

The love match



Author: Ningloreth

Title: The love match

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Rating: NC-17

Pairing: Draco/Hermione

Summary: When the Ministry of Magic passes a Law for the Regulation of Magical Marriages, Draco seizes the chance to have Hermione.

Disclaimers: This story is rated **NC-17 for sexual scenes**. Please do not read any further if you are not of legal age.

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"Before we go in," says Lucius Malfoy, pulling his son aside, "let me *advise* you, Draco, one last time, to see sense. There are loopholes in this law, and I can still put things right, if you will just—"

"No, Father. I *want* her!"

Lucius sighs. "Then, at least, leave the talking to me."

"Talking, Father?" Draco waves the roll of parchment he's carrying. "There won't be any talking. I have everything prepared."

"But there are certain matters that you have wilfully ignored, Draco. Certain *financial* matters..."

"Financial?" Draco quickly reviews his proposal—half a million Galleons (non-returnable) when she signs the Marriage Law Ledger; a further one and a half million on their wedding day; ten thousand Galleons per year for her clothing and books; and ten million settled on their son at birth—all, naturally, from his own personal fortune.

He's forgotten nothing. *Unless...*

"You can't be expecting me to ask her parents for a dowry, Father!"

"Their daughter and their grandchild will be Malfoys," says Lucius, "and the child's muddy blood will be *diluted* by yours. It is important that they acknowledge their good fortune."

Draco knows that he has to take control, but he's not going to whine and sulk until he gets his own way, because he isn't a child any more—and, anyway, there just isn't time—so he draws himself up to his full height—all Malfoy men are tall—and growls, "Don't think for one *moment*, Father, that I can't see what you're doing. You think that by insulting her you'll make her reject me. Well, I *want* her, and I shall have her. And if you mention a dowry, I shall make it perfectly clear that I have absolutely no idea what you're talking about."

He's pretty sure his father won't risk a Malfoy *versus* Malfoy shouting match in front of the Secretary for the Regulation of Magical Marriages—and when he hears his father sigh, as only Lucius *can* sigh, he assumes he's won.

This round, at least.

...

It's been more than five years since he last saw her—shortly after the Battle of Hogwarts—when, despite everything that had stood between them, she'd been the only one with the balls to ask him whether he or his parents needed food, or water, or a healer.

He'd accepted her help because his mother had needed it, but had secretly despised her for her charity until his mother had revealed the truth to him: "Your Miss Granger, Draco," she had said, "is showing surprisingly good breeding..."

...

The double-doors of the new Office for the Regulation of Magical Marriages open to admit the Malfoys, and Draco squares his shoulders, and walks inside.

As he crosses the marble floor, the Secretary rises and, leaning across his massive desk, offers his hand. "Good morning, Mr Malfoy—Mr Malfoy, senior—please, be seated."

Four chairs are arranged in pairs in front of the Secretary's desk. Granger's brought Old

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Weasley with her, and they're sitting on the pair to the left. (The private investigator Draco pays to keep a discreet watch on Granger has told him that her parents are living in Australia, and appear to be estranged from her, though he cannot ascertain *why*).

Draco takes the chair to her right, straightening his tie and—unconsciously—running his hand through his hair as he sits.

Granger's hair is spectacularly bushy, sitting atop her head like great furry helmet and, when he allows himself a quick look at her, he notices that her robes look suspiciously like a school uniform, and that her little shoes are those sensible, flat things that make her walk like she's furious...

...

The memory of Granger's frank brown eyes, gazing at him across the Great Hall, had sustained Draco through the months of uncertainty that followed Voldemort's defeat, when he and his father were waiting (separately) in Azkaban for the Wizengamot to determine their fate.

During those long, lonely days he'd carefully recall every one of their childhood encounters, searching for any evidence of affection on her part; in his dreams, the seeds of hope he'd found during the day would blossom and, when he awoke the following morning, he would try desperately to hold on to the feelings that dream-Granger had aroused in him.

...

Something twists, low in his body, because she's even lovelier than he'd remembered.

He's already hired a personal stylist who'll help her dress for the functions she'll attend with him, but he realises that he'll have to give the woman some pretty firm instructions, because there's no way he's having her turned into one of those stick-thin clothes horses, like the Greengrass sisters.

Impulsively, he reaches out, and grasps her hand.

