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Chapter: 1

This was written for H/D Glompfest on Serpentinelion - a fest created to write and draw for the awesome readers who don't write or draw, but who keep us all motivated with their awesome reviews. This one was for Kluminia (millions of hugs!) and I would also like to dedicate this to my darling Manos and to Anna for introducing us. You guys are FABULOUS! *sparklehugs to you* And for the rest of my darling readers, I love you all! *snuggles a billionty*

STRATAGEM

"Sit down, Harry," said Minister Tanner with an expansive gesture toward a cosy-looking chair. Harry wasn't fooled by his pleasant demeanour. Minister Tanner had got the job by being completely ruthless under a mask of genial efficiency.

Harry sat.

"Now, then. You might have noticed some shenanigans going on around the Ministry recently," Tanner said, leaning back in his chair and tapping his sparse beard with a large gold-coloured quill. He did not look at Harry as he spoke, as if discussing the weather.

"Shenanigans?" Harry asked, feigning confusion. In truth, he had been half-expecting this little chat for over a week. Tanner had obviously been distracted with weightier matters.

Tanner's gaze fixed on him, promising retribution for any dissembling. "Shenanigans, Potter. Unacceptable shenanigans and tomfoolery will not be tolerated in my Ministry."

Harry cleared his throat, not missing the shift to his surname. "What sort of tomfoolery, Minister?"

Tanner frowned. "I was hoping you would come clean, Potter. But perhaps you really don't know. After all, I can hardly expect my Head Auror to be involved in such nonsense." Tanner nodded,

apparently having convinced himself as to Harry's innocence.

Harry was silent, waiting for the Minister to continue and barely suppressing the urge to start babbling false questions. His training served him in good stead—he knew that suspects would often confess if left enough silence in which to hang themselves.

"Apparently several of my staff members are playing a game, Harry."

"A game?" Harry repeated, relaxing slightly as the Minister returned to using his first name.

"Yes. Several of my aides have reported some sort of contest wherein my staff members are attempting to kill each other—fictitiously, of course. Not in reality."

"Fictitiously?" Harry asked and then made a mental note to stop repeating everything Tanner said, as it was another sure way to reveal duplicity. Before Tanner could pick up on it, Harry continued, "So, this is an attempted murder game? It does sound dangerous."

Tanner scowled. "Of course it's not dangerous! It's unprofessional. Gorge—one of the secretaries in the Department of Magical—well, it's not important who divulged the story, but *someone* mentioned that a couple of my Aurors were racing through the halls brandishing wands and shooting paint at one another. The shame of it! Grown men acting like children!"

Harry adopted a serious mien and nodded sombrely, trying not to think of Dean Thomas and Alex Martinson racing through the Ministry. He raised a hand and pretended to scratch when his lip trembled with the effort to hold back a grin. Martinson had screamed like a girl when Dean had cornered him in a supply closet and peppered him with red paint. The entire thing had been witnessed by Pen Xian from Accounting, who had gleefully reported the event later over a pint at the local pub.

Too bad a couple of straggler employees had been wandering the halls after hours, including Gorge McKeen. *Bootlicking worm*, Harry thought.

"Therefore, Harry, I am charging you to put an end to this nonsense. Find the culprits, bring them to me for punishment, and that will be the end of it." Tanner waved a hand once more. "Don't worry that you'll be acting turncoat by exposing your fellow employees. I don't plan to give anyone the boot over this matter; I simply want it to stop."

Harry nodded, worried despite the Minister's assurances. Tanner was not above lying to get his way, Harry had discovered. "Yes, Minister," he said as he got to his feet and hurried out.

Once back inside his own office, Harry cast Unlocking Charms on his desk drawer and pulled out a thin black envelope. He opened it and slid forth the single photograph it contained. It was a photo of Draco Malfoy. Harry's next target.

The photo version of Malfoy was in profile at first, and then he turned around, smiled, and gave

a saucy wink. The photo had shocked Harry upon first viewing—Malfoy had never looked at him like that. Hell, he thought Malfoy had never *looked* like that.

