Author: [info]oldenuf2nb

Fic: Fool Rushes In

Pairing: H/D

Rating: R (Over-all. This part is probably more PG-13)

Word Count: 7912 (for this part)

Warnings: First time. Kissing, cursing, wanking, frotting. Violence. And Snark. Let's not forget the snark.

Summary: In a burst of unexplained magic, Harry Potter's Auror partner Draco Malfoy has simply disappeared. Frantic with worry, terrified that something really terrible has happened to the other man, Harry realizes that what he feels for him just might be more than friendship.

Author's notes; Written for the heck of it, and for the entertainment of my darling [info]sassy_cissa . This was a bunny that would just not cease hopping.

There was no moon and little light in the yard where the cars sat side by side on the close set tracks. The trains were mostly silent, faintly ominous coffin shapes in the darkness. The shadows between the tracks were long and inky black, and if one or two of those black shadows seemed to move, there was no one there to notice. And no one did notice, as a lumpier shadow extricated itself from between two of the cars and lurched clumsily toward another.

Harry Potter tightened his arm around the man he half-dragged, half-carried forward, eyes wide and searching each of the boxcars. These trains were on the south bound tracks. He hoped to find an open

door; someplace they could hide, rest for a bit, and maybe, if luck was on their side, hitch a ride back towards civilization.

“Donnelly!”

Harry heard the rough voice shout out to his left, and quickly pressed his back against the side of one of the cars, pulling his companion with him. The man moaned, and Harry reached over and quickly pressed his hand over his mouth. He couldn’t see the pain-filled eyes in the darkness, but he felt the moist breath against his palm.

“Ssh,” he breathed.

“Yeah, Dobs?” Another voice answered.

“Check them cars on the two-forty for Edinburgh. Don’t want no dogs in ‘em this time, right?”

“Yeah.”

Harry pressed his back even more firmly to the side of the train as he heard footsteps shuffle by not far away, his grip tightening in unspoken warning on his companion.

“You want the cars checked, do it yerself, ya twat,” Harry heard someone grumble as they moved past on the other side of the car, feet noisy on the gravel. “Yer the one got the raise, not me. Far as I’m concerned, demmed dogs can shite all over the place.”

Harry held his breath until he was certain that the man was gone, then leaned out, searching left and then right. And there, near the end of the long line of cars and one track over, he saw the telltale tendrils of steam lifting from between the boxy shapes, the only indication that it was the two-forty for Edinburgh. If they could get as far as Edinburgh, he could get help...

“Come on,” he said urgently, urging his companion forward. There was another muffled moan but Harry ignored it as he moved in the shadows next to the train. He had to get one row over, where he could check for open doors. And he had to hope that the amount of noise that they were making was being covered by the sound of the great steam engine, idling up near at the front of the train.

He pulled the surprisingly heavy body between cars, urging the other man silently to step up and over the coupling, and paused to once again check up and down the long train. He nearly groaned aloud in relief when there, just to their left, he spotted the yawning black hole of an open door. Up near the front of the train, he heard the doors starting to slide shut, and he knew it was now or never.

“Can you make it up and in that door?” he asked quickly. His companion didn’t answer. “Dammit,” Harry whispered heatedly, shaking him. “Answer me. Can you make it, because I don’t think I can lift you…”

“Stuff it, Potter,” came the muffled response. “And yes, I can fucking make it, if you’ll stop blathering.”

The voice sounded winded and pained, but there was enough of the usual bite that it reassured Harry somewhat.

“All right, you go first, and…”

“No.” There was nothing breathless about the sound now. “You go first, then pull me up. I won’t be able to climb in, and I don’t fancy getting caught while you’ve got your hands on my arse, trying to shove me in the door.”

“Fine,” Harry said shortly, checking up and down the tracks once again, seeing figures far down the line, shutting and securing the doors. “But we have to go now.”

They stayed in the shadows, moving towards the yawning opening. Harry braced his arms on the floor of the car and pushed up, rolling into the musty storage car, then turned and reached down with his hand.

Even in the darkness, he could see the ragged white-blond hair, the upturned face pale as bleached bone. He couldn't see the silvery color of the shadowed eyes, but he didn't have to. He knew it by heart, saw it in his most secret dreams; those quicksilver eyes that had haunted him for the four days that Draco had been missing. They looked glazed and shadowed with pain but no less alert as he reached out with both of his hands and caught at Harry's, and Harry grunted as he pulled him up and onto the rough wooden floor beside him.

Almost as soon as their feet had cleared the doorway, there were the sounds of voices from outside.

"I tell you, I saw someone," a man was saying forcefully, and Harry cursed under his breath, wrapping his arms around the thin, wiry body and rolling, hiding them behind a row of pallets just inside the door to the left. They came to a rest pressed against the wall with Harry lying on top of Draco, his head lifted and face turned toward the door. He tried to ignore the hot, damp breath that brushed his neck.

"Oh, for Christ's sake, Donnelly. There's no one in these cars. Relax; you got the fucking promotion." It wasn't 'Dobs', but someone who sounded a good deal gruffer, and more forceful. "I'm not impressed, and if we don't get these doors closed, the bloody train will leave late, and it'll be my arse. Now shove the fuck off and get out of my way."

There were more rough voices, raised in argument, but moment's later the heavy door slid shut with a decisive clang and the interior of the car was plunged into complete darkness.

Harry exhaled heavily and rolled off of Draco, lying at his side on his back. They didn't speak as the raised voices continued to argue just outside the door. They didn't speak even as the voices faded away. Finally, when all was quiet, Harry raised his head and turned it towards his companion.

"Are you all right?" he whispered. There was a moment's pause.

"Yes." The answer sounded faint, but steady.

“Did I hurt you, when I rolled you like that?”

A ragged chuckled greeted his ears. “After four days of beatings, that was nothing.”

There was another long silence. Finally, Harry reached out in the darkness, groping until his hand closed over a bony wrist. Draco startled, but didn’t pull away. “I’m sorry, Malfoy,” Harry said. “It was my fault, all of it. I should have known; the glamour wasn’t even that good, and I’d seen the spell before…”

Harry heard Draco sigh. “Potter, you can take the blame when it’s actually your fault. We both wanted to believe that we’d found something. For now, just…” There was another pause, then the voice came again, softer, infinitely weary. “Thank you, for coming to get me. I… I don’t…”

“You’d have done the same for me,” Harry said quickly, sensing Draco’s discomfort. There was another silence.

“I like to think so, but…”

“You would have,” Harry said firmly, then squeezed the tensile wrist and let his hand drop away.

Silence settled. Harry sat up and shifted until his back was against the wall, and he leaned his head back, closing his eyes, his rapid heart rate beginning to slow for the first time since he’d seen a beaten and bedraggled Malfoy tied to the chair in that shabby, neglected basement. He heard a shuffling sound, and a soft grunt. Moment’s later, he felt the warmth of Malfoy’s shoulder against his own, and closed his eyes briefly, secretly savoring the slight pressure. There was so much he’d come to realize in the last four days. So much about himself, and the source of the raw panic and fear he’d felt…

“You said you’d seen the spell before,” Malfoy said, sounding more steady. “What did you mean?”

Harry thought back, the images in his mind coalescing into a painfully clear picture. He and Malfoy had been called out to a small house in Surrey, told that there was ‘dark activity’ by a neighbor. He’d cursed

himself later for not recognizing the dark wizard under the glamour, but at the time, they'd been trying to break the case of several Auror's that had simply disappeared, and they'd thought it a legitimate lead. Malfoy had taken out his wand and begun to dismantle the wards when there was a distinctive 'pop' and he'd vanished.

Harry had his wand out and was preparing to cast a tracking charm to follow just as Ron had appeared, grabbing Harry's wrist, hurriedly ordering him not to do magic under any circumstances. Harry had been in a panic; his partner was gone, just like the others. But then what Ron was saying had begun to get through, and Harry's heart had dropped into his stomach.

He stared into the darkness now, remembering a tent in the middle of a dark forest, and the werewolves that had suddenly been there when he'd mentioned a hated name.

"During the war," he said quietly. "Voldemort had a spell he used, to track anyone who used his name…"

"Expicsor is m perdulis."

Harry turned his head toward the weary voice.

"What?"

"Expicsor is m perdulis." Malfoy repeated. "To find my Enemy." He paused. "I saw him use it. It was incredibly complicated."

"Apparently, it still is," Harry said, running his hand through his hair. "And they've made some alterations."

"What kind of alterations?"

Harry sighed. “Well now, instead of the speaking of a name being the trigger, they’ve somehow manage to attach the magical signatures of everyone working within the Auror division.”

Harry could almost hear Malfoy’s mind working. “They’ve ‘attached’ our magic?”

“Yes, with an involuntary Apparition spell.”

“So then, any magic…”

“Brings us right to them, yes.”

“Fuck.”

“Pretty much.”

Malfoy exhaled heavily. “Christ, that explains so much.” Harry could almost feel the grey eyes searching for him in the darkness. “That’s why you were carrying a Muggle weapon.”

The weight of the gun had felt uncomfortable in his hand, and yet it had been the only choice that Harry had.

“Did you think I’d gone round the twist?” Harry asked, smirking.

“I thought you had a cowboy fixation.”

Harry chuckled. “Sounds like something you would think I’d do.”

“Sounds like something you’d do,” Malfoy countered. He paused. “Actually,” he said slyly, sounding more himself than he had in the entire time that Harry had been with him. “It was kind of sexy, in that cop on the telly way.”

It was a habit of long standing between them. Malfoy, unapologetically gay, would tease; Harry, heretofore convinced of his unapologetic heterosexuality, would counter. “If a gun is all it takes, you’re too easy,” he managed, but his throat felt tight as he did so.

“So, I gather that until we figure out how they managed to find out all of our magical signatures, no one is doing much magic?” Malfoy asked.

“None,” Harry answered, glad the subject had changed.

“You had to travel here via Muggle transport,” Malfoy mused. “Which… explains the train, rather than a portkey or apparition.”

Harry marveled once again at how quick Malfoy’s mind was. It had taken him hours to process just that information.

“Therefore,” Malfoy went on into the darkness, “I’m guessing that means no spells of any kind, including healing.”

