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# Sticks & Stones

Oneshot Fan-Fiction

Desolate03

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## Part One

He should have known that it was too good to be true. How many times had his godfather counseled him against hoping and wishing? Far too many times to count, and far too often; however he had still dared to believe that for once something good could come from his enemy's presence in his life.

He was a bloody idiot.

Draco watched with narrowed silver eyes at the figure of his lover, well *ex-lover*, walking toward the gates of the exclusive high-rise penthouses before apparating away with a muted crack. Draco stood there for a long time, battling his own feelings, his own bittersweet memories.

All the things they had done together...most still making the cool Slytherin flush with unadulterated pleasure. The start had been rocky. The War was two years past, but the stigma of being the son of Lucius Malfoy still haunted him to this day. It didn't matter that he had taken the lives of his parents, nor did it matter that he had bled and sweat for those who still were wary of him when they saw him coming. Some mothers hid their children from him, telling them that he was a bad man, and they shouldn't speak to him.

Draco sneered, blithering idiots the lot of them, too cowardly to pull a dark spell or two from their back pockets in order to free themselves from a tyrant. Well, it was of no matter now; Draco was truly and utterly alone. He didn't care what they had thought of him as long as he had had his partner beside him, Draco thought he was invincible. Sev had always told him his arrogance and over confidence would get him some day.

It had returned in spades.

Draco blinked as tears burned his eyes, and he cursed himself for the weakness. His lover was getting married, to a witch that Draco loathed and equally admired. In fact, his lover had explained to him that he had been dating this witch while seeing Draco as well. *Two timing whore*, Draco snarled in his mind. He turned away from the window at last. The house-elves had burned every piece of furniture in the bedroom because Draco couldn't stand to look at the place where most of his nights had been spent pleasurably wrapped up in his lover.

He was through, love was a joke. And now he had more than himself to think about. He sighed and tossed some powder into the fire. He watched the flames turn a haunting color of blue and then disappear. Only moment later the austere figure of his godfather Sev stood before him.

"Good evening Sev," He said coolly. Severus arched a brow and then his eyes softened in concern as he took in his godson's state. Severus sighed heavily, if only he could kill the man that put Draco in this situation, however, it would land him in Azkaban for sure.

"How far along are you?" He asked. Draco grinned slightly and pressed a hand to his protruding stomach.

"Three months." Draco replied.

"Did you tell him?"

"Of course not, especially not after he told me he was marrying Granger." Draco sighed, "I was thinking of going to Italy, that seems far enough away don't you think? At least for the birth," Draco sounded tired and defeated and Severus didn't like either.

"Italy would be a nice place," Severus murmured, "Draco; I never wanted this to happen to you."

"Then I shouldn't have had an affair with Weasley. What's done is done. I would like to leave tonight."

"Any particular reason why?"

"He's getting married tomorrow."

An hour later, they were gone.

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*For a man getting married, Harry mused; Ron looked like he was waiting for someone to crucio his arse.* Harry looked around and smiled at Hermione; she made such a beautiful bride in the sleeveless full length white gown. It was a beautiful July day and the wedding was taking place outside. Ron had grown into his large frame and towered over everyone. His hair had faded into a nice full red color that bordered on auburn and his blue eyes were alight with pleasure as well as trepidation.

It was the latter that kept Harry on edge. Harry looked around the crowd and really couldn't see anyone that was overly threatening. Hell, they'd invited Malfoy and Snape even, but the two declined their invitation just last night actually. Snape was going with Malfoy to Italy for a few months or so. It was a very evasive and vague explanation and Harry's curiosity was piqued. Why were they rushing off now? It confused him but as he stood behind his best friend, he let it fade to the back of his mind.

"The wedding went off without a hitch Hermione, and you make a beautiful bride." Harry told her smiling. Hermione laughed with him as he twirled her around the floor. Ginny and Ron were dancing at the other end of the room and it seemed that whatever was bothering Ron had finally dissipated and he was finally having a good time.

"I see you noticed that he was acting weird today." Hermione said calmly. Harry jerked and then grinned sheepishly.

"Well, yeah, he was watching the doors as if he thought Voldemort would pop out and ruin everything." Harry laughed uncomfortably. Hermione smirked, a bitterness showing in her eyes.

"Close enough." She said harshly and then sighed. "Actually I shouldn't say that; Ron did something stupid and probably angered someone to the point of retaliating by doing it." Harry felt his stomach drop.

"What's he done?"

"Didn't you know? I surprised he didn't tell you, but then again I doubt he'd tell you because of your history." Hermione glanced around and then murmured lowly. "He was having an affair with Malfoy." Harry very nearly tripped and sent them sprawling, it was only his quick reflexes and Hermione's haste to cover his discomfort that saved them both.

"Are you bloody mad? Malfoy!" Harry hissed quietly. Hermione nodded.

"Apparently they had been seeing each other for nearly a year. It was right after Ron and I had that big spat last year about this time." Harry remembered that. Ron's jealousy had gotten the better of him yet again and he'd accused Hermione of rubbing his face in the fact she was smarter and cleverer, and that she was seeing someone else. It had been apocalyptic. Harry thought they'd never get back together. "He just never ended it." She spoke up, shaking Harry from his thoughts.

"But surely Malfoy knew that..." Hermione shook her head and her blue eyes filled with pity.

"Ron didn't tell him, that is, until last night." Harry winced, "Yeah, and that's why he was so worried. Just think of the problems it would've caused if Malfoy had shown up here."

"He would've hexed his balls off." Harry muttered as he looked over at Ron. His eyes hardened; he may not like Malfoy that much, but nobody deserved what Ron had done to him. "Ron would've bloody deserved it." Hermione nodded but then she smiled.

"He swore it was over so the wedding is going on as planned. Besides," Her eyes sparkled with delight, "I'm pregnant!"

"That's great!" Harry exclaimed and picked her up, swinging her around. Hermione laughed.