After the fourteenth time pulling it from the envelope to gaze upon it, Harry realized he might have a problem.

Placing the photo resolutely back into the drawer and locking it, Harry leaned back in his chair and stared at the ceiling, eyes going straight to the dark spot that resembled a spider. As always, he considered casting a Charm to erase it and, as always, he did nothing.

The game had started as a harebrained conversation between Seamus Finnigan and Dean Thomas, who should never be allowed to drink together. Granted, things were a bit slow at the Ministry. October was a notoriously light month for the Auror Department. Harry couldn't remember why, only that it had been charted and analyzed by someone in the Department of Mysteries and presented at a seminar that Harry had fallen asleep partway through.

Therefore, when Seamus started recruiting people for his "assassin game" Harry had gone along with it, mostly to appease Ron, who seemed eager to accept his first assignment. The gist of it was that each participant received a photo of their "mark". They then stalked that person and pelted them with a Paint Charm—in a vital area of the body—to denote they had been "killed". The loser was removed from the competition and the winner was given a new "mark".

The caveat was that the kill was only valid if it was witnessed by someone participating in the game. Someone that would not turn them in to Minister Tanner for playing an assassin game during work hours. Harry had done quite well so far, taking out a secretary in the Muggle Affairs division, an Unspeakable named Muller, two blokes from the Department of Magical Games and Sports, and Ron Weasley.

Ron was still a bit sullen over having been ambushed in the third floor loo, but they had been warned to always be on their toes, never knowing who was targeting them. Ron had foolishly set his wand on the counter to wash his hands just as Dean Thomas had walked into the room. Harry had raised his wand and painted Ron in the back of the head with bright red paint. Days later, Dean was still laughing about it and Harry had to take Ron out for drinks to soothe his bruised ego.

Still, it had been too perfect an opportunity to pass up, and now Harry had only one mark left. Draco Malfoy.

He knew he should call off the game. He should obey orders, put a stop to it, and avoid future trouble with Minister Tanner.

Or he could just take down one last mark and *then* end the game.

So deciding, Harry got to his feet and went to find Malfoy.

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After wandering aimlessly about the building for close to a half hour, Harry finally spotted a glint of blond hair in the Atrium, heading toward the lift. Harry bolted and slid into the box just as the doors were closing.

Apart from Malfoy, whose attention was solely focussed on an open file in his hands, there were six other people and a few meagre interoffice memos. Harry sidled his way to the back corner opposite Malfoy while surreptitiously taking his wand out of his pocket and readying it. He scanned the other occupants of the lift, looking for a credible witness. A girl with sandy-coloured frizz and a vibrant gold sweater scratched at her cheek with a red fingernail and glanced at Harry. Harry recalled the lanky bloke in Magical Weights and Measures had assassinated her with paint four days ago in the canteen. Her name was Mary, if he recalled correctly. She would do as a witness.

Three people got out at the fourth floor. Malfoy stayed where he was, although he lifted the file a bit higher as if to discourage conversation. Only five people remained—Malfoy, Harry, Mary, and two blokes arguing about the benefits of eating spinach over cabbage.

The two blokes exited at the next floor and Mary made as if to step out, as well. Harry called to her as she crossed the threshold. She turned just as Harry lifted his wand and let out a barrage of paint at Malfoy, but the blond was already moving.

Three bright splashes of paint appeared on Malfoy's file folder as he dove forward. Another paint splotch hit Mary's shoulder, drawing a shriek from her as Malfoy dropped the file—spilling papers across the floor—and grabbed her to swing her round, using her as a shield.

Malfoy shoved Mary forward and leaped aside as the doors began to close. Harry cursed and sent three more spells toward him, but scored only a hit on Malfoy's upper thigh.

"Dammit!" Harry yelled and pounded on the *Door Open* button.

"You've ruined my blouse!" Mary wailed. "Bloody hell, this stupid game! I've already been killed and now I've got another outfit destroyed!"

