk in the canteen, Father."

Lucius inclined his head. "Yes, although such gossip is frequently inaccurate."
"Do you find it so?" asked Hermione in her sweetest voice. "I think that depends on the person to whom you're talking. Some people are more trustworthy than others."

Draco coughed, his eyes sparkling with amusement. Lucius glared at Hermione.

"You have a very high opinion of yourself, young lady."

"Not higher than her abilities warrant," said Draco, which effectively cut off that line of conversation, as none of the three Malfoys appeared to be willing to quarrel too openly.

After a pause that stretched rather awkwardly, Narcissa remarked upon the unseasonably warm weather, and for the rest of the visit, all was at least superficially amiable.

"Goodness," said Hermione when they were back in Draco's flat, where she planned to spend the night. She stretched, putting her hands against the small of her back and bending backwards to stretch her muscles. "That was a delightful afternoon. I'm sorry," she added when Draco frowned. "I know you love your family, but you must admit they didn't exactly greet me with open arms."

"I know," Draco admitted with a sigh. He came up behind Hermione and began to massage her neck and shoulders. "They've accepted that it's expedient to change their ways, but I can't say that they've changed their underlying attitudes very much. Hermione."

"Hm? Don't stop, that feels lovely."

Despite her injunction, Draco's hands stilled, and he turned her around to face him.

"I know that you've wanted to keep what we do at Brands separate from the rest of our lives, but please, I need it badly tonight." He shoved back a lock of hair that had fallen into his eyes and gazed at her beseechingly. "As a special favour, please. I want you to beat me."

Hermione hesitated. She was still somewhat annoyed by how the visit with Draco's parents had gone, although she had hardly expected anything very different, and was concerned that if she acquiesced to Draco's request, she might use her anger to fuel the punishment that she doled out. She took several deep breaths, trying to let go of her emotional reaction.

"All right," she finally said. "But all of those things are at my flat, so we'd better go there."

Draco's anxious face relaxed. "Thank you," he said softly.

Although she had her equipment at her flat, she had no permanent installations like whipping-posts or wall shackles such as they had at Brands, so she would have to improvise somewhat. While Draco obeyed her order to strip completely, Hermione looked over her toys and made several selections.

She showed Draco the harness before she buckled it on him. It would hold a butt plug snugly inside him, while at the same time restraining his cock. The plug she had chosen was large, although its flared base was small enough that it would not prevent her from beating Draco once it was in place.

He took the plug with only a slight quiver at the speed with which she inserted it, bowing his head as she pulled the straps tight to secure his cock.

Lacking any post against which to have Draco stand, Hermione chose instead to have him bend over and grasp the back of her sofa. It was a huge overstuffed piece, very heavy, and Draco ought not to be able to move it accidentally. Besides, there was a certain frisson in doing this in her living room; the door was bolted and the Floo locked, but it nevertheless felt more like a public space than did her bedroom, and if she was going to act as a dominant at home, she would rather it not be in her private
sanctum.

She adjusted the plug so that it sat firmly inside Draco's arse, hearing him give a soft grunt as she did so. She stroked his trapped prick as well, fondling it as it swelled against the leather of the restraint. Then she stepped back, gauging the distance, and lifted the paddle she had chosen to use. She generally preferred to use a paddle with Draco; his skin was tender, and it took great control with a whip not to mark him excessively, control that she wasn't sure she had tonight. As it was, his arse reddened immediately with the first blow. He counted the strokes as they fell, in accordance with his training. Hermione liked the verbal acknowledgment. She gave him an even dozen and then left him there to wait while she went and changed, putting on a loose silk kimono and leaving her feet bare. After spending the afternoon dressed up for Draco's parents, she didn't feel like wearing her usual dominatrix attire. The blood-red silk with its embroidered black designs suited her mood well enough.

She ran a hand along Draco's spine when she returned to stand behind him, smoothing the skin of his bum, now only faintly pink after the pause.

"More?" she asked.

"Yes, please."

"Another dozen, then," decided Hermione. As she began the series, she remarked, "I noticed today how much you resemble your father physically. I wondered if he resembles you in liking this?" At the final word, she gave Draco an extra-hard smack.

Draco gulped. "I've no idea. It's really not something I've ever wanted to think about."

"But it's rather attractive to imagine," murmured Hermione. "The oh-so-stern Lucius Malfoy, willingly under the lash." She shivered and then caught herself. This was exactly what she had been concerned about; that she would transfer her dislike of the father into how she treated his son.

When she had finished the second dozen blows, therefore, she decided that she had better risk no more physical discipline of that sort tonight. She moved to sit on the sofa, loosening her kimono and letting it fall open, and beckoning Draco to come kneel in front of her. At her gesture he bent forward, his tongue lapping at her cunt lips to spread her open fully, then focussing his attention on her clitoris as he slid two fingers inside her and began to finger-fuck her as well. He was amazingly good at this, even better than Damien, Hermione thought dreamily as his circling tongue coaxed her up and up to orgasm. Whether it was native talent or a skill he'd perfected with other women, she really didn't care so long as she could enjoy the benefit of it. She groaned when her orgasm hit, and Draco slowed his motions, now suckling at her gently so as not to overstimulate her too much.

"Lovely," she murmured, and stroked his head with one hand as the other caressed her breasts. He continued to mouth her cunt, making her come several more times before she told him to stop and sit back.

His cock was a deep red, visibly pulsing against the leather band that encircled it. Hermione unbuckled that portion of the harness, leaving those straps in place which held the plug.

"I've never asked; how limber are you?"

"Limber?" Draco sounded puzzled.

"Can you bend enough to suck your own cock?" Hermione clarified. "If you can, I want to watch you do that. Make yourself come on your own face."
"I think I can," Draco said, and began to bow himself forward. "I may have to lie down, though."

"However you can make it work," Hermione said.

Draco pushed the coffee table away and stretched himself out on the rug there before gradually contorting himself until he was able to close his lips around the head of his cock. He had to grasp his thighs to hold himself in place, which made it difficult for Hermione to see as well as she would have liked, but she enjoyed the spectacle nevertheless. The long wait that Draco had endured meant that he came quite quickly, within only a few minutes of beginning to fellate himself, and as she'd instructed, he let go so that the spurt of his semen splashed across his cheek.

"Circe," he cursed softly. He uncurled and arched his back to stretch out the muscles. "Are you ever going to stop coming up with new ideas like that? I hope not."

Hermione chuckled. "I hope not, too. Come here."

She had him stand before her so that she could remove the plug, playing a bit with his loosened hole although his spent cock barely twitched as she did so.

Draco turned his head to look at her. "Thank you. For being willing to do this for me tonight. I know it's not your preference to act as dominant here."

"No," Hermione blew out a long breath and patted the sofa beside her. "Partly because, as I've told you, I couldn't possibly play that role all the time, so I've preferred to keep it entirely separate. Tonight, though, I was worried because I was upset by your parents. They weren't openly rude, but I could tell that they still think of me as –" she swallowed, "– as a Mudblood, with all the pejorative associations that has. As if I were dirt. And since you resemble them physically, especially your father, I was afraid I might lose control myself, go too far when I beat you."

"I'm sorry, Hermione," Draco murmured, and put his arm around her. "I didn't realise you felt that way. Another time, tell me, please?"

"I will," Hermione promised, "although it worked out all right in the end."

"Yes, it did." Draco gave her a kiss.

The sexual success of that evening caused Hermione to rethink what it was she wanted. Since he had taken her to meet his parents, Draco was obviously serious in his intentions toward her, and she acknowledged to herself that increasingly she felt the same. Having made a point of wanting to retain her independence, though, she took several months to taper off her involvement with her other men at Brands. She did bring Draco to meet her own parents sooner than that, though. Draco got on surprisingly well with them, considering how little they all had in common other than Hermione herself.

"How often do you see them?" he asked the next day. "I've just realised that I don't really know how close you are to your family."

"Probably not as often as I should," Hermione admitted, "given that I'm their only child. Maybe once a month, although I speak with my mum almost every week on the telephone. My dad isn't much of a phone person."

Draco nodded. "I can see that."

Hermione didn't think it wise to mention to Draco that her mother had asked about how Harry was
doing, and had said that he'd come to visit them a few weeks earlier.

"Such a nice young man," her mother had said. "I used to think the two of you might find something special together, after you and Ron broke it off. You had always written so much about Harry from school. But it seems I was mistaken, and as long as you're happy with Draco, that's what matters."

Hermione had agreed, but she felt somewhat guilty that Harry had been lonesome enough to visit the Grangers by himself. Recently she hadn't spent as much time with Harry as she liked, and she resolved to herself to do better. She didn't want to be one of those women who abandoned their friends when they became involved with someone.

By autumn Hermione had found someone else to take over for her with each of her three other partners at Brands. For all of Damien's protests, he was actually the easiest to suit, as it turned out. Lloyd ended up with a man, somewhat to Hermione's surprise, and William with the same woman who took on Damien.

"I'd like to talk again about living together," she told Draco the next evening.

Draco gave her a grin of pure delight. "Really? Are you certain?"