The reception went on long into the night. Harry's anger at Ron faded into the background and it was forgotten months later.

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*Five months later...*

"I'll bloody hex his balls off and then shove them down his lying throat!" Draco groaned in pain. Severus chuckled darkly.

"I'll hold him down for you. Now recline back; it will take some of the pain off your lower back. I want you to breathe as steadily as possible and get through the last of the contractions. Afterwards I will give you this numbing and sedative potion. It will knock you out so that I can work and in a few hours you should be as right as rain for someone who's just given birth."

"I understand." Draco gasped as a white hot shock of pain shot through him. He took a few deep breaths, reclined himself back against the mountain of pillows behind him. He breathed much easier as the contraction subsided, but he knew it would come sooner the next time.

The time in Italy had been good for him. He was much calmer with the prospects of being a single parent and he was every grateful for Sev's presence in his life and the life of his little one. He still felt hurt by what Ron had done to him and then on top of that Draco read in the paper some months ago that Hermione too, was pregnant and that set off his rage again. He'd be looked on as a whore if he ever stepped foot back in England again with Ron's children in tow. He knew that they'd be able to tell, even with the Malfoy genes being as strong as they are.

Bloody bastard.

The pain started up again and Severus pressed a small cup to his lips. Draco drank it gratefully and let it run its course. Draco gave a nod and small smile to Severus before falling blissfully into darkness.

When Draco came to, it was to the cries of a child. He opened his eyes and blinked slowly in the dim light. Severus was smiling gently, a rare thing, as he handed the child to Draco. "Congratulations, you had a boy." He murmured. Draco gave a breathless smile but as the baby opened his eyes the pain returned briefly. The child had Ron's eyes that endless rich blue Draco could have drowned in forever. "And," Draco looked up and was struck silent as Severus laid another babe in his lap. "You had a girl as well."

"Oh," Draco said quietly. Severus looked at him in concern but then as tears appeared in his godson's eyes as he looked on both of his children he finally understood. Draco had loved Ron Weasley. Severus closed his eyes against the tide of rage that swept through him.

"What are their names?" Severus asked through a clenched jaw. He'd deal with Weasley later, for now; he had a son to dote on and a few grandchildren as well. Weasleys and Malfoys; they could never do anything by halves.

"Dmitri Xavier and Alexandra Lillian Malfoy." Draco murmured.

"Strong names." Severus murmured.

"They will be strong people." Draco said with quiet pride.

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Harry stared out at the snow falling steadily around Godric Hollow. He'd had them rebuild his ancestral home, when he'd thought he was going to marry Ginny. Their relationship had fallen through, but they were still good friends. And Harry still had the home rebuilt. He felt more at peace here than anywhere, but right at the moment, it wasn't a peaceful feeling that was flowing through him.

Ron and he had come back to his house to talk and catch up on everything. Ron and Hermione had gone to the United States and the Caribbean for their honeymoon and stayed for two months before coming back and starting their lives. So far both were extremely happy and Harry was very happy for them. But it was at quiet times like this, when the conversation lulled the thoughts of Malfoy and Snape intruded.

The two spies had left five months ago and here it was Christmas Day and they were still gone. Harry's eyes narrowed, something wasn't adding up. According to their cancellation they said that it was just a

short vacation. Five months wasn't short to him and then there was the fact that Minerva had received a letter of resignation from Snape not two weeks ago.

Something was definitely up.

"What has you thinking so hard mate?" Ron asked jokingly. Harry turned back to him a frown marring his handsome face.

"You had an affair with Draco Malfoy." Harry said bluntly. The color leached out of Ron's face.

"How did...?"

"Hermione told me, on your wedding day." Harry said quietly. "How could you do that to them both?"

"I didn't mean for it to happen, it just did." Ron protested. "Besides, it's Malfoy; he really didn't mean anything to me anyway."

"He meant enough to you to keep it going for a year or more!" Harry snapped growing angry. "Obviously he meant a great deal to you." He said quieter. Ron swallowed thickly and turned to the roaring fire.

"For being a damn ferret the man is gorgeous and actually quite compassionate to boot. He listened to me, even if he did make cutting commentary, but he still listened. And through all the sarcasm he gave good advice. One thing just led to another that's all." Ron shrugged. "Hermione and I were going through rough times; I didn't think we'd get through it so I thought; what the hell? By the time we did get back together I...I just thought...damn it I don't know what I was thinking!"

"You *weren't*! That's the point. And then you broke it off with him the day before you get married! That's low Ron even for you. The bloke didn't even know you were back with Hermione, did he?" Ron shook his head. "Bullocks, Ron!" Harry shook his head and tossed back his whiskey. "Well it's old news now. But Snape just resigned and then there's a rumor that Malfoy is planning to live in Italy." Harry narrowed his eyes as Ron didn't meet his gaze. "He obviously cared for you and you basically treated him like a whore you dumb ass."

"It's just Malfoy." Ron finished lamely and Harry just shook his head.

"Yeah, well, *just* Malfoy killed his father and mother for the Order, *just* Malfoy saved the both of our asses more than once spying for the Order, *just* Malfoy deserves more than what you gave him Ron. You're lucky he wasn't a woman and pregnant or something just think of how that would make him feel." Ron made a strangled sound in the back of his throat and Harry narrowed his eyes. "What is it now?"

"Well, uh, he could get pregnant." Ron said and Harry's eyes widened. "We're wizards Harry basic muggle stuff doesn't apply. With magick, just about anything is possible."

"Well, do you know if he was pregnant or not?" Harry asked. Ron shook his head.

"He never said anything. And you know he would love just to rub Hermione and my face in it." Ron muttered. Harry kept his thoughts to himself, but he didn't think so. Malfoy would've just left, like he did, but he couldn't have been pregnant.

Could he?

