

Hiding in Plain Sight Reognition

"Harry!"

Harry Potter turned in time to be pulled into a hug, earning himself a face full of bushy brunette hair.

"Hey Hermione," he said as she broke the clinch. "I missed you."

"I missed you too you prat," she sniffed. She reached up and caressed the side of his face. "You've gotten rid of your glasses, contacts?"

"Lasik," Harry laughed.

Hermione hugged Harry again, and then she backed off and slugged him in the arm.

"Ow!" Harry protested. "What was that for?"

"That was for running into a fight without a plan or anyone to help you," the girl huffed.

"I didn't go looking for trouble," Harry protested.

"You lost your escorts from the order," Hermione pointed out.

"Yeah, they tried to restrict me to #4. You were not confined like that, Ron wasn't confined like that. No one else was imprisoned like that, so I left while Dung was sleeping one off," Harry shrugged. "I figured that if they didn't notice that I left, they wouldn't notice if someone else arrived."

"Oh, Harry," Hermione sighed. "We should go through to the platform."

"Oh, you haven't seen the best part..." Harry laughed.

"What are you talking about?" she asked as she followed her friend through the portal.

The pair emerged onto Platform 9 $\frac{3}{4}$ into a group of 5th, 6th and 7th year girls.

"Who's your friend Granger?" Katie Bell asked.

"Very funny Katie," Hermione responded with a shake of her head.

"No, seriously," Pansy Parkinson insisted, "Who is this?"

Perplexed, Hermione looked to Harry who simply smiled.

"Well, hello stranger," Susan Bones said as she flowed into his arms, and leaned up for a kiss.

"Sorry ladies, I saw him first."

The assembled young women fell into stunned silence as they watched Susan stroll off arm in arm with the stranger.

"Who was that Hermione?" Ginny Weasley insisted.

"Harry," she responded still watching the pair walk away.

"Harry knows him?" the red-head asked before looking around. "Has anyone seen Harry?"

Hermione stood open-mouthed as the girls all began chattering about how much they were looking forward to seeing the Man Who Won.

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"Harry James Potter!" Hermione demanded as she caught up with her friend and the girl who was evidently his new girlfriend. "What is going on, why didn't they recognize you?"

"It's his glasses, Hermione," Susan said helpfully.

"What do you mean?"

"After Harry saved my aunt and me from You Know Who..."

"I didn't even know you were there Sue," Harry protested. "Or that your Aunt was the victim, I just saw Tom and his minions attacking someone and..."

"AFTER Harry saved my aunt and me from You Know Who," the red-head repeated while glaring at her boyfriend before turning to Hermione to continue. "He went to a Muggle healer to get his eyes repaired."

"Why?"

"Tom summoned my glasses during the fight, which was really kind of lucky," Harry explained.

"Lucky?"

"Well, yeah," Harry blushed. "If he hadn't done that he'd likely have won. Once I couldn't see, I chanced a summoner of my own, mostly because it was the only area affect spell I could think of

at the time. I just cast and put everything I had into it."

"He pulled the entire facade of the Magical Menagerie down on top of the Death Eaters," Susan interjected. "That killed most of the Death Eaters outright and trapped You Know Who under the fallen wreckage."

"Trapped?" Hermione said as she took her seat in the rail carriage. "But all the reports said you killed him."

"Yeah, well about that..." Harry said, clearly embarrassed by the question. "After the front of the building came down, I heard Susan crying and calling for help because Amelia was trapped under the wreckage as well. I recognized her voice and ran toward her. I couldn't really see where I was going and I tripped over Lucius Malfoy. I stumbled and I... well, I sort of..."

"Harry crushed You Know Who's windpipe with his knee when he was running over him to get to me," Susan finished. "By the time the Aurors arrived the bastard was dead."

That was classic Harry, Hermione mused. To accidentally succeed in the face of disaster seemed to be Harry's signature move. "Ok, that explains how you defeated Voldemort, and why you got your eyes fixed," Hermione said. "But it doesn't explain why no one recognized you."

"I'm getting to that," Harry grinned. "Madam Bones felt she owed me for saving her and Susan. She took me home with her and made me spend the night. The next day, she arranged for me to be emancipated, which freed up my inheritance through Gringotts, and she told Dumbledore to back off and leave me alone outside of school, which meant that I never went back to good old #4, or my loving relatives."

"And this explains why no one knows who you are... how?" Hermione fumed in the manner Harry recognized as how Ms. Granger reacted to information being withheld.

"Getting there Hermione," Harry laughed. "Anyway, Susan and I got friendly and I decided that living in the Bones home was probably a bad idea if I wanted to keep Amelia from wanting to do evil things to me. So, I rented a hotel room for the rest of the summer and moved out. While I was at the hotel, I ran across an article in a magazine about wonders of lasik surgery, I went to a Doctor and they did it, left eye first, then the right."

"And when they took the bandages off," Susan added, "I didn't recognize him."

"What?" Hermione asked. "That doesn't make any sense."

"Tell me about it," Harry said.

"It took him three hours to convince me, and even then he had to put on his old glasses. It took even longer for Auntie Amelia to believe he was Harry. Neither of us understands it."

"Every Wizard raised we've tried it on has no idea who Harry is when he isn't wearing his glasses," Susan continued. "While all the Muggle born and raised compliment him on how he looks with his

new contacts. It's really weird."

"So, Ron?"

"Walked right past me in Diagon last week," Harry laughed. "I'm split between deciding to wear a pair of glasses with no lenses for a while or to just be all kinds of incognito for 6th year."

"But... " Hermione was almost speechless at the outrageous claim. "What about the staff?"

"Snape was behind me in line when I picked up my potions kit for the year. He kept looking at me as if he was trying to remember who I was. It was really pretty funny. He was raised right on the border of the magical and Muggle worlds, but it seems like the magical side has the edge with him."

Hermione was looking out the window while trying to digest this bit of information, when she spotted Mad Eye Moody standing in line to board the train. The retired Auror was wearing short trousers, a long sleeve shirt and tie, and an absurd mullet wig. Behind the old man were seven other grown men and women, all dressed as stereotypical 1940s era public school students.

Hermione stared as she watched the group of eight climbing aboard the Express. She turned to Harry with a look of incredulity on her face.

"Oh, you spotted Moody and his team? Yeah, that's my fault too."

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"Your fault?" Hermione asked.