Harry stopped pushing the button, which hadn't worked anyway, as the lift started moving again. He turned to Mary contritely. "Sorry," he said. "Want me to um… cast a Cleaning Charm?"

She glared at him. "It's *silk*," she said, as if that explained everything. She marched out when the doors opened and Harry made a mental note to send her a redeemable certificate from a nice clothier. A memo fluttered in before the doors shut. It landed on Harry's shoulder.

He opened it. *Nice try, Potter. Watch your back. D*

Harry grinned. The game was on.

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Malfoy ambushed him the next day on his way to the loo. Only his reflexes and a hastily cast Shield Charm saved him and he dove into the loo to take cover in a stall. In hindsight, it was a very bad idea, since he was then trapped when Malfoy sauntered in after him.

"How long do you plan to stay in there?" Malfoy asked with an amused timbre to his voice.

"That's a very personal question," Harry replied and risked a peek over the top of the stall to see Malfoy leaning casually against the edge of the countertop, twirling his wand through his fingers in a way Harry had never mastered.

"Why? Are you wanking?"

Harry's eyebrows shot up and he couldn't stop the laugh that escaped. "Would it interest you if I was?" he asked suggestively and then backed away to sag against the far wall, shocked that he had voiced such a question. And to *Malfoy*, of all people.

After a moment, during which Harry's cheeks heated with mortification, Malfoy replied, "I wouldn't turn down an opportunity to watch."

Harry flipped the latch and opened the door to stare at Malfoy, who seemed just as surprised. "You wouldn't turn down—? Why?" Harry asked.

Malfoy opened his mouth to speak, seemed to reconsider, and then said, "I—" just as the door opened to admit a group of interns from the Muggle Affairs Department, definitely not part of their game. Harry ducked back into the stall as Malfoy gave him a salute with his wand and departed.

Harry cursed the interruption for a long time before making his way back to his office.

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Harry did not see Malfoy over the weekend, but he certainly thought about him. He kept replaying the scene in the Ministry toilet over and over in his mind until it acquired an almost mythic quality. He let his fantasies play out in his daydreams, thinking of Malfoy walking into the stall and shoving him up against the wall to press a hard kiss upon his lips.

Although he had never thought about having sex with a man before, now it seemed he could think of nothing else. He pictured Malfoy pushing him up against the sink and cupping his cock with a hand. Harry thought about fisting his hands in Malfoy's hair and pressing biting kisses into his throat.

Harry dreamed more than he slept and woke on Monday morning feeling hung over and out of

sorts. He nearly stayed home from work, but knew he would only spend the day wanking to bloody Malfoy—again—and at least if he went to the Ministry he had a chance of seeing the git in order to convince himself his musings were utter madness. And also to persuade himself that seeing Draco Malfoy in leather trousers would not be erotic in the slightest, despite the fact that it seemed ridiculously so in his last dream.

When he exited the Floo in the Atrium, he didn't have a chance to convince himself of anything. Something smacked against his left bicep and Harry reflexively dove aside, rolling as he fell, and cast a hasty Shield Charm. Malfoy stood near the lift, next to Pansy Parkinson, and they both wore identical smirks as Malfoy levelled his wand to send another volley of paint racing to splatter against Harry's invisible shield.

Harry rolled to his feet and ran forward, dropping the shield in order to cast a quick succession of spells at Malfoy. Parkinson shrieked and jumped away from Malfoy, who spun aside to dodge the paint, earning only a red blotch on one thigh before his own Shield Charm caught the others.

Several wizards stepped out of the Floo and looked curiously at Harry and Malfoy.

"Bye, darlings!" Parkinson called as she stepped onto the lift and left them without an appropriate witness. Harry glared at Malfoy, who straightened and looked down at the paint that marred his thigh.

"What were you aiming for, Potter?" Malfoy asked in a tone that reminded Harry of his debauched fantasies.

Harry spelled the verdant paint away from his arm, but it left a pale green stain behind. Trust Malfoy not to use red like everyone else. Harry's eyes scanned the arriving and departing Ministry employees, alert for another possible witness.