“Hermione doesn’t think it would be safe. She said no potions, either.”

“Shite.” Malfoy grunted as he shifted. “I wish she wasn’t usually right. I feel like I went five rounds with the whomping willow.”

Remembering the pack on his back, Harry shifted away from the wall, setting it on the floor. “She was

afraid they might be causing some damage, and she sent some things, just in case." Moving blindly in the darkness, it took him a few moments to find the zip. He opened it and fumbled inside.

"What kinds of things?" Malfoy said suspiciously. "And please, God, tell me you've some food in whatever it is you're opening."

"I do," Harry said quickly, searching first for the cylindrical shape of the battery operated torch he'd tossed inside. One of the few benefits of being raised by Muggles was a working knowledge of the devices they used. He found the cold, round shape, lifted it from the bag, and flicked it on. A beam of bright light shot toward the ceiling, and he saw Draco jerk slightly from the corner of his eyes. He laid the torch on the floor, the beam directed at the wall so that the reflection of it lit the area immediately around his khaki-colored bag.

Digging through, he pulled out a bottle of water, and Malfoy made a grateful sound as Harry put it into his reaching hands. He could see their bruised knuckles uncapping the bottle in his peripheral vision as he found the small stash of candy bars and a plastic bottle that rattled when he caught it up in his hand.

"Oh, sweet Merlin," Malfoy groaned when Harry's hands came back into view. "You brought me chocolate. I may have to kiss you, Potter."

Harry swallowed against the sudden dryness in his throat as he held two of the candy bars out to Malfoy. "Hermione's doing," he said. "She said the sugar would help counteract the pain. Something about endorphins or something. No idea what it meant. But if you're going to be kissing in gratitude, it'll have to be her."

Malfoy made a face as he tore the wrapper from one of the candy bars. "No, thanks. Rather kiss Shacklebolt, if it came right down do it." The mental image of Draco snogging their stoic, serious supervisor made Harry smile. Malfoy took a bite of the chocolate, and the sound he made, pure pleasure mixed with gratitude, was so distinctly sexual that Harry grabbed another bottle of water from the bag and uncapped it quickly so that he could ease the sudden tightness in his throat.

Harry didn't think that there had ever been a time in his life when he felt quite as deeply in the weeds. As far as he'd known, he was a straight man, definitely attracted to girls, attached to Ginny Weasley in

particular. They'd been together since the war had ended five years before, and the sex had been… well, she'd been his first and only, so as far as he knew it had been imminently satisfying, and she hadn't complained.

When Shacklebolt had assigned Harry and trainee Malfoy to work as partners, Harry had been livid. Shacklebolt knew their history, and knew their mutual enmity. But, as he'd told Harry at the time, "you need to grow up and learn to work with all different kinds of people, Potter. And frankly, he's smarter than you are."

That had rankled, especially when it became quite clear the Malfoy had over-heard it. But the smug superiority that Harry had expected had never really materialized. Oh, Malfoy was a smart ass, and snide, and arrogant. He was also, Harry was forced to admit, smart as hell. And funny. Really funny. Much to his surprise, he made Harry laugh. And it was about the time that Harry had begun to laugh with him that he'd noticed other things about his partner as well.

Like the fact that the war had changed Malfoy in ways no one but those who knew him well would notice. He was incredibly gentle when dealing with victims of crime, especially those injured at the hands of the few rogue Death Eaters still at large. When there were children involved, Malfoy's calm, steadfast manner was reassuring. Harry was surprised by the almost tender way he spoke to them, handled them. If Harry had to pinpoint the exact moment when his own feelings about Draco had irrevocably changed, it had been when they'd been interviewing a young girl, no more than thirteen, who'd been sexually assaulted by one of Voldemort's few remaining followers.

Malfoy had seemed strung tight as a piano wire throughout the entire investigation, but he'd been unfailingly kind and professional. Harry was certain that he was the only one who had noticed Malfoy's hands trembling while he'd softly, carefully interviewed the tearful victim. When they'd gone back to the Ministry, Malfoy had calmly excused himself while Harry had briefed Kingsley. When ten, then fifteen minutes had gone by and Malfoy still hadn't returned, Harry had gone in search of his partner. He'd found him, finally, on a terrace off of the break room, a Muggle cigarette in his trembling hand, his face the color of old parchment.

"Malfoy, all right there?" Harry had asked from the doorway, brow furrowed as he'd studied Malfoy's ashen face. Malfoy's fair head had jerked in a tight nod, but Harry could see that he was lying, and let the door shut behind him as he'd stepped onto the balcony. Malfoy looked as if a stiff breeze might shatter him into a million pieces. Harry stood at his side, hands in his pockets, staring at the magically created view of London, feeling as helpless as he'd ever felt in his life. "Want to talk about it?" he'd asked finally,

and he heard Malfoy's tortured gasp of mirthless laughter at his side.

"No, I don't want to 'talk about it'," he'd answered, angry. "And you're not my fucking shrink, so back the hell off."

Harry had turned his head and looked at him. "Look," he'd said, his own anger engaged. "Clearly, something about this case has set you off. I just thought…"

"That's your problem, Potter," Malfoy had retorted, his storm cloud grey eyes flashing. "You don't think. You just… blunder in, all well-meaning and upstanding and fucking earnest, still the shining golden boy, still the Saviour of the world…"

"Hey, wait a minute," Harry had shot back, stung. "I just thought maybe you needed someone to talk to. You were so good with the girl, but clearly something about it got to you…"

The anger had drained from Malfoy's eyes abruptly, leaving them bleak, and weary. His face looked all angles, thin skin drawn taut over sharp bones. "Some things --" he'd said, and Harry would never forget the look on his face, the sound of his voice; ragged, lost, "—cannot be talked about, cannot be understood unless you've lived them."

Something had caught hard around Harry's heart, like a fist, and clenched tightly. "Malfoy," he'd wheezed. "Surely, no one…"

The corner of Malfoy's lips had quirked in the saddest excuse for a smile that Harry had ever seen. "It was pretty common knowledge among the Death Eater's that Lucius Malfoy's son was bent, Potter. And, as I've been told, I am so very pretty…"

The bitterness with which the words were delivered was almost as hard to hear as the expression on the pale face was to look at.

“Draco,” Harry had sighed. As far as he knew, it was the first time he’d ever used Malfoy’s given name. It was also the first time he’d had the almost uncontrollable desire to wrap him in his arms, and just hold him.

Malfoy’s reaction was, of course, somewhat different. He’d turned to Harry, back suddenly straight and eyes glinting now like tempered steel. “This conversation did not take place,” he’d said flatly. “If you repeat a word of it, I’ll remove your balls and feed them to you for breakfast.”

Harry had blinked, then nodded. “Understood.” They’d gone back to Shacklebolt’s office without exchanging another word.

Harry had kept his word, and kept his silence, but from that day forward the way he looked at Draco was changed.

He was more protective, more observant. He noticed things he never had before, like the way Draco’s hair fell over his forehead, making Harry’s hand itch to push the fringe back where it belonged. And the spare, elegant way Draco moved, and the languid gestures, and the way he’d finally grown in to that faintly pointed face. It didn’t really look pointed any longer, but aristocratic, and in a very real way, beautiful. His eyes were large and heavily lashed, his lips full and soft, and Harry was stunned the first time he found himself wondering what it would feel like to kiss them.

He knew that he was in real trouble when the dreams started. Disturbing, dark dreams full of long pale limbs, and hard flat chests, strong, muscled bodies moving together and fingers curled around his cock that were neither soft, feminine, nor his own. He’d wakened rock hard and in a cold sweat, lying next to a sleeping Ginny, terrified that some night he’d call out another’s name in his sleep and his life as he knew it would be over. From that moment forward his relationship with the perky redhead was doomed, and it wasn’t long before he ended it for good.

Ginny hadn’t taken it well. Certain that he had found someone else, she’d badgered him relentlessly for the name. He’d lied, telling her there was no one, but the way she looked at him told him louder than any words that she didn’t believe him. Her family’s disappointment had been palpable and painful, and Harry began to spend more and more time at work, and in the company of his partner. A rift grew between him and Ron. The only one who remained steadfast was Hermione, but even the way she would look at him, brown eyes soulful and sad, made Harry uncomfortable.

Draco had known that something was going on in Harry's personal life, but he hadn't pried. In fact, he hadn't said anything for weeks, until the deterioration in Harry's sleep habits began to show on his face.

"You look like shite, Potter," Draco had said bluntly one afternoon. "The Weaslette keeping you up nights?" One of his brows, darker than his hair, had arched ironically towards his hairline.

Harry had stared at his hands. "We aren't together anymore."

Silence had greeted the words. Finally, Harry raised his eyes and looked up to find Malfoy studying him pensively. Whatever Harry had been expecting, it wasn't what Malfoy had said next.

"Well," he mused softly. "She never was good enough for you."

He'd stood and calmly left their office, and Harry had stared at the empty doorway for a very long time.

Two months later, Harry still had no idea how to approach his partner with the fact that he had feelings for him, and Draco had disappeared on that ill-fated raid. And now, they were in a boxcar somewhere in the wilds of Scotland, and Harry still felt weakened with relief that Draco wasn't hurt any worse than he was.

"Tell me there's more chocolate in there."

The voice near his elbow made Harry start, and he looked over to find Draco watching him. There was a bruise on his cheek, and another along his jaw, and his hair was a ragged mess. Tenderness flooded Harry's chest, and he handed Draco another bar.

"I've a few more, but we'd better ration them," he said, forcing his eyes away and taking another drink from his water bottle. "I don't know how long it will take to get back to London."

“Well, how long did it take you to get here?”

The corner of Harry’s mouth quirked self-consciously. “Two days. I’d have left sooner, but I had to wait that long for the informant to find out where they might have taken you.”

“Driving the others crazy and making a complete nuisance of yourself, no doubt.”

Harry glanced up to find Draco watching him as he ate his candy more slowly. His eyes were indulgent. “I guess you could say that,” Harry admitted. “Even Hermione was about ready to hex me.”

Grey eyes shone mischievously. “Probably a good thing none of you can do magic, then.”

“Oh, she can,” Harry answered with a smirk. “She’s not an Auror. I’m just lucky she has more self-control than most.”

