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Name: Checkmating
Author: mahaliem
Chapter 1 to 3

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Chapter: 1

Title: Checkmating
Author: mahaliem
Rating: PG-13
Warnings: Slash, Sexual situations, Language
Pairing: Harry/Draco, Ron/Millicent
Disclaimer: This story is based on characters belonging to JK Rowling and various publishers. No money is being made and no copyright infringement is intended.
Summary: In hopes of convincing Voldemort supporters to change sides, Ron decides that he and Harry should pair off with Slytherins.
A huge thank you to my beta, fishsanwitt, for doing a terrific job with this story. Any errors that remain are mine and mine alone.

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Checkmating

Prologue

It was time, Ron decided, for him to start doing what he did best.

Harry and Hermione had been using their strengths to fight Voldemort. Harry was great at performing heroic deeds and Hermione was brimming with knowledge from books. What Ron was good at was strategy. Give him a chessboard and he could develop a plan for how to win. He just had to start thinking of the war with Voldemort as a game.

So Ron thought and thought and thought, and finally came up with a plan.

His plan was for Harry to get laid.

The idea had first come to Ron when he thought about kings and alliances against enemies. Quite a few alliances were sealed by a marriage. Ron didn't expect Harry to go that far, of course. A bit of shagging would probably do it.

But who should Harry shag?

First of all, it needed to be someone who would bring others to Harry's side. This eliminated quite a few people. Cho, who'd left Hogwarts at the end of last year, despite being popular and pretty, wouldn't add much to their roster of supporters. Neither would Hannah Abbot or Susan Bones.

Ron looked about the room. The Patils and Browns were already on their side. Ginny was out for the same reason. In the enemy camp were Pansy and Millicent. Both would be fairly good choices, especially Millicent, but neither would sway too many others to Harry's side with Malfoy spouting off against him.

At that moment, Seamus and Dean wandered in walking unusually close to one another, and Ron looked at them idly as he considered Harry's choices. Lately, Seamus and Dean had been complaining of rumours going around school that they were a couple. They both proclaimed it not to be true, but if they continued to look as if they were joined at the hip, what were people supposed to think?

Then it struck Ron that he'd eliminated a good number of possibilities without even considering them. Men. Harry could shag a guy.

Ron looked critically at Harry, who was currently muttering to himself as he kicked at the wall of the common room. He supposed Harry was good looking enough to attract most men. He was tall and didn't smell, except for after playing Quidditch. His hair was messy, but it was clean. The glasses weren't even that bad. He could definitely pull a bloke. But who?

Quickly, Ron eliminated all the Gryffindors. Terry Boot was bright, but wouldn't be too influential. The same for Justin Finch-Fletchley. Zacharias Smith was a distinct possibility. As for the Slytherins, the best possibility was...

Draco Malfoy.

Sitting up so suddenly that Harry looked away from where he was studiously still kicking the wall to see if anything was wrong, before returning to his task.

Despite the fact that he hated Draco, he had to admit that Malfoy was absolutely the perfect candidate. A good number of Slytherins followed his lead. Not only did he swing both ways, he'd recently broken up with a set of sixth year Slytherin twins, so he was available, too. As an added bonus, if Harry and Malfoy hooked up, it might even influence Malfoy's parents in Harry's favor. It'd have to be more than just a few shags for that to happen, though. Harry and Malfoy would have to be in love.

Could he do it? Ron thought. Could he get Harry and Malfoy together?

Ron looked at Harry, who'd kicked the wall so many times he'd managed to create a crack in the stone.

Yes, Ron decided, he could. He had to. All strategy aside, the boy definitely needed to get laid.

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Chapter 1 – Opening Moves

"Don't even think it, Malfoy," Ron said, as he made his way toward the blonde in the corridor outside the Great Hall.

"Don't think what?" Draco asked, genuinely perplexed.

Ron closed the distance until he was less than a foot from Draco. "It's never going to happen."

"What are you talking about Weasley?"

"I saw the way you were looking at him during breakfast. He's not interested. He'll never be interested in you."

Turning on his heel, Ron stalked away from Draco, who watched him quizzically.

As Ron rounded the corner, he smiled. The first move of the game had been played.

Malfoy turned to Crabbe and Goyle. "See? I told you that acting like a do-gooder eventually rots the brain. That's why evil is the way to go."

Crabbe and Goyle solemnly nodded their agreement, once more impressed with Malfoy's vast array of knowledge.

"You know I'm your friend, don't you Harry?'

It had been a particularly exhausting Quidditch practice. The rest of the team had left earlier, dragging their brooms behind them, but Ron had asked Harry to run through one more play with him and Harry had agreed.

Now, as they walked back to Hogwarts, Ron broached the subject carefully. It wouldn't do for Harry to be frightened off.

"Of course I know you're my friend," Harry replied.

"And you know that you can tell me anything. That it won't make a difference to our friendship, right?"

Harry nodded.

"Then why didn't you tell me? Why'd you let me figure it out for myself?"

Stopping in his tracks, Harry stared at Ron. "Figure what out?"

"You know..." When Harry still looked blankly at him, Ron continued. "That you're gay."

"What?" Harry screeched.

"I'm so glad we're having this talk."

"Ron—"

"I mean I was really worried that you wouldn't trust me," Ron said, quickly interrupting Harry. "I even thought that you might try to deny it or something."

Harry's mouth snapped shut.

"Sure wish you'd opened up before now, though, Harry. Think of all that time I spent talking about girls with you. But don't you worry. I fully intend to even things up."

Ron clapped Harry on the back. "So, mate, who do you think is the hottest guy at Hogwarts?"

When Harry let out a small groan, Ron ignored it.

"Give it up, Malfoy. He'll never have you," Ron sneered as he sidled up to the blonde during Potions while Snape was occupied containing the remains of Neville's latest disaster.

Draco glanced up from where he was stirring his potion and shook his head. "Not this again, Weasley. Do go and see Pomfrey soon. I only have so many enemies and would be heart-broken if one went insane before I had a chance to destroy him."

Scowling, Ron moved closer and hissed, "Harry will never shag you, no matter how much you stare at him."

"Potter? You've been talking about Potter?"

"No matter how many longing looks you send in his direction, no matter how many ploys you come up with, Harry will always reject you. You can't have him."

"Potter's gay? I never even suspected..." Draco's words trailed off and he was silent for a moment before he turned to focus his gaze on Ron. "Malfoys can have whomever they want."