Malfoy cast his own spell and the paint disappeared from his trousers, without leaving a stain, Harry noted, impressed until he realized he was basically staring at Malfoy's crotch. He raised his eyes to meet Malfoy's amused look.

Harry walked forward. "Look, Malfoy," he started. Malfoy raised his wand in a defensive manner. At that moment the lift doors opened again.

"Potter! Malfoy!" Minister Tanner's voice boomed out and rang through the Atrium. "Are you fighting?"

Harry lowered his wand guiltily and noted that Malfoy did the same. Giving in to a sudden impulse, Harry stepped even closer to Malfoy and slung an arm around his shoulders. "Of course not, Minister. Malfoy here was just showing me the proper technique for casting a Heat Detection Spell. We're great pals now, didn't you know?"

Tanner looked suspicious as he exited the lift, trailed by a group of underlings. "Great pals?"

Harry allowed a lascivious smile to curve his lips and he winked suggestively at Tanner as he said, "*Very* great."

Tanner's brows shot upward and his entire face went red. Harry would have laughed aloud if Malfoy hadn't sounded like he was struggling to breathe. He was most likely fighting not to hex Harry on the spot.

An arm curved around Harry's waist and tightened until he had difficulty drawing a breath. "Come along, *darling*," Malfoy said through what sounded like clenched teeth. Harry dared not look at his face to verify. "I'll walk you to your office."

Tanner spluttered, seemingly at a loss for words, as Malfoy dragged Harry into the lift.

"Bye, Minister!" Harry called with the last of the breath in his lungs just as the doors closed, leaving him alone in the lift with Draco Malfoy.

"What the fuck was that about, Potter?" Malfoy demanded, not easing his hold on Harry in the slightest.

"I'll—" Harry gasped. "I'll tell you if you allow me some air."

"I am not certain you deserve to breathe. Did you see the pack of sycophants surrounding Tanner? News that we're *gay for each other* will permeate the entire Ministry by noon."

"Sorry," Harry said, shifting in Malfoy's grasp in order to drag much-needed oxygen into his lungs. Except that he wasn't sorry at all. Malfoy allowed him to turn, but the new position was far from an improvement. Harry could breathe again, but he was still plastered to Malfoy's side, straddling his thigh and with his groin pressed firmly to Malfoy's hip.

"You're sorry? You're *sorry* that you've painted me as a wicked freak that has tainted the Chosen One?"

Harry frowned. "What are you talking about? You haven't tainted me. Why are you holding me so tightly?"

"Because if I'm going to be hanged for it, I might as well take a pound of flesh first," Malfoy said and kissed him, hard and brutally, just like in Harry's fantasies. Harry melted against him, no longer pretending he wanted to be freed. Malfoy stiffened, but only for a moment. His arms relaxed from their punishing grip and shifted, sliding upward, drawing over Harry's back.

The gesture was more of a lover's caress than the angry touch of an enemy. It was enflaming. Harry guided Malfoy backward until his back pressed against the wall of the lift and then his own hands did some seeking. His fingers moved over Malfoy's arms and shoulders, then farther up until they reached the bare skin of Malfoy's neck. Malfoy made a quiet sound into Harry's

mouth.

Harry's hands found Malfoy's hair and tangled into the softness, pulling him even closer.

"Level Five," said the smooth voice of the elevator. "Department of International Magical Cooperation."

Malfoy shoved him away and Harry staggered back, nearly falling on his arse before righting himself and catching his balance against the opposite wall. He stared at Malfoy, who looked as wrecked as he felt. His blond hair was a dishevelled mess and his eyes were wide and surprised-looking above lips that were reddened and wet.

As the lift doors slid open, Malfoy cast a spell that fluffed his hair for a moment and then let it fall in perfect soft layers. Harry straightened and smoothed his robes, trying to act nonchalant even as his tongue slipped out to touch his lower lip and savour the taste of Malfoy one last time.