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*One year later...*

Harry was in Italy during Christmas. It was quite beautiful especially here in Rome. Witches and wizards passed him on the streets with their families, bundled together against the crisp cold. In Northern Italy, it had snowed briefly but here in the southern part it was just a very crisp cold. He smiled at the vendors and then hurried into one of the cafes that were within walking distance of the Coliseum. Getting a hot chocolate he sat by one of the windows and watched the people scurrying around picking up their last minute gifts for Christmas.

Hermione, Ron, and their daughter Bridget, were having the perfect family Christmas with the Weaselys at the Burrow. Harry had stayed as long as he could but, things were strained with him and Ron. He just couldn't reconcile what he'd done. Hermione seemed forgiving enough, but Harry and Ron both knew better. She was keeping tabs on his activities. If Ron breathed out of place Hermione was on him like a bad rash. So Harry had left and went to France and now Italy. He tried to tell himself he was moving aimlessly throughout Europe but he knew he wasn't.

He was looking for Malfoy.

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"How are my beauties today?" Draco murmured as he bundled up the twins. Lilly just sat and smiled up at him and her brother Dmitri stared at him with quiet eyes but was grinning.

"Papa ice 'ream!" Lilly said and Draco laughed.

"No, today is far too cold, how about hot chocolate?"

"Coco!" The twins cheered.

"You spoil them Draco." Severus said from behind him. Draco laughed and took the twins' gloves and hats from Severus and placed them over their strawberry blond curls.

"I guess, but they do have impeccable manners."

"Yes, for being one." Severus said sarcastically. Draco grinned up at Sev before he strapped them into their stroller and tugged on his winter cloak. It was quite brisk for Rome this year. Usually it was around 15 to 20 centigrade. However sometimes it did get down to around 10 and it seemed this was one of those times. Draco placed the hood of his cloak on his head and then turned to Sev who was already dressed and waiting.

"Ready?" Draco asked and Severus nodded. Severus opened the door and Draco pushed the stroller out into the elevator. They were quiet going down the elevator of the exclusive high rise condos and when the elevator doors opened, Draco and Sev walked towards the entrance sedately.

A man nearly bumped into them, but he did hit the stroller. "Oh Merlin, I'm sorry, little ones, I'm such a klutz." Severus stiffened slightly at that voice. The children began laughing and giggling with the man and Draco got the strange vertigo feeling, like his life was about to change forever...again. The man looked up and Draco looked right into emerald green eyes.

"Oh shit." He muttered.

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Harry stared up at Malfoy in surprise and then elation. He found him! Harry stood and looked down at the children again. He couldn't help but smile; they were adorable. Everything about them screamed Malfoy genes except their hair which was strawberry blond and curly and the deep blue eyes that stared unblinking up at him. They were Ron's eyes. Harry turned his gaze to Malfoy and swallowed. If anything, the years had been kind to Draco making him even more handsome than he'd been before. He stood just an inch under Harry's own six feet. Draco's body looked lithe and fit and his silvery blond locks were cut short and they were spiked every which way giving him a sexy disheveled look. His ears were pierced. The left was pierced from bottom to the top and the right just had one stud in it. He looked good...really good.

"What a pleasant surprise Potter." Draco murmured. He looked down at his children and smiled. "Lilly, Dmitri, say hello to Mr. Potter."

"Hi!" They said together. Harry was smitten; he grinned at them.

"Hello," He said and then looked up at Draco and Severus again and nodded. "Malfoy, Snape, how are you doing?" Severus snorted.

"What are you trying to pull?" Severus muttered darkly as he motioned for Draco to go ahead with the kids, Severus and Harry brought up the rear. Severus waited until Draco was further ahead of them on the way to the café before speaking. "Draco has been through enough already so if you're coming here for Weasely..."

"Ron doesn't know I'm here." Harry said shortly. "He didn't even know Malfoy was pregnant. Hell, I didn't even know a wizard could get pregnant. I just wanted to make sure that everything was okay. Especially when you sent in your resignation letter. Minerva nearly hexed someone." Harry chuckled. Severus sneered and then snorted.

"Ridiculous, I can't believe you didn't know. It is well documented Potter." Severus sighed, "It is of no import now. I sent in my resignation as soon as Draco decided that he was going to stay here permanently for more than a few years."

"Why?" Harry asked. Severus looked at him and rolled his eyes.

"Can you see the ramifications of him coming back to England with two children that he definitely didn't leave with? Though the twins have blond locks, that strawberry color came from a red head and if you put that together with the eyes," Severus looked heavenward, "it would be a disaster. I can see it now. 'Death Eater Seduces Ronald Weasley...' blah, blah, blah. They'd tear those children to shreds and put the title of 'Whore' on Draco before we could all blink. All because of that simpleton you call a friend." Severus cut Harry a hard glare that made him feel eleven all over again. "Just what were you thinking making such a dumb suggestion?"

"I'm just trying to help."

"We don't need your help. Draco has been hurt enough in this life time, just leave him alone."

"But I want to make it right." Harry protested. Severus sighed and looked at Harry.

"You can't make everything right all the time Harry." Severus said surprisingly in a calm voice. "What Ron did was inexcusable; he can't make up for it and he won't be able to apologize for it either. But would it really be okay for Draco to really and truly go back to England? Do you really think so? What would Hermione Weasley say, or his parents, or any of those in our part of the world? They wouldn't look on it favorably. It would hurt everyone involved. It is almost best this way to be here. Draco will not have to be reminded of his lover's lies and the children will never have to know how much their sire hurt their father."

Severus and Harry stopped outside of the café and watched as Draco quickly and efficiently sat the children in their high chairs and began breaking cookies and pastries into smaller pieces. He was smiling and laughing and Harry was loath to break up the small bit of happiness that Draco had here. "You know he loved him." Harry felt bile build in his throat. "It devastated him that Ron would betray his trust and think so little of their time together. We may be cold, but for the most part we aren't heartless."