Draco’s lips twitched. “I’m surprised Shacklebolt let you come alone.”

Harry carefully screwed the lid back on his water bottle and returned it to his bag, but he knew that his cheeks were filling with betraying color. He could feel the heat of it.

“Potter,” Draco said flatly. Harry grimaced; the other man had a disturbing ability to read him. “Shacklebolt does know that you came alone, doesn’t he?”

“Uhm,” Harry stalled. “Hermione knows.”

There was a weighted silence, and Harry could feel Draco’s eyes boring into him. Finally, his partner

cursed fluidly.

“Son of a bitch, Potter,” he said harshly. “So, now not only am I considered missing, but you are as well.” Harry shrugged as if it were of little importance. “You fucking idiot. Have you any idea how frantic they must be, and how much trouble Granger is going to be in when they figure out she knew what you were up to? We’ll be lucky if they just suspend us…”

Harry’s eyes came back up then, and he stared into Draco’s face. “They won’t suspend you, they’ll suspend me, and it’s not like it’s the first time. Hermione won’t be in any trouble, because she won’t say anything.”

“So, she’ll just let them stew, circling one another, trying to figure out where you’ve gone?” He shook his fair head. “She won’t do it. She’s too bloody honest.”

“I made her swear that she wouldn’t say anything.”

Draco stared, stunned. “So, you’ve endangered not only your career, but hers as well? What the fuck is wrong with you?”

“I was worried, okay? I was afraid they might be… really hurting you, and I couldn’t wait around for the Ministry to pull its thumb out of its collective arse and do something…” Harry blurted, then bit his lower lip, wishing he could call the words back when Draco continued to stare at him.

The silence that hung between them was heavy. Finally, Draco sighed.

“You great idiot,” he muttered. “And what would have happened if they’d captured you, too?”

Harry stared down at the open pack. “Then… at least you would have had company.”

Another lengthy silence fell. “I might have been dead, you know. You might have walked into a trap.”

“I knew you weren’t dead.” Harry’s voice was flat as he slid the zipper closed emphatically.

“How could you?”

“I just did, all right?” Harry tossed the pack aside with more force than was necessary, refusing to look at his partner. “I just… knew. But I also knew that I couldn’t just… sit there once we had a lead on where you might be. I couldn’t let them hold you that long, I couldn’t give them the opportunity to weaken you enough that they could…” The words trailed off and he covered the lower half of his face with one of his hands, eyes tightly closed, but the truth of what he’d been about to say hung between them. Neither said anything more for several heartbeats.

“Potter.”

Harry shook his head, his hand still over his face, his eyes still tightly closed. They stung, and he was afraid if he opened them, Malfoy would see how very frightened he’d really been, and how lost. He jumped when a cool hand curled around his wrist.

“Potter,” Draco repeated, his voice closer. “Look at me.”

Harry shook his head, and Draco squeezed his wrist. “Harry,” he murmured, so close that his breath brushed Harry’s cheek. It smelled of chocolate. “Look at me.”

The use of his name, and the entreaty in the voice, finally had Harry’s eyes opening and he turned his head just enough to find Draco’s eyes inches from his own. They were wide, and resolved.

“I’m not fifteen-years-old anymore,” Draco said softly. “No one will ever do that to me again, do you understand?” Harry bit his lower lip. “They didn’t even try. In fact, it was as if once they had me they weren’t quite certain what to do with me.” His full lips curled wryly. “I’ve developed a bit of a reputation,

you see, hanging about with the most powerful wizard of the modern age, and I think they were afraid that I could do magic, even without my wand. They pounded on me, but none of them was brave enough to try something with a full grown man." His eyes hardened. "It's the nature of the beast, Potter. They're cowards, all of them, preying on the small and the weak. I am no longer either."

Truer words were rarely spoken. There was a lean hardness about Draco now, a leashed fury that was worlds away from the softness of his youth. Harry stared into his eyes, saw the truth, and felt the fear leave him for the first time in days. "Besides," Draco went on, "I'm not exactly a damsel in distress that needs rescuing, much as I appreciate the impulse. I'm a big bad Auror, Potter, remember?" Harry felt his lips twitch in the ghost of a smile, which faded when Draco's expression hardened. "No one will force me to do something that I don't want ever again, Harry. They'll die or I will, but I'll never be a victim again."

Harry stared into the resolute face, and slowly nodded. When Draco returned the nod and let his hand fall away from Harry's wrist, he leaned back against the wall of the boxcar as if the exchange had taken the last of his strength.

"Where are you hurt?" Harry asked softly, studying the lines of his body, the way he held his center stiff, the way his left arm was hugged close against his side.

"Ribs. I believe my kidneys are bruised." Draco answered, his eyes drifting closed. "That was a favorite spot, actually. And my left arm. One night they threatened to carve the mark out of it." Harry gasped, reaching forward and circling Draco's left wrist with his hand gently.

"They didn't…?"

Draco shook his head. "They said they would, but I think that my response took all of the fun out it for them."

"Why? What did you say?"

Draco's eyes opened half way as he peered into Harry's face. "That I wished they would, as the bloody

thing was little more than a testament to what an arse I'd been in my youth."

Harry's lips quirked in spite of himself. "Someday that mouth of yours is going to get you killed."

The corner of the swollen lips pulled up and his eyes gleamed, in spite of Draco's obvious pain. "My mouth may get me many things, Potter. It certainly has in the past. Kissed, yes. Killed? Not so much."

Harry shook his head indulgently even as unwanted images of Draco kissing other men flashed through his mind. Searching for a change of subject, he realized that he still had the bottle of Muggle pain killers in his hand and he held it up. "You want to try these?"

Draco frowned, eyeing the bottle suspiciously. "What are they?"

Harry turned the bottle so that he could read the small writing on the label. "Hydro… codone?" he said tentatively. "Yeah, that's what it says. Hydrocodone."

"Never heard of it." The corners of Draco's lips turned down and his brow furrowed.

"Well, not likely you would have, is it?" Harry said reasonably. "And remember; her parents are dentists, so at least you know it's legal."

"Like I care if it's legal," Draco scoffed. "I just want to know if it works."

"She said that it would help if you were in pain--" Harry eyes studied Draco's drawn features, "--which you are. Look, what could it hurt? You're used to pain potions; I doubt there's anything stronger in this."

Draco shrugged. "True." He held out his hand. Harry quickly glanced at the dosage, then shook two of the round white pills into Draco's hand.

“Two?” he said, uncapping his water bottle.

“That’s what it says; one or two as needed every four hours for pain.”

Draco snorted. “Must not be much to it, then.” He popped them into his mouth and grimaced as he washed them down with water. “A good pain potion will last up to twelve.”

“They don’t have the benefit of magic, remember.” Harry recapped the bottle and dropped it into the side of his bag.

“Well, I’m not expecting much.” Draco shrugged and wrapped his arms around himself, leaning his head back against the side of the boxcar and closing his eyes. “Merlin, I’m tired,” he said wearily. “The one thing they did manage to do was keep me awake.”

“Did you recognize anyone besides Rosier?” Harry asked.

They’d all thought Evan Rosier was dead; seeing him in the dingy basement had been a nasty shock to Harry. Leaving him with a bullet hole in his shoulder was about the only part of the rescue that had gone the way Harry wanted it to. They’d been damned lucky to get out alive. The pistol wasn’t much of a weapon against six wands; he still wasn’t sure how they’d managed it.

Draco shook his head. “No, they all seemed pretty young and inexperienced, as far as I could tell. He was clearly in charge. He must have been the one who activated the spell, too. The rest of them were abysmally stupid. Sheep, really.”

The boxcar jerked, and Harry looked at the door, reaching out reflexively, his hand curling around Draco’s arm. After a moment he realized that the train had slowly begun to move, and he let out a breath he’d not known he was holding.

“Relax, hero, just the train,” Draco said with a slight smile, patting Harry’s hand. He let it drop away self-consciously. “No more heroics necessary for the day.”

“Oh, shut it, you,” Harry retorted, but there was no heat in it.

As the train picked up speed, it became harder for them to hear one another, so they lapsed into silence. Harry leaned against a crate at his back, his legs out in front of him. He thought about turning off the torches light, but it was somehow reassuring to see Draco’s slender form across from him. He was glad later that he had left the light on, for if it had been dark he’d have never noticed when Draco slipped his hands between his raised knees, and his legs began to tremble.

He leaned across the space between them. “What is it?” He asked, frowning. “Are you ill?”

Draco shook his head quickly. “Cold,” he answered. And as Harry took in the thin shirt and slacks that he was wearing, and felt the chill breeze brush against his own neck, he could see why. It had been much warmer in London, where Draco had been taken from, than it was in the wilds of Scotland, and his Auror robes had been gone when Harry had found him.

Harry paused for just a moment before beginning to unfasten his heavy wool cape. Draco caught his wrist, stopping him.

“No,” he said firmly. “Then you’ll be cold. Don’t be stupid.”

“But,” Harry began, then stopped thoughtfully. “All right, then.” He quickly unfastened the cape and pulled it from his shoulders, and Draco scowled at him.

“I won’t take it, you imbecile,” he snapped. “Just put it back on.”

“Oh, shut up for a second, will you?” Harry snapped back, scooting until he was sitting next to Draco against the outer wall. He hesitated just a moment before slipping his arm around the smaller man’s shoulders, pulling him closer, then curling his hands around his upper arms and lifting him.

“What in three hell’s do you think you’re doing?” Draco protested, struggling slightly.

“Getting you—“ Harry pulled Draco over his leg and plopped him between his thighs, his back to Harry’s chest, “—warm, you bloody ingrate.” He settled the slender frame against his, then swept the long cape over both of them, tucking it around his sides. “You should remember some of your training, Auror Malfoy. Shared body heat to hold off hypothermia.”

“So now you remember the manual,” Draco groused, but after a moment, he relaxed slightly and leaned back into the solid strength of Harry’s chest. He felt chilled, and Harry quickly ran his hands up and down his thin arms. Immediately, warmth began to spread between them and Harry felt more than heard Draco’s sigh of relief.

“Sure this isn’t an excuse to get me under your cape?” Draco teased, and Harry was glad that his back was to him, for he was quite certain the heat that grew around his collar meant his neck was turning red.