Malfoy's eyes tracked the movement until a bustle of employees crowded into the lift, chattering inanely. Malfoy bypassed them and left the elevator without a word.

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Hermione was waiting in Harry's office.

"Spill it," she said without preamble.

Harry frowned at her. The gossip could not possibly have made it so far so quickly. Harry had departed the lift and only stopped in the Auror canteen for a moment to grab a cup of tea. "Spill what?" he asked innocently. "The tea? I'd rather not."

"Draco Malfoy," she said pointedly and Harry's heart sank. He walked around to his chair and set his tea carefully on his desk, stalling for time.

"What do you mean?"

"Someone came flying into my office and demanded to know when you and Malfoy had become an item. Apparently you were hanging all over each other in the Atrium."

Harry snorted, although he was impressed with the speed and tenacity of the gossipmongers. "Oh that," he said and dropped into his chair. "That was nothing. It was a joke." His stomach clenched when he said it, because the encounter in the lift had been anything but a joke, at least from Harry's perspective.

"Since when do you joke with Malfoy?"

"Since we started—" Harry broke off. He had been about to add "playing this game" but he had

never mentioned the game to Hermione for obvious reasons. Her reluctance to break any rules had quintupled in strength since joining the Ministry and she would have nagged him mercilessly about risking his job participating in such a silly, purposeless diversion.

"Started what?"

"Started, um… chatting. He's not so bad once you get to know him. Malfoy." Harry's words sounded lame even to his ears and he realized he couldn't back them up, since he really didn't know Malfoy at all. They had been in each other's presence no more than a dozen times in the past year, and those had all been in the lift, hallways, or at Ministry functions where they had studiously ignored one another.

"Chatting," Hermione repeated. "Without coming to blows? You never mentioned it."

"It's a recent development?" Harry knew he was grasping at straws and Hermione's lips thinned.

"You're not going to tell me anything, are you?"

"There's really nothing to tell," Harry said. "I mean, I might be a bit… attracted to him." There, he had said it. The admission was something of a relief. He nodded with a half-grin, finally accepting it himself.

Hermione's face showed no surprise. In fact, she smiled. "Harry, I can't believe I'm saying this, but I'm actually very happy that you've finally come to grips with it." She leaned forward and took one of his hands in both of hers. "I honestly thought you would be in denial forever."

He gaped at her. "What are you talking about?"

"It's been obvious, well, *to me*, at least, that you're attracted to men. I'm glad you've finally admitted it to yourself, even though I never expected Draco Malfoy to cause such a revelation, although I suppose in hindsight it should be obvious, considering how obsessed you were with him in school and all."

"Hermione!"

"You know you were. Anyway, just be careful with Malfoy. I don't want to have to hex him with an Elephantine Gonad Charm for hurting you."

"*Hermione*!"

She snickered. "You know, there isn't a man alive that doesn't make that exact same face when I mention that hex."

Harry resisted the urge to cup his testicles in horror, barely. "That spell should be on the list of Unforgiveables, honestly."

She smiled wickedly. "Well, then, I'll be sure to tell Malfoy not to—"

"No!" Harry cried. "You can't say anything to Malfoy!"

She frowned. "Why not?"

"Well, he doesn't know, of course. I mean, I told you we were only joking in the Atrium. He has no idea I actually…"

Hermione rolled her eyes. "Well, perhaps you should tell him, then."

Harry shook his head adamantly.

"You realize that rumours have already spread, right? I'm surprised you don't have reporters—"

A dozen brightly coloured memos fluttered in the door and hovered in an erratic circle just over Harry's head. Hermione raised an eyebrow. "I'll leave you to your correspondence, then." She winked at him and started out, but paused in the doorway. She waggled an index finger at him and mouthed *Talk to him*.

Then she was gone.

Harry sighed. Since when had talking to Draco Malfoy ever gone well?

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Harry walked into Malfoy's office, earning a look of surprise, quickly masked. He had never been in Malfoy's office before and, in fact, it had taken him awhile to locate it, tucked away in the warren of cubicles and tiny cupboards that made up the Department of International Magical Cooperation.