"Hey," Both of them were startled when Draco's voice reached them. "Are you both going to stand out there and freeze? Come in here, I ordered tea and coco all around." Harry smiled when he heard the twins cheer, 'coco!' from behind their father. Severus looked at Harry telling him without speaking that they would speak again. Harry nodded and really it could wait for that day.

And as he walked in to sit with the family he realized that this was what he wanted; a family. But more specifically...

...he wanted Draco and the twins.

## Part Two

*February*

"Thank you Mr. Potter, it was a pleasure doing business with you." The banker said and shook Harry's hand. Harry smiled at him and then laughed along with the older man as Lilly waved bye to him. "Good bye little Miss Malfoy, tell Mr. Malfoy that I will see him at his monthly meeting?" Harry nodded.

"Will do, come along Lilly. Let's go see what mischief Sev and Dmitri have gotten into." Lilly wrapped her little arms around Harry's neck as he stood and left the bank. He took a deep breath, taking in the crisp cold air and looked around and found the café at the end of the street. Draco had had business to attend to as Lord Malfoy, so Severus and Harry had offered to take the children with them on their own errands that day. They decided to meet up in the early afternoon for a snack. Walking up to the café, Harry watched as Severus was seating Dmitri into a high chair; the man had already put up another right next to Dmitri in preparation for Lilly.

"Afternoon, Severus," Harry said with a smile as he entered the café and approached them. Severus nodded to him and a faint smile curved over his lips as Dmitri immediately brightened on seeing him.

"Arry!" Dmitri cried. Lilly went willingly into her seat and Harry ruffled Dmitri's curly locks and the boy laughed in delight. Harry and Severus sat together in the booth, both sitting opposite of the children, so that they could easily help them if they were needed.

"What did the bank manager have to tell you?" Severus asked as a hot espresso was placed in front of them and warm hot chocolate was put in front of the children.

"Nothing much. The investments that I've made are paying dividends. Looks like my monthly allowance is going to rise because I've made quite a bit of money on the interest alone." Harry said casually, "He told me to remind Draco of a monthly meeting?" Severus nodded.

"Yes, every month Draco makes sure that all his money is in order and he puts more money into Lilly and Dmitri's trust funds. Have you heard anything from your friends?" Severus was referring to Hermione and Ron. Harry frowned slightly as he thought about them. Both had not been pleased when he said that he would be staying in Italy for a little while.

*"You're not trying to find Malfoy are you?" Ron had asked him. Harry frowned.*

*"What if I am?"*

*"Mate just leave it alone. If he hasn't come back by now, he won't ever. Maybe it's for the better." Ron had looked a bit relieved and Harry had had to control himself from blurting out that Draco had been pregnant and he'd had to go through the delivery and everything alone with Severus.*

*"Only you would think that." Harry had said and then hung up.*

"Harry?" Severus asked as he looked at him shrewdly.

"They weren't too pleased hearing that I was going to stay here for a few more months. Ron's afraid that I'll find Draco and get him to come back to England." Harry snorted, "I doubt Draco would want to see him again anyway." He spoke as he broke up the fresh bread that was set on their table into little bits for the children.

Severus watched Harry laugh as he fed and played with the children. The last two months have been exasperating and a revelation all in one. Harry was serious about correcting the grievous wrong done to Draco. And Draco seemed to be amused that Harry would want to take that burden on himself. The children adored him; he would play with them on the floor, or in the park, give them rides on his back, and read them stories. Sometimes Severus would catch Draco watching them all with a wistful smile on his face and he knew that Draco was becoming enamored with Harry.

What was it about Gryffindors that Draco seemed to be drawn too?

The only thing that doused Severus' rage at the thought of Draco being hurt yet again was the fact that Harry had been watching Draco as well and seemed to be as smitten with him as Draco was with Harry. Severus sighed as he thought about it. What a mess, but then again, he watched Lilly and Dmitri stare at Harry through large blue eyes and he saw the soft smile on Harry's face.

Perhaps it wasn't such a mess after all.

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"Do you need any help?" Harry asked as he popped his head into the kitchen where Draco was washing dishes. Draco turned and smiled at him.

"No thank you, I was just finishing up. Are Lilly and Dmitri in bed?" Harry sighed heavily but grinned as he leaned up against the wall and watched Draco.

"Yes, finally. Let me tell you they are the only work out a guy could need. They have so much energy. I don't know how you and Severus do it all the time." Draco chuckled as he dried the dishes with a wave of his wand and then began putting them away.

"It took some getting used to but, the little terrors are worth the trouble they put me through. And Severus adores them, so don't let him fool you with his scowls and snappy comments." Draco said blandly and Harry laughed. They chatted together as Draco finished cleaning the kitchen and then they moved into the living room. Draco sighed as he finally sat down, curling his feet underneath him as he stared into the flames licking at the fireplace. "Why are you here Harry?" He asked suddenly. Harry blinked at the question.

"I guess at first I just wanted to find out if you were okay. You left so abruptly and my friends didn't bat a lash, even after I was told why. Did you know Hermione told me on her wedding day?" Draco flinched at that but shook his head.

"No," he said shortly. Harry swallowed and stared at the fire as well.

"I couldn't believe it, but then Severus resigned and you didn't come back and Ron wasn't saying anything, so I confronted him at Christmas last year. I was so angry and I couldn't believe he just strung you along like that. So I tried to forget, but it got harder and harder to ignore."

"And so you came here?"

"Yes, I went to France first, so as not to be suspicious and then I came here. I had to see you. And then I tripped over that stroller," Draco grinned, "and saw the twins and then I saw you." Harry turned to Draco and looked him in the eye. "After that first trip to the café I didn't want to leave."

Draco felt his heart start thudding in his chest and his breathe quicken. No, he thought, this could not be happening again. And yet he knew it was. He was developing feelings for Harry and there wasn't a damn thing he could do about it. But as the conversation turned to lighter topics and the easy companionship that they seemed to have found lengthened, Draco wondered if it was a bad idea in the first place.