“Right,” he said instead, aiming for flippant as he continued to rub warmth into Draco’s arms. “Because that’s always been my goal.” Even as he said it, the thought ‘maybe not always, but now’ flitted through his mind, and he clenched his teeth.

Draco sighed dramatically. “Well, a boy can dream, can’t he?” He turned his head far enough to shoot a cheeky grin over his shoulder, and Harry just shook his head. “Kill joy.” Draco sighed and seemed to melt into his chest. “This is much better,” he admitted softly. “Thank you.”

“You’re welcome.” Draco’s hair felt soft against his cheek, and he fought the impulse to rub his face against it.

Silence broken only by the sound of the wheels on the tracks settled around them, and the gentle

motion of the train seemed to rock them. After several minutes, Harry felt Draco sigh again.

“So tired,” he said, turning slightly so that his shoulder was in the middle of Harry’s chest, tucking his head under Harry’s chin.

Harry couldn’t resist rubbing his back in slow circles. “You’ve had a rough few days.”

“Mmm,” Draco responded, pressing his cheek against Harry’s sternum, his hand lifting to curl in Harry’s jumper. Even after four miserable days of captivity, Harry could smell the scent of his expensive shampoo lifting from his hair. “Going to… go… sleep.”

“Good plan,” Harry agreed, but he knew the words were pointless. Draco had gone completely limp, but for the hand that was curled tight in Harry’s jumper just over his pectoral muscle, pressing over a nipple that felt far more sensitive than Harry could ever remember it feeling before. He damned himself as some sort of pervert for even thinking such a thing when Draco clearly trusted him, but he allowed himself the luxury of curling his arms around the slender body and nuzzling his face in the soft fair hair. Reaching for the torch that still burned brightly near his knee, he flicked it off before tucking it against his thigh, sending the boxcar into complete darkness.

Part Two

Fic: Fool Rushes In/ Part 2 of 2

Posted on 2009.02.10 at 19:19

Author: [info]oldenuf2nb

Fic: Fool Rushes In

Pairing: H/D

Rating: R

Word Count: 9300 (for this part)

Warnings: First time. Kissing, cursing, wanking, frotting. Violence. And Snark. Let's not forget the snark.

Summary: In a burst of unexplained magic, Harry Potter's Auror partner Draco Malfoy has simply disappeared. Frantic with worry, terrified that something really terrible has happened to the other man, Harry realizes that what he feels for him just might be more than friendship.

Author's notes; Written for the heck of it, and for the entertainment of my darling [info]sassy_cissa . This was a bunny that would just not cease hopping.

Part Two

Harry wasn't quite aware of falling asleep, but he knew the precise moment that he awakened. It took him a moment to remember where he was; the rocking of the train felt faintly surreal, the warm weight in his arms pleasant but unfamiliar. He blinked, noting that it must be dawn, for watery light was creeping around the door and through small gaps in the walls. His face felt cold, but he was pleasantly warm, thanks in no small part to the body he still held against his own. Draco had turned even further, pulling his legs up and tucking them in against Harry's stomach, his face pressed against Harry's throat. It felt different than holding a woman; Draco was all hard planes and angles, juts of bone and wiry muscle. But it was surprisingly pleasant, even given the circumstances, and Harry tightened his arms around his partner, sighing softly before closing his eyes once again. He could get used to this, he thought. Draco made a soft sound, like a sleepy child, and Harry was startled by how close he came to pressing his lips against the other man's forehead.

His eyes opened again moments later when he felt arms slip around his waist. Draco still felt limp against him, still breathed slowly and evenly in sleep. Something swelled near Harry's heart when he realized that it must have been instinctive; that Draco must had been seeking reassurance in his sleep, and Harry rubbed a gentle circle over his boney spine. He felt the slow inhale and exhale that moved Draco's back, felt the soft, moist breath on his throat, and swallowed again heavily. God, if anything had happened to him…

"Potter…"

The voice came to him from just beneath his chin, and Harry went very still. He'd been so certain that Draco was asleep.

"Yes?" Harry managed, his voice a breath of sound.

"Much as I appreciate how very warm you are, and as truly pleasant as I'm finding the back rub, we have a problem." He let his head drop back against Harry's bicep, heavily, like he couldn't really hold it up, and Harry looked down into the upturned face. It was pale in the meager light, and his eyes were very wide, pupils hugely dilated, long lashes throwing soft star shaped shadows on his cheeks.

"We do?" Harry whispered.

Draco nodded enthusiastically enough that his fringe moved on his forehead. Harry arched a brow when he didn't continue.

"Are you going to tell me what it is?" he asked, smiling slightly when Draco blinked. "You know, this problem that we have?"

"Oh!" Malfoy nodded, and Harry found himself charmed by this slightly impaired Draco. Even when they drank together, Draco had rarely seemed affected by the alcohol, but the Muggle pain killers had clearly

had more of a kick than firewhiskey.

“The problem,” Draco said somberly, “is that I—“ he spread his thin fingers on his chest , “—am bent. And you—“ one of those thin fingers turned and poked Harry hard in the sternum, “—are not.”

“This isn’t exactly a news flash, Draco,” Harry said, even as his heartbeat sped up slightly. “And how is that a problem now?”

“It’s a problem now,” Draco said with the exaggerated care of the inebriated, “because you are holding me, and rubbing my back, and even after everything you smell like the wind and pine trees and Harry. And you’re all hard muscles, and green eyes and impossible hair and I’ve pretended not to but I’ve wanted you for as long as I can remember…” His voice trailed off and Harry held his breath, waiting as those quicksilver eyes made a thorough study of his face. “And, if you keep holding me, and touching me,” he went on, his voice soft, his gaze lowering and fixing on Harry’s mouth, “I’m going to kiss you. And you don’t want that.” There was a weighty pause.

“I don’t?” Harry finally managed, his voice thick. Draco’s eyes never left his mouth even as he shook his fair head.

“You don’t,” he said. “Because… you like girls.” He stopped, blinking in fuddled bemusement before his eyes lifted to Harry’s. “Don’t you?”

Here it was, Harry thought, his heart hammering at the base of his throat. The moment of truth, the perfect opportunity, and yet he couldn’t get his mouth to work. He just sat there, everything he wanted in his arms, unable to articulate a single word.

“Oh, of course you do,” Draco answered himself, smacking Harry’s chest with his hand. “I mean, you’ve been with the Weaslette for years.” He rolled his expressive eyes. “Although why is beyond me. I mean, I suppose her body is nice enough, if you like girlie bits, but all of that ginger hair and freckles. She must be like that… all over.” He shuddered and closed his eyes again, sighing dramatically. “Too bad, actually, because I’ve had these wonderful dreams, about getting my hands in your hair, and my legs wrapped ‘round your waist, and you’re pushing me down on a bed, and…” he shrugged. “Well, you certainly don’t

want to know about that, because it would probably send you screaming into the night…"

"Draco."

Harry was as startled by the sound of his voice as Draco clearly was. He abruptly silenced and opened his eyes, looking up into Harry's tight, drawn face. "Sorry," he whispered, seeing Harry's hard expression. "Must be the drugs. I'm not usually this chatty…"

"Yes, you are," Harry countered. "And that's not it." He paused, took a deep breath, dampened his lips. "Draco, I…" His heart was hammering so hard that he was surprised that Draco didn't hear it. "I've had dreams, too." Draco frowned slightly. "About… you. Holding you." His voice was a harsh whisper, and his eyes dropped to Draco's lips, which parted as he caught his breath. "Kissing you…"

Draco's widened eyes came back to Harry's, and they stared at each other for a long, weighted moment. Finally, the corner of Draco's lips curled upwards, very slowly.

"So," he mused, trying valiantly to sound casual. "Not so straight, then?"

Harry exhaled heavily, then bit his lower lip. "I just… I don't know," he said in exasperation. "I've never… this isn't…" He huffed in frustration even as Draco's smile widened.

"I can help you with this," he said wryly. "If you've thought about holding a man, and kissing a man? Chances are you're not entirely straight, Potter."

"Not 'a man', Draco," Harry retorted, his eyes catching Draco's and holding. "You. And just you."

The smile slowly melted from Draco's face, replaced by a faintly tender expression. He lifted his hand and cupped Harry's jaw. "Potter, you great idiot," he mused, thumb stroking Harry's stubble roughened chin.

“When you say things like that, you make me want…” his voice faded away even as his face moved closer.

“What?” Harry breathed, their lips inches apart.

“To find a way to shut you up.”

With those words, Draco arched his neck and closed his mouth over Harry’s, and Harry’s heart slammed into the base of his throat.

It was a kiss like others he’d had before, and yet as unlike them as dark was to light. Draco’s mouth was as soft as he’d thought it would be, as mobile, but also faintly demanding. He caressed Harry’s lips with his, massaged them with a slow and thorough movement and angling of his head, but the tongue that traced the seam of Harry’s lips wasn’t asking for an invitation, but demanding admittance. When Harry opened his mouth, his heart lurched and his groin quickened when Draco’s sleek tongue slid between his teeth, and curled around his own in a sinuous motion that pulled a startled grunt from Harry’s throat.

Draco shifted between his legs, and with that smooth, easy grace that Harry had always admired, lifted himself, urged Harry’s knees together, then straddled his lap without ever breaking the kiss. When slender thighs gripped his hips and Draco’s arms curled around his neck, Harry felt a dizzying sense of vertigo. This was very different, this partner much more insistent. He wasn’t used to a hard, flat stomach, wiry arms, a muscled chest rather than breasts. He didn’t know what to do with his hands, what came next. Draco angled his head the other way, deepening the kiss, and pressing his chest against Harry’s, his hands curling into Harry’s hair. When he fisted one his hands and pulled Harry’s head back, revealing the arch of his throat, and broke the kiss to trace it with his lips, Harry’s eyes rolled up in his head and his mouth dropped open.

“I don’t… know what to do,” Harry admitted, hands moving tentatively along Draco’s slender sides.

Draco nipped at the curve of Harry’s throat, licked his Adam’s apple. No one had ever done that to him before, and it felt so erotic that Harry’s back arched. “The first thing to remember,” Draco said against Harry’s skin, “is that I’m not a girl.”