"I hate to admit it, but yes. A couple of weeks ago I invited Susan and Amelia out for dinner and a movie, sort of showing them how the other half lives. I was running late, so I sat them down in front of the suite's telly while I changed. Channel 4 was showing that old Yank show, 21 Jump Street."

"The one where the obviously adult policemen went undercover as students at a high school?" Hermione asked.

"Auntie really liked that documentary, and she decided that with the fall of You Know Who, there might still be some active sympathizers at Hogwarts, and she wanted to put some of her Aurors in undercover," Susan explained.

"Documentary?"

"Yeah, I tried to explain that the show was fiction, but they don't believe me," Harry shrugged. "Some fights just aren't worth fighting. The whole idea appealed to Amelia and she's created a team from her department to emulate it. Since Moody was the department's premiere stealth instructor during his time at the Academy, she had him recalled from retirement and put in charge of the new unit."

"You're serious?" Hermione asked, hoping desperately that he was not.

"Oh, yeah. If nothing else, this year should be interesting."

The door to the compartment slid open to reveal Ron Weasley. "Hey Hermione, we've got to get to the Prefects meeting. Good seeing you Sue, I'm glad you and your Aunt came out of the whole Death Eater Attack thing ok," The red-head's attention focused on Harry. "Have we met?"

"I'm new," Harry grinned. "My name is Kent. Clark Kent."

"How you doing, Kent?" Weasley responded with a nod. "Come on Hermione, meeting."

Hermione stood up and headed for the door, pausing to turn back to Harry and mouth 'Clark Kent?' before disappearing down the passageway.

"Clark Kent?" Susan asked.

"Clark is another bloke who no one recognizes when he takes his glasses off. I'm guessing he won't mind if I borrow his name," Harry explained, not really wanting to get into the concept of fiction with his new girlfriend again.

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"Hermione" Colin said as the young woman exited the prefect's compartment. "Something very weird is going on and I think you should see it."

In as much as her entire day had been a bit weird, Hermione nodded her acceptance of the invitation and followed her younger housemate through the passage, ending up three cars back.

There they found the sight of three third year Ravenclaws bullying a man of at least 35.

"You aren't going to cry are you firstie?" the tallest of the three taunted the man as he delivered a shove.

"Firsties always cry," the second 'claw said as he shoved the man to the third bully.

"I wonder what Professor Flitwick will say when he discovers he's lost 30 points while his students were still on the train." Hermione asked rhetorically.

The three bullies scattered into compartments and the doors slammed shut. Hermione fixed her gaze on the adult. "What the hell is going on here?"

"Ah," the man said as he straightened the crease in his plus fours. "Muggleborns I take it?" the man produced his badge. "I'm on special undercover assignment for the DMLE. We're deep cover as unsorted first years at the moment."

Hermione blinked. Harry had warned her, but actually seeing it was mind-boggling. A quick

glance at Colin showed he was a confused as she. "How do you expect to pass as first years?"

"Look Miss, the Department of Mysteries has been working for years to discover how you Muggleborn can see through our disguises. Just let it suffice to say that we know what we are doing, alright?" The man straighten up, "I've got to go find my mates now Miss. Just keep in mind that you don't want to be interfering in an official investigation, alright?"

Hermione watched as the man made his way down the passage and into one of the compartments.

"You know," Colin said, reminding Hermione that he was still at her side, "when I heard that Harry had finished the Dark Lord, I thought this might turn out to be a quiet year."

"I quite agree Colin," Hermione nodded. "It seems we've traded horrifically dangerous for psychotically silly."

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Hermione returned to the compartment she had left Harry and Susan in to find Harry to be missing.

"Where is 'Clark'?" She asked.

"Out spreading a bit of chaos," Susan laughed. "He couldn't decide if he was going to be Harry or Clark this year, so he's decided to be both."

"Both?" Hermione asked.

"Yeah, he's out with his fake glasses now, making sure people see Harry. After he's done with that, he'll be back here to cuddle with me and been seen as Clark," The red-head grinned. "After all he's been through at school, he's earned a bit of fun don't you think?"

Hermione could not see any way to deny Harry his bit of fun. Truth be told, she was wondering just how much Harry could get away with before someone in authority put the brakes on his little bit of teenaged rebellion.

The door slid open and Harry slipped in sliding the door closed behind him. Removing his glasses, he put them into a pocket as he slid into the seat next to Susan, putting his arm around her.

"Time for Harry to disappear, I think," Harry said as he pulled Susan close.

As soon as Harry was sitting, the door flew open to reveal a panting Ginny Weasley. "Harry, you tease," she said looking into the compartment, only to blink owlshly. "I thought... Harry was right here..."

"Is there a problem Ginny?" Susan asked sweetly.

"I thought I saw Harry come in here..."

"No one in here but us," Susan said.

Ginny looked to Hermione, the bushy haired witch just shrugged.

"Who's Harry?" the young man in the compartment asked.

"Who's Harry?" Ginny asked in astonishment. "Who's Harry? Are you kidding? Who are you anyway?"

"Clark Kent," he said with a smile.

"How can you not know about Harry Potter?"

"Oh, Potter," Harry said with a nod. "I didn't make the association. He's probably out giving an interview. Truth be told, he always struck me as a bit of a glory hog."

"You don't know Harry!" Ginny screamed, before wheeling on Hermione. "How can you sit here and listen to this... fool say things like that?"

"In all fairness, Harry has never sought out his notoriety," Hermione pointed out.

"And he saved me and my Auntie," Susan suggested. "You shouldn't say things like that about poor Harry."

"Poor Harry?" Ginny asked. "What do you mean by that?"

"Well, he went by a while ago with Pansy, and well..." she leaned forward and whispered, "she was hanging off him the way she used to do with Draco."

"Harry and Pansy?" Ginny asked paling.

"No one knows what he's been doing all summer," Hermione sighed. "Merlin only knows what he's gotten up to, and what kind of scarlet women he's fallen in with."

"I've got to find him!" Ginny said as she ran from the compartment.

Silence filled the compartment for several seconds, " *What kind of scarlet woman he's fallen in with ?*" Susan asked sarcastically, breaking the silence.

"Ooh! I know the answer to that!" Harry said pulling her onto his lap. "The best kind."

"You started it," Hermione giggled. " *You shouldn't say things like that about poor Harry .*" She said mimicking Susan's voice.

"Alas," Harry laughed, "poor Harry, I knew him well... Now he's fallen in with a bad crowd..."