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*June*

"You aren't peeking are you?" Harry asked laughingly. Draco snorted but shook his head as he slowly let Harry guide him to wherever the bloody wizard was taking him. He could hear his children whispering and giggling amongst themselves and he could feel Harry's warm callused hand in his own much smoother one.

"Where are you taking me?" He asked and all he got was laughter in return. Even Severus chuckled at his expense. Draco huffed, well, of all the *nerve*...

"Okay here we are, now let's sit you down." Draco was startled when he was pressed gently into a very comfy and soft blanket. "Now, you can take off the blindfold." Draco ripped the blindfold off, hating the feeling of helplessness that always surrounded him when one of his senses was lost and then gasped.

"Papa's b-day!" Lilly and Dmitri yelled loudly. Draco looked at the cake that read '*Happy Birthday Papa*', in Slytherin green and then looked at the picnic basket behind Harry, the presents in Severus' arms and then he looked beyond them, over the hills of Italy.

"Happy Birthday Draco," Harry said with a smile. Draco turned to him, words of gratitude stuck in his throat.

"H-How did you know?" He whispered as he watched Lilly and Dmitri try to grab handfuls of the cake and toss it into the air. Severus caught them both with practice ease and then gently chided them and took them over to the basket of food.

"I asked Severus," Harry said, "And you've always been fond of the country. I can see it in your eyes sometimes when you speak of Malfoy Manor. You always talk about how open and quiet the land is compared to the city and your face lights up." Draco looked up at Harry and Harry smiled tenderly. "I wanted you to enjoy your day. Severus told me it had been awhile since you had last been to the country side, so I thought that it was a wonderful time to come."

"I-I don't know what to say." Draco said beginning to smile. Harry felt himself grin; this was the reaction he'd hoped for.

"Don't say anything, like I said, let yourself enjoy your day."

And Draco did.

There was laughter all around when Lilly and Dmitri finally got their wish and threw cake all over the place. Draco chuckled at the books he received from Sev, and kissed each of his children for the paintings of their hand and foot prints in paint. They ate lunch and played games well into the evening. On the way home, the twins fell asleep, Severus was dozing and Harry and Draco were talking quietly as the driver took them back into the city.

"Thank you," Draco said as they reached their building. "I really do mean it, thank you." Harry watched him for a moment and then leaned over and kissed him softly on the lips. Draco felt his eyes fall shut at the touch of Harry's lips on his. Something was pressed into his hands and then Harry moved away from him; unbuckling Lilly and Dmitri from their seats and gently taking the boy into his arms as well as the now empty picnic basket.

"Severus," Harry whispered and then man's eyes opened and he immediately went ahead and took Lilly, leaving Draco to do nothing but get out of the car, which would be a challenge for him as his hands were shaking as he stared down into them and looked at what Harry gave him.

It was a pendant. It was a dragon and snake combined, coiled intricately together, the dragon's wings encompassing both the forms. The scales of the dragon were silver while the snake's eyes were onyx, only the eyes were the same; a fierce silvery blue that Draco knew where the color of his own eyes and would bring them out when he wore this.

Draco got out of the car and followed his family up into their penthouse.

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Harry was stepping out of the bathroom when he noticed that he wasn't alone in his room. He looked up and found Draco's back to him. Harry frowned and pulled on a pair of pajama bottoms before swinging his towel around his neck and approaching the man. Draco looked up at him, his elegant finger playing with the pendant in his hands. "Why?" he asked. Harry sat down in the desk chair beside his bed and sighed.

"The moment I saw it I thought of you."

"No!" Draco rasped, "Why? Why are you doing this? Why are you tormenting me so? I can't get involved with you, not now! Not ever!" Draco thrust the pendant into Harry's hand, but he didn't expect Harry to grab his forearm and push him down onto the bed and straddle him to keep him there.

"Why?" Harry asked his green eyes blazing, "What would be so wrong with both of us giving in to what has been there between us since this whole thing began and even before. We've always had chemistry you know this, so why are you fighting so hard?"

"Because I could learn to love you!" Draco said just as harshly, "and I can't let myself do that again. It nearly tore me apart the last time." Draco felt the burn of tears but he refused to shed them; he'd shed no more tears over the bastard who had left him to raise their children alone and in exile in a different country.

"You loved Ron, didn't you?" Harry asked softly; Draco nodded and choked back a sob and then laughed harshly.

"I should have known that he would never care for me. Me, Draco Malfoy, lowly son of a Death Eater, thought that one of you stupid arrogant light wizards could actually care for me. I hoped just once, just *once* in my life for a happy ending and it all blew up in my face. My children deserve a Sire who loves them and who will be there for them, and what fucking happened? The bloody bastard two times me, dumps me, and marries the girl he's always wanted. They'll never get to meet him Harry; do you understand how much that hurts me? What am I going to do when they want to know where their other parent is huh? What?" Draco's voice had risen with his pain and his anger, for himself and for his children.

"They'll have one." Harry whispered hoarsely. "If you'd let me be that other parent, they'd never miss him." Draco stopped struggling and laid limp on the bed. He looked up at Harry in surprise and then he rolled his eyes.

"Whatever, as soon as it gets hard you'd run back to the littlest Weasley and leave me high and dry. I will not..." Harry swore and grabbed a fistful of platinum blond locks as he hauled Draco's head up slightly and kissed him deeply. Draco gasped and Harry's tongue took the advantage and wormed into his mouth, lapping at the upper bridge of his gums and dueling with his own tongue. Draco felt his arms encircle Harry almost desperately and the grip on his hair lessened until Harry was just cradling his head in his hands. He moaned as he felt desire, hot and deep, flood through him.

"I'll never leave." Harry whispered against his lips as they parted for air. Draco looked at him and was about to speak, but Harry placed a finger to his lips and quieted him. "No, don't contradict me, I said I will never leave, and I won't. You have my word on that."

"What as a Gryffindor?" Draco snapped. Harry shook his head then kissed Draco's neck.