"Not Harry."

"Even Harry. I mean Potter. And there's nothing you can do to stop me."

Ron glared at Draco. "We'll see about that."

This plan was working better than he thought it would.

"So," said Ron, plopping down on the chair next to where Harry sat hunched over a homework assignment in the library, "you never told me who you thought was the hottest boy at Hogwarts."

Harry scrunched down so that his lower half was in danger of sliding under the table. "I haven't really thought about it."

"Oh, come on. You must've noticed someone you thought was hot."

"I don't know... maybe Oliver Wood?"

Ron leaned back in his chair and thought for a moment. "I suppose some might fancy him. Good looking, athletic, got those Quidditch muscles in the legs and arse."

Harry smiled a little half-heartedly. "Not everyone who plays Quidditch develops like that."

"Some do. You've got them. So does Malfoy." Ron straightened up and looked at Harry intently. "You don't fancy Malfoy, do you?"

"Why would you even think that?" asked Harry. "You know we hate one another."

"Well, he's got those muscles and he's all lean and dangerous. And despite the fact that he's a total git, he's sometimes funny. He's smart enough to get Hermione worried that she'll lose her top rank in classes. He's also kind of... pretty."

Harry blinked rapidly. "Ron," he said slowly, "are *you* gay?"

"No. Of course not. I've got eyes, though."

"Oh."

"Harry, do me a favor. I don't really care who you fall for, just don't let it be Malfoy. That's my one rule – not Malfoy."

Harry smiled. "I guarantee that you don't have anything to worry about, Ron."

Ron grinned back. If there was one thing Harry could never resist doing, it was breaking a rule.

The plans with Harry and Draco were falling into place. Ron wished he could figure out a way to finagle Hermione into seeing Smith from Hufflepuff, but figured she was too smart. She'd see through it in a minute.

Ron could, however, do the same thing he was tricking Harry into doing. He could convert an enemy into an ally. He might not be the best looking fellow, but he was tall and had more than his share of muscles. He wasn't the brightest, but he didn't misspell his own name like Crabbe and Goyle did, or should he said Crabi and Goil. Ron knew he could do it. He only had to try.

During Care of Magical Creatures, Ron took a deep breath and stepped closer to his Slytherin prey. The object of his pursuit had wandered some distance away from the rest of the group, so privacy was ensured.

"Hi."

He was given a snarl in reply. Dredging up a smile, he tried again to communicate. "Nice weather we're having, isn't it?"

This time, the snarl was accompanied by a show of teeth.

This wasn't as easy as he thought it would be. Straightening his spine, he tried again. "You're looking well."

Millicent Bulstrode gave him a glare that was so effective that Ron took several steps back before he even realised he was doing it. "What's that supposed to mean?" she growled, while closing the distance between them, fists clenched and at ready.

"Nothing. I just meant that your robes are nice and... and black. And that's a lovely decoration you have on it."

Her brow furrowed. "Decoration? You mean the Slytherin crest? The crest all *Slytherins* have on their robes?"

"Right," Ron stammered. "It's quite... um... snaky."

"Have you been knocked on the head lately, Weasley?"

"No."

"Are you trying to be?"

Ron hastily took a few more steps backward. "No."

"Then get lost."

As Millicent turned her back on him, Ron knew it was time to use his secret weapon.

"I know where there's a stray cat."

Ron stumbled for the third time and bit back a curse. His companion, for all her bulk, moved smoothly in the dark and he decided it must be a genetic gift. She was most likely a product of generations of Slytherins who did evil, nasty things on moonless nights and they'd developed the ability to move around without bumping into things.

And why did they have to keep it so bloody dark, anyway? It had totally ruined his plan.

He'd told her of the scrawny orange stray he'd seen lurking around the broom shed, in an attempt to let her get to know him. In anticipation of sweeping her off her feet with his attention to her, he'd worn his best robes and put on smelly stuff that Bill swore would entice any female. Harry had teased him about having a hot date and Hermione had given him a speculative look as he'd left the common room, but neither had managed to get him to tell whom he was meeting.

It was only when he arrived at the appointed spot that he realised he'd badly miscalculated.

Millicent told him that his robes were making too many swishy sounds and that she hoped his smell didn't frighten off the kitty. Worst of all, she refused to let him use Lumos so he could see where he was going. And he looked darn good in wandlight. It made his freckles disappear and darkened his hair so that it wasn't so red.

But Millicent didn't seem interested in him at all. She was interested in the cat.

"Are you sure it's here, Weasel?" muttered Bulstrode, as they rounded the back of the shed. "You didn't just make it up to get me out here alone, 'cause if you did I'm going to pound you so hard-"

"It's here. Somewhere," Ron stammered.

"It'd better be."

Reaching into a pocket, Millicent pulled out a paper wrapped packet. When she opened it up, Ron could see pieces of beef from the evening meal.

"Why are you eating a snack?"

Even in the dim light he could see Millicent rolling her eyes. "I didn't realise Granger went for such stupid boys."

"She doesn't," Ron said indignantly on his friend's behalf. And she and I – we aren't like that. A few moments passed, before Ron added, "And I'm not stupid."

By that time, Millicent had laid out the meat and created a caging spell around it so that the

animal could enter to get to the bait but couldn't escape. Straightening up, she nodded her approval then began to walk off, grabbing Ron by an elbow and dragging him with her.

"So, now what?" he asked.

"We wait." She pushed him hard and he fell into a patch of deep grass With a grunt, she plopped down on her stomach next to him. "I've spelled the beef so that the aroma is stronger and spreads out farther than it normally would," she explained.

Ron studied her. "How many times have you done this?"

"Do it all the time back home. The real trick is finding a family that will take a stray in as a pet."

"Do you ever keep it for yourself?"

"Can't. My dad said he'd kill me if I brought another mangy animal home."

At Ron's questioning look, she sighed and answered the unspoken question. "At current count, I have nine cats, two dogs, three snakes, five rats, and a squirrel."

"Blimey!"

"Since we live near a Muggle town, he won't let me keep anything magical. Stupid Muggles."

Ron opened his mouth to ask another question, but there was a rustle in the bushes, and Millicent clamped a large hand across his mouth, silencing him.

The rustling grew closer and Ron would've been interested in looking, but he was too busy trying to breathe. Millicent's hand was blocking his air.

The stray crept closer and closer to the trap. In the meantime, Ron was thrashing, positive that he was going to suffocate.