Her head jerks round, and she stares at him.

...

When the Malfoys had been released, and their fortunes restored, and Draco had come into his own inheritance, he'd hired a private investigator and used his own funds (and the contacts his father was re-establishing) to grease the odd wheel or two, and smooth the progress of Granger's career.

He'd never approached her personally; he might never have seen her again had the Wizengamot not decided to pass a Marriage Law.

But, the moment he'd heard of the forthcoming legislation, Draco had begun to lay his plans and, after receiving an encouraging report on Granger's (lack of) love life from his private eye, and after consulting his lawyer, he'd drawn up a formal proposal, and had owled it to her the day the bill became law.

...

He smiles.

Granger doesn't smile back—she looks down at their joined hands, and frowns—but she doesn't pull her hand away.

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"Mr Malfoy—Miss Granger," begins the Secretary, "it's a great pleasure to welcome you both here—the first of our young couples to register a betrothal under the new law." He beams at them in turn. "I have your documents here, duly copied and notarised,"—he points his wand at two rolls of parchment—"Mr Malfoy's proposal, and Miss Granger's acceptance. All that remains is for you to reach an agreement on one or two small areas of concern, then make your verbal declarations, and sign the Ledger."

Draco sees Granger nod, and smiles, because he knows she'll be following every word of the proceedings. He squeezes her hand, and thinks he feels a slight answering pressure.

"Miss Granger," says the Secretary, "perhaps you'll explain your reservations to Mr Malfoy."

Granger nods again. "Mr Malfoy," she says, and he loves how erotic it sounds, "you propose to settle a certain sum,"—it's obvious that she doesn't care how much—"on your son, at birth, but you don't say what will happen if the child is a girl." She turns to him, and raises her eyebrows, and...

Her expression is so much more *confident* than he'd expected!

He's surprised and, as he gropes for an answer—

"The *Malfoys*," says his father, coldly, "have not produced a legitimate daughter in over six generations."

"*Father*," Draco hisses, then turns back to Granger: "A daughter would, of course, have exactly the same standing as a son,"—he smiles—"Miss Granger."

"Thank you," she whispers.

Her gratitude does something entirely unexpected to his body. He squeezes her hand again. "Anything else?"

"I have a career," she says, and she leans towards him, which makes matters—well, not *worse*, exactly, but certainly more *noticeable*—"and I shall want to continue working."

"I understand that." He takes her other hand. (He's actually intending to offer her a job himself, because the Malfoys have need of someone with her skills, but he knows that now is not the time to mention it, either to Granger *or* to his father).

"Then I'm ready to proceed," she says. *To him*.

"Good," he says.

He's struck by an intense desire to raise her hand to his lips and kiss it, and he suddenly wonders whether Granger has cast some sort of *charm* on him—

"*Mr Malfoy?*" prompts the Secretary, clearly expecting an answer.

"I'm sorry...?"

"I said, I believe that *you* have a number of concerns?"

"I..." Draco frowns. "No, I—"

"My son fears," says his father and, for Draco, the interruption—thankfully—is like having a bucket of iced water dumped over his head, "that Miss Granger, having been raised in somewhat *different* circumstances, might experience difficulties adjusting to a less *impoverished* lifestyle."

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"I'm afraid," says Draco, smoothly (though his voice is a little louder than he'd intended), "that I've neglected to tell my father that any concerns I might have had,"—he glances at Lucius—"have already been settled between Miss Granger and myself."

"Good," says the Secretary, smiling. "Very good! Then let us proceed to the declarations."

"One further thing," says Lucius. His manner's imperious, but Draco can hear desperation in his voice. "My son will, of course, require independent confirmation that Miss Granger is still *virgo intacta*."

The syllables seem to echo round the chamber. Old Weasley gasps; the Secretary turns puce; Granger is looking poisoned daggers at his father—and Draco cannot help noticing that her little hands have grown *sweaty*.

...

Draco had kept his plans secret, but Pansy Parkinson had very nearly given him away.

"Of course," she'd opined, loudly, "this new law's just made for you, Draco. Did you know that, at one point, the Weasleys were running a book on when you and a certain Miss Gryff-in-dor,"—she'd mouthed the last word—"would do the dirty, and I wagered twenty Galleons on the Yule Ball."

"I took you to the Yule Ball, Pansy," he'd said, sharply.