"No, as Harry Potter, just Harry Potter," Harry murmured. Draco said nothing but Harry could feel him shaking. He gathered him in his arms and held him until they both fell asleep.

The next morning found Draco standing in front of Harry's mirror, in his hands was the pendant necklace Harry had given him the day before. Tan fingers gently lifted it of his hands and then placed it around his neck. Draco watched in the mirror as Harry snapped the clasp shut and then kissed his nape. Draco swallowed heavily in trepidation, but leaned back into Harry as the slightly taller man wrapped his arms around his middle and stared at him through the mirror. Those emerald eyes were still as piercing as if he'd been staring Draco in the face.

"I won't leave, I swear it." Harry murmured in his hair as he kissed his head. Draco closed his eyes but gripped their tangled fingers tightly.

He hoped he hadn't made the same mistake twice.

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### *December*

Severus watched Harry stare at the large Christmas tree, with all its lights, and glass beads and balls. They'd had fun decorating the tree, the twins were asleep, and exhausted from the big day they all had. Draco was sleeping, curled into Harry as the wizard slowly corded his fingers through Draco's mussed hair.

"Are you going to stand there forever?" Harry asked him with a small smirk. Severus snorted and strode into the room, sitting closer to the fire to keep warm, but also so that he could see Harry's face. Severus realized months ago that Harry's plans had significantly changed. He wasn't just here to make amends for the wrong committed; he wanted Draco and the twins.

As the months past, Harry was integrated into their little family so seamlessly it seemed to Severus that he had always been there. Whenever Draco doubted his resolve, Harry would patiently wait until the Slytherin's fit of temper ran its course and speak as if it had never happened. Rows like those between the two were very few and very far between now a days. Draco slowly began to trust Harry; trust him in his mind and his heart. Slowly but surely Severus watched the bitterness that had festered unnoticed in Draco's heart fade with each smile Harry bestowed upon him and the children.

"What are you thinking about?" Harry asked softly. Severus stared at him and then he smirked.

"When will you tell your friends?"

"When I'm good and ready," Harry retorted, "Besides Hermione and Ron are having another row, I think this time she'll leave him for good." Severus rolled his eyes; that's what Harry had said the last two times his friends had been at each other's throats.

"What is it this time?" Harry smirked.

"Hermione cheated on Ron." Severus sighed in exasperation.

"Merlin what a bunch of snippy children; and what are you going to do about it?" Harry arched a brow, "I assume that you, being the Savior and all will rush in and save the day." Harry laughed.

"No, they got into this mess; they can get out of it on their own. I've much better things to think about." Harry confided as he smiled lovingly at Draco. Severus felt his lips twitch, as if he wanted to smile. He scowled instead and Harry laughed.

"Oh, and what would that be?"

"Picking out an engagement ring for Draco."

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## *Christmas Day*

Draco smiled as he watched his children tear into the pile of presents under the tree, with the help of Sev and Harry. Since they were born on Christmas Eve, they always got double the presents. Draco could only imagine what it would be like when they got older and realized how important that little fact was.

Paper, ribbons, and bows were scattered around everywhere. For Severus, Draco had gotten an entire collection of rare Potions manuals, for his angels he got them every toy he knew they had seen in the windows of shops before Christmas, and for Harry he got him the key to the penthouse, as well as a key to the country villa Draco had just purchased for his family. The light in Harry's eyes made Draco feel wanted and cared for and he blushed when Harry kissed him and the twins cheered.

"I have a present for you too Draco." Harry said Draco looked curiously at the small box Harry gave him. He frowned as he eyed it, but opened it anyway, until his fingers came in contact with the smooth black velvet underneath the paper. Draco felt Harry and Severus' stares on him as he quietly and slowly opened the case.

A platinum band practically glowed in the soft light of the fire that blazed brightly behind him. It was so finely made, and Draco, mesmerized, picked it up out of its bed of fine black velvet and held it carefully. He let his fingers drift inside and felt an inscription. His eyes widened at what it said.

*Amo il Sole per i giorni, la Luna per le notti, e tu per sempre*

"Harry I..." Draco watched as Harry took the ring from his numb fingers and then placed it on the ring finger of his left hand.

"I love you Draco." Harry said simply, "Will you marry me?" Draco opened his mouth to reply but then Severus broke the soft mood with his usually cynical self.

"If you don't say yes Draco I'll hex you!" Severus scowled. Harry turned and glared at Severus as Draco gasped and then laughed. He pulled Harry's attention away from his godfather by squeezing his hand and then kissing him when he'd finally turned back around to face him.

"Yes," He whispered, "Yes I'll marry you. I love you too Harry."

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**Italian translation (hopefully it is right):** *I love the sun for days, the moon for nights and you forever*

### Part Three

*Four years later...*

Ron Weasley had a shitty life. He stared at himself through the cracked barroom mirror along the wall and grimaced. His wife was fucking anything that moved, not that he minded, he'd lost all taste for her years ago. He made one mistake and everything went to shit. Well, he was still stuck here in his shitty marriage with a decent job and two terrific kids. The second one was purely a mistake, a desperate move to keeping their marriage together. Now he and Hermione were stuck with each other for at least fifteen more years until the children were old enough to take care of themselves.

Ron snapped his head back, taking a shot of fire whiskey like it wasn't anything special; it wasn't. He'd been drinking so much he was sure his kidneys would fail sometime soon. Not that he cared really. The wizard looked around and then outside into the snowy streets of Hogsmeade. People were bustling around buying Christmas presents; though Christmas was like three weeks away. Ron snorted; bloody Christmas, every year that went by in his house was a joke.

Harry had relocated to Italy permanently saying that he fell in love with the city and some bloke, with two kids of his own and got married to him. Ron had thought he'd lost his marbles, but Harry was adamant about it and they did get married in a quiet ceremony in Italy. Ron would get a letter or card every now and again and couldn't help but feel jealous of his friend's good fortune. The last letter he received said that Harry was going to be a father again; the guy he'd married was pregnant.