Sniffing the air, the cat moved a few steps toward the bait. Ron was beginning to turn blue.

Slowly the cat moved closer, finally nosing the beef, and the caging spell activated, glowing pink in the night.

Millicent removed her hand and Ron sucked in a deep breath. He stayed where he was while Millicent went to get the cat and was still gasping when she returned with the creature clutched in her arms.

"Ooh, poor baby," she murmured.

"Thanks," Ron said weakly.

"I wasn't talking to you."

Ron looked up to where she was stroking the cat, scratching under its chin, causing it to purr loudly. "Right." He sighed and slowly got to his feet. "Let's head back."

They were almost at the castle when Nott and two sixth year Slytherins stepped out of the shadows.

"Look what we have here, boys," Nott drawled to his companions. "It seems we've finally found a guinea pig for a those hexes we just learned."

"You're not touching my cat," Millicent said, her voice harsh.

"Your cat?" Nott shook his head. "I wasn't talking about the cat. I meant the Weasley."

"Oh." Millicent shrugged. "You can have him if you want."

"What?" Ron shouted. He watched as Millicent, the stray still tucked into her protective arms, strode past Nott and the other Slytherins, abandoning him.

Ron gulped. It wasn't easy being on Dumbledore's side in this war. Especially since it meant seducing Millicent Bulstrode.

As he dodged a hex aimed his way, he wondered if there were any openings in the Death Eaters.

"What's wrong?" Harry asked as they sat at the breakfast table the next morning. "You keep staring at the Slytherins. Did they do something to you?"

Ron shook his head. "They tried, but I fought them off. Those Slytherins are an underhanded bunch of gits, aren't they?"

"You're telling me. They sneak up on you when you least expect it, haul you into some dark corner, then start doing things. Things you've only read about. Things you couldn't believe people actually do."

"Harry?"

"Things that make your heart thump like mad and shivers go up and down your spine."

"Harry?"

"And then, just when you think you'll explode, they smirk, and walk off. Like it was nothing. Like it didn't mean-"

"Harry!" Ron shouted.

Harry looked at Ron, and then turned a bright shade of red.

"At least that's what I've been told they do," Harry mumbled.

Ron snuck a peek at Malfoy, who seemed to be so busy staring avidly at Harry that he wasn't noticing what Pansy was doing to his robes.

"Look at him," Ron said. "Look at the way Malfoy uses Pansy."

Pansy was now running her hand up and down Malfoy's chest. Malfoy's eyes, however, were locked on Harry's. Ron suspected he hadn't noticed that Pansy was even sitting next to him.

"Someone should teach him a lesson about using people for his own pleasure."

Eyes still on the Slytherin, Harry licked his lips. "Yes, someone should."

Knowing that his work there was done for the day, Ron let his gaze fall on Millicent. She was currently wrapping several sausages in a napkin and sticking them in the pocket of her robe. It occurred to Ron that she was getting food for the cat.

Quickly looking about the Gryffindor table, he spied one last sausage and snapped it up before Neville, who was reaching for it, could take it. Wrapping it up in his own napkin, he stuck it in his pocket.

When he saw Millicent get up to leave, he said good-bye to Harry and headed for the door. By the time he exited the Great Hall, she was halfway down the corridor and he was forced to hurry to catch her.

"Millicent. Wait up."

She turned and scowled at him. "What do you want, Weasley?"

He stumbled to a halt and gave her his best smile. Her expression didn't change.

"I just wanted to tell you I had a nice time last night."

"Really?"

"Yes."

"What was your favorite part, Weasley? Almost falling on your face in the dark? Or having to run from Nott and his gang?"

He gave her his best seductive look that he'd practiced in the mirror during fourth year when he had a crush on Fleur. "It was being with you."

If anything, her scowl became more pronounced.

Ron reached into his pocket. "So... do you want my sausage?"

"What?" Millicent said, looking shocked, followed closely by anger.

"My sausage. Figured after last night, you could use it."

The fist that knocked him to the floor seemed to come out of nowhere.

It was only as Ron lay on the floor, watching Millicent march away that he realised he could've phrased that last bit better. Trust a Slytherin to always give everything a dirty interpretation.

That night Ron sat on the couch in the Gryffindor Common Room looking glum when Harry came downstairs.

"I was wondering if you wouldn't mind helping me out," Harry asked. "I'm learning a few new spells and want to get them right."

"Sure. What do you want me to do?"

Harry thought for a moment, and then pointed to the entryway. "Stand over there, then walk toward me, like we're passing each other in the hall."

Rising to his feet, Ron did as Harry directed. They were almost next to each other when Harry raised his wand and Ron was slammed back against the wall.

"Hey, that hurt," he said, rubbing his head.

"Sorry." Harry raised his wand again and Ron's arms shot above his head, pinning themselves to the wall.

"So... why are you practicing these spells, anyway?" Ron asked.

Pink tinged Harry's skin. "For... for fighting Voldemort, of course. You never know what might come in handy."

"Oh." Ron thought for a moment. "Harry, how would you go about romancing a girl?"

Harry shrugged. "Usual way, I guess. Let her sob all over me about her last boyfriend."

With the next spell, Ron's legs were spread and bound to the wall, as well.

"But how do you suppose a girl might want to be romanced?"

"Don't know. Flowers and candy, maybe?"

There was another flourish of Harry's wand and Ron's robe and shirt disappeared, leaving him clad only in his trousers.

"Um... Harry?"

"To make sure Voldemort and his Death Eaters don't have any hidden weapons or potions on them," Harry explained hurriedly.

Ron didn't like the way Harry was eyeing the remainder of his clothes.

"Can we just assume that spell will work on my trousers without actually trying it out?" Ron suggested.

Looking up, Harry nodded. "Just have one last spell to practice." Another wave of the wand. This time, Ron didn't notice anything different.

"Did it work?" Ron asked.

"You tell me." Harry came closer and touched Ron lightly on the arm. Ron bucked in reaction. "Sensitivity spell," Harry explained with a smile.

"Oh, right." Ron said, still quivering. "Now that one ought to do Voldemort in."

A few minutes later, as Ron dressed, he sent a sympathetic thought winging toward Malfoy. The git had no idea what he was in for.

Ron watched as Pigwidgeon flew into the Great Hall during breakfast and winged his way toward the Slytherin table. With great difficulty and much fluttering of feathers, he made his way to Millicent where he dropped a package on her plate.