"Certain." Hermione smiled too. "My flat definitely isn't big enough, but we can think about whether yours would be, or if it might not be better to find a new place altogether. I would really prefer to have a room that was my own, where I could work if I needed to bring something home from the Ministry without feeling as if I were getting in your way or making you turn the wireless off if you wanted to listen to a programme or something. And we might want to have another room especially for scenes, I'm not sure. Then I think I'd feel more comfortable doing them at home instead of at Brands – I could keep more of a mental separation."

"My flat does have two bedrooms, but the second one is fitted out as a guest room, as you know. Not that I've had that many guests, but I like the idea of having somewhere to put them that isn't on the sofa. I'm not sure if we could squeeze a desk in there as well. Although... how good are your shrinking spells? We could shrink the bed and put it away and only get it out if there actually were a guest to put into it."

"I suppose that would work," said Hermione, but she sighed.

"What is it? You don't like the idea?" A line appeared between Draco's eyebrows as he gave a worried frown.

"Well, I'm sure it's more practical to keep your flat and only have to move my things, but I'm afraid that then it will always feel like your place, not our place. Does that make sense?"

Draco gave a slow nod. "Yes... I remember from when I was young, my mother saying things like that. Of course Malfoy Manor had been in my family for generations, so it wasn't just my father's home, it had centuries of Malfoy taste stamped all over it."

"Right. Your flat wouldn't be that bad, but..." Hermione shrugged.

"No, I can see your point. We can look for a place that suits us both, and this time I won't let my mother decorate it, either." Draco smirked slightly. "You can be the one who decides how everything should look."

"Oh no. You'll help," said Hermione firmly. She was not going to take sole responsibility for that.
They gave a housewarming party to celebrate once they had found a suitable place and moved in. The fact that Hermione Granger and Draco Malfoy were living together caused more than a few raised eyebrows, but the party was a smashing success. They invited Draco's parents, who sent a stiff note declining, and Hermione's, who turned out to have a dental conference that week and were off in Corfu. Ron came, however, with his new wife Susan, and gave Hermione a hearty hug and a buss on the cheek.

"Never would have expected it, Hermione, but as long as you're happy?"

"I am. Very. And I can tell that you are with Susan," Hermione responded.

Ron's expression softened almost to fatuousness as he looked across the room at his wife. "Yes. Susan's great. Funny how things work out, really."

Harry came and hugged Hermione too. He didn't say much, just gave her a smile tinged with melancholy as he looked around. He shook Draco's hand as well and congratulated him on having persuaded Hermione to move in with him.

"I didn't persuade her," Hermione heard Draco say. "I suggested it first, true, but after that I left it completely up to her to decide."

"Hermione's good at that," Harry agreed.

"So are we going to see you settling down any time soon, Harry?" George Weasley had come with Angelina Johnson, and Hermione suspected that George would be popping the question any day now. Or maybe it would be Angelina who asked?

"Leave him alone, George," Angelina said, giving Hermione the barest of winks. "Not everyone wants to settle down right away. Look at your brother Charlie."

Harry flushed nevertheless and hastily moved away, although the next people Hermione saw him talking to were Ginny and Neville, which seemed odd, almost as if he were deliberately reminding himself that he'd been the one to break it off with Ginny.

The party went on until the wee hours of the morning, and by its end Hermione was too tired to want to do anything except fall into bed, pushing her speculations about Harry to the back of her mind for the time being.

They fell quite rapidly into a pleasant, domestic routine. Draco's hours at St Mungo's were more irregular than Hermione's at the Ministry, but they did manage to eat dinner together most nights – Hermione's mother had always emphasised that as she was growing up – and found time for other activities as well. Mostly they indulged in the domination and submission that they both enjoyed on weekends, when there was time and opportunity to enact more elaborate scenarios if they wished, and sometimes they still went to Brands to do so, although once or twice they talked about investing in more permanent installations at home. Concern that some family member or friend might pop in unexpectedly and see what they preferred to keep private, however, kept them from actually doing so.

Hermione considered it her greatest triumph when she convinced Draco that he could indeed cook dinner for two of them, without the assistance of house-elves. She'd been dismayed when she learned that he had borrowed house-elf services from his parents on a regular basis before they moved in together, and made him promise that they would never have house-elves work for them in future. Even Draco, though, could not have much trouble opening tins of soup or putting something pre-
made into the oven. Over time, he even ventured to try a few recipes from scratch, finding that the skill wasn't so very different from potion-making, at which he had always excelled.

Draco hadn't actually made the potato and leek soup that they were eating one fateful evening, although he had cooked the sprouts and sausages that were to follow. Somehow the bowl slipped through his fingers and landed with a hot splash on Hermione's lap.

"Oh, fuck," she yelped. "Damn it, Draco, you're not that clumsy!" She struggled to hold back tears; it hurt badly, although Draco pulled out his wand immediately to cast a cooling spell, and then fetched a healing potion to ease the scald further.

Despite his apologies, Hermione was still in a cross enough mood later that evening that when Draco asked if she had any new sexual ideas she wanted to try out, she said, not entirely in jest, that she fancied bringing another man into their bed sometime; to be specific, she fancied Harry.

Draco didn't react quite as she had expected. After a few moments of silence, he seemed more intrigued by the idea than threatened by it, in fact, asking if she was serious, and what made her think that Harry might be interested.

"The way that he looks at us," Hermione said. "You, me, the two of us together. I noticed it a while ago, but at that engagement party for Ginny and Neville last month, he couldn't take his eyes off us. You were feeding me a bite of cake and Harry looked... wistful, I suppose is the word I want. Not quite jealous, but as if he wished he were the one being fed, or maybe doing the feeding, I'm not sure.""

"Couldn't he?" Draco ran his fingers through his hair and leaned back. "I didn't notice that, but it didn't occur to me to pay attention, either. So you think that Harry might go for it?"

Hermione nodded. "He's dated a couple of wizards as well as various witches over the years," she said. "Discreetly, but still, he's done it. So perhaps he'd be interested in the two of us together. Just to see what that would be like – you know."

"I know that no Gryffindor can resist a challenge," Draco murmured. "I think that's why you first agreed to see me."

There was definitely some truth to that.

A few days later, while they were having one of their more-or-less regular lunches, Hermione invited Harry over for the evening. "It's been awhile since we've been able to talk without me having to race back to work, and I'd like you and Draco to get to know each other better, now that I'm living with him."

Harry looked slightly uncomfortable, but he agreed. "Shall I bring anything?" he asked.

"Only if you want to," Hermione said.

"All right. I'll see you at six-thirty on Friday then. I have to run – I've a meeting with the team sponsors in ten minutes. I think they want to convince me to do more publicity photos." He rolled his eyes, sketched a quick salute at her, and hurried out of the Ministry canteen.

Plenty of wine, Hermione decided, was going to be necessary to get Harry into the proper state of mind to hear out her proposal. Candles. An atmosphere that was sensual without being too overtly romantic, since that might frighten him off. Draco chose the wine and helped to get everything else ready the night before, since unfortunately his shift at St Mungo's wouldn't end until six.
"Nervous, love?" he asked Hermione as they waited for Harry's arrival. Draco had raced home to take a quick shower and change out of his hospital uniform, and his hair was still a little damp, clinging to his neck.

"Yes," she admitted. "He's been my friend for years and years, but what if I misread him? I think he's attracted to both of us, but what if I'm wrong? What if this idea upsets him?"

Draco stroked her back soothingly. "Don't worry about it. You know Harry too well to make a mistake like that. Maybe he won't be interested, but I shouldn't think he'd be offended, either."

A thump of the Floo signalled Harry's arrival, and Hermione put aside her worries to greet him with a warm hug.

During the meal she made sure that Harry's wineglass remained full; she calculated that he drank perhaps the equivalent of three or four glasses in the end before he finished and moved back to the living room where he accepted a glass of brandy.

She curled up next to Draco on the sofa, tucking her feet to the side and leaning against him. Whenever Harry wasn't talking, she could see hints of forlornness on his face as he looked at the two of them together.

The conversation had wound through variations on politics and Quidditch and general gossip and had died down to near-silence when Hermione said, "Harry."

Harry glanced up, the candlelight muting the green of his eyes behind his spectacles. "Hm?"

"We've seen you watching us." She turned her head and glanced at Draco, who nodded and patted her shoulder. "Both of us. Separately and together."

She could see Harry swallow hard.

"I'm sorry," he muttered. "I didn't mean for you to realise. Don't worry, I won't let it happen again."

He set down his nearly-empty brandy glass and shoved his fringe back from his forehead. "I'd better leave."

"No, don't," said Draco. Harry had begun to stand, but now he let himself sit back down, although he was on the edge of his chair and looked as though he might leap up and run out at any moment.

"We asked you here tonight because we thought you might be interested in acting on what you've been thinking," said Hermione. She was proud that her voice didn't seem to reflect the nervousness she felt.

"What?" Harry stared.

"Do you need it repeated?" Draco earned a brief elbow in the ribs for that remark. He added, "It's a serious offer, Harry. Hermione and I have talked it over, and decided that we both wanted to invite you to share our bed."

Harry turned his head away, and Hermione saw him blink rapidly as he tried to master his emotions.

"You don't have to answer now if you don't want to," she said anxiously.

"If I don't want to?" Harry's voice broke on the penultimate word. "God, Hermione, you don't
know..." He took a deep breath. "You don't know how much this means to me, how amazing it is to have something I've dreamed of for ages actually happen." His voice cracked again.