The trio fell into laughter and found it very hard to stop.

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"And where do you think you're going Mr. Kent?"

"Professor McGonagall?" Harry said, almost as surprised that his head of house had not recognized him, as he was that the alias he had selected impulsively to mess with Ron had somehow gotten to the castle before he had.

"You'll need to be sorted Mr. Kent," the Deputy Head sniffed. "Go on out into the hall, you'll be sorted with the first years."

Harry watched as McGonagall strode away, presumably to fetch the first years, he then looked to Susan. "Well, I didn't expect that."

"It looks like someone wants you to find your new House," Susan noted, as she fingered his solid black tie. Harry was surprised to see that his robes had lost all of their Gryffindor identification somewhere between the Express and the Castle.

"I wonder if anyone has ever been sorted twice before," she giggled, before rising on to her tiptoes to kiss him. "Just don't get sorted into Slytherin, it's embarrassing enough to be dating a Gryffie."

Harry could not help but grin. Susan was a whole lot of fun; he really had not expected that the first time he had asked if she would like to go shopping with him. He contemplated simply putting his glasses on and going to sit at the Gryffindor table, but where would the adventure be in that?

Harry made his way to the area where the Firsties would congregate until the Great Hall was ready for them. Now, Hermione on the other hand, she might not find his needing sorting again to be quite so amusing. Harry knew that Hermione, even now, was sorting through her memories of Hogwarts: A History for any reference to such a thing happening before.

Harry sighed, at least this time his standing out was a result of something he had done, and not something someone else had manipulated him into.

McGonagall approached leading the herd of Firsties like ducklings following their mother. She had evidently already done her "your house is your family" spiel, because she instructed the new students, including Moody's 'stealth' crew to at least attempt to make themselves presentable before disappearing into the Great Hall.

Harry waited, not speaking while the Firsties settled down. He noticed Moody eyeing him suspiciously from his place among the first years, while a handful of those first years, the Muggleborn and raised, regarded the 'stealth' crew with more than a little confusion, clearly wondering how and why fully-grown adults were among them.

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"Back again Mr. Potter?" the hat said deep within his mind. "Or should I say, Mr. Kent?"

"Hey Hat," Harry responded. "Sorry about this, it wasn't my idea. I have no idea how I ended up out of Gryffindor."

"The Express is an extension of the school boy," the hat huffed. "Much as I am, and the school found the idea that you might take advantage of the inability of those raised around magic to see beyond the obvious to be quite humorous. Almost as soon as you started to imagine yourself as leading two lives this year, the castle laid a charm onto your spectacles. When you wear them, you will be Harry Potter, Gryffindor, when you don't you will be Clark Kent, the as yet unsorted 6th year."

Harry had to laugh. "Ok, that sounds like it could be fun. I noticed your own change. When did you get a badge?"

"That was my price for sorting Amelia Bones' Aurors into their student roles. I'm officially deputized."

"Honorary?" Harry asked.

"Of course not!" the hat exclaimed. "I'm officially on the roles for the next year, at least. I'm going to use my salary to have myself repaired, cleaned and blocked this summer."

"Oh, this year is shaping up to be so truly weird. So, where am I going?"

"Well," the hat said. "It would be too confusing to have both of your aspects in Gryffindor..."

"True, and hard to keep track of," Harry agreed.

"And you've changed too much for me to inflict you on Salazar's house."

"Inflict me?" Harry echoed.

"Yes, you troublemaker. Don't think for a moment the school doesn't know what you've been up to all this time. I believe it's quite clear that you wouldn't enjoy Ravenclaw,"

"Can't argue with that really," Harry admitted.

"So, I'm afraid that Miss Bones will have to get used to having you close by in..."

"HUFFLEPUFF!" the hat shouted aloud.

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"Clark Kent?" Justin Finch-Fletchly asked with a single raised eyebrow. "It's not that I don't appreciate your ingenuity in finally getting over to the one true house of Hogwarts Harry, but you call yourself 'Clark Kent'?"

"You'll notice that none of our pureblood friends seem to have realized there is something going

on?" Harry asked as Susan wrapped an arm around his waist.

"Well, other than Sue, now that you mention it... What's going on?"

"Wait for it," Harry teased. "Do you see who is being sorted now?"

"Is that... Moody?" Justin asked as he recognized the face of the man who taught him the 4th year DADA curriculum.

"Yep," Harry grinned. "Gather up the Hufflepuff Muggleborn and raised after the feast tonight, and I'll explain the best I can."

"Ok," Justin agreed, and then hesitated. "Clark Kent?" He asked again.

"It was a joke that something magical took much too seriously," Harry laughed as Moody went to Ravenclaw.

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Pansy Parkinson entered her dorm, her fingers pulling at her necktie. She had been worried about how the school was going to be reacting to Slytherin house in the aftermath of the death of the Dark Lord. Her time on the Express and through the welcoming feast had shown that nothing had really changed. There was a general distrust of the residents of Salazar's house, but no more than before the Dark Lord's fall.

That was oddly comforting.

Pulling her tie from her collar, she noticed that her dorm-mates were staring at her.

"What?"

"So," Millie said with a sly smile. "How long have you and Potter been going at it?"

"What?"

"Everyone knows Pansy," Tracey laughed. "Though we haven't figured out how you kept it quiet for so long."

"What?"

"So," Daphne asked, "how is he?"

"Is he as large as the Weaslette says?" Millie giggled.

"Is it true he likes to take you from behind while pulling your hair?" Tracey asked, her face flushing.

"What the hell are you talking about?"

Suddenly there was a banging on the door. "Pansy!" Draco screamed. "Open this damned door Pansy! I know all about you and Potter Pansy! Open this damned door right now!"

"Bloody hell," she breathed.

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"Ok," Tracey Lincoln, 7th year Hufflepuff said. "Explain this again. Why can't our pureblood classmates see that you're Harry Potter?"

"I don't know for certain," Harry laughed, "but I think it has to do with cynicism. Those of us raised out in the Muggle world usually are not willing to believe much of anything on face value, because we grew up with limits on what was possible. People raised in the Magical world all seem to believe anything they're told without question, mostly because pretty much everything is possible with magic."

"And they accept Professor Moody and the rest of the Aurors masquerading as students because?" She asked.

