

Call Me In The Morning

A/N: I do not own Harry Potter. Nor any of the other characters or situations associated with Harry Potter.

A/N2: This is particularly silly, and probably should not be read, by anyone at any time. Ever. In fact allowing your children to read this is most likely classified as child abuse in most states. But then if you've ever read any of my stuff, you already know that.

Call Me In The Morning

Now:

I bought a coconut.

That unto its self was odd. While I often purchased things I wanted, the things I wanted rarely required a trip to a Muggle Supermarket. Since I was already there, I also bought a small mesh bag of limes.

How convenient, I thought at the time, to have the missing components of the potion I was brewing so readily available, and at such low prices.

I paused to consider the small fuzzy spheres in a bin next to the limes labeled 'Kiwi Fruit'. Disgusting. Muggles certainly ate some horrible things. I made my way to the check out area, and while waiting on queue, I learned many things about the Muggle world that I had never imagined.

It seemed that something called 'the Incredible Frogboy' had escaped again from whatever holding facility it had been confined in. There were also articles about how some people called 'scientists' were keeping someone named Hitler's living brain in a jar, and evidently there were Muggle loonies who were claiming that they had sent someone to the Moon, because there were whole newspapers dedicated to debunking that absurd claim. I picked up several of the magazines and newspapers containing those stories, so that I could show my father the state of the Muggle world.

I reached the head of the queue, and my order was tallied. To my utter amazement the bored shop assistant accepted the colored bits of Muggle paper just as the Goblin had assured me that she would. I accepted the oddly shaped coins that were offered as change, then securing my purchases in to the pockets of my great coat, I left the establishment. It was a short walk to the convenient alley from which I apparated back to Hogsmeade.

====oooOOOooo====

Making my way back to the castle, I was soon ensconced in one of the potions labs hidden deep within the bowels of the Slytherin house Dorms, and deep into my project.

This was no time for mistakes. I had learned from my earlier lapses in judgment. I had researched ever single aspect of this potion. I knew what I needed to do, I had all of the instruments and ingredients called for in the recipe, and I had covered every possibility. I was so close, too close to risk disaster this time. I had been preparing for this night since the return from the Christmas holidays. There were only five days left before the school let out for the summer and my seventh and final year at Hogwarts was done. Tomorrow I would finally do it. Tomorrow I would wrest from Potter what I deserved.

Warily following the instructions for the fourth of Potter's secret potions, I placed the coconut into a shallow bowl. Carefully, so very carefully, using the charms learned at my Godfather's knee I performed the incantation and wand movements that would gently split the palm fruit and allowed the milk to drain into the bowl over a low heat. Allowing the coconut milk to warm, I set about juicing the limes. Soon. The potion would be finished soon, and then I would receive what I deserved.

The brew started to foam lightly, just as the instructions said it would. The color was perfect. Seven hours and six precise stirrings to go. I turned the timing glass over to allow it to mark the time to the next stir, and sat back to reflect on how I arrived at this point.

====oooOOOooo====

Despite the fall of the Dark Lord at the hand of that ass Potter the previous summer, the Malfoy family had emerged untouched, their stature in Wizarding Society the same it had always been. What I had expected to be a triumphant return to Hogwarts had turned out to be something less than satisfactory. The reason was the same it had been every year.

Potter.

Wearing his mantle of Slayer of Voldemort, Potter had quickly built himself a following among the students, including several from Slytherin house. Anytime the 7th year Gryffindor wasn't in class he was surrounded by women. Several women, and at the same time. It was disgusting. It was unnatural. It was unfair. I wanted, no needed, no, I demanded my fair share.

It had taken weeks to find out Potter's secret. The Gryffindor had been dosing himself with a potion, one that made him irresistible to women. My first clue had been when Tracey Davis had come back to the dorms following a 'date' with Potter. The normally unflappable (and unapproachable) strawberry blond had sat in the common room gushing to her friend Greengrass about her evening with Potter and saying something about coconut and limes.

That was when I realized what Potter was doing. And I knew what I needed to do.

====oooOOOooo====

There she was. Bloody predictable that girl. All I had to do was wait long enough outside the library and she would appear. I stepped from the shadows.

"Granger." I said in a friendly manner. I would show her that I was the bigger man, willing to make allowances for her disgusting origins.

The brunette turned to my voice. She spotted me immediately, her eyes narrowing and her hand drifting toward her wand.

"What do you want Malfoy?"

"I want what Potter's getting and I'm willing to pay for it." She had to be the source. Potter had no talent for potions, Godfather had said so repeatedly. Granger had to be the source.

"Excuse me?" she said, her cinnamon eyes almost seemed to be sparking.

"Oh don't play innocent with me." I said dismissively. Honestly, this girl had no business sense. I was offering top Galleon here. "I know you're giving it to Potter, I want it too. Name your price."