Hermione slipped out from the circle of Draco's arm and went over to Harry, kneeling in front of him and putting her hand on his leg. He clutched at it as she said, "You and I have been friends more than half of our lives, Harry. I love Draco, but I realised that I can be attracted to you this way, too, without diminishing what I feel for him."

"Draco?" Harry was so rigid that Hermione knew it must be a deliberate attempt to keep himself from trembling.

"I'm not just doing this because Hermione wants it, if that's what you want to know. Don't you remember what happened when you got me out of the Room of Requirement?"

Hermione supposed Draco must be talking about the Battle of Hogwarts, but she had no idea what exactly he meant. She resolved to ask Draco later, however. Whatever it was, it seemed to convince Harry, for the tension in his body softened.

"I remember."

"Well, then," said Draco, with a "there, that's settled" air.

"Right." Harry stroked Hermione's hand where it rested on his knee. "I don't see any reason to wait when I know the answer I'll give is yes."

"Oh, Harry." Hermione reached her arms to draw Harry closer. Their first kiss was clumsy, tentative, as if Harry was still uncertain whether or not he should be doing this. The very awkwardness managed to be erotic, however; Hermione felt a flutter in her stomach as the kiss ended. She heard Draco behind her, standing up to walk over, but she couldn't take her eyes from Harry's face. He looked back at her with equal absorption until Draco laid his hands on Hermione's head, and then Harry glanced upward.

"I don't think this is going to be the most comfortable place to do much. Perhaps we should take things elsewhere?" suggested Draco.

"Yeah," agreed Harry a little hoarsely.

Hermione let Draco help her rise to her feet, and they each held out a hand for Harry to take as he stood.

"I'm really not sure how this is going to work out," Hermione admitted against Harry's chest as they stood in a three-way embrace for a long moment. "Physically, that is. Logistically."

Harry's chuckle had a slightly hysterical edge to it. "Neither do I."

"Nor I," said Draco, "so let's just try it and see."

It was only a few steps down the hallway to Draco and Hermione's bedroom, but it took rather a long time to get there, as they couldn't keep their hands off one another as they went. By the time they reached the bed, in fact, the two men had managed to undress Hermione completely and were wearing scarcely more themselves. Hermione stroked Harry's cock through the tented white fabric of his pants. Harry gave a soft groan, his head falling backward against Draco, who was standing behind him.

"God, yes," he said in an intense near-whisper.
Draco smiled at Hermione over Harry's shoulder, and she smiled back. "Let's take these off and lie down," she suggested, tugging the fabric down Harry's legs.

"How do you prefer it, with men?" Draco murmured, stroking the skin of Harry's shoulders.

"Hm?" Harry was glassy-eyed, his lips swollen with kisses.

"With men," Draco repeated. "Would you rather top or bottom?"

"Er. I usually prefer topping –"

Draco smiled at that.

"– but what about Hermione?" finished Harry.

"We don't have to do everything at once," Hermione said sensibly. "We've all the time we want. I'd rather enjoy watching the two of you together, I think." She had only ever once or twice watched Draco with another person, and that had been strictly in the context of dominance and submission, when she had deliberately handed him over to other women as part of his discipline. She was keen to see how Draco would respond to someone else, especially a man, without the security of those roles. She lay on her side, using pillows to prop herself up so that she could watch them comfortably while caressing her breasts with one hand and fingeriing her clit with the other.

Apparently Harry needed no further encouragement, for he turned to Draco and began kissing him, fierce slow kisses, pinning Draco under him. Draco's thighs parted so that Harry's knee could slip between them, and Hermione could catch glimpses of their cocks rubbing against each other's thighs.

"Yes," Draco muttered as Harry's mouth travelled along his neck and bit the hollow of his throat. "Go on, I like it rough."

Harry stilled for a moment at that, and Hermione wondered if perhaps Harry was put off by Draco's words, but he said hoarsely, "Lube?"

"I'll get it." Hermione used a wandless spell to Summon the bottle, which she had left inconveniently across the room. "Here, let me."

Harry sat up to let Draco roll onto his hands and knees.

"I like it like this," he told Harry, who nodded.

Hermione squeezed a generous dollop of lubricant onto Harry's fingers, and another onto her own. Together they made certain that Draco was ready to accept Harry's cock. Then Hermione guided the head of Harry's cock to Draco's tight aperture and watched as her lover was penetrated. She shuddered and her hand flew back to her cunt, pressing against her clit and rubbing in firm circles. She was familiar with Draco's expressions of pleasure during sex; he was unquestionably enjoying the way Harry fucked him, deep and slow. Harry looked dazed, as if he couldn't quite believe this was happening. He gripped Draco's hips like a lifeline, but his eyes rested on Hermione, who spread herself to give him more of a show.

"Do you like that, Draco?" she asked softly. "Harry's gorgeous prick splitting you open? I can tell you do, the way you're so flushed. Another time you can fuck me while Harry's fucking you, but I like watching like this too. You're so sexy together I can't stand it." She rubbed herself faster, a series of minor orgasms flickering through her.

Harry's face and chest were flushed with arousal. "God – gonna –" he choked out.
"And another time you'll fuck me, Harry. You'll pound into me and I'll come around you the way I am now." Hermione was panting, but she managed to keep talking. "Or maybe the two of you together could eat me out, one from the front, the other from behind. Draco has the most amazing tongue; you'll find out."

"Ohhh," Harry groaned, and arched his back as he came. He bent forward to put his arms around Draco's chest and rolled them over together, his cock still buried in Draco's arse. Reaching for Draco's prick, he began stroking it, saying, "How's this, then?"

"Rougher," begged Draco through gritted teeth, and Harry complied, increasing the tempo of his stroke. Then Draco was coming, spurting through Harry's fingers, the sharp smell of it tickling Hermione's nose.

"That was marvellous," she said.

"You didn't feel left out at all?" asked Harry with a touch of anxiety in his voice.

She chuckled. "No, I really didn't."

"I never imagined that you'd talk like that in bed." Harry blushed. "It was pretty hot."

"She's a real firecracker in bed," Draco agreed, stretching lazily and leaning over to give Hermione a lingering kiss. "Bossy, though."

Which was, of course, true, but they hadn't said anything at all to Harry about how they had gotten together in the first place. Someday perhaps they could tell him... especially if they did this again.

Harry stayed with them that night, a little shyly, borrowing a toothbrush from Hermione and a pair of too-large pyjama bottoms from Draco. Hermione would have expected to find a third person in bed disturbing – she had had enough trouble getting used to Draco – but somehow Harry's presence didn't bother her a bit. She slept well and deeply between the two men and woke in the morning with Draco sprawled out and snoring lightly to one side and Harry curled up against her on the other.

"I'm not quite sure what to do now," admitted Harry over breakfast. "I mean, you two are a couple already, and while I was pleased, even honoured, by your inviting me to join you last night, I don't want to presume too much." He took an enormous bite of toast thickly spread with marmalade and looked from Hermione to Draco and back again.

"The sex was good," said Hermione matter-of-factly, causing Harry to choke slightly and produce a spray of wet toast crumbs across his plate. "At least, I certainly enjoyed it, and you both seemed to as well."

"Oh, unquestionably," Draco agreed, running one sock-clad foot along Hermione's calf.

"Yes, fine, but um. We've been friends for a long time, Hermione and me," said Harry when he managed to swallow properly. "Is this going to change things between us?"

"I hope not. It doesn't have to," Hermione said.

"Okay." Harry sounded relieved, although there was something in his voice that Hermione couldn't quite label, too.

He left shortly thereafter, saying that he'd Owl Hermione about having lunch again soon. She didn't hear anything all week, and fretted about it to Draco, who advised her to wait a little longer, send a message to Harry the following week if he still hadn't been in touch.
On Friday, at six-thirty, the doorbell rang. Harry stood there holding a bottle of wine.

"Can I come in?"

Hermione smiled enormously. "Draco!"

She led Harry inside. They hadn't planned on having an extra person to feed that night, but it didn't matter; the three of them ended up going directly to the bedroom anyhow.

The following Friday, it was the same, although this time Hermione guessed that Harry would turn up and made sure to have enough frozen quiche for three.

After a couple of months in which Harry came over every Friday and stayed the night – Quidditch season was over, luckily – Hermione woke up one Saturday to find Harry propped on his elbow, looking at her.

He saw that she was awake and stroked a stray lock of hair out of her face. "What are we doing?" he asked quietly, as Draco slept on.

"I... don't know," Hermione confessed. "Maybe we should talk. With Draco, too."

Harry nodded. "Want me to help make breakfast?"

They got up and went into the kitchen. Eventually the smell of frying bacon lured Draco out to join them at the table.

"I've really been happy being with the two of you, these past weeks," Harry said in a rush. "But the thing is, I want to know where matters stand. If this is just about the sex... I'm not sure I want that. Not that I don't like it, I do, very much, but I want more."

"Of course you do. It's only natural that you should want to settle down into a relationship, something meaningful. Not that everyone wants that, but you've never been the go-it-alone type, Harry," said Hermione, and spooned up a grapefruit section. "I think we could move forward with things."

"What are you suggesting?" Draco asked.

"Obviously this isn't something that can happen at the drop of a hat; think of how long it took us to develop an emotional relationship, Draco," said Hermione. "I think that perhaps the way to go about it is for the three of us to spend time together, getting to know each other in different ways: talking, doing things, and so on. Not just having sex, good though that is."