"Pretty much the same thing," Harry shook his head. "Harry Potter wears glasses, everyone knows that. I get my eyes fixed, I don't wear glasses, and no one knows who I am. With Moody, Alastor Moody is a retired Master Auror, he doesn't dress like a school kid, and everyone knows what school kids dress like. So, you see a tall firstie and he couldn't possibly be Alastor Moody."

"That's crazy," Justin noted.

It is," Harry agreed, "but if you want REAL crazy, watch this;" from a pocket he pulled out his glasses and slipped them on his face. The assembled Hufflepuffs gasped as his uniform shifted from Hufflepuff colors to those of Gryffindor house. "I didn't do this," Harry pointed out. "If the Sorting Hat is to be believed, the Castle itself put the charm on my glasses after hearing me joking about it on the Express."

"Weird," Justin mused. "So you just want us to go along with it?"

"Why not?" Harry laughed again. "Voldemort is gone, Umbridge is gone, Fudge is gone, and the Ministry has decided that we were telling the truth all along. Why shouldn't I prank the school?"

"Ok, fine," Lincoln said after looking about the room at the other Muggleborn and raised and seeing general agreement. "But if Clark Kent is dating Susan, how does she feel about Harry Potter's torrid affair with Pansy Parkinson?"

"What?" both Susan and Harry both asked, shocked by the suggestion.

"Come on Harry," Justin said shaking his head. "Everyone knows."

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Hermione searched through the eighth book of this session, not for the first time cursing the Wizarding World's apparent ignorance of the existence of indexes. There had to be a reason that Harry was getting away with this silliness.

A week into classes and none of the staff had batted an eye when Clark Kent morphed into Harry Potter by putting on a pair of glasses, and then back again as the whim took him. She had been through every single book on the power of suggestion as realized among magicals, but none of the books had any insights, so she was delving deeper into what little existed in the Hogwarts library on the subject of psychology in the Magical world.

Progress so far was nonexistent. Still, research had never failed her before.

"Do you have a moment Granger?"

Hermione looked up shocked. Pansy Parkinson had not addressed her so politely since they met on the train back in 91. And that was before the Slytherin had learned of Hermione's heritage.

"How can I help you Parkinson?" she asked, quietly palming her wand under the table. The Dark Lord may be gone, but she knew that Slytherins like Pansy still regarded her as something less than human.

"I'm looking for Potter; do you know where he is?"

"I saw him earlier this evening with Susan Bones," Hermione answered truthfully.

"No," Pansy sighed. "I just saw her, she's with that Kent boy."

Hermione fought against the smile that threatened to reveal itself. Despite of her fondness of rules, she found the idea that people could look at Harry without his glasses and not recognize him to be hilarious.

"You're Potter's best friend, right?" Pansy asked, trying another tack.

"I like to think so," Hermione responded. "Why?"

"Everyone is telling me that we've been having an affair, Potter and me," Pansy answered hesitantly. "A wild passionate affair, but... but I don't know anything about it. Do you think he might have obliviated me? Would he do something like that?"

Every time Hermione imagined she had a handle on how effectively the Hogwarts rumor mill could mangle a rumor, something like this happened. She wondered just how Susan's off hand teasing of Ginny over Harry's whereabouts had so mutated in such a short time. "Harry Potter would never do such a thing," Hermione said in a tone that did not invite debate. "Harry is far too honorable to do that to someone he cared for, and the only way he would have taken you to his bed is if he cared for you. Besides, Harry doesn't know the obliviation spell."

“He doesn’t?” Pansy asked in surprise. “But he fought the Dark Lord...”

“Harry is extremely talented in defensive and offensive magic,” Hermione explained. “He can outfly almost anyone, and is very, very good at transfiguration. But something lacking any use in a fight, like obliviation, well, that wasn’t worth his time.”

“Then why can’t I remember it?” Pansy asked plaintively.

Because it never happened you stupid slag, Hermione thought. She paused for a moment as an idea came to her. “Well, there might be an explanation for that...”

“There is?” The plea in the Slytherin girl’s voice was beyond evident. Hermione decided to throw the girl a lifeline.

“In Muggle medical literature there are examples of what they call ‘Carnalis Memoria damnum’ where bouts of intense pleasure can actually cause memory loss,” the bushy haired girl suggested.

“Intense pleasure?”

“Extremely intense pleasure,” the Gryffindor nodded. “That’s why it’s so rare, it’s unusual for a woman to be so pleased, that she is at risk of losing her mind.” *She’s buying it*, Hermione marveled internally. *How gullible can you get?*

“But...” Pansy seemed confused. “That would explain why I don’t remember it, but shouldn’t there be gaps in my memories?”

“Not necessarily,” Hermione said, her mind racing, “the human mind is adaptable; it isn’t unknown for the mind to fill in the blanks with routine things. I suppose it’s possible that when your passion with Harry overwhelmed you, your subconscious simply filled in the blank periods with what would happen on one of your normal days.”

Pansy blinked, and then started to nod. “That makes sense. Thank you Granger, if you see Potter... if you see Harry, ask him to come see me, we need to discuss our future.”

Hermione watched the Slytherin girl rise from her seat and leave the library. She sighed and shook her head. She added this symptom to her list for research and study. If they were all like Parkinson, Hermione Granger was going to own the Magical world in less than a decade. She made a note to tell Harry about the lovesick girl he was going to have after him for her next exposure to mind blowing sex...

Wait.

Hermione smiled as a truly evil idea formed in her mind. This would be payback for every time Pansy had called her a Mudblood, for every ‘joke’ calling into question Hermione’s sexuality, her looks, her clothing, her family...

Yes, Hermione would arrange for Pansy’s ‘affair’ with Harry to continue, with her tragically

losing all memory of each tryst and having to be reminded of it. She did a quick review of the Muggleborn in her circle... who else would be interested in paying Pansy Parkinson back, just a little bit?

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"Albus, I'm telling you that there is something going on, and Potter is behind it."

Albus sighed. There were four universal constants at Hogwarts, it seemed. The Express always arrived on Sunday September first, the Sorting Hat's song was always cryptic, and since 1991, the DADA professor would at some point attempt to kill Harry Potter, and Severus Snape would blame Potter for everything... including those first three constants.

"What is it that has you so concerned Severus?"

"Something has my Slytherin's stirred up," the Potions master said.

"A good number of them did lose one or more of their parents the night Potter ended You Know Who," Minerva pointed out.

"And even more have parents and siblings currently residing in Azkaban, a claim that both Minerva and I can also make about our houses Severus," Filius suggested. "What makes the agitation of your Slytherins all that special?"