“I… get that part,” Harry panted.

“No, I don’t think you do.” Draco caught Harry’s wrists and lifted them, pinning them to the rough wall on either side of his head. “With a girl, there’s all of this mystery.” He nipped Harry’s earlobe sharply, and he jerked. “Internal plumbing, foreplay, romance.” His mouth hovered over Harry’s ear, and Harry’s breath shortened in expectation. “With a bloke, there’s only a couple of things to remember.” Draco’s voice was a low hiss, his breath moist and warm against Harry’s ear. It made gooseflesh rise across his shoulders. “Number one; you won’t hurt me, so you don’t have to be tentative. If you want to grab, you grab .” He squeezed Harry’s wrists hard. “If you want to bite, you bite.” Harry stiffened in preparation of another sharp nip, but Draco just chuckled. “I’m not that predictable, Potter,” he teased. “But remember; I’m a man, not a rose bud. Please don’t treat me like one. And, number two; you know as much about my bits as I do about yours. If you like it, chances are that I will, too. And pretty clearly --,” Draco rolled his hips forward, and the hard bulge at his groin pressed into Harry’s, “—neither of us exactly hates this.”

Harry couldn’t even form a rational thought. He’d never felt a man’s cock pressed against his before. His heart was slamming against his ribs and a slick of perspiration had glossed his forehead, but he didn’t think he’d ever been so turned on in his life. Instinctively, unable to help himself, he bucked up into the pressure. When Draco chuckled again, Harry growled deep in his throat.

“Easy, tiger,” he teased, but undulated forward again, caressing Harry’s hardness with his own. “We’re not in that big of a hurry.” With those words, he slipped his tongue into Harry’s ear and swirled it over sensitive flesh, and any restraint that Harry might have had, and there wasn’t much, was broken. He tore his wrists free of Draco’s gasp with surprising ease and sank his hands into Draco’s fair hair, holding his head.

“Says you,” he snarled against Draco’s lips before taking them fiercely, mouth open, tongue thrusting, hips lifting. Had he been cognizant enough to care, he would have been gratified by the high squeak that emanated from Draco’s throat, but in that moment all he wanted was more; more of the taste of Draco’s mouth, more of the feel of his cock, more of that insanity inducing, rolling pressure. His hands slid from Draco’s head, down his back, feeling each knob of his spine, each rib, then dropped lower still and filled with Draco’s arse, squeezing. Draco didn’t squeak this time; he moaned and pushed back into Harry’s hands.

“God, I love a man that’s a quick study,” he gasped against Harry’s lips. Harry squeezed again and pulled

Draco flush to him, arching up, pelvis lifting, throbbing erection rubbing not just the inside of his own smalls, but against that tempting swelling behind Draco's fly as well. He found a rhythm, fast, harsh, scrubbing Draco against him as he thrust up.

"Amazing," he muttered, his mouth opening, his teeth sinking into Draco's throat before he latched on, sucking hard. He felt a surge of satisfaction when Draco cried out.

"Christ, Potter," Draco managed, hand curling in Harry's messy hair. "You just jump right in to a thing, don't you?"

Harry grunted, continuing to move, Draco riding him, their breathing loud and harsh, loud enough to be heard over the trains wheels on the tracks, the heat of it forming a soft cloud of condensation around their heads. Harry had never felt so out of control, or so close to losing it so quickly.

"Draco, I… Oh, shit, this is… I'm close…"

"Wait, wait," Draco gasped, grabbing Harry's shoulders, pushing his hips back and away from the press of Harry's.

"What're you doing?" Harry asked desperately, hands tightening on Draco's arse.

"I'm not as close as you are," Draco growled. "And I'll be damned if we go this far—" his hands reached for Harry's waistband, tearing the button open, lowering the zip, "—and I don't even get to touch… Sweet Circe, Potter," he gasped as he pushed down Harry's pants and his cock slipped into Draco's waiting hand. "Who knew you were hiding this? I can't even close my fingers around it…"

"Oh, shit," Harry cried out, back arching at the feeling Draco's hand curled around him. "I can't… oh, fuck!"

"No you don't!" Draco closed his thumb and his index finger around the base of Harry's cock and

squeezed, hard. Harry made a strangled sound as the pressure built in his balls, but the constriction effectively stopped his orgasm. He ground his head against Draco's sternum, and bit his lower lip until he tasted blood. Draco stroked the back of his head with his free hand, but didn't release his grip. After several moments of Harry panting and straining, he relaxed slightly as his orgasm receded. "Better?" Draco asked.

"I think that's entirely a matter of opinion," Harry answered, sounding suffocated. "But you can let it go, now."

Draco lifted Harry's head with the hand curled in his hair, and looked down into the glazed green eyes. "I don't think so," he murmured, leaning in and kissing Harry softly, easing his grip but not releasing him. "I didn't want to stop everything. Just… slow it down a bit."

Harry's cock felt harder than it ever had before in his life, but he didn't feel the pressure of imminent orgasm anymore, either.

"This truly is impressive, Potter," Draco went on conversationally, stroking his fingertips over the distended length, pausing to catch a drop of pre-come on his finger. When he lifted it to his mouth, he held Harry's eyes, a wicked sparkle in his own. His tongue slipped between plump lips and he licked the droplet away, and smiled slowly. "Not bad at all. I could develop a taste for that."

Harry was panting again, his mouth slightly open. "Did anyone ever tell you that you're a fucking tease?" he muttered. Draco's smile widened.

"I never tease about fucking, Potter." He released Harry long enough to reach for his own fly, lifting his shirt tail to reveal a tempting inch of pale flesh along his waistband before slowly unbuttoning and unzipping the fly of his own slacks. Harry's eyes dropped and held on the movements of his nimble fingers, ignoring the hard arch of his own cock to watch Draco open his trousers, and gradually push down his black pants. When Draco's cock slid into view, Harry caught his breath.

He'd never paid much attention to other men's penises, before. Oh, he'd darted a glance or two in the men's, just by way of comparison, but he'd never just… stared at one. Nor had he ever thought them particularly attractive; just sort of… odd looking. There was nothing even remotely odd about Draco's

cock. It looked just like the rest of him; long, slender, so pale that it might have been carved of marble. Tapered, slightly arched, elegant, and for the first time in Harry's life, he wanted to reach out and hold another man's hard cock in his hand. He even reached forward, stopping to look up into Draco's face. "Can I…?"

"Please." Draco all but purred, and arched his pelvis forward.

Tentatively, Harry ran just the pads of his fingers up the slight curve, felt the veins and the throb of Draco's heartbeat beneath the velvety skin. He glanced again at Draco's face, and saw his eyes drift closed as he lightly bit his lower lip. Harry stroked it again in fascination, and Draco grabbed his hand, curling his fingers around the warm, straining length. "Talk about a tease…"

"Sorry." Harry swallowed heavily, feeling the thump of Draco's heartbeat against his palm. "I just don't know what to do with it…"

"What do you like?" Draco's eyes opened and he pinned Harry with his gaze. "Touch me like you touch yourself."

Harry felt heat flood into his face, but he lowered his eyes back to the prick in his hand, and he thought about what Draco had said. He did know what he liked, and though Draco's cock was more slender, it wasn't that different… He removed his hand long enough to spit into it, then curled it around the bobbing prick and began to stroke it slowly from base to tip, squeezing over the head the way he liked. Draco must have liked it to, because he hissed and pressed his hips forward.

"Like that?" Harry asked, doing it again.

"Yeah," Draco answered, mouth slightly open. "Only, wait a second—" He took Harry's hand away and moved closer so that his cock brushed against Harry's . Harry gasped when he directed Harry's hand to curl around both. "Now, move your hand."

Harry did, and immediately a whole new layer of sensation was added. He was so hard that he ached, and the feeling a Draco's cock against his was amazing. His mouth fell open as he tightened his grip, and

Draco gasped.

“Harder, Potter,” he wheezed. “Like this.”

He wrapped his hand around Harry’s and squeezed, hard, and Harry’s eyes rolled closed as his fist moved up and down over the hard cocks. Draco grunted and began to move, rolling his hips forward, adding another sensation, another pulling, dragging madness. Harry bit his lip and began to move his hips as well, until they were both moving, hips flexing up and in, cocks straining, breathing loud and harsh. His free hand groped Draco’s hip, then around to his arse, fingers digging in, pulling him closer, harder.

“Ah, shit,” Harry groaned, eyes clenched shut. “This is… there’s nothing like this. Nothing has ever felt like this.”

Draco’s free hand slid up Harry’s chest, closing over his pectoral muscle and squeezing as he leaned forward, his mouth against Harry’s ear. “This? This is nothing, Potter,” he promised, tongue touching Harry’s lobe. “Wait until you’re all slicked up, hard and aching, pushing into my arse. Trust me; the Weaslette has got nothing on the control I have over my sphincter. It’ll squeeze you, Potter—“ his hand tightened around Harry’s until his grip was so tight it was almost painful; the spill of their mingled pre-come slicked his palm, “—and I’m hot, so hot inside that you’ll think you’ve dipped your dick in a vat of heated honey, only I’ll squeeze around you, and squeeze—“ He demonstrated by squeezing his hand, and the words in concert with the renewed tightness of their grip were more than Harry could take. He arched and cried out, spilling himself between their fists, up his stomach onto his jumper and Draco’s shirt.

“Oh, God!” Harry choked, shuddering, shaking hard. His cock slid from his hand and his grip started to loosen, but Draco growled in his ear.

“No,” he ground out harshly between clenched teeth. “No, godamn it. Squeeze. I’m close, I’m so fucking close…”

Harry forced himself to focus even as his body continued to jerk and shake, tightening his grip on Draco, his hand now slick with his own come. Draco reached up and twisted his hands in Harry’s jumper just over his shoulders, and began to thrust into his fist in earnest. Harry found the strength to open his eyes,

and watched Draco's face in awe as his mouth dropped open, his eyes intense on Harry's, his fringe bouncing on his forehead as he rode Harry hard and fast. As he watched him in the watery light, watched the faint blush climb his neck and his brow furrow in concentration, he knew he'd never been as affected by anything. Being the focus of all of that attention, all of that intensity, he'd never had that before. Ginny had always seemed to draw into herself when she was close, closing her eyes, turning her head away. Draco stared, into his eyes, his heart, and suddenly all Harry wanted was to give Draco what he'd already had; that mind-numbing, crushing, soul-draining orgasm.