"Perhaps both you and I should each spend time alone just with Harry, too," said Draco thoughtfully. He had finished eating his toast and now rose to make a fresh pot of tea.

"I'd like that," said Harry. "Hermione and I might have been friends for years, but it's still different now, and you and I have never really gotten to know each other, Draco."

"As long as none of us expects all this to happen overnight. We each have jobs, for one thing, and other friends and family. But I think Draco's suggestion is a good one. This week, for example," Hermione said, "I'm going to be terribly busy at work, as we're coping with some newly-proposed legislation, but Draco's schedule is freer, I think?"

Draco nodded. "You and I could have lunch or dinner together sometime this week, if you're free," he told Harry, who nodded.
"That would be great."

"See?" Hermione smiled at Harry. "Not so difficult, really. Although time will tell if we can work it all out."

"If we want to, we will," Draco said in a firm voice.

After Harry had gone home, though, Draco wasn't quite so sanguine.

"I like having sex with him," he told Hermione.

"I'd noticed," she said with a laugh.

"Come on, I'm trying to be serious here. I like having sex with Harry, but more? I don't know. You and Ron broke up because you didn't feel you had much in common. What do Harry and I have in common, really?"

"Isn't that what you'd be spending time alone with him to find out?" Hermione asked reasonably. "If you really don't get along outside of bed, then it'll become clear that there's no long-term future for the three of us. It wouldn't be fair to Harry to just have sex with him, and me be friends; that's not what he wants or deserves, so it would be better to figure out sooner rather than later if the two of you can become friends, too."

Draco frowned. "Yeah."

"What's the problem? You don't look that happy."

He denied that there was one, but when Hermione pushed, he finally snapped, "You've been so happy with Harry in our bed – I feel like I'm being pressured to get along with him, or you might decide to go with him instead of me."

"No." Hermione shook her head. "Draco, I love you. Yes, I love Harry too, but it's still more of a friendship kind of love, along with physical attraction, admittedly. You and I have something special together, though, and I don't want to lose that. If it's really a problem for you, becoming friends with Harry, I want you to be honest about that."

"Okay." Draco took a deep breath. "I'll try. But without you there – he and I, you know how we acted toward each other in school. I'm afraid we'll fall into that pattern again."

Hermione chuckled. "Did it ever occur to you that maybe part of the reason why the two of you were always sniping at each other was because you were each attracted to the other and didn't want to admit it?"

Draco blinked. "No."

"Well, think about it. And have lunch or whatever with Harry, and see how it goes," Hermione kissed him. "Meanwhile, I have a suggestion to pass the time." She whispered in his ear, and Draco responded enthusiastically.

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He and Harry did manage to have dinner together that week; Draco reported to Hermione afterward that he had certainly had a good time, and that he thought Harry had as well, although without giving too many details. Which was, after all the point, that Harry and Draco should have private things together without having to include Hermione in everything. Still, in order to accept the state of things she had to remind herself that the same would be true when she and Harry had time to be together,
She was also glad that Draco had pointed out to Harry that he, Draco, would want to spend time alone with Hermione as well. Living together of course they were around each other in the mornings and evenings, but they needed to be sure that there would be some real "couple time" as well, in particular, time for the sort of play that had brought them together in the first place.

Communication between the three of them wasn't always perfect, naturally, a fact that was brought home to them all one Sunday. Hermione and Draco had both agreed that eventually they would need to tell Harry about their established dominant-submissive relationship, but neither of them was quite sure when and how it would be best to tell Harry. In the meantime, they continued with it when Harry was not around... or at least, so they thought.

"Ten... eleven... twelve," Draco counted, his reddened arse flexing as each stroke fell. He was pressed against the wall, arms outspread and held by ropes, head turned to the side, eyes closed.

Hermione stopped, reversing her hold on the flogger and running the handle of it down his spine, probing between his buttocks. "I really should consider getting a strap-on," she murmured. "Watching Harry fuck you makes me want to do it myself."

"Yes," Draco agreed.

"Maybe we can go pick one out together." She stroked his arse. "Another dozen? Pick up the count."

Swish-crack.

"Thirteen... fourteen..."

"What are you doing?" Harry's voice cracked from the doorway, his expression wavering between astonishment and horror as Hermione turned to look at him.

"Caught," murmured Draco, and Hermione lowered her arm so that the flogger brushed the floor.

"What does it look like, Harry?"

"You – but I – you never told me that you did this stuff," Harry said.

"Finite incantatem." At Hermione's words the ropes binding Draco vanished, and they both stepped toward Harry.

"It wasn't that we were trying to hide this from you," Hermione assured him. "Honestly. I just wasn't sure if you'd be interested, and I didn't want to make you think that you had to be."

"It's true, Harry." Draco touched Harry's cheek to make Harry look at him. "We were going to talk to you about it eventually; we didn't expect you here so early today. I thought you were just coming for dinner."

"Are you very upset?" Hermione asked a little anxiously.

Harry let out a long breath. "Not exactly. Not by what you were doing so much as by the fact that you never even hinted that you did anything like this."

"I'm sorry," she said. "I wasn't thinking about the fact that you might feel excluded."

"Okay," Harry said. "Just don't keep the secrets like this another time, all right?"
They both nodded. Draco asked, "Are you interested in it yourself? Would you like to watch?"

"I – yes, I think I would," said Harry. "I'd like to understand. Do you take turns?"

"No, Hermione doesn't enjoy submission the way that I do," Draco said. "She's an excellent dominatrix, though, whether or not she's inflicting pain."

Hermione blushed at the compliment. "There's something beautiful about complete and voluntary obedience," she tried to explain.

Harry looked a little confused, but he nodded. "I guess I see. Maybe watching will help me understand better."

"You don't need to participate, nor even watch if you don't want to," Hermione said.

"We don't do this all the time, either," Draco added. "If it's not to your taste, that's not going to be a problem for us as a triad, I hope."

"Let me learn what it's like, and we'll see how it goes," Harry said, and he conjured a chair to sit in while Hermione and Draco returned to what they'd been doing. His own evident arousal by the sight of Draco being beaten made Draco even more responsive than usual, and Hermione smiled to herself, confident that even if Harry didn't ever want to submit himself, he would have no long-term trouble in accepting what the other two did.

"Draco," said Harry presently.

"Yes?"

"You like being the –" Harry paused, clearly groping for a word.

"Submissive," Hermione supplied.

"Submissive," Harry repeated. "Why?"

Draco ran his fingers through his hair, then shook his head, the strands falling neatly into place. Hermione always felt a pang of envy, watching that. "Hermione's asked me that, too, and I'm not sure if I have a very good answer."

"Well, tell me whatever you can, then. Because it seems odd to me; in school I would have thought you'd do just about anything to get out of feeling pain."

"Not quite," said Draco thoughtfully. "Not pain so much as shame, I'd say. Although it isn't precisely the pain that I like either. It's more the security of knowing what the expectations of me are, of having someone correct my faults with care and attention. Hermione's very good at that."

"What does she do to you, if it's not always a beating or whatever?" Harry frowned.

Hermione opened her mouth to speak, then thought better of it and shut it again. She wanted to know how Draco perceived matters.

"Different things. She has had me polish her boots, for instance." Draco grinned. "I won't forget the first time she did that. I had never polished a shoe before in my life, and she told me she wanted to be able to see her face in them when I was done. I was terrified I wouldn't do a good enough job."

"You did just fine, though," said Hermione.
"It was funny, actually. I was so absorbed in the task... and stroking the leather of your boots almost made me feel as if you were touching me."

"Yes, I remember your reaction." Hermione smiled at Draco.

Harry had been looking from one of them to the other. "What was his reaction?"

"It excited me. A lot," Draco explained patiently. "Hermione is a kind mistress, though, and she permitted me to come almost right away, as a reward for doing a good job. Those boots weren't clean for long."

Harry looked as though he was trying very hard to understand why Draco would find all that satisfying. "Okay," he said in doubtful tones. "So sometimes she punishes you physically and sometimes she makes you do tasks you don't like, but the point is that she's doing this because you've done something wrong or disobedient, is that it?"

"More or less. Although the tasks can turn out to be quite enjoyable in their own way. As I said, I rather liked polishing her boots, in the end; it was satisfying to make them as perfect as I could. And she's had me do other things that I enjoyed."

"We don't by any means always engage in the roles of dominant and submissive, either," Hermione put in. "It takes a lot of effort and concentration, for both of us. I know there are a few tops who live the role pretty nearly all the time, but that's not something I would want to do, probably not something I could do even if I did want to. But sometimes – yes, sometimes it's what each of us needs. I think of it as helping to make my partner as nearly perfect as he can be."

"Your partner? Isn't that always Draco?"

"These days it is, but it didn't used to be. I was working with several other bottoms when Draco first asked me if I would take him on." Hermione touched Draco's shoulder fondly. "It took quite a while before he persuaded me to become exclusive."

"So you would – top – several people at once?"

"No, no. I couldn't give proper attention if I did that. Some tops could, maybe, but not me. No, I'd see someone different each time. I had three regulars before Draco came along; they've all found other mistresses or masters now."

"I see." Harry's voice was thoughtful. "I think I see."