"I know," she'd shot back.

He'd never seriously considered that Granger might turn him down, but the speed with which she'd accepted him had taken him by surprise. He'd immediately broken the news to his parents, and had paid for it, for Lucius Malfoy did not need a Cruciatus curse to squeeze his son's heart within his chest.

...

"That won't be necessary, Father," says Draco, and his voice, though slightly off-key, is rock solid. "I would not reveal this under any other circumstances," he says to the Secretary, "but, in this chamber, I feel I can admit that Miss Granger and I have already slept together." He squeezes Granger's hands quite hard, and his heart lurches when he sees the confusion on her face, but then her eyes meet his, and they hold each other's gaze, and he's *certain* he feels her fingers press his, in solidarity.

"We're both ready to make those declarations," he says, firmly.

...

Pansy had been right about one thing.

He would have shagged Granger at the Yule Ball, had he been given half a chance.

Years later, in the misery of Azkaban, he would imagine being in some deserted corner of Hogwarts with her—her wearing those ravishing pink robes, with snowflakes sparkling in her hair and on her smooth, bare arms, with her head flung back against the wall, her legs wrapped around his waist, and him fucking her out of her mind...

Merlin!

But Granger had gone to the Yule Ball with Viktor Krum, and even Draco hadn't had that much confidence.

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...

Granger agrees to a Yuletide wedding and also—which is something of a surprise—to moving into the Manor immediately, so that his mother can help her prepare for her future as a Malfoy.

Old Weasley's worried that she'll be cutting herself off from her friends, and he's trying, in his bumbling way, to dissuade her—and Draco's surprised to feel himself developing a vague *affection* for the man, with his determination to protect anything and anyone that comes within an arm's length of him—but Granger somehow convinces him that she'll be perfectly happy with her new family.

All this time, Draco's been holding her hand but, as they leave the Ministry, he releases her, and draws his father away, to give her the chance to say farewell to her friend in private.

He watches her throw her arms around the man's neck and hug him tightly, and from some deep, seldom-used place inside himself, he feels a silly smile bubble up, and make its way to his face.

She's *exactly* what he's always wanted, and—

"Do hurry your future wife, Draco," says his father.

...

Lucius had made him feel foolish, perverted, and traitorous, in turns, but—with his mother's help—Draco had held out, somehow sure that his entire future rode upon this chance to marry Granger.

The struggle had been every bit as formative as his miserable war and his stay in Azkaban and, when his father had finally capitulated, he'd emerged from the ordeal a stronger, braver man.

...

"It costs nothing to let her say a proper good bye, Father."

"As a matter of fact, Draco, it could cost us both a good deal; I'm already late for my meeting with the Cartel."

"Then you go, Father," says Draco. "And Granger and I will make our own way home, in the carriage."

He watches his father apparate away, and sighs with relief. He knows that the next few hours are going to be important, and he expects them to require a great deal of concentration.

...

With all the Weasleys and Longbottom already spoken for, he'd been reasonably sure that—despite their past differences—she'd find him the best candidate available. But he'd also known that, for her, this would still be a forced marriage, and he'd prepared himself for some resistance—for tears, yes; sulks, probably; and hexes, maybe.

...

Draco sinks back into the leather seat and smiles at Granger, who's sitting on the opposite side of the carriage. For some reason, he's feeling far more nervous than he'd expected. "I thought we might need some time to ourselves," he says, "to break the ice."

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Granger nods, calmly pulling off her gloves, and there's a slight crease on her forehead, which suggests she's thinking. Suddenly, her eyes narrow, and she says, "Why did you lie to your father about us having sex?"

"I didn't."

"We have never had sex, Malfoy."

"I didn't say that we had. I just said that we'd slept together. And we *have* slept together, on the Hogwarts Express, that time after the Easter Holidays when we had to sit in the same carriage, and we both fell asleep."

"Your father didn't believe you."

"No, but the Secretary did, and Weasley did, and my father wouldn't lower himself to argue in front of them, so..."

"It was clever," she says.

He hopes that's a compliment. "Clever's my middle name," he replies.

"I thought it was Abraxas."

He hadn't expected her to know that, and he wonders whether she's been studying his family history—it would be just like her to make sure that she was fully prepared. "You're right," he says. "Draco Abraxas *Clever* Malfoy," and he's pleased to see the ghost of a smile flit across her face.