Snape shook his head. They did not understand, they never understood. "The loss of their parents is the least of the issue. If anything, most of my house considers all of this as opportunity to be grasped with both hands. While Draco Malfoy did truly mourn when his father died at Potter's hand, he never hesitated to take the power and treasure his elevation to head of house Malfoy afforded him."

"Then what is the problem?" Pomona asked with a sigh.

The dour man's mouth formed into a firm line. "Potter and Pansy Parkinson are in the midst of a rather torrid affair."

Albus perked up at this news, while Minerva began to sputter. "Potter and Parkinson?"

"Believe me Minerva, I know," Snape said. "I've tried to catch them at it, so that I could discourage the relationship, but I've failed in that regard. I haven't even caught him looking at her in class, though she seems to be spending the majority of her class time making doe eyes at him."

"Well," Albus said quietly, "I for one find the idea of a romance between two such prominent students of houses with such a historic rivalry to be refreshing."

"That isn't the point," Severus insisted.

"Then what is the point Severus?" Pomona asked.

"That is just it," Snape thundered. "I don't know. Something is going on, and Potter has a hand in it. Granger is entirely too pleased with herself, and that new Kent boy, there is something about him that puts me on edge, then we get in a crop of first years that just know too much..."

"Mr. Kent is one of mine," Pomona Sprout said dangerously. "We've spoken before about you not abusing the students of my house Severus; do you require a reminder of why it would be a mistake for you to do so?"

"Of course not, but think! The boy arrives, apparently without prior training, yet he is doing well, as if he has been attending class all along."

"I have been monitoring Mr. Kent's progress in all of his classes, Severus, including yours. He is doing quite well," Pomona said quietly.

"That is entirely my point," Snape countered. "He showed up September 1st with no formal education on record, yet somehow he is in the top 20 percent of his cohort."

"The top 10 percent of potions and tied with Potter in Defense," Sprout noted.

"Yes!" Snape exclaimed. "How is that even possible? He comes from nowhere and is somehow under the protection of Amelia Bones while evidently courting her niece. He flows into my Newt Potions class like he's been there for years already."

"Leaving the twin evils of Potter and Kent for future discussion," Filius interrupted, "you mentioned first years who know too much?"

"You can't tell me that you haven't noticed those eight first years, a male and female in each house, who seem to associate with each other to the exclusion of their housemates?" Severus asked. "Each of them demonstrate a level of potions knowledge that is far in advance of what a first year should know. I've overheard the rest of the first years discussing the fact that these children are similarly achieving in other classes."

"I've noticed them," Filius admitted. They appear to have a ringleader, young Bannister Noody in my house. There is something familiar about him, he reminds me of someone..."

"But you can't quite put your finger on who," Minerva nodded.

"Thank Merlin," Pomona sighed. "I thought I was imaging things."

"All of this has something to do with Potter!" Snape declared. "And probably Kent as well."

---oooOOOooo---

"There she is," Hermione whispered.

Hannah Abbott nodded. This was going to be fun.

“Are you sure you’re ok with this, Hannah?”

“With all the grief that bitch has given me over the years, I’ve got no problem at all messing with her head,” the Hufflepuff giggled. “I’m surprised that you’ve talked Harry into it.”

Hermione stiffened. Telling Harry... That’s what she forgot.

---oooOOOooo---

“The only reason I didn’t turn you in was out of courtesy because you’re a fellow prefect, Parkinson. Don’t let it happen again.”

“What are you talking about Abbott?” The sixth year Slytherin sniffed.

“Oh, I see, you’ve forgotten that I caught you in the act with Harry Potter.”

“What?” Pansy gasped.

“I’ve already reported him to Granger, so if she turns you in, that’s not my problem.”

“You saw me and Harry?” Pansy asked.

“I saw far more flesh than I cared to see, I can tell you,” Hannah continued.

“It happened again?”

“Oh come on Parkinson, I heard you screaming three floors away.” Hannah said, while trying to remember if she had hit all the points Hermione had outlined for her. “Are you trying to tell me you’ve forgotten an orgasm like that?”

Pansy slumped against the wall; her only memories of the previous evening had been studying for charms and then an uneventful two-hour patrol where she saw nothing and no one unusual.

“Thank you for telling me Abbott,” she said quietly. I need to go...”

“Go?” Hannah asked. “Go where?”

“I need to find Harry; I need to talk to him.”

---oooOOOooo---

“Pansy.”

“Yes,” Hermione confirmed.

“And me.”

“Yes,” she nodded.

“A torrid affair. Between Pansy and me.”

“That’s the rumor,” Hermione acknowledged.

“A rumor that I first heard from the Hufflepuffs. And she believes it?”

“Yes,” she nodded again.

“That doesn’t make a bit of sense,” Harry protested. “How could she possibly believe that we have been having an affair?”

“I think it’s sort of my fault,” Susan said hesitantly.

“Your fault?” Harry asked incredulously. “Have you been renting my body out without telling me?”

“Oh, stop it,” Susan laughed. “I said it was my fault, because I told Ginny Weasley on the Express that you and Pansy were going at it like she used to with Draco.”

“Ok, fine. But I knew that was a lie, why doesn’t Pansy know it was a lie?” Harry asked.

“That part is sort of my fault,” Hermione admitted.

Harry was quiet for a moment, and then he continued. “What did you do?”

“She came to me looking for you,” Hermione said, her eyes cast downward in embarrassment. “She wanted to know why she couldn’t remember the affair that everyone else knew about and asked if you might have obliviated her.”

“And you told her?”

“That you wouldn’t do that, of course.” Hermione huffed. “Honestly Harry, that you would even ask.”

“Really?” Harry murmured. “I notice that despite your denials, the rumor didn’t die, and you seem to be somewhat embarrassed... Why might that be Hermione?”

“I had been looking at a lot of psychology books trying to figure out why you and Moody were getting away with your pathetic disguises, and I sort of suggested that, well I suggested that maybe she...”

“Spit it out Hermione, what did you tell the poor girl?”

“I told her that the reason she didn’t remember the affair is could be contributed to a Muggle disease I made up where a woman who experiences extreme pleasure actually loses all memory of the event.”

“I see,” Harry said while facepalming and wondering what was wrong with Pansy that she would believe such a thing.