"Come on, Draco," he murmured, tightening his grip, moving his hand quickly. "Come. Come for me."

Draco's arms began to shake as if he were in the grip of an electric shock, and he froze, going rigid, a low moan coming from his throat as pearlescent streams of white shot through Harry's fingers, mingling with the moisture already dotting his jumper. Draco hung there for a long moment, making muffled, choking sounds as Harry murmured "that's it, that's it, it's okay…" over and over in a soft, soothing voice. When Draco's orgasm had run its course, he collapsed onto Harry's chest, his face pressed against Harry's neck, his shoulders trembling. The cape had fallen to his waist, and Harry pulled it up and tucked it around his neck, then encircled him with his arms, swamped by a wave of tenderness that surprised him and made his throat feel thick. He'd done this, he thought as Draco shuddered one last time, then melted against him with a sigh. He'd caused this supremely self-possessed man to lose control, and he was humbled by that.

The only sound for a long time was the wheels of the train on the tracks, and the subtle rocking motion had all but lulled Harry into a post-orgasmic stupor when Draco shifted uncomfortably against him.

"Shit," he heard muttered against his throat even as Draco fidgeted.

"What?"

"No magic," Draco answered. "No magic means no cleansing spells. And I'm sticky, damnit."

Harry couldn't help it. He sounded so completely disgruntled that Harry couldn't stop the chuckle that moved through his throat. He doubted that Draco actually heard it, but he felt his chest vibrate, and

smacked his bicep without lifting his head.

“You might not mind parading around wearing spunk, Potter, but I’ve got standards.” He shifted again. “Besides, it’s… gross.”

“Sorry,” Harry said unrepentantly. “No spells of any kind.”

“Fuck.” Draco shifted, and moments later Harry felt one of his hands rubbing over his side. No, not rubbing, exactly. More like scrubbing.

“Are you wiping your hand on me?” He asked, both highly amused and faintly disgusted.

“You’ve already got it all over you,” Draco said matter-of-factly, straightening. “What’s a little bit more? It’ll dry, and you’ll never notice the difference.” Harry jerked a bit in surprise when he felt Draco tuck his cock back into his trousers and zip him up, then perform the same routine on himself, grimacing the entire time. When they were both covered again, Draco settled back against him with a soft sigh, pulling the cape up over his shoulder. “That’s a bit better,” he said as he shifted. “But I’ll be wanting a shower just as soon as we get… wherever we’re going. I refuse to itch.”

“God, you’re prissy,” Harry muttered, softened the comment by encircling Draco once again with his arms.

“Just particular about my personal grooming,” Draco answered, yawning. “Trust me; you’ll have reason to appreciate it, too.”

Harry felt his face flush as the implication of what Draco was saying sank in, but by the time he’d thought of a response, he could tell from the limpness of Draco’s body and the steady, regular nature of his breathing that he’d fallen soundly asleep.

Harry let himself savor the feeling of the weight in his arms, and the head against his shoulder, before

drifting off again himself.

ooooOOOOOoooo

“Potter.”

Harry muttered and shifted his long legs, turning his face away from the persistent voice. The rocking of the train lured him, like a siren’s song, back towards sleep.

“Potter!”

The voice was more insistent this time, and faintly alarmed, and something about that had Harry rousing and reaching instinctively into his sleeve for his wand at the same time.

“NO! No magic!”

Now his eyes shot fully open and he was staring into widened grey ones just inches from his own. Where he was and who he was with came back to him in a rush, and he pressed the wand back into its holster and reached for Draco’s arm.

“What’s the matter?” He asked, voice rough, as he looked around the interior of the box car. It looked exactly the same, except for perhaps a bit more light, and from the sound and motion they were still moving. They were still completely alone as well but Draco’s arm was stiff and he seemed to be holding himself rigid.

“Your pocket,” he answered, gesturing towards Harry’s trouser pocket, whispering now.

“My… pocket?” Harry frowned. “What about my pocket?”

Draco dampened his lips with his tongue. “It was… vibrating.”

“It was what?” Harry patted himself down just as a low hum began to sound again.

“You see? You see?” Draco said, backing up slightly. “Just like that!”

“Oh,” Harry sighted, relieved. He reached into his front pocket and removed a small black square object and held it up. “It’s just a mobile that Hermione gave me, so that we could stay in touch.” He flipped it open. The screen read ‘new text message’, with Hermione’s name. “Yes!” he said in satisfaction. “We must be back within range.”

Draco leaned forward, studying the small screen. “And Granger wanted you to have a mobile, because…?”

“Well, no magic, for one,” Harry answered. “We could stay in touch without triggering the Death Eater spell. But I was out of range within twelve hours…” He looked up to find Draco watching him, and the phone, slightly suspiciously. “Sorry it scared you.”

“It didn’t scare me,” Draco protested, crossing his arms over his chest. “It merely felt incredibly odd, vibrating against my balls.”

Harry laughed. “I’ll just bet…” He pressed the button that would bring up the message, waiting a moment for it to load.

“Spell identified,” it read. “Counter spell identified. Notify immediately upon receipt of this message.”

“What does it say?” Draco asked, craning his neck as Harry quickly typed in ‘message received’.

“That they’ve identified the spell,” he answered, waiting, watching the screen. He didn’t have to wait long. The small phone buzzed, and the words ‘oh, thank God!’ appeared in his hand. He smiled slightly as he typed ‘hello, luv’ in response. ‘Mission accomplished’.

‘Excellent,’ she typed back. ‘Is he all right?’

‘Bruised and battered, but nothing permanent,’ he responded. ‘Is Kingsley ready to kill me?’

“What are you saying?” Draco asked, trying to see. Harry turned the phone slightly so that he could see the small, lit screen.

‘He says he’s going to suspend you,’ appeared in the dialogue box.

“He’ll do no such thing,” Draco declared in outrage.

‘but he doesn’t mean it,’ the typed message went on. ‘Just worried about you both.’

‘We’re all right. So, what do we do now?’

Harry had no more than hit the send button when the phone in his hand give off a soft ringing sound, and he pressed another button and brought it to his ear.

“You’re sure that you’re all right?” Hermione Granger asked, her voice harried.

“I’m fine.”

“And Draco, they didn’t hurt him too badly?”

“Here, I’ll put the phone on speaker, and he can tell you himself.”

Harry pressed another small button on the side of the phone, looked over at a wide-eyed Draco with a slight smile, and held it up.

“Go ahead, Hermione,” Harry said, raising his voice slightly.

“Draco?”

“Hello, Granger.”

“Oh, thank God, Draco,” Hermione gasped. “We were so worried about you! They didn’t do any permanent damage?”

“I don’t believe so,” Draco said, his lips curving as he stared into Harry’s eyes. “Everything seems to be in proper working order.” His grin widened when a rust colored stain began to creep up Harry’s neck.

“Oh, I’m so glad!” Hermione said in relief. “As soon as we get you back here, we’ll get you into St. Mungo’s for a proper evaluation.”

“So, what’s the plan, Hermione?” Harry asked.

“All right. First,” Hermione said emphatically, now all business, “do you still have the back pack that I gave you?”

Both Harry and Draco glanced at the crumpled bag nearby. “Yes,” Harry answered.

“Excellent. Sewn into the lining of that bag is a sixpence.”

“A what?” Draco asked, frowning.

“Sixpence,” Harry answered. “Muggle currency. What about it, Hermione?”

“It’s a portkey,” she answered. “One that can only be activated from this end. All you have to do is have your hands on the bag, and it will bring you straight here. If the phone is working, that means you’re in range.”

“What are we waiting for?” Draco asked, reaching for the bag. Harry stilled him with a gentle hand around his wrist.

“Well, there’s a bit more to it than merely portkeying you to safety. This may be the best opportunity we have to capture the people who perfected this spell.”

“And how do we do that?” Harry asked, his voice calm even as his eyes found Draco’s in the dim car.

“You need to cast, Harry,” Hermione said firmly. “It needn’t be anything major, or complicated. Just a spell. We’re quite certain that they’ve your magical signature attached as well.”

“But, that will take him to them, the way it did me,” Draco protested.

“No, it won’t,” Hermione replied emphatically. “We’ve figured out how they were attaching the magical signatures, and we’ve perfected a spell to stop them from being able to Apparate someone involuntarily.”

“And you’ve tested it?” Draco persisted.

“We have. The spell is Anteverto Captivus. The wand motion is the same as for Apparition, just reversed.”

“You’re certain this works?” Draco asked again. “You’ve tested it yourself?” There was a pause. Draco shook his head. “You aren’t doing it,” he said resolutely to Harry. “Not if they don’t even know that it will work…”

“Draco, I haven’t tested it, but Dawlish and Rawlings have, and it worked. Mostly.”

“Mostly?” Draco asked.

“Neither of them has Harry’s skill, you know that. Dawlish in particular…”

“What happened?” Draco asked, his voice hard.

“Well, let’s just say that Dawlish mostly stayed behind, but Rawlings was able to snatch… certain parts of his body that required a rather embarrassing emergency trip to St. Mungo’s. Dawlish doesn’t remember much, but Rawlings may never be the same.” Harry began to laugh. Even Draco’s lips quirked. “I seriously doubt that Harry will have the same problem.”

“I’ll give you that,” Draco conceded dryly. “So, what happens then? If they can’t snatch him, then what?”

“Well, we know that they’ve been able to recognize the magical signatures of everyone they’ve taken. We believe it’s why they started with weaker wizards at first, like Abbot and Henderson. They worked their way up to you.” Draco exchanged a glance with Harry. “We figured out what they were doing right about the time you were taken, and no one cast again until we were sure that we were blocking them.

But," she paused, cleared her throat. "We believe that they'll recognize Harry's signature, and won't be able to resist. We think that even when it becomes obvious that they can't summon him to them, they'll come to where he is."

"So, you've left him unblocked." Draco frowned.