"You still haven't explained why you did it," she says.

He shrugs. "You were upset."

"Well... I can't think of many things more demeaning than being treated like a brood mare."

"And *I* didn't want some quack putting his hand up my future wife's..." He can't think of any word for it that isn't likely to offend her, and wreck what they seem to be building, so he waves his hand. "I think we both got what we wanted."

She looks out of the window. "I'm not," she says, quietly.

"Not what?"

"*Virgo intacta.*"

"Oh..."

...

His plan had been to wait, stony-faced, until she'd cried herself—or, possibly, duelled herself—to exhaustion, and then to woo her—not with the diamonds and furs that might sway an ordinary woman, but with certain little gifts he was sure a bookworm would appreciate—and then, when she'd begun to warm to him, to play the ace up his sleeve, and seduce her, because he was absolutely certain that everything would come right once they'd had sex.

...

He can't *believe* how much her confession hurts him.

He knows that she's twenty-three, and beautiful, so it really shouldn't have been a surprise,

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but he's wanted her for so long, and he's dropped his guard with her, and her words have slammed into his gut—into his *groin*, actually—like a rogue bludger. "Was it Weasley?"

She shakes her head.

"Potter?"

"No! Of course not!" She blushes. "It was Viktor. I've only ever been with Viktor."

"Viktor? Oh, *Krum*." Draco lets out a deep sigh of relief, because—although the man's a quidditch legend—he seriously doubts that Krum knows how to pleasure a woman, and that means that, although he won't be Granger's first, he can still be her best.

Besides...

"I'm not a virgin either," he says, somewhat belatedly.

Granger laughs. "I know *that*, Malfoy. Your women always liked to boast." Then, twisting her fingers together, and staring at the floor of the carriage, she says, "Malfoy... I've been thinking. Can we get it over with?"

"Get what over with?"

"The sex. I know that, technically, we're supposed to wait until after the wedding ceremony but I don't think I could bear having it hanging over me until Yule. I mean, we're going to marry, aren't we, so why don't we just do it now?"

"Now?" He can't believe it! "You want to...? Do it in *here*?"

"Is there time?"

"Time?"

He rakes his fingers through his hair, thoroughly confused. On the one hand, he *has* been gagging for it (with her) since Azkaban. On the other hand, he doesn't want their first time to be nothing more than a quick shag...

On the third hand, a solution quickly presents itself. "Yes," he says, "yes, if I order the thestrals to circle the Manor until we're finished."

"Do that, then," she says.

...

He's had a reputation for being good in bed since his father hired a prostitute to 'show him the ropes' on the day he came of age.

At school, the girls had called him the Slytherin Sex God.

...

He conjures one of the seats, making it broad enough for both of them, and turns the travel rugs into cushions and a silken throw.

Granger settles herself on the bed, and watches him take off his shirt. "How many women have you had, Malfoy?" she asks.

She's such a strange combination of shyness and boldness, of naivety and the thirst for knowledge, he's not sure how to deal with her.

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He shrugs.

"So many!"

"Well, there's nothing I can do about it now," he says, because he sees no reason to be ashamed of his nature. "I need sex, Granger. But I haven't been with anyone since I proposed to you, and I would have waited for you as long as you'd wanted. I don't intend to be unfaithful to you."

He unbuttons his fly, and steps out of his trousers.

"You don't *intend*?"

"Obviously, should you ever refuse to sleep with me, I'll have to make alternative arrangements."

He slips out of his shorts.

"Oh, Merlin," she gasps.

"What?"

"I never believed all the rumours."

Draco smiles, proudly—*Take that, Viktor Krum!*

He can see that she wants to touch it, and wonders why she doesn't. Is she too shy? Too lady-like? He picks up her hand and brings it to his erection, and watches her turn her full attention to it—running her fingers up its length, curling them around its girth, brushing her thumb around and over its head.

Her touch takes him by surprise.

It's like a blade—like a fine edge of beaten gold—and it seems to be *slicing* through every nerve in his body—it's making him tremble, making his knees give way and, unable to keep himself upright, he drops onto the bed, and scoops her up, and buries his face in all that ridiculous hair.

"It's beautiful," she whispers, then corrects herself: "I mean, *you're* beautiful."