“And then I sort of reinforced it, by having people yell at her for them walking in on you and her in the act,” Hermione continued. “She’s convinced that you and she have been having mind blowing sex of such intensity that her mind couldn’t deal with the pleasure and I think she’s falling in love with you.”

“Sex so intense that I might lose my mind?” Susan mused. “Is that what I’ve got to look forward to?”

“I’m looking forward to finding out,” Harry grinned, “but not with Pansy.”

“Harry,” Hermione began.

“So, who all knows a lot more about my imaginary sex life than I do?”

“Hannah, Colin, Katie and me so far. Su Li is supposed to be confronting her in about fifteen minutes.”

“Damn it Hermione,” Harry sighed. “Pansy is a bitch, but she doesn’t deserve this.”

“Actually, that’s why I decided to tell the two of you what is happening with her,” Hermione said. “She’s convinced herself that she’s in love with you and wants to tell you herself.”

“Bloody hell,” Harry whispered staring at the ceiling. “Why can’t life ever be easy?”

---oooOOOooo---

Amelia looked up from her drink when Moody entered the private room she had taken at the Hogshead.

“You look like hell, Alastor, have a drink.”

“Thanks lass,” the old Auror said as he settled into the waiting chair and reached for the offered drink.

Just the look of exhaustion on her old friend’s face brought a smile to Amelia’s. “Problems Alastor?”

“I’d forgotten what dealing with children was like, lass.”

“And I’d thought you’d underestimated how many you’d need on your team,” Amelia lifted her glass in a toast. “So, anything to report?”

“Well, the Muggleborn among the prefects spotted our people on the Express, just as we expected them to.”

“Any theories on how they spotted you?” Amelia asked.

“No, and it’s not limited to just the Muggleborn either,” the old man grumbled. “Your boy Potter came up to me after the sorting, put his arm around my shoulders and asked ‘Bannister Noody? Seriously?’ before starting to laugh. Potter is a half blood.”

“But brought up among the Muggles,” Amelia pointed out.

“Aye,” Moody nodded, “that’s true. Speaking of Potter, your Susan seems to be done with him.”

“Oh?” Amelia asked suddenly very interested.

“She’s taken up with a new lad, one named Kent, Clark Kent. From what I understand they met on the Platform even before they boarded the Express.”

“Clark Kent, you said?” “Amelia said making notes.

“Aye, new student, 6th year, sorted into Hufflepuff, although...” the old man paused as if something was just occurring to him. “He seems to be fairly well known among the Muggleborn... even the first years, who all seem to find his name amusing for some reason.”

Amelia looked up from the notes she was taking. “Describe him.”

“Apparent age, 16. Black hair, green eyes. He’s a bit on the short size, about Potter’s size, and about Potter’s weight.”

“Hmm,” Amelia murmured, putting the clues together. “Does he wear glasses?” She asked adjusting her monocle.

“No, though now that you mention it, if he did he would look just like... Oh, bloody hell!”

“Yeah,” Amelia nodded. “When he fought You Know Who, the bastard summoned his glasses. In the aftermath, Potter went to some Muggle healers and they fixed his eyes so that he doesn’t need to wear glasses. I didn’t recognize him either.”

“That little bastard!” Moody rumbled.

“I am surprised he’s taken on a new identity,” Amelia mused. “Something we’ll need to talk about over the Christmas Holidays I suppose. What about what you’re actually undercover for?”

“Nothing,” Moody admitted.

“Nothing?”

“Nothing at all. There is no shortage of students at the school with blood prejudices, but there is no sign of anyone jockeying to take the snake faced bastard’s place. Even among the most likely suspects, they seem to be more interested in consolidating their power within their families than is

ruling the world.

“Including the Malfoy boy?”

“Especially the Malfoy boy. From what Jensen in Slytherin has heard, the boy never expected to take headship of his house until he was a grandfather, and now he’s scrambling to keep from having it taken from him by one of the cadet lines. That and he’s trying to deal with losing his girlfriend to Potter.”

“What?” Amelia said losing her smirk. “When was Susan having anything to do with Malfoy?”

“Never, as far as I know,” Moody shook his head, hiding his emotions. There was always something special about surprising the boss. “Potter is shagging the Parkinson girl. Everyone in the castle knows about it.”

“It seems that Mr. Potter and I will have several discussions over Christmas...” Amelia temporized while contemplating demonstrating to the young man the difference between police brutality and the civilian kind. “Assuming Susan doesn’t kill him in the meantime.”

---oooOOOooo---

“Harry, we need to talk,” Ron said as he moved to block the door.

“Love to Ron,” Harry said, “but I’ve got places to be, people to see, things to do.”

“We know about you and Pansy Parkinson, Harry,” Neville said from where he sat on his bed. “She isn’t right for you. The whole relationship is just wrong.”

“Too right Harry,” Seamus agreed. “I mean sure, she’s gotten hot since she grew into her face, but still...”

“She’s a damned Slytherin,” Ron pointed out, not moving from his place in front of the door.

“I see,” Harry said before addressing the only member of the dorm who had not commented yet. “How about you Dean? Do you share in this rather sick interest in my sex life?”

“Nope,” the Londoner said, not bothering to look up from the book he was reading. “Who you shag is between you and her. Hopefully her. I mean, I’ve got nothing against blokes into other guys, I always figured that was one fewer lad I had to compete against for the available tail, but the rumor says Pansy and not Draco, which would be sick, but not because the blood bigot is a poof, which he probably is.”

“What?” Neville asked, clearly confused by Dean’s statement.

“Ok, smaller words:” Dean sighed. “I don’t care who Harry shags.”

“Thank you Dean, for that at least,” Harry said. “Ok, you three don’t like what you’ve heard about

me and Pansy?”

“We don’t Harry,” Seamus said. “And Dean’s not caring aside, think man. That Slytherin twat is probably using potions on you.”

“Potions? Really?” Harry frowned at his friends. “Now, I know I’ve taken all the same potions classes you lot have. Am I showing any of the signs of controlling potions? Am I fixated on the focus of the potion? Did I go into an unthinking rage when you questioned our love? Have you noticed any lack of direction on my part when I am away from my one true love?”

“Well, no,” Ron admitted.

“Ok, so potions are out for the mysterious reason for my relationship with Pansy. That only leaves you three not liking her as a person.”

“Well,” Neville said quietly, “she isn’t a very nice person.”

“Not a nice person?” Seamus sputtered.

“She’s a bitch!” Ron pronounced.