"Lucky bastard," Ron muttered and sighed dejectedly.

"Ah, cheer up squirt!" A cheerful voice said behind him. Ron rolled his eyes but gave his brother Bill a grin.

"What's up old man?" He asked. Bill grimaced but tucked a piece of his darker red hair behind his pierced ear and winked.

"Nothing much, just out with my husband." He said grinning. Ron gave him the effect he was looking for; Ron spewed his drink all over the counter and Bill roared with laughter.

"Blimey Bill you tied the knot again? I thought you were over after Fleur?" Ron asked. Fleur and Bill's marriage had fallen apart three years ago. They just said it wouldn't work; the lady had even let Bill keep their then one year old daughter Catherine. Now Catherine was a rambunctious four year old with auburn curls and bluer eyes than the sky. "When did this happen?"

"Oh, a few months ago." Bill said easily seemingly happier than ever.

"No, no, when did you meet him?"

"Oh! Well we've actually known him forever. I ran into him in Italy about four years ago, working at one of the banks down there." Bill said with a blush and a smile. Ron just scowled; what was it about Italy that made everyone go crazy. "He was there with his godson and we just hit it off. I was still married at the time so nothing happened for a while and then a year ago he proposed and I said yes!" Bill flashed

his left hand and Ron widened at the sight of the platinum band embedded with two onyx stones and one sapphire. Well whoever Bill had hooked up with had galleons coming out of his ears. There was a plain platinum band that Ron assumed had been his engagement ring right behind it.

"Well congrats, so when do I meet this guy?" Ron asked and then he heard a voice that he'd never wanted to hear again.

"Ah, Mr. Weasley drinking your life away I see." Came the unmistakable drawl of one Severus Snape. The man was still as formidable as the last time Ron saw him, but the only difference was the fact that Bill smiled at the man and kissed him soundly. Ron blinked...wait did Bill just kiss *Snape*?

"Sev, you don't have to scare him." Bill said teasingly. Severus looked at Bill and his eyes softened slightly and he grinned a little.

"But it's my favorite past time, messing with you Gryffindors." He purred darkly. Ron watched as Bill's eyes darkened with lust.

"Oh you can mess with me anytime you..."

"Okay! Break it up! I do not want to see this!" Ron said covering his eyes. Severus snorted.

"You are so juvenile Mr. Weasley." Severus snapped, "Grow up! Come Bill, Draco and his husband are waiting for us." Bill chuckled and then curled into Severus' lanky frame as the man wrapped an arm around his waist.

"See you later Ron," Bill said.

"Wait a minute! Draco's here?" Ron asked. Bill's eyes turned cold as did Severus.

"Leave him alone Ron, you did enough." Bill said coolly; Ron winced as he was reminded of what had happened. When he finally told his parents and family they'd been mad at him for months afterwards. It still rubbed them the wrong way when someone brought it up.

"Let it go darling," Severus murmured and then sneered at Ron. "We are staying at Malfoy Manor, I am sure you will be able to find it. I think there are a few things that you should see." Severus said cryptically and then walked out of the pub with Bill into the snowy street.

Ron sat at the bar, his drink forgotten as he thought. Once his decision was made he left his money for his tab and walked out into the night.

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Ron looked up at the palatial estate and swallowed. He'd known the Malfoy's were wealthy; he just didn't know how wealthy they truly were. He knocked on the door and it was opened by an austere faced butler. "Yes, Sir?" The butler asked raising an eyebrow at his unkempt appearance.

"Uh, I'd like to see Draco Malfoy please." Ron stammered. The butler sniffed at him and led him into the foyer.

"Wait here Sir, while I go see if his Lordship will speak with you." The butler walked off and Ron was left there to fidget in the foyer of this huge house that could probably fit his and Hermione's townhouse into it four or five times and still have space. It was quiet for a few moments before he heard the laughter of children and the pattering of their feet along the marble halls.

"No fair Dmitri give it back!" A girl's voice shouted. He heard the laughter of another child and then another as two blond haired blurs and a black haired one came to a stop in front of him.

"No way Lilly, I had it...oh!" The boy stopped and stared up at Ron and Ron felt his heart stop. He looked at the girl, identical to her brother and his mouth dried with trepidation.

Strawberry locks framed both of their faces and his blue eyes stared back at him. The children frowned but then smiled; they were Malfoy's through and through besides the hair and eyes. "Hello, Sir," The girl said and she did a small curtsy. "I'm..."

"Alexandra Lillian and Dmitri Xavier what are you doing?" Ron felt his breath hitch at the sight of Draco Malfoy coming through a set of double doors followed by the butler. Both children looked properly chastised.

"Sorry Papa," they said together. Draco merely frowned at them and then jerked back as the black haired blur from before ran right for him.

"Papa! Lilly 'n Dmitri were running, but they stopped because of him!" A little finger was pointed in his direction and Draco looked up and his face paled.

"Ron?" He said in surprise. He looked down at his children and sighed. "Go upstairs now you two, your punishment will be postponed for now. Just wait till your Father gets back from stabling the horses." Draco said. Lilly and Dmitri nodded and climbed the stairs quickly. The smallest child was lifted into Draco's arms, his big green eyes staring at Ron shyly. "Ron, it's been a long time." He said quietly.

"Yeah, uh, you look, you look good." *Gorgeous*, Ron thought to himself. Draco's hair was still cut short, his ears still pierced like they were when Ron was with him last. He looked very fit, except for the roundness of his abdomen giving light to the fact that he was pregnant again. "Uh congrats..." He motioned towards Draco's stomach. Draco smiled serenely.

"Thank you, it will be our last for a while, my doctor and Sev are worried that I'm having too many children too soon."

"Your husband worries too." A familiar voice teased him. Draco turned and grinned, the little boy in his arms already reaching out as Harry came into the room. He kissed his husband and then took the little boy out of his arms. "And how are you doing my little Gabriel?"