"You can think of it as 'it' if you like," he says, hoarsely. "I do."

He finds her hand again, and slips it between his thighs and, when she cups his balls and supports their weight in her palm, he focusses on the sensation until it makes him dizzy.

"Make love to me, Draco," she whispers.

Clumsy with desire, he unbuttons her shirt. She's wearing the sexiest brassiere he's ever seen, a skimpy Muggle thing in pale pink satin trimmed with black lace and—when he pushes her skirt up—he finds that her tiny briefs match her bra, and the little belt holding up her black stockings completes the set.

In all the years he's known her, in all the fantasies he's had about her—in Azkaban and since—he's never imagined her in anything other than plain white cotton.

"Did you wear these for *me*?" he asks, looking up at her.

She blushes adorably, and nods, "Of course."

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He kisses her mouth, feeling hot and light-headed, but she quickly breaks the kiss and, pressing her forehead to his, she whispers, "I want you inside me, Draco."

He summons his wand, and vanishes her skirt and shirt, then slips the wand tip between her legs and—hand shaking—draws it gently along her slit, splitting the crotch of her sexy little briefs.

She gasps, arching her back and pushing her hips forward, pressing herself onto his wand and into his magic and, enthralled, he strokes her again and again, letting little bursts of warmth—magical fragments of his own need—spill into her.

"Oh, Draco," she moans, "oh, Draco... Draco..."

...

From his nameless prostitute he'd learned to take his time; thanks to her, he'd always—even at school—enjoyed the foreplay—the touching, the tonguing—always loved that look of satisfaction that came over a woman's face when, at last, she had him inside her...

...

He loses it the moment he enters her—which has never happened to him before—but he puts it down to his long obsession with Granger, and to his recent bout of abstinence.

Granger accepts it with good grace and, since it never takes him long to recover, he soon makes it up to her, getting her close and keeping her there, holding her on the very edge, winding her up, tighter, and tighter, and—

"Oh!" she cries.

Too tight.

"OH! OH, MALFOY! OH,"—her body arches—"OHHHHH,"—and her shout turns into a long and petulant wail—"FUUUUUUUUCK!"

...

At school he'd always been second best to Hermione Know-it-all Granger, but he'd honestly thought that things would change once they were man and wife—that he would be the man.

As usual, he'd been fucking wrong.

...

She wakes with a start, and looks up at him, nervously. "I'm sorry," she says. "I wasn't supposed to fall asleep. Are you all right?"

"No, Granger," he spits out, and his anger, which he's been controlling ever since he began to feel the first whispers of discomfort, erupts: "No, I'm *not* fucking all right!" He grits his teeth, riding out another wave of pain—"Fuck! Oh, fuck! *Fuck!*"—until the fire recedes, and leaves him panting for breath. "Did you think—think I wouldn't realise? *Oh, Draco's so stupid, he'll never know I've hexed his balls!* Is that all you think of me—oh, fuck, not *again!*" He rocks back and forth, holding himself. "What the fuck did you do to me, Mudblood?"

Granger sits up—giving him another eyeful of those bloody tits in that fucking Muggle bra—and says, "Come back to bed, Draco."

"Fuck off!"

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"Look, I can stop it hurting." She stretches out her arms. "Please, Draco—let me help you, and then I'll explain—"

"WHAT THE FUCK DID YOU DO TO ME?" he shouts.

"It's just a side effect," she says.

"Just a *side effect*? A side effect of *what*?"

"Shhh—*shhhhhh*, Draco—Draco, come here,"—she leans towards him—"and I'll make it all right."

"You're fucking unbelievable." He would throttle her if he could take his hands off his cock. "Oh, fucking hell, it *hurts!*"

"That won't work," she says. "I have to do it for you, Draco..." She holds out her arms again and, despite hating her fucking Mudblood guts, he's so desperate, he climbs up beside her.

She burrows between his legs, and uses her mouth and her hands, and—well, she must have her wand down there, too, working like a house-elf—and, in seconds, he's coming, and the red hot pain's bursting out of him and, as he arches up, she throws her arms around his hips, and presses herself against his body, and he empties himself into her gorgeous fucking cleavage.

Then he falls back, *shattered*.

It's the most intense orgasm he's ever had.

And, when he can see straight again, she's there, leaning over him, smiling like she's done something so bloody clever. "Better?" she asks.