"Well, you know that anything you want to know about it, you can ask," Hermione assured him.

"I will," said Harry. "I'm sorry, I'm interrupting. You should go on."

He had been interrupting, but Hermione didn't mind all that much, not if it meant he was interested. "Maybe you should take off your clothes, too?" she suggested. "Or at least, you can touch yourself while you watch, if you want."

"Do," Draco encouraged, and Harry licked his lips and pulled down his jeans and pants before sinking back into his conjured chair.

Hermione felt a little self-conscious now. She'd had an audience plenty of times at Brands, but there, there were always other couples too, so she didn't feel quite so much as if she were putting a solo – well, duo – performance as she did with just Harry watching. She finished another dozen blows with the flogger before deciding that perhaps that was enough for the time being.
Telling Draco to turn around, she was pleased to see his response to having Harry watch was positive; the head of his cock positively glistened with pre-come. A little delay seemed appropriate.

"Eat me," she ordered, sitting on the edge of the bed and spreading her thighs wide. Not imaginative, maybe, but it always worked well for Draco, and Harry would probably enjoy the sight too.

She was very wet. Draco blew across her cunt, the caress of the air by itself almost enough to trigger an orgasm, but he followed with light short licks, flickering his tongue over her clít. Hermione dug her fingers into the mattress, her muscles spasming. Draco's eyes rolled upward to gauge her reaction, and pressed harder with his tongue, slurping and smacking and making little noises of appreciation. Over in his chair, Harry whimpered; Hermione could see his hand pumping on his cock.

"Good boy," she murmured, rocking into Draco's face. "Don't touch yourself, now. I want your hand free to fuck me. You'll get to come soon."

"Yes, ma'am," he replied indistinctly against her. "Fingers now?"

"Now," she said, and felt a mighty rush as he pushed into her cunt. Three fingers, she thought he was using, and silently approved his choice. "Harder."

Draco obeyed, finger-fucking her fast and hard even as he kept his lips sealed over her clít, suckling, tongue vibrating rapidly; she wondered how long he could continue. Her orgasm was like a waterfall, a continuous surge gushing through her, holding her quivering at the peak for long minutes until she could take no more and she was compelled to say, "Enough! Stop, Draco."

He stopped immediately, sitting back on his heels, his face shining with her juices.

Harry had already come. He sprawled, his prick still red but now softening against his dark curls as his chest heaved with deep breaths.

"Turn so that Harry can see you, Draco. Touch yourself."

She let him go on for a good five minutes without giving him permission to come, watching Harry's face as Harry watched Draco wank.

"You may come," she said at last. It took him a few more strokes, he had been holding back so hard, before his semen jetted out onto the floor – he'd aimed at Harry, Hermione thought, though Harry was too far away to be reached.

"Wow," Harry breathed. "Um. I didn't realise it could be like that."

Hermione smiled and stroked Draco's shoulder. "As I said, if you want to know more, or to try it sometime, we'll be happy to talk to you about it... and if not, that's fine too."

"Yeah, all right," Harry said, still looking a little dazed.

He still maintained his own flat, and the three of them had established a schedule – subject to variation based on what each of them had to do for their jobs – in which Harry saw Draco at least once a week, Hermione usually once for lunch, and then the three of them were together twice. Since not all of the get-togethers were at night, Hermione and Draco generally had several evenings a week to themselves.

"Does Harry talk to you a lot?" Hermione asked Draco one night.
He had been working on a crossword puzzle in the *Daily Prophet* and looked up at her question.

"Sometimes. It depends." He went a bit pink. "If we're meeting at his flat, or here, we're more likely to get physical, but if we go out for lunch or something, then obviously not."

"But the two of you get along well together in non-sexual ways, is what I mean."

"Oh, definitely." Draco cocked his head. "Although you might not think so, if you were a fly on the wall. We do tend to slip back into some of the ways we interacted back in school, you know? A bit of insult, that kind of thing. It's comfortable but it doesn't mean anything negative, not any more."

"*Men.*" Hermione rolled her eyes at him. "As long as it works for you two, though." She tucked away that bit of knowledge, so that if they started posturing and sniping in front of her, she'd know to ignore it.

"We try to be on our good behaviour in front of you," Draco said with a slightly wicked smile. "I mean, isn't that what you've trained me to do?"

"Yes, but not Harry."

Draco waved that away. "Harry's a quick study."

Although Hermione had been reluctant when Draco suggested they live together, she was the one who first brought up the idea of Harry moving in, some eight months after their first time together as a threesome.

"I don't know," said Harry doubtfully. "Draco, what do you think?"

"I'm certainly not *against* the idea," said Draco.

"But you're not for it, either?" asked Harry.

"I just want to make sure that we all know what we're getting into. I think that having three people together all the time is likely to be a lot more complicated than any of us realizes. Just the little things, like personal space. I think we need to think about it, talk things over carefully before we make any precipitous decisions. Do you agree, Hermione?"

Hermione nodded. "I wasn't trying to suggest that Harry move in here *tomorrow.* It will take some thinking and discussion to figure out how this is going to work. We'll probably need a larger place again, for one thing, and then there's another issue to deal with as well."

"What?" Harry looked confused.

"Our families," said Draco shrewdly.

"Exactly. Even Harry might find it a little awkward to explain to the Weasleys, for instance, what's going on, and I doubt that either your parents or mine will be delighted either." Hermione made a little face. "Your mother asked me last time we visited whether we planned to get married, and I suspect she was hoping the answer would be 'no,' rather than 'we haven't really discussed it,' which is what I told her."

"I know this is kind of precipitous given that we are really only discussing possibly all living together, but is it even *possible* for three people to be married? I know that Muggle law forbids it, but what about in the wizard world?" Harry asked.
Hermione had looked up wizarding law about marriage the previous week, but she kept quiet to see what Draco would say.

"It's..." Draco paused, biting his lip, "...it's possible, but complicated. It would be especially complicated for the three of us."

"Why?"

"Because you and I, Harry, are each the last direct descendants in our families, and Hermione is Muggle-born. The pre-nuptial agreement would have to take into account how inheritance would occur, with all the possible variations depending on how many children Hermione might have, and what their sexes happened to be, in what order. I don't know about the Potters, but there are some fairly stringent restrictions on inheritance in the Malfoy family, although I think we might be able to find a way around the blood purity question." Draco flushed. "Look, you know that I don't care about that anymore, right? But because of the way that the Malfoy family properties are held and passed down, it could be a problem. Even if it were just Hermione and me getting married, that would be the case, and adding a second potential sire to the equation would complicate matters quite a bit."

"I see." Harry looked at Hermione. "In a theoretical sort of way, what do you think of the idea, not immediately but someday?"

"I would be happy to marry both of you," she said, reaching for their hands and bringing them all together. "At least, once we've lived together for a few months and it looks as if we can make it work with the three of us. Maybe we should try seeing how we manage in this flat, even if it is a little small for three people to each have some privacy, and if things go well, then we could talk about getting married and finding a larger place, perhaps even a house, at the same time."

"That sounds like a decent plan," agreed Draco, and Harry nodded too.

For practical reasons having to do with Harry's current lease, it ended up being another month and a half before he moved in, and in the meantime they continued their pattern of spending time as different couples as well as all three together.

"Do you ever get jealous, about Draco and me?" Harry asked Hermione one day when it was just the two of them. They had gone to see a Muggle film, and were just finishing dinner at a rather nice restaurant.

"Sometimes, yes," said Hermione honestly. She ate the last mussel from her pasta and decided she'd had enough. She set down her fork and looked directly at Harry. "But sometimes I'm glad when the two of you are spending time together, too. It's nice to have a chance to be by myself occasionally, even though I love you both. What about you?"

"More or less the same," Harry said. "Sometimes I'm still overwhelmed that the two of you have invited me into your lives, you know? It's more than I ever thought possible, and I'm grateful."

Hermione leaned forward and took his hand across the table. "We are grateful you said yes," she said firmly. "You've been my best friend practically forever, Harry, and I'm glad that now we have this as well."

Harry stroked his thumb over her wrist.

"Would you help me with something?"

"Of course. What do you need help with?"
"I was thinking that I wanted to do something special for Draco, when I actually move in. I don't know that I'd want or be able to do it all the time, or even very often, but could you teach me how to, er, to do some of the dominating things you do for him?" Harry's eyes were very green as he looked at her pleadingly.

Hermione blinked. Whatever she'd expected, that was not it. "I suppose I could," she said. "Did you have something specific in mind? Because really, a lot of being successful as a dom is just thinking about what the sub would like, and I think you know Draco well enough to be able to do a reasonable job."

"Well..." Harry shifted in his chair. "I'd like to learn how to use some of your, um, toys. The whips and things," he added in a whisper, after looking around to make sure he wouldn't be overheard.

"Ah, I see." Hermione thought about it for a minute. "I think, then, that the best thing to do would be for you to go with me to Brands once or twice. I can get in touch with one of my former subs, maybe Lloyd, and see if his current master would be willing to let you practice on him. Carlo is a little possessive, as I recall, so we'd need his permission, but I believe he'd give it."

"Could you do that? I'd really like not to disappoint Draco, if I try this," said Harry eagerly.