“Ok,” Harry shrugged. “You lot not liking her is a valid reason for me to stop seeing her I guess.”

“Alright Harry!” Seamus cheered.

“I told you he could be made to see things our way,” Ron said authoritatively.

Dean just shook his head in disappointment.

“Of course, this means that I have to approve your girlfriends, don’t I?”

“What?” Ron asked.

“Ron, you’ve been seeing Lavender for a while... You’re going to have to break it off with her. I think you can do better... she’s pretty vapid don’t you think?”

“What?” Ron repeated.

“Yeah, she’s not good for you, so you’ll need to break it off. And Seamus, I know you’ve been seeing Parvati, but seriously mate, she gave it up on your first date. I know she did, because you told us all about it when we were trying to sleep. Far too slutty, she’s got to go as well.”

“That’s hardly the same thing, Harry!” Seamus protested.

“It’s completely the same thing Seamus. Hey Neville, you dating anyone?”

“No,” Neville said, hanging his head.

“Oh well, when you do start, let me know and I’ll decide if she’s good enough for you, deal?” Harry turned back to Dean. “Dean, since you so selfishly disregard who I am with, I don’t care who you date. Go nuts. Lavender and Parvati are going to be unattached soon; maybe you can pull a threesome.”

“Cheers Harry,” the Muggleborn said with a wide grin.

“So, I guess the only thing left is for you two to dump your girlfriends, right?”

Ron got a stubborn look on his face, while Seamus started to sputter.

“I guess we understand each other then,” Harry said as he pushed past Ron to the door. “You wallys don’t get to choose who I date until I get to choose who you date.”

---oooOOOooo---

Pansy pulled the drapes around her bed closed and set up the privacy charms she had learned from her mother.

Her roommates were relentless with their questions and jibes about her relationship with Potter. With Harry. Draco was consumed by the knowledge of what she had done with... Harry. Even the disapproval in the eyes of the staff was getting to her.

Worst of all, she was beginning to remember their encounters, the night before she had recalled how they had met in Diagon in a dream. It had been the day after Potter had destroyed the Dark Lord, and had killed her uncle, and she had screamed at him, and struck at him with both hands.

Potter... Harry had caught her wrists and pulled her into a secluded alley, while she continued to kick and even bite at him. While she fought against him, he just held her in place and smiled that damned smile of his.

Then he kissed her. She remembered the shock and ... pleasure of it. There in that alley, just yards away from the crowds that thronged through the Alley that first day after the fall of the Dark Lord, they made love for the first time.

And she had lost all memory of it. It was all so clear now, that she had come to wakefulness in the midst of an orgasm. And now, she could remember it all if she concentrated on it. That first time was repeated only days later, this time in her home, then again, and again, and on the Express, and on her Prefect rounds.

She had been wavering back and forth about confronting Potter... Harry about their affair, but she had been terrified that once he learned of her inability to recall their encounters he would reject her. No, she had decided to keep what they had, to cherish it even though it took days for her to start to remember what they had together.

Then Draco had come to her after the evening meal. He had expressed his anger over what she was doing with Potter, but he wished her well, with tears in his eyes he promised her that if... no, he

insisted, when, she tired of Potter, he would be waiting.

Tire of Harry? She could not imagine that ever happening. Not when the memory of his touch so excited her so, not when dreams of his kisses caused her to lose herself. What she had shared with Draco had been wonderful, but with Harry it was... magic.

She needed to find Potter... Harry. She needed to see him... to tell him...

---oooOOOooo---

“Poor Harry,” Susan giggled.

“Look,” Harry whined in a manly manner, and sat up, “I don’t mind all that much that they are so against me having a relationship with Pansy, but they thought they could demand that I end it, without even talking to me about it.

“You don’t have a relationship with Pansy,” Susan pointed out as she reached up to pull him down so that he was once again lying with her on the sofa, “and unless you are really looking to find out what Auntie’s security detail taught me, you never will.”

"Sue," Harry sighed. "It's the fact that they felt they could tell me who I could see. Besides, I could take your Aunt's security detail. I took out the guy who took them out."

"It's so cute when you try to be all macho," she teased stroking his hair. "And we both know you didn't take You Know Who out, you pulled a building down on him. Hardly the same thing."

"It's the end result, that counts," Harry sniffed. "And the whole building thing was only the first stage of my cunning plan, don't forget that I choked the life out of him with my bare... ah, knee."

"Ooh Harry," Susan cooed as she rolled over on top of him. "When you pretend to be a he-man, it makes me so hot."

---oooOOOooo---

"We're wasting our time here Boss," Belinda Cooper said, scratching at the scar that bisected her face, a souvenir from Voldemort's first rise. "These children aren't interested in starting a war; the kids old enough to be of any threat are only interested in getting laid."

There was a grumble of agreement from the other Aurors in the room.

"I've already reported that to the Director," Moody explained. "She says we're here at least until the Christmas break."

"I am so tired of having my hair braided every night," Cooper complained. "I don't remember doing that in my first year."

Laughter rippled through the group.

---oooOOOooo---

"Hello Harry," Pansy said.

Harry pulled his robes back down so that they hung properly, cursing himself for forgetting to take his glasses off prior to going out into the hallways of the castle. Pansy might not be able to summon a person, but she was more than capable of summoning the robes someone was wearing.

"Hello Pansy, would opening the door and inviting me in have been too much trouble?"

"I was starting to think you were avoiding me," she said flowing up against him. "It's been a week since we were together."

Actually, it had been approximately their entire lives since they had been as close as they were right then, but Harry did not point that fact out. "I haven't been avoiding you Pansy."

"I dream about you Harry, about what you do to me, about what I want you to do to me," she whispered, her lips close to his right ear.

"Look Pansy..."

"Oh, what we've had together Harry, what you've done to me," She whispered.

"Listen, about that..."

"You've driven me to heights that I had never imagined. Your touch almost cost me my mind, Harry. I'm only just now starting to remember what you've done to me."

"Pansy..."

The Slytherin placed a finger on his lips. "Shh, don't interrupt me Harry; it's all I can do to keep from tearing your clothes off. What we have is so special, so very magical. I'm afraid that our passion is such that I couldn't survive it long Harry. Every time you touch me, I lose a bit more of myself."

She removed her finger from his mouth, and leaned forward to kiss him.

"I have to go Harry, we cannot be together, I can't risk it. I love you, but I cannot be with you. I'll never forget our time together, never."