For a moment she stared at it suspiciously, poking it a few times with her wand. As a good number of Slytherins eyed her, she unwrapped it to reveal a box of chocolates from Honeydukes.

Ron was quite proud of himself as he observed the reaction from the Slytherin table. Pansy was almost drooling over it, as she should.

He could see Millicent opening the card he'd included. When she stood up, holding his gift and made her way toward him, he preened. The box of chocolates had certainly done the trick.

Therefore he was quite surprised to feel the box slam down on his head, sending the sweets

spilling out, causing a chain reaction of students leaping to try to catch them before they fell to the floor.

"I'm on a diet, Weasley," spat Millicent, as she huffed back to her seat.

"You gave her chocolates?" asked Hermione disbelievingly.

"She's the one you're interested in? Harry's eyes were wide.

He'd spent a good portion of his savings on that candy. Now almost all the Slytherins were laughing at him. The exception was Pansy, who was too busy mourning the loss of chocolate.

Ron stared at Millicent determinedly. She stuck her tongue at him. When he blew a kiss at her in return she blinked a few times before focusing on her breakfast.

"All's fair in love and war," Ron stated quietly.

"It's love?" sputtered Harry. "Or is it war?"

Hermione looked thoughtful. "I suppose since the object of his affection is Millicent Bulstrode, there might not be much difference between the two."

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Chapter: 2

Title: Checkmating
Author: mahaliem
Rating: PG-13
Warnings: Slash, Sexual situations, Language
Pairings: Harry/Draco Ron/Millicent
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Part 2 – Middlegame

Each morning, Millicent was bombarded with a new gift. When Ron sent her wildflowers he'd picked himself, she whacked him in the face with them, saying that she was allergic. He told her that he should've known that she was the delicate sort.

Ron sent her only cinnamon-flavored Bertie Bott beans after bribing Pansy (with the surviving

chocolates) into telling him it was Millicent's favorite flavor. She blew them at him with a straw. Afterwards, he complimented her on her aim and her excellent lung capacity.

The various notes and poems he sent to her were always shredded. Ron smugly noted that these were made into little bits only after she'd read them. Encouraged by this, he began to send her little letters at dinner as well.

The highlight was the evening Ron stood in front of the school and began to recite his latest work.

She thumps about like a storm
Dark hair spreading 'cross the skies
Thunder rumbling from her form
Bolts striking out from her eyes

I wish to stand in rain at night
Drown myself in Millicent
She's the one for which I light
Powers up my filament.

It was all Ron could do to lose Millicent when she angrily chased him out of the castle and to the edge of the Forbidden Forest.

Afterwards, Hermione told him that if Millicent *had* managed to catch him, it would've been deemed a justifiable homicide, as the poem really was quite terrible.

Hiding behind a tree, Ron waited until Millicent stomped out of sight. Just to be sure that the danger was past, he remained where he was for a few more minutes. It was then that he heard noises coming from the nearby bushes.

Slightly nervous, Ron called out, "Is someone there? Show yourself."

Harry stepped out, brushing a leaf from his hair. Behind him, Malfoy appeared, straightening his robes.

"Ron. Hey," Harry said, waggling his fingers in what was a half-hearted wave.

"Harry? Malfoy? What are you doing here?"

A few sounds came out of Harry's mouth, but nothing that could be termed coherent. Malfoy stepped forward.

"We were fighting. Bitter enemies and all that."

"Right." Harry was now nodding his head.

Folding his arms across his chest, Ron leaned back against the tree he'd been hiding behind. "In the bushes? At night?"

"Didn't want that fool Dumbledore to find out."

Harry frowned at the fool part, then looked at Ron. "He would've stopped us. And we really wanted to fight."

"That's right," Malfoy said, a smirk spreading over his face. "I didn't want anything to keep me from getting Harry right where I wanted him."

"And I felt that Draco needed to be shown who was boss."

"So I pushed him down on the ground."

"But I pulled him down with me."

"Which is how I ended on top of him."

Harry's voice quivered. "Yes. On top of me. Touching me everywhere."

"Pressed against me," Draco added.

The pair stared at each other intently. Ron watched Draco's chest rise and fall rapidly. Was he having problems breathing?

"I tried to get out from under him. I wriggled and thrust up as hard as I could," Harry continued.

"Oh, god, yes. Extremely hard. He did do that."

"But he... he bit me. On the neck." Harry's eyes started to glaze over as he looked at Draco.

Ron didn't like the way Harry's voice was low and husky. And the way he was looking at Malfoy was downright wanton. He might have set the two of them up, but that didn't mean he had to stand by and watch them.

Loudly, he cleared his throat and saw two pairs of eyes swivel towards him in surprise, clearly having forgotten that he was there.

"If you're done *fighting*, then we can go in, right?"

Harry looked longingly back at the bushes for a moment before nodding his head.

As the three of them headed back to the castle, Ron edged closer to Malfoy. "You're a Slytherin,"

Ron said, striving for a casual tone instead of his usual accusatory one. "As such, you probably know a way for me to get closer to Millicent."

Malfoy tilted his head and looked at Ron. "You really are interested in her? And all this time I thought the whole 'brave Gryffindor' bit was a load of –"

"Do you know something or don't you?"

The group halted. Malfoy crossed his arms and smirked at Ron while Harry watched the interplay.

"And why should I tell you, Weasley?"

"Because if I succeed, you know Millicent will be terrible for me. She'll treat me rotten."

"Hmm...I suppose that is a good reason. Fine. I'll do it. I'll help."

Malfoy talked as they walked back to the castle with Harry hovering close by. As Ron listened, he reminded himself that he hadn't signed over his soul to Satan so he really shouldn't feel as if he just had.

"Weasley, you lousy little rodent!" Millicent marched toward where Harry and Ron stood talking in the corridor after breakfast.

"Incoming," Harry said. He gave Ron a sheepish smile and ducked away.

"The Wizarding World's Hero - Hah," Ron muttered as he watched his friend (who'd faced Voldemort countless times) scurry out of the way of Millicent on the warpath. Taking a deep breath, he faced her.

"I can't believe even you would stoop so low." Millicent waved a crumpled letter in her hand so hard that it made a flapping sound.

"What is it?"

"You had your mother write to my father. She's invited me to spend the Christmas holidays with you."

"Yes, you're right. That was absolutely dastardly of me."

Her glare became even harder. "He's told me it would do me good to spend some time with ... " Millicent became so outraged and flustered at this point that she had a difficult time spitting out the next words, "*my boyfriend*!"