"Yes, but the Anteverto Captivus will protect him from being taken…"

"But it won't stop them from coming here," Draco argued. "He'll be one against at least half a dozen. My wand is gone…"

"Draco, listen," Hermione interrupted. "The moment the Death Eater's appear, I will activate the portkey. Instantly, the spell will turn back on them, attaching their magic in the same way they managed to attach yours." Harry whistled softly.

"Meaning?" Draco demanded, clearly not following.

"Meaning," Harry said patiently, "that whoever attaches my magic, and it will be all of them, will be portkeyed with us right to wherever we want them to go. Isn't that right, Hermione?"

"Correct," she said briskly. "And we'll be waiting for them. All of us."

Harry and Draco exchanged a telling look. "In that moment, Granger," Draco said finally. "In that moment when they get here, it will still be six or more against one. He'll be incredibly outnumbered, and getting off a spell doesn't take long…"

"And he's the most powerful wizard alive," Hermione countered. "You're just going to have to have faith in him, Draco."

“Having faith in him has never been a problem,” Draco retorted. Harry was startled by the ringing endorsement, and it must have shown. Draco clearly saw something on his face, for he reached over and curled his hand around Harry’s and held on, tight. “I’d trust Potter with my life; have done, as a matter of fact. It’s not him I’m worried about, and frankly, it’s not you.” He paused before going on. “But you and I both know that we’re not the most popular partnership in the program.”

Harry opened his mouth, but Hermione spoke before he could. “We want you back, Draco. Everyone here knows the danger that you’ll both be in, and that your safety, and Harry’s, depends on them doing their job. They might resent you, but they don’t want you hurt. There will be no room for professional jealousy in this engagement.” The tone of her voice left Harry with little doubt that she meant it, and that the conversation with the other Aurors had already taken place. Harry and Draco were the most efficient team of Auror’s in the Ministry’s Enforcement Division, Hermione it’s most prolific prosecutor. There was no doubt in his mind that she’d already made her feelings about their rescue, and her wrath if anyone screwed it up, abundantly clear. “We’re bringing the prisoners to a contained environment,” Hermione went on with assurance. “At which point they’ll be outnumbered five to one. Even they won’t be so foolish as to try something with those odds, and it will be a huge capture that everyone gets a share of.”

Draco’s brows rose at that. “Five to one.” He shot Harry a wry grin. “Clearly, that’s about you, big boy, not me.”

Harry cleared his throat roughly when he saw Draco’s eyes begin to sparkle faintly with amusement.

“What do I need to do, Hermione?” Harry asked.

“We’ve just been waiting to hear from you,” Hermione said quickly, clearly already in battle-mode. “Give me five minutes to get everyone into position, and then you just need to cast a spell, any spell. You’ll leave the phone line open, and once the subjects are on the scene, you tell me and I’ll activate the portkey. The only one who won’t be attached to you, Harry, is Draco, so he’ll have to physically grab hold of you.”

“No big hardship, there,” Draco said wryly, and Harry couldn’t stop the slight smile that pulled at the corner of his lips.

“Just let me advise Kingsley and alert everyone into position, and then I’ll be back. Leave the line open, just in case. I don’t want this whole thing fouled up by the vagaries of Muggle technology.”

“All right, Hermione. We’ll be standing by.”

He turned to Draco, and found that he was being studied carefully. “What?” he asked, knowing that his face was filling with color.

“I find people who go into ‘take charge’, mode incredibly hot,” he teased, cocking his head to one side, frowning slightly. “Actually, that’s not true. I’ve never met anyone with more of a ‘take charge’ attitude than Granger, and I don’t find her remotely hot. Must be you. Don’t suppose there’s time for a quick shag?”

Harry shook his head as he reached for the back pack and pulled it closer to them. “You are incorrigible,” he said, setting the open phone on the floor before unzipping the bag and putting the electric torch back inside. He spotted the uneaten chocolate bars near the bottom. “Do you want another candy bar?”

He looked up, and startled slightly in surprise to find himself nearly nose to nose with Draco, who had moved in closer to him while he’d been fussing with the bag. “I don’t want chocolate,” he said softly, reaching up with one hand and cupping Harry’s jaw. “I would, however, like to kiss you again just in case you come to your senses once we’re back to civilization.”

“Draco,” Harry protested softly.

“No, it’s all right. Really, I don’t expect a great love affair. If that was a once off, I understand,” Draco assured him, but there was something there in his eyes that spoke in contrast to the easy words. Something faintly desperate, nearly covered with bravado. “It was lovely and all that, but I’d get it if you went back to birds. I’d just like… something to remember from this grand adventure.” He spoke flippantly, but still, there in the depth of the quicksilver eyes, something hopeful remained.

“Draco,” Harry repeated more firmly. “You’ve been my partner for what? Five years, six? In all of that time, how many ‘one off’s’ have I had?”

“Now, how would I know?” Draco huffed. “It’s not like I keep track.” Harry cocked one brow skeptically and waited. “Fine,” Draco finally said, rolling his eyes. “There was the Weaslette…”

“Four years does not a ‘once off’ make.”

“True. It makes a case for abysmal taste, but not a once off.” Harry’s eyes narrowed dangerously. “Fine, fine.” Draco released Harry’s chin and waved his hand. “There was that Scarlotti bint, from accounting.”

Harry flushed. “I was drunk.”

“And she’s the Ministry mattress; classic combination for a once off.”

“She was nice enough,” Harry said flatly. “And that’s one.”

Draco appeared to be thinking hard; a line appeared between his brows.

“See? You do keep track, and there was all of one, in the five years we’ve been partners. I don’t cat around, Draco. I never have.” He paused and zipped the bag closed before he set it aside.

“Well, you might have come to your senses and decided that you didn’t really want to be with a man…”

Draco caught his breath when Harry snaked his arm around his waist and pulled him against his chest in a smooth motion. “I seem the indecisive type to you, do I?”

When Draco spoke again, he sounded winded. “Not that I’ve noticed, no.”

“And it wouldn’t be about being with a man,” Harry went on earnestly, his other hand lifting, sliding along Draco’s neck to his nape. “It would be about being with you. I’ve been feeling this for a while; I just didn’t know how to bring it up, how to say it…”

“How about ‘fancy a fuck, Malfoy’? It might have worked.” Harry tightened his hand in the hair at the base of Draco’s skull and pulled his head back, and his eyes went very wide as his mouth fell open. “Uhm, or that. That works, too.”

“Listen to me, carefully,” Harry said softly. “As far as I’m concerned, that was not a ‘once off’.” Harry leaned forward and ran the tip of his nose along Draco’s chin before murmuring directly into his ear. “What it was remains to be seen, but it was more than that to me. What about you?”

Harry heard Draco swallow, and smiled against his skin. “More,” he finally admitted. “A whole hell of a lot more.”

“Brilliant,” Harry responded. “Now stop wasting time talking.”

Draco opened his mouth to say something else, but Harry circumvented further conversation by taking his lips and sliding his tongue into the waiting space. He still tasted faintly of chocolate but more pointedly of something that was all Draco’s own, and Harry reveled in it. He sucked against his tongue, savoring Draco’s soft moan in reaction. It filled his mouth, vibrated in his chest and he tightened his arms around the slender body, spread his hand on the wiry back.

“All right, Harry. We’re ready when you are.”

Hermione’s voice sounded loud in the boxcar, and their lips came apart abruptly. They stared at one another for a moment, eyes widened, breath short.

“Okay, Hermione. Give us a moment.”

He smoothed his hand through the silky hair, then pressed one last, soft kiss to the corner of Draco’s mouth before easing him away from his body. Resolutely, he pushed himself to his feet and picked up the backpack, slipping it onto his back before looking down and offering Draco his hand. Draco stared at it for a moment, then took it and allowed himself to be hauled to his feet. When he grimaced, Harry paused.

“You’re hurting,” he said.

“Muggle potion has worn off,” Draco acknowledged, cradling his side.

“Hermione,” Harry said, bending to retrieve the phone. “Notify St. Mungo’s that we’re bringing him there as soon as the rest of this is sorted.”

“Don’t fuss,” Draco scolded.

“Of course,” Hermione said over him. “Are you ready?”

“One second.” Harry handed Draco the phone. “Hold that.” He bent once again and retrieved the cape that had fallen forgotten to the floor, swinging it around Draco’s shoulders, pausing to fix the clasp closed with steady fingers. Their eyes met and held, and Harry tried to convey everything that he was feeling. When Draco smiled faintly and nodded, Harry withdrew his wand from his sleeve. “We’re ready now, Hermione.”

“All right, Harry,” Hermione answered, all business. “You cast a spell, any spell, and then you wait. There may be a sensation of pulling, in your mid-section from them attempting to Apparate you against your will, but that should be all.”

“Should?” Draco said, clutching Harry’s sleeve.

“It will be all right,” Harry assured him. “Go on, Hermione.”

“Once they Apparate in around you,” she went on, “all you have to say is ‘now’, and I’ll activate the Portkey. Next thing you know, you’ll be here, surrounded by the entire squad, and they will be so outmanned that we should be able to take them with little difficulty.”

“There’s that word, again,” Draco muttered. “I don’t like ‘should’ Granger. You make damn sure you get it right.”

“Relax, Malfoy,” another voice said, this one deep and gruff, and they both recognized Kingsely Shackebolt speaking. “We’ll save your arse.”

“You’d better,” Malfoy retorted. “I’ve got plans for it.”

There was the scattered laughter of several people from the small speaker in the phone, and Harry sent Draco a wry look. “You ready?” He asked, intentionally pitching his voice low.

“As I’ll ever be.”

Harry turned then and pointed his wand at Draco, whose light eyes widened. “Scourgify!” Harry announced softly, and Draco felt a tingling pass over his stomach and groin, and he jerked in surprise.

“Scourgify?” he said incredulously. “You used scourgify as your spell?”

“You said you didn’t want to be itchy.” Harry shrugged.

“Potter, you fucking idiot…”

But whatever else he was going to say was lost when Harry stiffened, a sharp tugging sensation pulling just behind his navel. “No…” he said, his hand covering the spot as the room around him began to spin. “Fuck, no…”

“Harry?!” Hermione cried out through the phone.