"I'll send messages to Lloyd and Carlo tomorrow," Hermione promised. She wondered if Harry was planning something special for her, too, and if it would be the counterpart of what he would do for Draco: offer himself up to her. It would suit Harry's sense of fair play, but on the other hand, he had to know she would guess that he might do that, so it wouldn't be much of a surprise if he did. She'd just have to wait and see, she supposed.

"Thanks." Harry smiled. "In the meantime – want to go back to my place tonight?"

"I'd like that," Hermione agreed. Thinking about Harry being dom to Draco's sub was turning her on.

They paid the cheque and took a bus to Harry's flat in a Muggle neighbourhood. He'd mentioned to Hermione years ago that he preferred that as it kept down the number of young witches and wizards – and no few older ones, for that matter – who would otherwise hang around, hoping for a glimpse of the wizarding world's single biggest celebrity, even years after Voldemort's destruction.

"I'll miss this place," Harry confessed, gesturing at the somewhat messy but comfortable living room. "Furniture I like, everything where I put it, you know?"

"I know. Draco and I were both like that when we moved in together, too, but once we grew used to the change it worked out all right. The trick seems to be to have some private space, I think." Hermione hugged him.

Harry kissed her, gently and then more insistently, and led her off to his bedroom. They undressed together – like an old married couple, she thought, and smiled to herself – and then Harry picked Hermione up, her legs wrapping around his waist so that she could feel his cock nudging her cunt, and kissed her some more.

The first time he'd done that Hermione had been nervous, thinking that she'd be too heavy for him to hold, but Harry had assured her that it wasn't a problem. "Even if it started to be awkward, we're two steps from the bed. I'd just put you down," he'd said.

So now Hermione simply enjoyed the feeling of being held and supported. She didn't like to move too much like this lest she unbalance Harry, but she tilted her hips slightly, hoping to find the angle
that would let him slide into her.

"Don't be in such a rush," Harry murmured against her ear, and licked a wet stripe down her neck.

Hermione giggled. "That tickles."

Harry did it again, until Hermione couldn't help it and was wriggling uncontrollably. He overbalanced, but she didn't have time to be worried before they were on the bed with Harry leaning over her, grinning.

"Oh, you," she said in fond tones.

"Yes, me." Harry buried his face against her breasts, suckling, moving from one nipple to the other until they were both drawn to tight aching peaks. Hermione could feel herself growing wetter. She ran her hands along Harry's back as far as she could reach, using her nails to make him quiver under her touch.

He shifted and knelt between her legs, his head poised above her curly patch of brown hair. "You taste so good," he said, and proceeded to prove that he meant it, running his tongue along her slit, slowly spreading her open. He circled her clit a few times, then drifted away, nipping at the tender skin of her thighs, sliding a finger inside her.

Hermione moaned, wanting more, and Harry seemed to understand, bracing himself over her and slowly, slowly, pressing his cock inside. She locked her ankles together around his back, pulling him deeper. Harry was barely moving, his eyes intent on her face.

"Tell me what you want."

"You," she groaned. "Come on, Harry."

Finally he started to thrust, not too hard, and she tilted her hips so that he rubbed over her clit at every stroke, pushing her higher and higher along the path to orgasm. Hermione shook, clutching at him.

"Yeah, that's right," he murmured. "Love it when you're happy like this."

"Yes," she gasped. "Harry, yes."

He picked up his pace. "Are you ready?"

"I'm there, come on, now, please!"

Harry's face contorted though his body stilled as he came. Hermione was still shuddering through the last shocks of her own pleasure, and it was a moment before she unclasped her legs from around Harry to let him slide out, his semen mixing with her juices and dripping down her thighs.

Hermione chuckled.

"What's funny?" Harry sounded concerned and sleepy.

"I was just thinking, first, that I'm going to be going away in a few minutes and leaving you to sleep on the wet spot, but then that you could just cast a cleaning or drying spell if you wanted. Sometimes I still forget all the advantages of magic."

"Me too," admitted Harry.

"Draco doesn't." Hermione rolled onto her side so she could look at Harry. "It's such a different
"Neither are any of us." Hermione's hair was clinging to her face in damp tendrils, and Harry stroked it back.

"Change is inevitable," Hermione agreed. "We just hope it's for the better."

"I think it is." Harry gave her a smile. "Otherwise I'd still be with Ginny, and you'd be with Ron, and Draco..."

"Would be with Pansy, probably," put in Hermione.

"...and none of us would be as happy as we are now," Harry finished. "Ginny's much better off with Neville than me; she hero-worshipped me too much. I don't think she does that with him. I mean, he was definitely heroic at the Battle of Hogwarts, but she'd already known him as a regular person, and that makes all the difference."

"I think it does, yes. I wouldn't have guessed that Ron would end up with Susan, but they're clearly happy together," Hermione said.

"You're too clever for Ron," said Harry. "I don't mean that as an insult to either of you; it's not like I'm all that brilliant myself, mind you."

"No, I know what you mean. Ron's a lovely person, but he's prone to comparing himself to everyone around him and thinking less of himself on that account. With me it was schoolwork, with you it was Quidditch. I think not having been in the same House as Susan made it easier for him."

"Could be."

"Much as I hate to say it, you'd probably better be getting home."

"True." Harry stretched. "One plus about having the three of us living together, there won't be all this late night dashing around. I think I'm getting too old for this."

Harry laughed. "You're hardly old. None of us is even thirty yet."

"I'll be thirty before either you or Draco," she reminded him. "The old lady."

"Yeah, but women live longer."

"Sometimes it just seems longer," she joked, and kissed him again. "See you later this week?"

"I'm spending Saturday with the two of you, yes," Harry said. "I think Draco wanted to talk about maybe adding some wizarding space to your flat, for storing some of my things."

"Oh, right. See you then."

As she'd promised, Hermione sent owls to both Lloyd and his master Carlo to ask if it would be possible to have Harry learn a bit about how to use some of Draco's preferred toys.

*I don't know if he will ultimately be interested in becoming a true dom, Hermione wrote, but he's eager to learn a few basic techniques, for the man we both love. I would be most grateful if you would permit this training.*

Carlo replied on behalf of both of them, indicating that he would be willing to agree to Hermione's
request, but that someday he'd claim a favour from Hermione in return. That was more or less what Hermione had expected, and she didn't mind. Carlo would almost certainly ask Hermione to make a third in some scene with a sub who wanted to be dominated by two people at once, and Hermione could do that. Draco understood that such play didn't necessarily involve the emotions, and wouldn't be threatened by it, and Harry would come to learn the same.

Finding a time when the four of them could meet without Draco's knowledge was tricky. Hermione had hoped that they might manage more than one session – it wasn't as though domination was easy to master – but time was short and that proved to be impossible. It was less than a fortnight before Harry was to move in when she took him to Brands and introduced him to Lloyd and Carlo.

"So, you're interested in learning what we do?" Carlo was a large, strongly-built wizard, who conformed visually to the stereotype of a dominant, wearing tight black leather that displayed his muscles, a whip coiled at his belt. His voice, though, was a surprisingly light tenor. "Do you have any experience as either a dom or a sub?"

"No," said Harry. "Mostly I want to learn this to please Draco. I don't know if I'll really get into it otherwise."

Carlo pursed his lips and looked at Hermione.

"It's not that Harry doesn't take it seriously," she assured him. "Just that, as he says, he wants to be able to do it for our lover, say if I had to make a long trip for my job, or on special occasions. We've talked with him about the dynamics of a dom-sub relationship, but Harry would like to have it be a surprise, the first time, so as I said in my note, he needs practice with an experienced sub, and I thought Lloyd would be ideal."

"He's well-trained," Carlo agreed, resting his hand on Lloyd's head.

Hermione smiled slightly, acknowledging the implied compliment, since she had been Lloyd's mistress before turning him over to Carlo.

"What exactly do you want to learn, then?" Carlo asked Harry. "We have only a few hours, so there won't be time for much."

"Maybe how to use a couple of Hermione's whips?" Harry said tentatively. "Or floggers, whatever they're called?"

"The two are quite different," Carlo told him, and proceeded to lay out a selection of his own equipment, pointing out the many distinctions between the different types of whip, flogger, and crop, throwing in a cane for good measure.

He paused and glanced at Hermione. "Shall I take him through restraints, too?"

"Just the basics," Hermione said. "Draco and I don't use those much; mostly I require him to remain in one place without mechanical assistance."

Carlo nodded, and pulled out a set of leather cuffs, some metal manacles, and a length of rope, each of which he demonstrated on Lloyd.

"Now it's your turn," he told Harry. "First we'll have you put each restraint on Lloyd and take it off a few times, so you know how to do it smoothly. Nothing breaks the mood like fumbling around trying to pull a knot tighter. Choosing to do it slowly has a very different feel from being unable to get it right the first time. Then you'll use at least three different tools to beat him." Carlo gave a slow smile. "Lloyd likes pain, as you'll see, but I'm going to give him permission to speak or cry out
during this session, so that you can get a sense for how he feels. Finally, if you want, I'll beat you. There's nothing like experiencing it yourself, after all."

Harry paled, but nodded.

"Don't worry. I'll be gentle with you... relatively speaking," said Carlo. "Ready?"

"Ready," said Harry.

It didn't take Harry long to get the hang of the restraints, thought Hermione, watching. Carlo was quite a good teacher – not all good doms could explain what they were doing the way he could – and it was clear that Lloyd was even happier with him than he had been with Hermione as mistress.