Malfoy's plan to use parental influence had worked. Too bad it gave Ron a slightly queasy

feeling to know that he'd listened to the prat.

"I suppose you could always tell him the truth. Tell him I'm not really your boyfriend."

All the energy seemed to escape Millicent like air from a balloon and she started to droop. A little worried, Ron took her by the arm and led her into an empty classroom, then to a chair that she slumped into.

"What's wrong?"

"I can't tell him the truth."

"Why? Some Slytherin code about always lying?"

Millicent gave him a dirty look. "No, you git. I can't tell him because he's... "

As she paused, all sorts of awful scenarios rushed through Ron's head.

"He's so happy for me," Millicent finally said.

Ron's eyes almost bugged out. "What?"

"My father worries that I might be lonely."

"But... but you're always surrounded by Slytherins. Many of them follow you and tremble at your every word."

Millicent's gaze lowered to the floor. "Dad wants me to be loved."

A trickle of guilt crept into Ron's thoughts. He'd begun this entire business for good reasons, the defeat of Voldemort being the best reason possible, but he hadn't really considered the feelings of others.

Squatting down next to her chair, he took one large, calloused hand in his. "Would it be so bad, Millicent, if I was your boyfriend?"

A faint smile crept over her face.

"Yes, Weasley, it truly would."

When Millicent entered the train compartment and plopped herself down next to Ron, Hermione and Harry both did their best not to stare at her, only sneaking peeks with quick sideways glances. Ron didn't even try.

"What are you doing here?"

"I'm in a lousy mood. Instead of inflicting it upon my *friends*, I'm inflicting it upon the cause – you."

"You mean she has a good mood?" muttered Harry.

"You mean she has friends?" mumbled Hermione.

Ron gave his companions a pleading look. Hermione sniffed a bit and then leaned forward, extending her hand. "It's very nice to see you again, Millicent."

Millicent looked at Hermione's hand as if it were a deadly snake. Actually, Ron thought, reconsidering, she'd probably like the snake.

"Touch me with that, Granger, and I'll crush all the bones."

Hermione quickly withdrew her hand.

Harry straightened up in his seat, outraged. "You can't talk to her like that."

"Who's going to stop me? You?" Millicent gave a brittle laugh at Harry's anger. "You're too well-mannered, too full of that honourable crap, to draw your wand on me first. You're too much of a Gryffindor."

"I won't stoop to Slytherin levels," Harry said haughtily.

"If you don't, we'd all better start learning how to bow to Voldemort because you're going to lose, Potter."

At Harry's glare, Millicent let out a puff of exasperation before continuing. "Think back to second year, the Dueling Club. I was paired off with Granger and won."

"You cheated," Hermione interjected, still peeved about the incident five years earlier.

Millicent cast a smug smile at Granger, before turning to face Harry again. "The purpose of a duel is to win. I knew that Granger knew more spells than I did. It would've been stupid to stand there and let her hex me."

Harry sat back in his seat, staring hard at Millicent.

"From what I've heard, Potter, you don't tend to follow rules well. If you want my advice, don't follow them when you fight, either."

Ron watched Harry absorb this information and for a moment was quite proud of his fake girlfriend. Then Malfoy flung the door open, folded his arms across his chest, and leaned against

the jamb.

"So there you are, Potter. Thought we were going to have one last tumble before we went off with our nearest and dearest for the holidays."

"Malfoy!" Harry screeched, turning pink and looking wildly about at Ron, Hermione, and Millicent.

Draco pushed away from the door and took a step forward. "You promised me that we'd... fight."

"Oh, right. Fight." Harry took a deep breath. "We can do that. But there's no place on this train to... um, fight.'

"I heard the baggage compartment was a good place for fighting," Ron suggested.

"That's strange." Hermione's brow furrowed. "I'd heard it was a good place for kissing."

Reaching out, Draco grabbed Harry by the arm, and dragged him out of the compartment.

As Harry was pulled down the aisle away from them, Hermione looked worried. "I do hope Harry doesn't get injured."

"Don't worry about it. Malfoy won't hurt him." Millicent waved away Hermione's concern.

"I've seen Harry come back after meeting Malfoy with bruises and such," Hermione said.

"And wearing a smile, I'm sure."

"Only when he's taught Malfoy a lesson."

Millicent looked puzzled for a moment. "Malfoy has quite a reputation. I wouldn't have thought Potter could teach him anything."

Hermione smiled primly. "There's a lot more to Harry than most people know."

"Must be."

"Harry can be quite a formidable at fisticuffs."

A look of understanding passed over Millicent's face. "Oh, you actually think they're going back there to fight?"

Ron looked from one girl to another. Hermione's questioning expression. Millicent's glee at being able to tell the smartest girl in the school something she didn't know. If Millicent talked, Hermione would stick her nose in it, and the gig would be up. Millicent began to open her mouth

and Ron knew he had to stop her.

Grabbing Millicent, he pulled her forward and plastered his lips to hers.

Several things happened.

Hermione lost all of her verbal skills, reduced to making gurgling sounds.

Millicent lost her ability to move, acting as if she'd been hit with 'Stupefy'.

And Ron lost his mind.

Definitely lost his mind since part of him was thinking this was quite nice.

In a rush, reality returned. Millicent pushed him away, then punched him in the head, causing Ron to fall on the floor, seeing stars. Hermione regained her voice and put it to use by shrieking "Ron!" and Ron learned that certain ideas were very, very bad.

He did, however, gain some insight into what the courtship between Hagrid's father and his giant mother might have been like.

Mrs. Weasley looked at Millicent. She turned to look at Ron for a moment, and then looked back at Millicent. Taking a deep breath and putting a smile on her face, she moved forward, clasping Millicent's hands in hers.

"Hello, my dear. We're so pleased that you'll be joining us for the holidays." Her gaze traveled down to one of Millicent's hands and she let out a small gasp. "You seem to have hurt your hand. We'll have to get that healed up right away."

"Why thank you, Mrs. Weasley," Millicent said, following in Ron's mother's wake as she led the way out of the station. "I must've somehow knocked it into something hard."

While Hermione and Ginny followed closely behind the pair, Ron rubbed the swelling behind his ear where Millicent's fist had landed and went to search for Harry.

The train was almost empty, sweet wrappers lying crumpled on the floor, a few papers strewn here or there, but Ron heard voices coming from near the rear of the train.