He watched her leave and stared at the door for several moments before asking the question forefront in his mind.

"What the fuck just happened?"

---oooOOOooo---

Harry found Susan and Hermione studying together in the Library. His glasses in his pocket, he sat down across from the two most important women in his life.

“You’re late,” Hermione noted without looking up.

Susan saw the expression on his face. She cocked her head to one side and asked. “What’s wrong Harry?”

“I’m not sure, but I think Pansy just dumped me,” Harry explained.

That got Hermione’s attention. “You’re not sure?”

“She pulled me into a room and just started talking. She says she remembers our great sex life, which puts her one up on me,” Harry explained. “She said that I was too much for her and she was afraid that she was going to lose her mind. And then she kissed me and left saying we would never be together again.”

“She kissed you?” Susan said loud enough to earn a shushing from Madam Prince.

“Note I said, *SHE* kissed *ME*,” Harry pointed out quickly. “I didn’t kiss anyone. I’m the one who got dumped from a nonexistent relationship that you two created.”

Susan blushed, and Hermione’s eyes narrowed. “She thinks she remembers your sex life?”

“It must be the flip side of that power of suggestion thing you’ve been researching, everyone told her we were doing it, and then she started believing we were doing it because of your amnesia through sex story, and now she thinks she is starting to remember it all.”

“Wow.” Susan murmured.

“Yeah, I’m evidently really good in the sack,” Harry grinned.

“There is so much that can be done with this information,” Hermione enthused.

“Yeah, whatever,” Harry said shaking his head. “Look Hermione, in your next attempt in taking over the magical world, leave me out of it, ok?”

---oooOOOooo---

Harry stared at the tip of Amelia's wand as it glowed with barely restrained power.

"Uh, Sue, you told your Aunt how that whole Pansy thing was entirely your and Hermione's fault and that I had absolutely nothing to do with it, right?" He asked pleadingly.

"Calm down Auntie," Susan said, "Harry hasn't done anything wrong."

Amelia blinked and lowered her wand. "How was his affair with the Parkinson girl your fault?"

"I started the rumor about Harry and Pansy," Susan sighed. Upon seeing the look on her aunt's face the red-head continued, "it was supposed to be a joke, a way of distracting a Boy Who Lived fan girl, I certainly never expected everyone to believe it, much less Pansy herself."

Amelia sat down, with a confused expression on her face. "You made up a story about an affair between Harry and this girl and she ended up believing it?"

"I was spending most of my time as 'Clark', so no one was seeing much of Harry outside of class," he explained. "When coupled with the rumor, people used that to explain where 'Harry' was. Pansy was being quizzed by everyone about her tryst with me, and she went to Hermione Granger to see if it was possible that I had been obliviating her."

"Hermione has her own history with Pansy," Susan continued. "Some unpleasant things have been said back and forth over the years, so Hermione saw an opportunity to pay Pansy back a bit. She assured Pansy that there was no way Harry would ever obliviate anyone, but that there might be a medical reason she didn't remember her affair with Harry."

"Medical reason?" Amelia echoed.

"Yes," Harry nodded. "Hermione made up some Muggle medical thing where a woman would lose her memories of an event if it was associated with intense pleasure. She managed to convince Pansy that was what had happened."

"So the affair..." Amelia asked.

"Was completely in Pansy's imagination." Susan confirmed.

"So you never had sex with the Parkinson girl?"

"Not even a little bit," Harry shook his head. "Or with anyone else."

Amelia turned to her niece, digesting this bit of news. She had been sure that Susan had dealt with that the previous summer following Harry's emancipation.

Satisfied, Amelia smiled. "Welcome home, Harry. And Happy Christmas."

---oooOOOooo---

The Great Hall was abuzz with the news that Pansy Parkinson had ended her affair with Harry Potter just prior to the break for the Christmas Holidays. More than one girl had spent the trip on the Express in search of the elusive Boy Who Lived in order to offer her condolences for his loss.

No one found him, and Harry Potter was conspicuous in his absence from the Gryffindor table.

Before the beginning of the meal, Professor McGonagall signaled for attention, and the Headmaster rose to speak.

"I have just been made aware that Harry Potter has withdrawn from the Hogwarts School of Wizardry and Witchcraft. While I do not routinely make announcements when a student withdraws from our school, I felt that Mr. Potter has over the years he has attended made enough of an impression that his presence will be missed both by his teachers, his friends and his... competitors," the old man paused as the news was absorbed by the assembled students.

"I hope you will all join me in wishing Mr. Potter well in his future endeavors," Dumbledore said as he raised his goblet high. "To Harry Potter!"

"To Harry Potter," the assembled students and staff echoed, some more enthusiastically than others.

---oooOOOooo---

At the Slytherin table, Draco was ecstatic. "I see what you did now Pansy," he enthused. "That was brilliant. What the Dark Lord's force couldn't do, what my father's scheming couldn't do, what my plots couldn't do, you did by making the fool fall in love with you, and then ripping that away."

"So, Slytherin," he said in wonder. "I think you might well be the most Slytherin of us all."

So thrilled with the news, Draco never noticed the tears in Pansy's eyes.

---oooOOOooo---

"Did he say anything to you Herms?" Ron asked.

"No Ron, he didn't," she responded. "And I've asked you before not to mangle my name."

"Leaving school?" Neville asked shaking his head. "That doesn't seem wise. I hope Harry has made plans."

"I'm sure he has," Hermione said quietly. "Harry isn't the type to abandon his future."

No one at the Gryffindor table noticed her nod toward the Hufflepuffs.

---oooOOOooo---

"You are absolutely shameless," Justin noted.

"Who me?" Clark Kent asked in an innocent tone.

Yes, you," the Muggleborn wizard grinned. "Talk about hiding in plain sight."

"Is it wrong to want to spend a couple of years where no one is expecting me to solve the world's problems?" Clark asked.

"Of course it isn't," Susan said as she leaned into her boyfriend while they waited for the

announcements and generalized staff silliness to finish. "Draco seems to be really broken up over losing Harry..."

"Draco probably envied Pansy," Justin snarked.

"Ok ew," Clark said, a look of disgust on his face. "You know once the old folks are done yammering, there's going to be a meal, right? Even an imaginary affair with Draco is close to turning my stomach."

"Don't worry Clark," Susan said as she reached up to run her fingers through his hair. "I'll protect you from that nasty Malfoy boy. I'm selfish, I never share."