"Lloyd's safe word is 'spoon', by the way," Carlo told Harry as he handed him a flogger with a half-dozen suede falls. "I doubt he'll use it, he never has with me, but just in case."

"Right." Harry swished the flogger experimentally. "Um. So I just hit him with this, right?"

"Pay attention to how hard you strike, and where. The arse is safest, if you're inexperienced, as it's well-padded. The thighs and upper back are also possibilities. Even light blows can produce some very intense sensations as you repeat them again and again," said Carlo. He frowned thoughtfully. "Maybe it would be better if I demonstrate a few on you, first, and then have you practice on Lloyd."

"That seems like a good idea," Hermione interjected.

Harry gulped, but agreed, and Lloyd moved away from the pillar against which he'd been standing, waiting for Harry.

"You will want to undress," Hermione reminded Harry.

"Oh. Yeah," Harry said, and bent to untie his shoes. It didn't take him long to strip naked.

Hermione beckoned him over and kissed him. "I'll be fine. Carlo is very good, he'll be careful," she murmured.

Harry gave her a crooked smile and went to stand against the pillar. "I'm ready. Uh. Safe word, yeah? How about 'shoe'?"

"'Shoe' it is," Carlo agreed. "I'm going to use a paddle first, then that flogger you were looking at, and finally a more traditional whip."

"All right." Harry visibly braced himself.

Hermione wished she had three pairs of eyes; she would have liked to watch the reactions of all three men to what Carlo was doing, all at once. As it was she had to look from one to the others, and worried that she might miss something. Clearly Carlo was being gentle, at least to begin with, for Hermione could see that Harry had relaxed after the first few blows, although the skin of his arse was reddening a bit. She glanced at Lloyd and saw him staring intently; well, he'd get his soon enough, and Hermione was certain that Carlo would make up for any faults in Harry's technique later. Carlo had that peculiar focussed look that almost all topmen had when they were working. People outside the scene always assumed that being a dom was easy, but Hermione knew better. Learning to accept pain, or humiliation, or even simply orders was often much simpler than judging how to dole those things out to the best effect.

"I think that's enough of the paddle," Carlo commented. He beckoned Lloyd over. "Bring the flogger
now."

Lloyd bowed his head and did so quickly, handing it to Carlo and resuming the kneeling position that Carlo evidently preferred him to maintain.

Carlo brushed the suede falls over Harry's back. "Feels soft, now, but it won't in a minute," he noted, and raised his arm.

As the blows fell, Hermione saw Harry's breathing quickening. In his position against the pillar, she couldn't tell if he was aroused or not, but she suspected so. She smiled. Even if Harry never wanted to get seriously into this kind of scene, as either dom or sub, his reaction boded well for him occasionally joining Draco and herself in play in the future.

"One more to go." Carlo hummed softly in his throat. The last whip was the one he wore at his belt, and he uncoiled it with obvious affection. "This is going to hurt more," he warned Harry, who yelped when the whip struck him, though Hermione could tell that Carlo had held back, using only enough force behind the blow to ensure that Harry would get a true sense of it.

Lloyd's skin sheened with sweat as Carlo continued, giving Harry six blows altogether. Not many, really, Hermione knew, but then Harry had no experience with pain like this, and didn't especially desire it; he only endured it so he would understand what he would do to Draco.

"You okay?" Carlo asked when he had finished, and Harry nodded against the pillar before he dropped his arms and stepped away.

"You did well, for a beginner," Carlo complimented him. "Even seemed to enjoy it a little, didn't you?"

Harry could hardly deny it when his erection was obvious, but he nodded nevertheless. "I didn't expect to," he confessed, "but it was... different... from what I thought."

"That's not unusual." Carlo waved Lloyd over and gestured to him to take a position against the pillar. "Are you ready to try it from the other side now? Which did you enjoy best?"

"The paddle," said Harry immediately. Then he frowned. "Although maybe that was because it was first. I got a little tender after a while."

"Lloyd will be fine, whichever you use first," said Carlo. "Lloyd, tell Harry if he's striking you too hard, or not hard enough. The trick, Harry, is mostly to be aware of what you're doing, and vary it according to the results you want – which will be different depending on who your sub is, as well as factors particular to that person, the day, and all sorts of other things. Basically, though, if you pay attention, and respond to their responses, you'll be fine. Lloyd is just going to let you know if you're way out of the ordinary range."

"Okay." Harry took a deep breath. "Um. Maybe I should put my clothes back on, though. I feel kind of weird doing this naked."

Hermione generally felt the same way about being naked while acting as a domme. Even a wisp of a skirt made her more comfortable. She stood up and Summoned Harry's clothes from the pile he'd left them in, handing them to him.

"You did really well, Harry," she said in a low voice, and he gave her a crooked smile.

"Thanks. I hope I do as well from the other side."
"You will," said Hermione confidently.

He did, beginning with the paddle. Perhaps it was having just felt the impact of the three types of instrument himself, but only once or twice did Lloyd have to tell him to strike harder or softer with any of them.

"My arm's getting tired," he remarked as he put down the whip – not the one Carlo had used, but a similar one belonging to Hermione – and reached for the flogger.

"It takes a lot of practice and effort," Hermione agreed, and Carlo nodded as well.

"You can stop now, if you'd rather."

"No, I want to try this one too. I know that every whip or whatever is unique, but I'd like to have a little bit of a sense of the different types in general," Harry explained. "As long as Lloyd's doing all right."

Carlo laughed. "Lloyd can take being beaten much harder than you're doing, and for much longer. Don't worry about that."

So Harry tried the flogger, finding that although he had preferred feeling the paddle himself, he enjoyed using the flogger most of the three.

"You've seen me use a flogger on Draco before," Hermione reminded him. "So that works out well. I'd say you should offer to flog him, if he wants. But remember too that it's not pain that Draco likes so much as being dominated, whether physically or otherwise. He likes to give up control, be told what to do."

"I know, but I'm glad to feel like I can beat him a little if that seems like what he wants, sometimes, and not worry that I'd be doing a poor job of it," Harry said. He held out his hand to Carlo. "Thank you so much, Carlo, you and Lloyd both. I learned a lot tonight."

"You're welcome. Hermione – I'll see you another time?"

Hermione nodded. "Yes. Thank you, both of you. I really appreciate your help."

"What did he mean, he'll see you another time?" Harry asked as they were leaving Brands.

"The bargain we made. He did this as a favour to me, so now I owe him one." Hermione shrugged. "Don't worry. He'll probably just want me to be a second domme in a scene sometime. I'm happy to oblige."

"Okay," said Harry, although he sounded uncertain. After a moment he said, "It's really a whole world unto itself, with its own rules and etiquette and everything, isn't it?"

"Yes, it is. For some people it becomes their whole world, but it's never been that for me, or for Draco. I think it might be for Lloyd and Carlo, although I haven't asked and they haven't said."

"I see," Harry said. "I have to say, all that did turn me on more than I expected." He gave her a sheepish grin. "Um. Walking is a little uncomfortable right now."

Hermione glanced around, then tugged Harry into an alley, out of sight of any stray passers-by; not that there were many at this time. She didn't want to wait, either. A Banishing spell took care of her panties, and within seconds she had her legs wrapped around Harry's waist and his cock thrusting into her.
The brick wall was uncomfortable against her back, but that was a small price to pay for the pleasure she experienced, heightened by the chance of discovery – minimized, but real. Harry was just as eager as she, one hand closing over her breast as he held her up with the other.

"Hermione," he said as he came, voice choked, and she held him close as her feet again touched the ground.

Harry moved in the following weekend. Hermione was thankful that magic made the whole moving process infinitely easier than for Muggles; she and Draco helped Harry pack up, using spells, and then shrank all the boxes until they could all be stacked on a single luggage trolley that they borrowed from George Weasley. He used it for moving merchandise around the shop, and Hermione suspected either he or Fred had originally nicked it from King’s Cross Station.

Draco volunteered to cook their first meal together. Hermione forbore from pointing out that, technically, it wasn't their first meal together – that honour could probably be given to the start-of-year feast at Hogwarts when they had all been first years; and they'd begun this relationship with dinner, as well; but she knew what he meant, their first meal living together.

When Draco put the food on the table, Harry reached out to both of them, taking their hands.

"I just want to say," he swallowed, "that I love you. Both of you."

Hermione found that she had a lump in her throat, but she managed nevertheless to say, "I love you both too," and Draco echoed her.

Then he said, "Now that the sentiment is out of the way, can we eat? I've been working hard on this."

Harry looked at the dish, and laughed. "Real men make quiche, then?"

"This is a quiche, yes. I'll let the two of you decide if I qualify as a real man."

"I'd say so," Hermione said. She picked up the knife and cut into the quiche, giving each of them a slice as Harry served himself some vegetables. "Did you make the crust and everything?"

"I did," said Draco proudly. "It actually wasn't that difficult."

"Mmm." Harry had already taken a bite. He sucked in some air. "Hot! Good though."

"Thanks." Draco smirked. "Can I take that as a compliment to myself as well as the food?"

Harry flipped him off and grinned. "I'll have a present for you later."

"Not for Hermione?"

"There's something for her, too."

Hermione sipped at her wine. So Harry had planned something besides the scene she knew about, with Draco. She looked forward to it.