"Damn it, Malfoy. You can't do this."

Draco let out a harsh laugh. "A few sessions in the broom shed doesn't mean you own me, Potter."

"But Voldemort will."

For one crazy moment, Ron wondered if Draco was planning sessions in the broom shed with Voldemort before it clicked. Draco must be considering becoming a Death Eater and Harry must've been trying to convince him it was nuts.

Ron stood in the compartment's doorway and observed Harry and Malfoy for a moment. Malfoy's hair was almost as messy as Harry's and their robes were wrinkled, as if they'd spent a good part of the trip wadded up. Malfoy had his head tilted up, staring at Harry disdainfully as if he wanted no part of him. Harry's eyes were blazing with anger as he faced him.

"Ahem." Ron cleared his throat and the two spun towards him, startled at his presence. "We have to go now, Harry."

Harry gave a brief nod, then spun back to Draco. In a spurt of movement, he grabbed him by the arms and slammed him back against the window, then pressed against him. Latching his mouth onto Malfoy's, he kissed him hard for a moment, before releasing him and stepping back.

Still furious, he pulled a package from his pocket and shoved it into Draco's hands.

"There's your present. Merry fucking Christmas," Harry spat, before leaving, pushing past Ron as he did so.

Malfoy, holding the silver wrapped box in his hand, still stood with his back against the window, as if that were the only thing holding him up. For a moment his eyes met Ron's and he stiffened, as if thinking of once more donning the mask of pride he usually wore before sighing and giving it up.

Ron hated Draco. He'd always hated him. Ron knew he should be crowing with delight at the triumph of his strategy. The Malfoy standing there, holding Harry's gift tightly and looking totally alone in the world, would never be an enemy to Harry. Instead of gloating though, Ron felt slightly ashamed.

He gave Draco a sympathetic nod, then turned away.

It took him a few minutes to catch up with Harry.

"Want to talk about it, mate?"

Harry shook his head.

"That was some kiss you laid on Malfoy."

Letting out a deep sigh, Harry shoved his hands in his pockets. "All right. Let's hear it."

"Hear what?" Ron asked.

"The 'ews'. The fake retching. The shouts of disgust that I kissed Malfoy."

Ron smiled. "Not one who can talk. Got you beat there."

As Harry's eyebrows rose, Ron explained.

"I kissed Millicent."

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Chapter: 3

Chapter 3 – End Game
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Ron screamed and began brushing the spiders off his body. Hermione, Harry, and Ginny rushed to lend him a hand.

Mrs. Weasley was admonishing Fred and George. "Really, boys! I thought you'd given up such nonsense. Tormenting your brother like that the moment he steps out of the Floo."

"Knew he was bringing home a girlfriend," Fred said, still laughing.

"Thought we'd help him make a good impression," George added.

Millicent stepped forward. "You like hearing him scream."

"It's amusing," said one twin. "Just a joke," said the other.

Millicent smiled her most Slytherin-like smile. "I like hearing screams, too."

Fred and George's eyes widened and they backed away from her. In response, she stepped forward and hissed, "Only I don't joke."

The spiders were gone and Ron had finally calmed down. His father and the rest of his brothers entered the room to greet the newcomers, in a bustle of 'hellos' and hearty hugs. Percy looked fairly pale next to Bill and Charlie, but pushed his way in with the rest of them to give stilted hellos to Harry and Hermione. Then, in the midst of the happy chaos, Ron heard a strident voice.

"Weasley! Is your brain completely filled with snot?"

Silence filled the room as Ron turned to face Millicent. "What now...", he glanced about at the astounded faces surrounded him and added a hasty "darling?" The faces became even more astounded.

"You never told me you had a brother that worked with dragons." Millicent pointed at Charlie.

"Didn't mean to keep it a secret. It just never came up in conversation."

Millicent hmphed, then with one meaty paw grabbed Charlie by the arm and proceeded to pull him from the room. "You and I need to talk about dragons."

Ron saw Charlie gulp nervously as he was dragged away.

Silence descended once again upon the remaining group as everyone stared at Ron.

"Well, I like her, Ron" Arthur stated. "Reminds me of your mother."

Mrs. Weasley promptly smacked her husband on the head.

Ron thought he could see the resemblance.

It seemed as though it took forever for Christmas to come. Hermione had taught them the Muggle way of stringing popcorn on the tree. They'd spent most of one evening creating strands of decorations only to come downstairs the next morning to find the tree denuded.

Millicent had mumbled that she'd become hungry during the night and had wanted a snack.

The sleeping arrangements caused a bit of a problem at first, as neither Ginny nor Hermione had wanted to fall asleep with Millicent in the room. Ron wasn't quite sure how it was resolved, but after that first night when the walls had reverberated from the force of hexes being thrown, he was certain he didn't want to know, either.

He did know that Hermione had stumbled out of the room the following morning with green hair, Ginny had acquired a tail, and every time Millicent opened her mouth that day to say anything, it came out in song. Consequently, she didn't say much and the day passed quite pleasantly.

In any case, the three came to some sort of a truce. It was the type of truce where each side possessed weapons that could destroy the other and would be quite willing to use said weapons, but a truce nonetheless.

Finally, Christmas morning arrived. In silence, Millicent opened the present Ron had given her – a birdcage he'd spent several days making, having Hermione teach him the spells to make the wood supple enough to shape before returning it to its previous hardness.

"What do you think?" Ron asked eagerly, a little surprised at himself that he even cared. "You

never said you had a bird. Thought you could get one now."

"It... it doesn't suck."

That was high praise indeed, Ron decided. He was slowly learning how to speak Millicent. Her scowl at him was not nearly as lethal as it normally would have been, so she was obviously enthralled with her gift.

As he basked in her not-quite-a-glower, Millicent handed Ron a bag of money. "I was supposed to buy your family Christmas presents."

"But you didn't have time. I'm sure we all understand, dear," said Mrs. Weasley

"Actually, I couldn't be bothered," Millicent corrected her.

The Weasleys once again stared at her.

Ron took the opportunity to glance inside the sack and gasped.

"Dad, you know how you've been wanting to take us all to Romania next summer to visit Charlie but you weren't sure you could swing it?" Without saying another word, Ron handed the heavy bag of galleons to his father.

His father also looked inside. When he faced his family, he was smiling brightly. This is marvelous. Thank you so much, Millicent."

"Whatever," Millicent said, waving aside his gratitude. "When's dinner?"