Malfoy's office was tiny, but extremely neat, with one wall spelled to resemble a shaded forest lane. His desk was large and took up nearly the entire space, leaving room for only a single guest chair placed at an angle before the desk.

Harry sprawled in the chair and noted that it was very uncomfortable and sat quite a bit lower than Malfoy's chair, forcing him to look up at the man. It was a subtle, but effective, intimidation tactic.

"Hey, Malfoy," Harry said with a smile as his gaze fixed on Malfoy's mouth, the flavour of which he remembered well. It had taken Harry nearly an hour to work up his courage and seek out Malfoy, but now that he was here, he felt more confident, mainly because Malfoy hadn't hexed him yet.

Amazingly, a hint of pink rose into Malfoy's cheeks. His voice, however, was steady and cool. "What do you want, Potter?"

"I thought we might continue the discussion we started in the lift," Harry said.

"That discussion was concluded."

Harry's grin widened. "I don't think so."

Malfoy blinked and Harry felt a curious sense of satisfaction. Apparently he still enjoyed throwing Malfoy off-balance, even if the playing field had changed from rivalry to something else entirely.

Malfoy's eyes narrowed. "You seem very full of yourself."

"I'd like to be full of something else," Harry replied in a purring tone, shocking himself. Was he actually flirting?

Apparently so, because Malfoy's jaw dropped and he looked more astonished than Harry had ever seen. He said, "Annabelle, I would like a cup of tea."

Harry was perplexed for a moment, until a round face appeared around the edge of the door, followed by a rounder body belonging to a witch who blushed and gave a slight curtsy and a sheepish nod to Harry. "Yes, sir. Right away, sir."

Malfoy cast a spell that slammed the door on his secretary and any other potential eavesdroppers. Then he glared at Harry and opened his mouth, most likely to say something infuriating that would make Harry want to hit him, so Harry did the only logical thing. He got up and leaned across the desk to grab Malfoy's tie and haul him into a kiss.

Malfoy was definitely speaking, but his words were mangled by Harry's lips and the moment his mouth opened wide enough, Harry inserted his tongue, bravely hoping Malfoy wouldn't bite it off.

Apparently it was the right choice. Malfoy relaxed and stopped trying to speak, and even leaned forward a bit and cocked his head to allow Harry better access. Fearing a trick, Harry lifted his other hand and pushed it into Malfoy's soft hair. He decided he would never get tired of touching it.

He deepened the kiss, licking the taste of sugar out of Malfoy's mouth and suspecting he preferred his tea far sweeter than the average person.

Long before Harry was finished kissing him, a tap sounded at the door. Malfoy pulled away, eyes half-lidded. "What are you playing at, Potter?" he murmured.

"Not playing," Harry replied and kissed him again.

The tap came again, louder. "Mister Malfoy?"

Malfoy broke away and detached Harry's hand from his tie, albeit not ungently. He sat back in his chair and wiped his mouth with the back of his hand, eyes locked with Harry's. For some reason, the gesture was curiously erotic.

Harry returned to his seat and crossed one ankle over his knee, striving for a casual demeanour while hoping to hide the fact that he was more than half-aroused.

"Come in, Annabelle," Malfoy called, still watching Harry.

She entered and set a cup of tea on the edge of Malfoy's desk, looking nervously from him to Harry and back again. A flock of memos entered around her and circled over Malfoy's head. "Can I get you anything, Auror Potter?"

"No, thank you," Harry replied. "And could you shut the door again on your way out?"

She nodded, curls bobbing up and down, and then turned and went out, closing the door gently.

"She's listening at the door, you know."

"Then we'll just have to stop talking," Harry said as he got up and rounded the desk.

"Are you under some sort of spell?" Malfoy asked, watching him warily. "Experimental potion? Some new Weasley product?"

Harry shook his head. "None of that," he said as he pulled Malfoy's leather swivel chair around and placed his knees on the seat, straddling Malfoy's lap.