“Bloody hell,” Draco gasped, and reached out and caught Harry into his arms, holding him even as Harry felt as if the floor were pitching beneath his feet and the rush of wind grew louder. “NO!” he shouted directly into Harry’s ear. “No. You’re the most powerful fucking wizard alive, Potter. Fight it! Fight it!”

Harry clutched him back, hand curled hard around Draco’s upper arm, eyes closed in concentration. They were trying to pull him; he could feel it. In fact, his insides began to ache, as if part of them might be ripped away in the effort. He winced at the pain. “Concentrate on staying here,” Draco shouted. “Concentrate, damnit! You can do this!”

Forcing the pain and the pressure away, Harry concentrated as hard as he could. He pictured the boxcar in his mind, the slight sway beneath his feet, the rush of cool air over his face. But it wasn’t working. He could feel the molecules in his body beginning to destabilize, and he let out a tortured cry.

“Don’t you fucking dare leave me! Don’t you dare, Potter. I’ll kill you, I swear it!”

Draco’s cry brought Harry’s eyes open, and the grey eyes were inches from his own, wide, pupils huge, but resolute and unblinking.

“Stay with me,” Draco said firmly. “Stay with me.”

Harry used the eyes staring into his as an anchor, a rock he could lash his resolve to. With Herculean effort, he brought his other hand to Draco’s shoulder and held on, tight. Slowly, slowy the pain began to

fade, the wind began to calm, and he felt the cells in his body re-aligning, back into their usual configuration.

“That’s it,” Draco murmured. “That’s it, Potter.”

When he could once again feel his feet upon the floor, a wave of relief flowed through Harry, but it was followed almost immediately by a debilitating surge of dizziness and nausea. Apparating always left him feeling shaken, and this was the same feeling, magnified by a hundred. He closed his eyes and fought down bile rising in the back of his throat just as he heard the distinctive sound of five or six sharp pops around them.

He staggered around, trying to stay steady, trying to lift his wand, but he couldn’t focus. He knew that there were now shadowy figures all around them, but they seemed to be weaving in and out of his vision, like shifting wraiths. He shook his head, but it wouldn’t clear. He began to sway, and felt Draco’s arms lock tight around his chest from behind.

“Well, well, well. Mr. Potter.” It was Rosier’s voice, but Harry couldn’t place which one of the shapes was him.

“Now, Hermione,” Harry said, but his voice was gone. He couldn’t put sound behind it; his lips moved, but nothing came out of his mouth.

He heard laughter. “It looks as if your counter spell is working, Higgins,” Rosier announced. “Mr. Potter here appears to suffering from the Confundus charm you added to the Apparition spell, even if we couldn’t bring him to us. Clever that. I’m guessing Granger.”

Harry swallowed again as the floor lurched sickeningly.

“I’m also guessing that the Silencio we cast ahead as we arrived is keeping your friends from coming down on our heads. And how nice of you to keep Mr. Malfoy safe for us; we weren’t quite finished with him yet.”

Harry began to panic. Hermione couldn't hear what was going on, and he was so disabled that his wand, even as he thought it, was slipping from his nerveless fingers. He could feel Draco behind him, trembling, helpless, and rage unlike anything he'd felt before in his life roared to life in his body. He would not be taken like this; he wouldn't. He had to do something… He turned his head to the side, caught Draco's widened eyes staring wildly into his face. "My wand," he mouthed, using every once of his strength to lift his arm up. "My wand…"

One moment he was standing, the next he was being hauled onto the floor. He fell heavily backwards, unable to stop the full weight of his body from landing on the man behind him, and he heard a sharp gasp even as his wand was wrenched from his hand. A jet of red light shot just over them even as he saw the wand motion from the corner of his eye and heard Draco cry; "Finite incantatem!"

"Now, Granger!" Draco shouted near Harry's ear, then grabbed him and rolled him until he was on top of him, and over Draco's shoulder, Harry saw the boxcar lurch and lift and fall away, saw the sky swirling madly as they flew, felt the wind tearing at his hair and his clothes, and the hands like talons digging into his shoulders. And then they landed hard and Draco grunted, and almost immediately there were spells flying and shouts and cries and the sound of bodies falling. Through all of it, Draco remained on top of him, looking wildly over his shoulder, shielding Harry's body with his own.

It was over almost as quickly as it started. The silence that fell was as shocking as the travel by Portkey, as ringing as the spells and the cries. Draco lifted his head when the silence fell, and Harry heard him sigh heavily before he rolled off of Harry to his side.

Harry tried to lift his head, but it was still spinning, and he closed his eyes. He felt a hand curl around his, and tried to return the pressure, but it was a feeble attempt.

"Harry!"

Hermione's voice pried his eyes open, and she was on her knees at his side. Ron was behind her to the left, his face smudged and his hair wild, concern in his eyes, and Shacklebolt was over her other shoulder, wide face creased in a deep frown.

“Harry, what happened, what did they hit you with?” He felt Hermione’s hands moving over his arms and chest, as if searching for injury.

He tried to answer, but nothing came from his mouth but a garbled groan.

“There was a Confundas charm linked to the snatching spell,” Draco answered weakly from his side. “I remember being confused at first too, but they must have removed it from me fairly quickly. Even though the snatch didn’t work, the Confundas did. And it was a strong one.”

“You all right, mate?” Ron asked, frown deepening.

“No, he’s not all right,” Draco answered sharply. Harry closed his eyes, grateful to Draco for answering for him. “He’s been nearly torn in two fighting the fucking snatching spell, and Confunded within an inch of his life. How would you be?”

“Easy, Malfoy,” Ron retorted. “Just asking.”

“Potter.”

Harry forced his eyes open at the sound of Shacklebolt’s voice, and fought to focus on his superior’s face. It swam dizzyingly in his vision, making his stomach lurch. “Sir?” he managed.

“We got all of them.”

Harry sighed in relief and managed to nod weakly even as his eyes slid shut again.

“And even though we’re all grateful for Mr. Malfoy’s safe return…”

“Gee, thanks, Kingsley,” Draco said wryly.

“…if you ever do anything as foolish as this, ever again,” he went on as if he hadn’t been interrupted, “you’re suspended. Do you get me?”

Harry managed another nod. He felt Draco shift at his side and groan, and he opened his eyes to find him sitting near his hip, holding his side.

“He needs,” he started, then had to stop to cough. When he spoke again, his voice was stronger. “He needs St. Mungo’s.”

Draco shot him a look over his shoulder. “So do you, idiot.” He started to move away, but Harry surprised himself by being able to grab his elbow before he could.

“Did I hurt you?” he asked, sounding winded. “When I fell on you?”

“Well, I can’t imagine it helped,” Draco said, rolling his eyes, pulling his arm away and putting some distance between them. Harry frowned.

“I’m sorry.”

“Oh, stop it. I pulled you down on top of me.” He shrugged, glancing away. “Besides, it was the least I could do, after all of your obnoxious heroics…” He moved further away, and even in his confused state, Harry could see what he was doing. They were surrounded by people; Hermione, Ron, Kingsley, the rest of the Aurors. He was giving Harry space, trying to cover in case Harry had changed his mind…

“Draco…”

Harry saw the slender shoulders stiffen before he glanced back, saw the caution that had entered the grey eyes. “Relax, Potter. I’ll live. And you prevail, once again.” His lips twitched slightly, taking the sting from his words. “You’re record is unblemished. You are, as ever, the hero.”

“You saved me,” Harry said, struggling to sit up, helped by Hermione and Shacklebolt. Even though his head was spinning, he caught Draco’s arm in his hand, caught his eyes and held them. “Thank you,” he said sincerely.

“Well, it would have looked bad if I’d let the Boy Who Lived cease to, now wouldn’t it?” Draco said flippantly, turning away.

For a man suffering from a wicked Confundus charm, Harry moved with surprising alacrity, grabbing the back of Draco’s neck, turning him back around. Draco stared, eyes wide, mouth slightly opened.

“Can’t you just take a compliment without acting like a prat?” He said sternly. “Thank you, you wanker. Now shut up.”

And there, in the middle of Auror’s main office, Harry pulled Draco to him and kissed him into stuttering silence.

There was a long moment when there wasn’t a sound. It was broken by a soft cough, and a heartfelt groan.

“Tell me that’s the Confundus charm,” Ron moaned. “Please, tell me it’s the bloody charm.”

They broke a part, and Harry saw the fetching blush that had spread over Draco’s cheeks before he tucked his head under Harry’s chin and hid his face in his jumper. Harry looked up and caught Hermione’s

eyes, relieved when she smiled at him slowly.

“I don’t think so, Ron,” she answered. “You may just have to get used to it.”

Ron cursed fluently as he turned away, and Shacklebolt straightened, looking somewhat gobsmacked. Harry didn’t look past Hermiones face. When she leaned in closer to them, he angled his head, brushing his cheek against Draco’s in the process.

“For future reference,” she murmured for their ears only, “when a mobile line is left open, the person on the other end can hear. Everything.” Draco’s soft moan was muffled in Harry’s shirt, and Harry felt heat spreading up his face. “’Fancy a fuck?’” she whispered to Draco, who cringed slightly. “Does that work for you, Malfoy?”

“I’m never going to live this down, am I?” Draco asked miserably, lifting his head to find Hermione grinning at him unrepentantly.

“Oh, no. I don’t think so.” She assured him, then stood briskly. “We need to get these men to St. Mungo’s,” she announced to the room at large. “And those six? Straight to the dungeon’s. Their injuries can be seen to, but I want them questioned before we move them.”

As she moved away, Draco turned his head and stared into Harry’s eyes.

“Sorry about that,” he whispered.

“I’m not,” Harry murmured, then settled his forehead against Draco’s, letting his eyes drift closed. “I’m not. I just hope our second date is a little less eventful than our first.”

“Oh, Potter,” Draco laughed, circling him with his arms. “If you think you can get away with calling that a date, you’re out of your mind. Trust me, I want dinner, and dancing, and some good wine and some

serious snogging before we can call anything a date…”

Harry smiled even as his head swam, and he wasn’t sure if the pounding of his heart and the pitching of his stomach was the Confundus, or the understanding that what had begun with Draco was going to turn his life on its ear. And even with the realization, as he leaned forward and pressed his forehead to Draco’s shoulder and listened to him prattle, he felt the rightness of it settle around him like Draco’s arms.