"You fucking witch," he gasps, and swallows hard. She's covered in his come—it's on her cheek, and in her hair, and it's smeared across those fucking tits of hers... And though he hates her, and though he's just exploded all over her like a botched potion, all he wants is to be inside her.

And it's not just about shagging.

It's about intimacy, about being *inside* her.

"Tell me what you've done to me, Granger," he pants, "and tell me why."

She reaches down and brushes a strand of his hair out of his eyes and, smiling at him—almost bloody *tenderly*—she starts to explain: "I soaked my hands and arms in a mixture of *Delectatia* and *Consuetudia* so that we'd both absorb them when you touched me—but you did that so much sooner than I'd expected."

"In the Office of Magical Marriages," he breathes. "So I was *right*... You *had* used magic on me." But he can't stop himself reaching for her, and his entire body reacts when she settles in his arms.

"*Delectatia* wasn't ideal," she's saying, "but I didn't want anything too strong, and I needed something with no odour—not *Amortentia*, because I was pretty sure you'd notice if I suddenly started smelling like the Gringotts vaults and quidditch leathers."

"You cheeky tart..." He almost smiles, and he does press his mouth to her temple. He can't fight her bloody potions, and he already knows he's going to let her get away with it so, deciding that he deserves *some* compensation, he takes her hand and brings it to his cock.

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"Mmmm." She grasps his shaft and, sliding her leg over him and shifting her body, she rubs herself on his length.

His balls tighten.

"I wanted it to be more than a love potion," she continues, rocking on him, lightly, "I wanted something that would bring us together—hence the *Consuetudia*."

"And that's why," he says, hoarsely, "I suddenly started feeling all warm and fuzzy towards Old Weasley—I was feeling what you feel. But how did you stop *him* falling for you—oh, the *gloves*."

"That's right."

"I wondered where they'd appeared from."

She rewards him with a very nice bit of teasing and—he notices—a good smear of her own juices on his cock. "You really are quite clever, Malfoy."

His bloody heart glows. Then, "Fuck," he groans, "this means I get to be bestest friends with Potty and the Weasel, doesn't it?"

"Well, you didn't honestly think you could marry me and *not* make friends with my friends, did you?" she replies, all annoyingly bossy. "Besides, I'll have to make friends with your friends, too."

She's stopped moving, and he twitches his cock in protest.

"Malfoy!" She laughs and, sliding down his body, she leans in to him, and covers his balls with kisses.

"Oh..." He sinks back into the pillows and thoroughly enjoys her attentions, until another thought pops into his fuddled brain. "That doesn't explain the pain, though," he says.

She raises her head. "Well, no... I also cast *Libidio*, *Conjugo* and *Fidelio* charms on my—um—my vagina."

"Which is why you were so anxious to get me *in* there straight away."

"Before we got back to Malfoy Manor." She licks his cock from root to tip.

"Fucking hell," he gasps. The physical pleasure's overpowered what was left of his puny anger—as she'd no doubt known it would. Still, "I'd already gone head-to-head with my father for you, Granger," he objects. "Couldn't you see that I wasn't going to let you down?"

"I had to cast the charms before I met you in the Secretary's Office, Draco. Do you think it's going to be easy for me to go back to that place, and live there? I had to be absolutely certain you'd be on my side."

"And *I* was stupid enough to think you fancied me."

"Of course I fancied you. I've always fancied you. I wouldn't have accepted your proposal if I hadn't fancied you."

"*Always* fancied me?"

"Always. Besides, you must have known that once I'd seen your—um—your actual *equipment*, I wouldn't be able to resist?" She smiles up at him. "I can understand, now, why all the girls

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used to call you the Slytherin Sex God."

"Oh, you'll use that mouth to get whatever you want, won't you?" he says. "One way or another." And, suddenly, the desire that's been mounting ever since she sucked him off overcomes the exhaustion, and he grabs her, and rolls her onto her back, slipping his hand between her legs. She's wet, and swollen, and more than ready for him, but he slides a finger round her opening, then strokes her insides with his fingertip, and pretty soon she's begging him for it.

"Please, Malfoy," she whimpers. "Please, Draco... *Fuck me...*"

Her desperation's almost heartbreaking.

And a victory, of sorts, so he thrusts himself inside her hot, velvety—

"Malfoy..."