"Some new mania sweeping the Auror Department?" The sardonic suggestion was all Malfoy could manage before Harry's mouth found his again. This time both hands twisted in Malfoy's wonderful hair.

Malfoy's hands cupped Harry's arse and squeezed, pulling him closer. Harry thought their other kisses had been brilliant, but this… This was a thousand times better, especially when Malfoy's fingers began to roam, sliding from Harry's waistband down over his arse to dip into the curves beneath before gliding back up again. Harry wanted those hands all over him, without clothing in the way.

Malfoy pulled away suddenly, gasping. "Why? Why now?"

Harry bunched Malfoy's blond hair in his hands and let his thumbs trail over his ears. He leaned in for another kiss, but Malfoy jerked his head sideways and Harry's lips pressed against his

cheek instead. Harry didn't mind. He kissed Malfoy's face in between words. "I don't know. I saw you smiling in that photo and I wanted you to smile at me that way. I couldn't stop thinking about it."

"What? You wanted me to *smile*? That's it?"

"At first," Harry admitted, kissing his temple and burying his nose in Malfoy's sweet-smelling hair. "And then I wanted to kiss you and now I want to," Harry moved his mouth down to whisper breathily in Malfoy's ear, "have sex with you."

Malfoy's breath hitched and his hands tightened almost painfully on Harry's arse.

"And then I want to wake up with you and make you breakfast. And I want to talk with you and play Quidditch with you. And chess. And Exploding Snap."

Malfoy's hands left Harry's arse in order to grab his face and shove him back until their eyes met. Malfoy's glare was potent. "Do you hear yourself? Do you have any idea what you're saying? Who gave it to you?"

"Who gave what to me?"

"The love potion. You're obviously addled."

Harry chuckled, because he had never realized how delicious Malfoy was, especially with his forehead wrinkled with perplexed worry. And, of course, he tasted divine. "No love potion. Now let go so I can kiss you again."

"No more kissing. I can't think when you do that."

"You can't?" Harry filed that titbit away for future reference. He grinned happily.

"Don't look at me like that. We're going to find Granger and figure out how to break this spell."

"How about if you come to my place for dinner? I'll invite Ron and Hermione and you can ask her all the questions you like."

Malfoy stared at him and Harry reached up to grab both his wrists. He pulled them away from his face and leaned down to kiss him again. There was a brief rap on the door and then it swung open.

"Malfoy, your secretary said Harry was—"

Harry stopped nibbling on Malfoy's lip and turned at the sound of Ron's voice. He smiled at Ron's shell-shocked expression.

"—here," Ron finished.

"Hey, Ron. You're invited to dinner tonight. Hermione, too."

There was a pregnant pause and then Ron said, "Yeah. Okay. Um…"

"You were looking for me?"

"Tanner wants to see you."

Harry frowned. "Now?"

Ron coughed. "Yeah. Want me to go tell him you're… busy?" Ron looked away and flushed nearly scarlet at the word.

"No, I'll go." Harry sighed and turned back to Malfoy. "Dinner, then? Tonight? You'll be there?"

"If it's the only way to get to the bottom of your madness," Malfoy said with a sigh. "Even though Weasley doesn't look particularly surprised."

"I'm not surprised. Well, I'm surprised it's *you*, but not surprised about the bloke thing." He cleared his throat at Harry's expression. "Sorry, Harry, we sort of knew for a while now."

"Hermione mentioned it. Anyway, great! Then, I'll see you tonight, *Draco*." Harry placed another smouldering kiss on his lips and then crawled reluctantly off his lap. He headed for the door where Ron waited, looking uncertain. Harry would go see Tanner and tell him the game was finished. There wasn't any need to prolong it now.

"Potter," Malfoy called. Harry turned and staggered back into Ron when something thudded into his chest. He glanced down to find a large green paint splatter marring his left breast.

"Game over," Malfoy said smugly. He lowered his wand and smiled brilliantly. "See you tonight, *Harry*."

~END~