Ron shoved a present into her hands. "I've told you four times already, we'll eat after we open all of our gifts."

Millicent glanced around at the huge number of Weasleys and their huge number of presents. "I'm going to starve," she whined as she unwrapped another gift. She opened the box then turned to Ron. "What's this?"

"It's a jumper. My mother makes them." Ron didn't tell her that his mother had taken one look at Millicent at the train station and had hastily begun a larger garment. The knitting needles had only just finished their task the night before.

Slowly, as if fearing it might bite, Millicent pulled the garment out of the box and held it up. "It's very red," she said slowly. "And it has the letter M on it."

"Yes. The M is for Millicent."
"I'm going to look like an M & M," Millicent grumbled.

Harry let out a short, quickly stifled laugh. Hermione giggled.

Ron looked mystified. "What's an manem?"

"A Muggle candy," Hermione supplied.

Ron turned to look at Millicent. "How do you know about muggle candy?"

Millicent glanced down at herself, then back at Ron. "Take a wild guess, Weasley."

"Oh. Well, I suppose you'll look like one because you're so sweet," Ron said, hoping to placate her.

He realised it didn't work when he felt Millicent's fist connect with his head moments before she stomped off.

"Ah, that brings back memories," Mr. Weasley sighed.

The memories were brought back even more vividly when Mrs. Weasley whacked him on the side of the head in retaliation.

They'd sat down to the Christmas feast Mrs. Weasley had prepared and were halfway through the meal when there was a large popping sound, startling the entire group.

Draco Malfoy stood in their midst smelling of smoke, energy crackling around him, and blood running down his cheek from a cut on his forehead. His right arm seemed to be hanging strangely.

For a moment, he stared around at everyone seated at the table, then began to slowly collapse in a faint. Harry just managed to race forward in time to catch him before his head smacked on the ground.

"Good heavens," shrieked Molly.

"Oh dear," said Arthur, standing up and hurrying to help Harry with Draco's limp body.

"Pass the potatoes," Millicent said, between bites.

Ron looked at his bed. There was no help for it. He'd have to burn it.

The reason why burning was necessary was the blonde currently occupying it. Harry lay next to Draco, murmuring soothing nonsense while patting his shoulder. Mrs. Weasley had done her best to heal all the injuries she could find then loudly pronounced that the boy needed to sleep. Hermione and the rest of the Weasley clan filed out of the room, Millicent not among them. As far as Ron knew, she was still eating dinner.

Draco's eyes fluttered open. "Harry?"

"I'm here."

"I think I died for a moment." Draco looked at Harry with horror in his eyes. "I went to hell. It was terrible. The demons all had red hair."

"Well, you're safe now. At the Burrow." At Draco's blank look, Harry explained, "The Weasley home. Ron's mother healed you up."

Ron stepped forward. "What happened, Malfoy?"

For a moment a sneer touched Draco's lips before fading away. "I didn't want to take the dark mark. I told Vol-," Draco paused, swallowed hard, and then continued. "told You-Know-Who that we should postpone it. I gave him plenty of good reasons, such as how I could spy on Dumbledore for him while I finished my education."

Draco looked down at his lap for a moment before raising his gaze. "He decided that he'd educate me in the use of 'Cruciatus'."

Harry leaned forward to clasp Malfoy's hands, which earned him a small smile.

"How'd you get here?" Ron asked.

"Harry's gift. I figured out that it was a portkey. I didn't know it'd bring me here."

"No," Harry said quietly, giving Malfoy's hand a squeeze. "It wasn't created to bring you to the Burrow. It was supposed to bring you to me."

"Are you barmy?" Ron shouted.

"Have you finally misplaced that miniscule brain of yours?" cried Draco.

A brief glance passed between Ron and Draco, both quite uncomfortable that they were in any sort of agreement.

Ron recovered from that odd experience first. "They could've taken it from this git. Used it to get to you."

"It could've been Voldemort who arrived." Draco was incensed. "And you'd have had nothing but a pack of Weasleys to defend you." Ron let out an angry expletive, which Draco shrugged off. "Oh, I'm sure the lot of you can be quite rabid, but this is Voldemort."

"I don't care." Harry was completely unrepentant. "It did what it was supposed to. It kept Draco

from harm."

"If you ever do anything quite so idiotic again, I'm going to tie you to a bed," Draco hissed. "Then do you know what I'll do to you?"

Harry's eyes went wide with a combination of curiosity and fascination. "What?" he asked breathlessly.

"Absolutely nothing."

"Oh." Harry thought for a moment. "Oh," he said again in a small voice.

Draco covered his face with his palms. "I've turned my back on my family and will probably soon be penniless, I've become enemies with a powerful dark lord, and now I discover that my boyfriend is a nincompoop. At least things can't get worst."

Ron smiled wickedly. "Malfoy, did you know that you're in my bed?"

Draco screamed.

It was three days after Christmas and Draco had healed sufficiently to go downstairs. This had led to some squabbling because he could not get it into his head that Fred and George weren't house-elves and had kept ordering them around.

"But why else would you need two of them?" he asked Harry, who, tired of arguing, simply shrugged his shoulders.

Charlie burst into the room. "I just received notice that there's been a wild dragon spotted less than a hundred miles from here. They're trying to capture him, but they need all the help they can get."

All the younger Weasleys, except for Percy, immediately clamored to volunteer. Hermione made clear her desire to join the group, while Millicent ploughed through their ranks to make sure that she was in front of all of them.

Harry was quiet for a moment, his gaze resting on the still weak Draco.

"Oh, do run off, Potter. You finally have the opportunity to slay a real dragon."

"He'd better not touch it," threatened Millicent.

With one final glance at Malfoy, Harry brightened and joined the volunteers. The group excitedly headed out of the Burrow.

It was an exceedingly different group that wandered in several hours later, sporting singed hair, a

few burns, and assorted scorch marks on their clothing.

"You should've seen Millicent," Charlie crowed to his parents and Draco. "She was marvelous. She arranged a diversion, and then, while the dragon was occupied, used a slow shrinking spell on its wings. In no time, it was grounded."

Draco looked at Harry, whose robe was torn and blackened. "And where were you when all this was happening?"

Harry scowled. "Guess who the diversion was."

Draco's screech filled the room. "Bulstrode!"

"What is it, Malfoy?"

Millicent thrust through the crowd to face Draco. Ron thought her expression looked more belligerent than normal.