His back's arched, his arms braced, and she has to push herself up to murmur in his ear: "I cast a *Robustus* charm on your penis when you were undressing."

"Fucking *hell*, Granger!"

That *has* to be the last straw! He collapses, crushing her beneath him, and lies still. "You honestly thought that *I'd* have trouble getting it up?"

"I'm sorry." She presses her lips to his cheek. "I really didn't believe all those rumours about your phenomenal powers—it seemed like overcompensation to me—and I needed to be absolutely sure that you could make love to me. I'm so sorry, Draco—I think it's the *Robustus* that's causing you the pain."

"Fucking-bloody wonderful. How long will it last?"

"All we have to do," she says, "is keep having sex until it wears off."

"*How long?*"

"A few hours."

"You don't actually know, do you?"

"Not exactly. It varies from man to man and, since *you* don't really need it..."

"Brilliant. And the only relief I can get is from you?"

"Until it wears off, yes."

"You do know that you won't be able to walk for a week?"

"But think how *close* it will make us, Malfoy."

"Is that why you did all this?"

"Of course it is! This is *it*, Draco. It's you and me, for the rest of our lives. We *have* to make it work."

"So you tricked me, and tortured me—"

"The torture was accidental."

The love match

"See, that's why there are laws controlling the use of magic," he says, angrily.

"Oh, that's good," she says, matching his anger, "that's very good, coming from a Death Eater." She tries to wriggle out from under him. "And what about your private eye, Draco? Hm? Trying to meddle in my career—aren't there laws controlling that, as well?"

"I am a Malfoy," he says, holding her still. "You—you're supposed to be good, and moral, and—and—and a lot less like me."

She grins.

And, he notices, she's stopped struggling.

"Anyway," he says, holding out a little longer, "love potions don't create real love, Granger, you know that. Snape told us—even bloody Slughorn told us that."

"Muggle science suggests otherwise," she says.

"Oh, Muggle *science*."

"You'll love Muggle science, Draco, I know you will—I'll take you to the Science Museum!" He lifts his head and looks down at her, but his scowl makes no impression on her at all. "Muggle science," she says, "has established a number of cases where cause and effect are interchangeable—so people who smile *become* happy, and people who behave like they're in love, *fall* in love."

"This doesn't feel like love, Granger."

"How would you know?"

He sighs. "Well, it doesn't even feel like proper shagging—and I *do* know what shagging feels like."

"Is it better or worse?"

"It's..." He eases himself deep inside her, and grinds his hips. *Mother-fucking hell!* "Better," he admits. Then he withdraws almost entirely, and slowly thrusts back into her. "It feels... It feels like your pussy was made to measure, Granger. Is it really you, or is it just your bloody charms?"

"The charms shouldn't affect dimensions, or muscles, or—you know—lubrication..."

He lifts himself up and, on stiff arms, looks down at her. "Is there anything else you need to confess to me, Hermione Granger, or can I just get on with fucking your brains out now?"

She grins up at him—a huge, triumphant, irresistible grin. "There's a bottle of wine and some food in my beaded bag," she says, "and there's an owl in my luggage in case you want to warn your mother that we're going to be out all night..."

The love match

Two and a half years later...

"Granger, you ready?"

It's their second wedding anniversary and his mother has all but bankrupted his father putting on a celebratory banquet; he's spent a whole week preparing his stupid speech; and Granger's refused to show him what she'll be wearing.

He is *stressed*.

"GRANGER!"

She walks into his dressing room wearing her new robes—but they're not robes, they're a Muggle evening gown of the softest cream velvet, cut to hug all of her curves and with a neckline that's been cleverly designed—obviously by a Muggle *man*—to look as though it's unbuttoned and falling open, affording him tantalising glimpses of the ivory silk bustier cupping her breasts...

"Bloody hell, Granger," he mutters, pulling her down onto his lap, "there's no way I'm letting you out of this room dressed like..." He frowns. "You have make-up on your tits."

"It's supposed to give a deep cleavage effect—is it too much?"

"Too much? Not if you're happy for every man at the banquet to die of a hard-on." He grimaces. "Obviously, not my father, or Potter, or Old Weasley—well, maybe Old Weasley, but not—"

"Don't, Malfoy,"—she grabs his hand—"you'll smudge it!"