They didn't rush through the meal, however, enjoying each other's company and lingering over glasses of wine afterward. Draco had even made a lemon cake; by then Hermione was too full to want any, but the two men each had a slice.

"Well," said Harry eventually. "Shall we wash up, and then Hermione can help me give Draco his
"Why bother washing up?" Draco raised his eyebrows. "Today's Saturday. None of us has to work tomorrow; we can clear up in the morning if we want."

"All right then. Draco, please wait in the living room. Hermione will come fetch you when I'm ready."

"Are you sure about this?" Hermione asked in a low voice when they were in the bedroom.

Harry nodded firmly. "I really want to do something special for him, something that means I acknowledge what the two of you have had together." Then he bit his lip and looked worried. "You don't feel like I'm pushing in on this, do you? I mean, you were the one he chose to dominate him, right? You're not bothered if I try it?"

Hermione laughed. "Harry, if that were the case, would I have helped you learn about it, arranged for you to meet Carlo and Lloyd? Honestly, no, I'm not bothered. I think it's lovely that you want to do this. What do you want to do to set up?"

"I thought I'd just lay out a couple of your whips and restraints, and, um, I bought some leather trousers and a vest. To have the right look. I hoped you'd wear one of your domme outfits too? Maybe we could both participate."

"Whatever you want, Harry." Hermione changed quickly, putting on her corset – much easier with Harry to help – and her high black boots, and knotting her hair up. "I'll put my dressing gown over, so that when I fetch Draco he won't guess right away."

"Good plan." For all Harry's determination, he still looked a little nervous.

"Relax, Harry. You'll be fine... and Draco will be so pleased that you wanted to do this for him. If I can make a suggestion, I think restraining him and maybe using just the paddle would be more than enough this time. He's not like Lloyd, he doesn't like pain for its own sake, but he really loves it when I take charge. Make him kneel and suck you off." Hermione gave Harry a conspiratorial grin. "He'll probably almost come himself from having you order him around."

"Okay." Harry took a deep breath. "I'm ready now."

"I'll get Draco." The heels on Hermione's boots clicked as she strode down the hallway. Draco probably would guess, since the boots added several inches to her height, and her dressing gown didn't quite reach her ankles so that the polished leather toes were visible.

Despite his words earlier, Draco had cleared off the table and was just finishing with washing the dishes when Hermione found him in the kitchen. He flicked his wand to send the final plate into the drainer and turned.

"So Harry's surprise is ready?"

Hermione nodded.

Draco stepped toward her and put his arms around her. "Hermione, love." He kissed her. "Thank you."

"For what?"

"For having suggested bringing Harry into our lives. I'd always fancied him a bit, but I don't think I
would ever have come out and said so." He shrugged. "I don't know why, but that seemed more
difficult than approaching you in the first place. So thank you."

"You're welcome... although it's not as if I did it just for your benefit." She gave him a mischievous
smile. "Come on, now. Harry's waiting."

Draco followed obediently – how appropriate, Hermione thought – and gasped when they reached
the bedroom and he saw Harry in his leather, leaning against the bedpost and holding Hermione's
favourite paddle.

"What...?" He looked at Hermione first, waiting for her to speak.

"Harry will take charge of you tonight," Hermione told him.

"Kneel, Draco," said Harry softly, and after another moment's pause, Draco did.

He was still fully dressed, but managed to look graceful as he knelt, holding the pose with his head
slightly bowed, his blond hair gleaming in the light of the candles that Harry had placed around the
room.

Harry crossed over to him and used the paddle to caress Draco's shoulders. Draco held very still, but
Hermione could see his breathing quicken, and his cock was clearly outlined against the fabric of his
trousers.

"Take your shirt off, slowly," Harry ordered.

Button by button Draco loosened the crisp white cotton. A whispered word undid the cufflinks he
affected, and he caught them in his palm before they could fall to the floor. Then he slipped the shirt
from his shoulders and held it in one hand as he waited for Harry's next command. Harry licked his
lips and tilted his head. Hermione leaned against the wall, behind Draco so that he could not see her,
and began to caress her clit as she watched.

"Stand up and finish undressing, then kneel again."

Draco kept his face and body oriented toward Harry as he obeyed; that was as it should be,
Hermione thought. Now that she'd given him permission to take Harry as his dom for the night, he
was going along whole-heartedly. It was quite gratifying actually to see Draco acting according to
the training she'd given him. She caught a few glimpses of his cock while he stripped, and as she had
told Harry would be the case, Draco was hard, fluid glistening at his slit as his cock bumped against
his belly.

When he had returned to his kneeling posture, he was required to undo Harry's trousers, just enough
to free Harry's prick so that it sprang out, the dark hair that surrounded it blending into the leather of
the trousers.

"Suck me."

Hermione stroked herself faster, watching Draco's head bobbing against Harry's groin. The contrast
of Draco's paleness against the black leather Harry wore was positively transfixeding.

"Stop."

Draco ceased immediately and pulled back. Hermione couldn't quite see his face; she moved
sideways a little until she could. Draco looked worried.
"You scraped me," said Harry coolly. "I didn't specify that you had to keep your teeth under control, but I didn't think I needed to. A little punishment is in order, I believe; five blows should do it."

He picked up the paddle from the bed and sat down. "Here, over my knees, like a naughty child." He gave Hermione a tiny smile as Draco positioned himself across his lap, and Hermione smiled back. "Count."

"One... two... three... four... five," counted Draco steadily as Harry paddled him. Harry rested a hand on Draco's back, holding him there, after he'd finished.

"Accio lube." The bottle flew to Harry's hand. "Spread your legs, Draco."

Awkwardly, still sprawled across Harry's lap, Draco parted his thighs as wide as he could. Harry reversed the paddle, holding it by the flat edge, and dragged the handle along Draco's spine until it rested between his arsecheeks.

"Can you guess what I'm going to do, Draco?" Harry crooned.

Hermione's eyes widened.

"You're going to fuck me with the paddle," Draco answered almost inaudibly.

"Very good. I am. But I'm going to be kind and let you come at any time," said Harry. He squeezed a generous amount of lubricant onto the paddle's handle and his own fingers, and pressed one fingertip against Draco's anus. "You can make all the noise you want, too. Now relax."

It didn't take long before Harry was able to slide the handle into Draco's arse. Hermione shuddered with the beginnings of orgasm as he did so. She slid down the wall until she was sitting on the floor, reaching down with her left hand to thrust three fingers into her cunt as she continued to play with her clit, and came hard, watching.

Draco was moaning, almost whimpering, as Harry pumped the handle in and out, his hips jolting at each stroke. "Oh fuck, oh fuck, Harry!" he cried out, and Hermione saw his semen spatter against Harry's trousered leg and the floor as he came.

Harry stopped, easing the handle out, and used the paddle to caress Draco's buttocks. "You can sit up," he told Draco.

It was a couple of minutes before Draco managed to do so.

"Wow," he muttered. "That was... wow. I didn't expect anything like that." He looked at Hermione. "You taught him that, didn't you?"

"I helped him learn," said Hermione, "but I didn't know exactly what Harry had planned." She crawled over to them. "I think we need to take care of Harry, now; you and I have both come, but he hasn't."

"Mm. Yes, please," said Harry. He wriggled back onto the bed and sprawled out.

"Let's both suck him at once," Hermione suggested, and Draco nodded enthusiastically.

Their lips and tongues met around Harry's cock, kissing intimately even as they worked together to tease Harry to climax. Draco had his mouth over the tip when Harry came, and he swallowed every drop but shared the taste with Hermione in a deep kiss afterward.
She snuggled between them sleepily, then, until Draco drawled, "Didn't you say you had something to give Hermione, too?"

"I did say that." Harry rolled away. "Hang on, let me get these off," he said, peeling down his trousers.

"That's a good idea," said Hermione, and sat up to remove the corset and boots she still wore. Whatever Harry's present was, she didn't expect she needed to be dressed up for it, and they weren't all that comfortable if she was going to curl up with her two men.

Draco helped her, while Harry padded out of the room and came back a few minutes later with something clenched in one hand.

"This isn't really from me," he said, sitting cross-legged on the bed in front of Hermione and Draco.

"It's not?" asked Hermione, confused.

"No. It's from both of us." Harry opened his fingers to reveal three rings sitting on his palm. "I know that maybe it's a little soon to be making a permanent commitment, and we need to see how we can work out all the mundane details first, but if it does work, I know I want to marry you. Both of you. And Draco agreed with me. He's already started looking into the legal side of things. Hermione?"

Hermione was smiling though tears streaked her cheeks. "Oh, Harry. Draco." She picked up one of the rings and looked at it. "This is perfect."

Each ring was formed of three strands of gold, twisted together – one ordinary yellow gold, one white gold, one rose gold.

"Actually that one's mine," Draco said. "We had them sized already."

"So you accept?" asked Harry anxiously.

"Of course I do." Hermione let the two of them slip the ring on her finger, and then she helped put on Draco's and Harry's also. "How could I not, when I love you both?"

End Notes

Written for the hermionebigbang in 2009. This was inspired by several drabbles and ficlets that I wrote for inell. Many, many thanks to snegurochka_lee for beta-ing; her suggestions have (I hope) much improved the story, and any remaining errors and infelicities are entirely my own responsibility.

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