"Do what you want with these." Draco waved his hand at the assembled Weasleys, "but Potter belongs to me."

"Hey!" said several Weasleys.

For a moment, Harry grinned widely; then it struck him that he'd just been labeled as property. "Hey!"

Both Draco and Millicent ignored the cries of outrage as they faced off.

"I did not just abandon my family and all that the Malfoys stand for simply so that Harry could become dragon kibble."

"Oh, stuff it, Draco. Others might buy that 'abandoned my family' crap, but I know better. Your father's probably so happy about you and Potter that the Dementors are getting fat trying to suck it all up."

Everyone looked at Draco, who was flushing.

"What does she mean by that?" Harry asked, touching his boyfriend on the shoulder.

"My father always wanted to me to befriend you. You know that," Draco mumbled.

"Right. So he could turn me over to Voldemort."

Ron could see that Malfoy was doing his best to avoid Harry's eyes.

"That's right, isn't it Draco? Your father wanted you to betray me."

"Not quite." Draco's voice came barely above a whisper. "Malfoys have been around for centuries. Despite wars, despite politics, Malfoys have survived." Draco raised his head to stare at Harry. "We've done it by having different generations support different sides. That way, no matter who prevails, a Malfoy is always on the winning side."

"If you were a Slytherin, you would've known that," Millicent smirked at a stricken Harry.

"Oh do shut up, Bulstrode," Malfoy spat. "You'd think you'd be happy that I've finally joined your side."

Wait a minute, Ron thought. "Millicent's on Dumbledore's side?" he managed to stammer.

She let out a huge exasperated sigh. "Of course I am, you dolt. Voldemort kills unicorns. He needs to be destroyed."

"But... but... that can't be right." Ron ran a hand through his hair, totally exasperated. "Malfoy's supposed to turn to the side of good 'cause of Harry, not as part of some Malfoy plot. Millicent's supposed to do the same 'cause of me." Ron pointed at Millicent. "You're not supposed to be good on your own"

"Is that what all this has been about?" screamed Millicent. "You pestered and tormented me thinking I'd fall for you and join your goody-goodies? Like I didn't even have a mind of my own? Like I'd just do whatever my boyfriend wanted?"

"If you want to hit him, I'll hold him for you," volunteered Ginny, stepping forward. "I can't believe my brother is so chauvinistic."

Millicent glared at Ron. "I'm through with this farce. I'm packing up my things and going home."

"I don't blame you," Ginny said, following her upstairs.

Draco was fuming. He stepped forward to confront Ron. "You will pay for attempting to manipulate me."

"Attempting?" Ron said, then immediately wished he hadn't.

Clenching his fists, Malfoy announced. "I'm leaving. I'm going to..." It occurred to him that he really had no place to go. Reaching a decision, he grabbed Harry. "I'm going to my room and I'm taking Harry with me."

Draco disappeared upstairs dragging Harry behind him.

Slowly the rest of the Weasley's filed out, shaking their heads in disappointment until only Ron

and Hermione were left.

"I was just trying to help," Ron stammered to Hermione. "It seemed like a good idea at the time."

Hermione stepped closer to him and Ron gave her a sheepish smile. Which was why it completely stunned him when her fist landed on the side of his head, knocking him to the floor.

"Didn't you think I could convince some idiot to change sides?" she shouted down at him. "Or am I too unattractive?"

As Hermione stomped off, Ron decided it was a good thing everything was over. She'd obviously spent much too much time around Millicent.

"Are you mad at me, too, mate?" Ron asked Harry.

He'd spent most of the rest of the day underneath a tree while being shunned by everyone. When Harry had walked over, he'd expected another tongue-lashing, but instead his friend had quietly sat down next to him, not saying a word.

Harry thought for a minute, then shook his head. "I know you manipulated me, but I'm used to it. Heck, I think Dumbledore has made it his full-time job. You were just trying your best. And I guess it wasn't all bad. Draco's on our side and now we know we can count on Millicent. I think.

Ron sighed. "Everyone's angry at me."

"Yeah, you're right. Draco's absolutely furious." A smile played over Harry's lips. "Which means lots of really good angry sex, so I can't complain."

"Too much information, Harry," warned Ron.

"Right."

They sat together in silence for a few more minutes before Harry spoke.

"Hate to give you more bad news, but..." his voice trailed off.

"What is it?" Ron prompted.

"Charlie was protesting Millicent's leaving. It seems he was very impressed with how she handled herself around the dragon."

"So?"

"He was really*, really* protesting her leaving." Harry grinned. "The way he was going on, she might be joining your family, yet."

Groaning, Ron put his head in his hands. "God is punishing me, isn't he?"

"Ron?"

The sound of Hermione's voice made him raise his head. "What are you doing here?"

"I just wanted to apologize for hitting you."

Ron glanced at her as she sat down next to Harry. "It wasn't because I thought you weren't attractive, you know," he explained. "That's not why I didn't set you up. You're just too smart. I was sure if I tried, you'd figure it out."

"Oh." Hermione looked at the ground and a long silence followed before she broke it. "You know, it actually wasn't that bad of an idea."

Harry and Ron turned to stare at her.

"Maybe if we made everything more above board. Let everyone know what we were about."

"Hermione, are you suggesting that we..." Harry hesitated, not quite sure how to say it.

"Pimp ourselves out?" finished Ron.

"No. No, of course not. That would be rather crude, wouldn't it?"

Ron breathed a sigh of relief, then realised he'd done it too soon.

"But we do have many quite attractive people on our side. There's all of your siblings, Ron. Then there's Tonks, and Shacklebolt, who are both quite dishy."

"Oliver Wood," suggested Harry. "The Patils."

"We could each pick someone to... um... work on." She thought for a moment. "It really is a good thing Lucius Malfoy is married or I believe Ginny and I might have come to blows over him."

"I think I'm going to be sick," Ron groaned.

"Nonsense. It was your idea in the first place. We should have a catchy name or phrase, though."

"Make love, not war!" Harry suggested, pleased with himself.

"Perfect." Hermione eyed her friends. "Harry is obviously taken and can't participate, but we should start recruiting and choosing our targets."

Hermione studied Ron. "How do you feel about Pansy Parkinson?"

The world had gone crazy, Ron decided. That was the only explanation. He could either fight it, or go with the flow.

"I hate her. When do I start?" he asked.

The End

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A huge thank you to my beta fishsanwitt for doing an absolutely wonderful job.