She kisses his fingers and, keeping his hand at her mouth, she looks at him, speculatively.

"What?" he asks.

"I'm wondering whether to give you your anniversary present *now*."

Yes, he mouths.

"Merlin, Malfoy, you're such a kid! All right, wait here a minute."

"I've no intention of going anywhere..."

He turns to the mirror, and works on his hair until she comes running back and, seating herself on his lap again, hands him a parcel wrapped in pale blue paper and tied with a dark blue ribbon.

It's obviously a book, but tucked under the ribbon there's something else.

He pulls it out and looks at it—it's white, about the length of a Muggle fountain pen but thicker, and it has a small hole, like a window, in its side. "What am I supposed to do with this?" he asks.

"Nothing," she says, smiling. "I've already done it."

"Done what?"

"Peed on it."

"Granger!" He drops it into her lap.

The love match

"I've washed it since, silly." She hands it back. "Do you see the two blue lines?"

"Of course. What are they?"

"Your son," she says, proudly. "Well, *evidence* of your son."

He stares at her, open-mouthed, and she laughs and wraps her arms around his neck. "It's a Muggle pregnancy test, Malfoy. I'm pregnant." She hugs him tightly.

"You mean," he murmurs against her cheek, "you mean I'm going to be a father?"

"Well, technically, you *are* a father." She leans back, and takes his hand, and places it on her stomach.

"Oh, Granger... Oh, Granger, Granger." He suddenly pulls his hand away, panicking. "But I... We shouldn't have... Granger, you should have told me *before*. Before I—"

She presses her finger to his lips. "It's all right. Really. Open your other present."

"What?"

"This." She pulls the parcel from where it's slipped down between them, and hands it to him. "Open it."

"I know it's a book," he says, tearing off the paper. "A Muggle book..." He turns it over and reads its title. "*Love-making during Pregnancy*."

"It takes you through each trimester, gives you lots of advice, and illustrates special positions..." She presses her lips to his ear. "Because I don't want you finding alternative accommodation whilst I'm pregnant, Malfoy."

"Granger!" He's genuinely hurt—almost angry with her. "What do you think I am? I'd never—"

"That's not what you said to me when we signed the Marriage Law contract," she says. "*If you won't have sex with me, I'll have to find someone else who will*—that's what you said."

"I was an *idiot* when I said that! I didn't *know* you when I said that—didn't *love* you!" He grasps her hands, trying to make her understand. "I would never betray you, Granger, or little Scorpius. Never! I'd charm my own balls off before I did that."

It takes her a moment to react. "*Scorpius?*"

"Scorpius Hyperion Malfoy."

"No."

"I've given this a lot of thought, Granger—"

"It's ridiculous."

He says nothing—but he lets his determination show on his face.

She looks at him through narrowed eyes. "I've no choice, have I? You'd Confund me until it was too late to stop you."

"I'd use an Imperius on you," he says, "and make you smile throughout the naming ceremony."

There's an uneasy pause, because they both know that he just *might*. Then, "Well," she says, "I suppose it's no sillier than Draco Abraxas Malfoy."

The love match

"Since I seem to be winning at the moment," he says, "I'll let that pass."

"Remember it's not *my* fault, Scorpius," she says, patting her stomach, "when all the other kids make fun of you. Blame your father."

He puts his hand over hers. "No one will make fun of a Malfoy, Granger."

"Keep dreaming, Draco."

She's irresistible. He leans in to kiss her nose.

"Did you mean it?" she asks, cupping his face in her hands.

"Mean what?"

"That you'd hex your balls off?"

"Nah." He smirks. "But I wouldn't need to. You've got me so whipped, Granger, I don't think it would work with anyone else."

"Will it work with me, when I'm the size of a Muggle house?"

"Granger..." He imagines her, all warm and rounded, carrying *his son*, and immediately feels the answer. "It will work even better," he says. Then he grins, holding up the book. "Do you want to try a bit of Muggle-style shagging,"—she scowls—"I mean, love-making?"

"We'd be late," she reminds him. "And *I'd* be blamed, and your father would feel the need to read out our pre-nuptial agreement. Again."

He leans in slowly, proudly, possessively. "Not this time, Granger," he murmurs, nuzzling her neck and resting his hand on her stomach. "This time, you've got him. From now on, Hermione Granger, you're a proper Malfoy."

THE END