"Fine, Lilly 'n Dmitri were running again." Gabriel said seriously. Draco sighed.

"Yes our little tattler, why don't you go and find your Grandpa Bill and see if you can help him make cookies okay?" Gabriel nodded and wiggled out of Harry's arms and dashed off down the hall. "No running!"

"Yes, Papa!" was all that was heard and then there was silence again. Ron looked at Harry and Draco; he could feel the tension in his friend and in his ex-lover.

"Good evening Ron." Harry said formally.

"Hey mate," Ron said uneasily, "Um, good to see you."

"It's good to see you too." Harry smiled, but it didn't reach his eyes. He wrapped an arm around Draco's shoulders and Ron watched in pain as Draco easily accepted his comfort. "So why have you stopped by?"

"I ran into Bill and Snape at the pub. Snape mentioned you were here so...?"

"So you just decided to come over?" Draco snapped. Ron nodded, "I should've known." Draco said snorting. "Well as you can see, I'm fine. I have a wonderful husband, three beautiful children and the fourth on the way..."

"Those are my children as well." Ron said angrily, "Why did you tell me you were pregnant?" Draco looked at him in surprise and then laughed.

"And what would you have done? You were getting married for Merlin's sake! Not only that but you were getting married the very next day! I couldn't tell you! You'd have had it all over Britain that I had seduced you and was trying to get a reprieve or something by having your children." Draco took a deep breath and said much quieter, "Besides they are not your children in the way that matters. You didn't raise them, didn't coddle them when they were sick, nor did you spend anytime with them. Harry is their Sire and I gave birth to them. Those are our children, mine and Harry's. You missed the boat on that one."

"But it's my blood in their veins."

"Yes," Draco snapped, "and my father's is in mine, but that doesn't mean I'm a sadistic killer like he was." Ron snapped his mouth shut. "Get out of my house." Harry placed a calming hand on Draco's face.

"Darling, calm down, it's not good for the baby." Harry murmured and kissed Draco softly. Draco nodded and then whispered...

"I just want him to leave." Harry glared at Ron and then nodded.

"He's on his way out the door." He told Draco and Draco nodded and turned away going back the way he came. Ron felt as if the man were slipping away from him.

"Wait Draco, didn't our time mean anything to you? I loved you, you know." Ron said pleadingly. Draco halted and turned back to face him.

"I don't love you anymore Ron." Draco said sadly almost pityingly. "You should've thought about that love you think you had for me six years ago. I'm not the same person I was back then and neither are you." Draco looked at Harry and his gaze softened. "I fell in love with Harry and I'm still in love with my husband and probably will be for the rest of our days." Ron said nothing and Draco gave him a small smile. "Good bye Ron. I sincerely hope you and Hermione have a good life together." And he was gone.

Ron looked back at Harry and glared at him. "You said that you got married to an Italian."

"I never said that," Harry said quietly, "I said that I fell in love in Italy and got married there, I never said that he was Italian, you merely thought it." Harry sighed.

"Why didn't you tell me you were marrying Draco?"

"It wasn't really any of your business." Harry said coldly. "You said that it was for the best that he'd left because it would've messed up your perfect life to see your infidelity staring you in the face. Well, so he left, and I went to find him to make sure he was okay. Imagine my surprise when I find out that he *had* been pregnant when you dumped him and was raising two beautiful children on his own with Sev.

"I stayed with them because I wanted to correct the wrong you committed but would probably never own up to and slowly but surely I realized that they were all I could've ever wanted. I fell in love with those children and then Draco afterwards. And after a year of living with them, I asked him to marry me and he made me the happiest man alive when he said yes. We got married on New Year's Day and we've been together ever since."

"Why come back now?" Ron asked hollowly. Harry looked at him and smiled sadly.

"Draco wanted them to see the Manor, even if it would only be for holidays only. We're going back to Italy in the middle of January. The children have to get back to school." Giggling could be heard from upstairs and Harry grinned, "And I have punishments to hand out." He said and then said loudly, "How would the two of you enjoy learning how to muck out stalls?" Two groans could be heard and Harry nodded grinning. "That's what you'll be doing tomorrow morning, now get down stairs without running, it's almost time for dinner."

"Yes, Father," could be heard from both of them and then there was silence as their footsteps slowly faded away. Harry turned to Ron, who was looking dejectedly at the floor.

"So, how is your marriage?" Harry asked gently.

"Falling apart, but we'll be together in holy hatefulness for the next two decades or so, until the children are out of Hogwarts at least." Ron said bitterly. He glanced down the hall watching the children laugh and play with each other and his brother Bill, Snape, and Draco. He looked on as Harry's eyes softened and his smile widened as he shared a glance with Draco. That smile was returned and Ron knew then that he had no place here...

...not anymore.

"Well, you can come by anytime." Harry said. "Just let us know." Ron smiled but shook his head.

"No I think I've caused enough heartache for sometime to come." He opened the door and then looked back at Harry. "Just...take care of him alright?" Harry merely stared at him.

"Do you really even have to ask that?" He asked. And Ron laughed at his own words.

"No, no I really don't." He said, "Do you remember the whole thing about sticks and stones?"

Harry looked puzzled but replied, "You mean 'sticks and stones may break my bones, but your words will never hurt me?'"

"Yeah?"

"What of it?"

Ron smiled, "It's a lie." He said and then closed the door.

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Harry watched Ron vanish out into the snow. Draco leaned against him and sighed. "I thought I would never forgive him, but I think I have."

"That's good."

"Will he ever be happy, do you think?" Draco asked almost hopefully. Harry smiled.

"Maybe, if he truly wants to be." He murmured and then kissed Draco softly. "Come on our family is waiting." Draco smiled and fingered the pendant around his neck that he'd worn faithfully since the day Harry gave it to him; his smile turned into a grin as he walked back into the dining room filled with joy and laughter.

Harry never broke his promise.

He never left.

*The End*