The mud... no, must not use that term anymore. The Muggle born girl stepped closer, I took this to mean that she was considering my generous offer and moving closer in order to begin confidential negotiations. Then she grasped the front of my robes and drove her knee into my groin.

The entire universe went red, and my limbs failed me, I fell to the stone floor.

"You. Listen. To. Me. You. Disgusting. Pervert." Granger said, punctuating each word with a kick to my stomach or ribs. "I. Am. A. Nice. Girl. Take. Your. Disgusting. Offers. And. Leave. Me. Alone."

====oooOOOooo====

I ended up spending twelve hours in the Hospital Wing, where I was forced explain to the Matron again and again that I had been assaulted by three, no five large ruffians, who finally managed to take me down after I had dispatched three of them.

The Matron had the temerity to suggest that the bruises on my body appeared to have been made by a size six woman's shoe.

My father will hear of this insult. Oh yes, she will pay for insinuating that I might have been beaten by a mere girl.

After my release from her purported 'care' I returned to the Slytherin Common Room and carefully went over my memories of the conversation that led to Granger's unprovoked attack upon my person, and I could find no fault. Perplexed, I approached Pansy, and explained what might have happened, hypothetically of course, hoping for insight into the female mind.

"You actually said that? You actually told her that you knew she was giving it to Potter and you wanted it too? Then you offered her money?" The silly girl started to laugh.

That struck me as an odd reaction to not understanding the actions of a mud... Muggle born.

====oooOOOooo====

Now:

The timing glass chimed.

Selecting the glass rod, I dipped it into the brew and began a slow anti-clockwise stir, making one full revolution every seven seconds. With each full revolution the colors of the brew changed starting milk white and by the end of the nineteenth turning a full pink.

Removing the glass rod from the caldron, I took a three ounce ladle of the brew and raised it to my mouth, tipping the mixture into my mouth. I swished the vile liquid in my mouth for a full count of twenty three, and then spat it back into the caldron, keying the potion to myself.

I turned the second timing glass to measure the time until the next schedule stir, and then stumbled to the toilet to purge the remaining potion from my body. The costs of this potion were high, but the rewards promised to be... amazing.

====oooOOOooo====

Plan 'B' was similar to Plan 'A', only with a different target. Tracking this one down was far more difficult, between her time on the Quidditch pitch, 'dates' with various male students, even studying on occasion, it took me two weeks to find her alone.

"Good morning Weasley." I said, covertly checking that the protective charms I had cast on my groin were still in place. "Might I have a moment?"

"What do you want Malfoy?" Honestly, the way she spoke my family name was almost like an invective.

"Look Weasley," I said, in a conversational manner. "I know what Granger is doing for Potter. I want the same thing, and I'm willing to pay you for it."

====oooOOOooo====

"Oh for goodness sake Mr. Malfoy, the more you squirm, the harder you make this." The Matron said, no doubt smiling widely at my discomfort. "Brace yourself Mr. Malfoy."

After having tried and failed to deal with the situation myself overnight, I found myself laying face down on the hospital cot. Gathering the pillow to my face, I nodded my readiness, and then bit into the pillow. I could hear the Matron muttering about not being paid enough to do this sort of thing; I felt a wrenching pain and then blessed relief. I almost cried as the offending object was removed.

"It seems that a completely different ruffian is responsible for this incident Mr. Malfoy" The Matron said in a tone that suggested she was fighting against laughter. "It appears that this particular ruffian wears a size four woman's shoe." She said as she casually deposited the article of footwear that I had come to think of as the Mary Jane of Doom on the table beside the bed. "Although how he or she managed to wedge it that far up your..."

Once again, my letters home will make sure that my father hears of this insult. The old crone will most certainly pay for insinuating that I might have been beaten unmercifully by an even smaller girl.

In the mean time however, I needed to determine what I had been doing to so provoke these temperamental Gryffindor witches. Given her previous bout of unhelpfulness, I avoided Pansy, but I still needed a woman's insight into their behavior. Looking over my options with Pansy out of the picture, and Davis and Greengrass firmly in Potter's corner, which left only one woman in my cohort that might offer said insight.

Well, sort of a woman anyway. Larger than Goyle, crueller than Crabbe, Millicent Bulstrode was a force to be reckoned with. She was currently dating BOTH Crabbe and Goyle, simultaneously whether they liked it or not. I don't know what she was doing to them but it must have been horrible. Two nights previous Crabbe had returned to our dorm room in tears, while Goyle sat on his bed with his massive arms pulling his bent knees to his chest, rocking in place while staring at the wall and muttering something about 'so much hair'. I decided that I really didn't want to know.

I set about tracking Millicent down ultimately finding her reading under the large elm beyond the oaf's cabin. Approaching her, I made sure to make my presence known as most of us in Slytherin House had discovered the hard way that sneaking up on Millie Bulstrode was a very bad idea.

"What do you want Malfoy?" She asked, never looking up from her book. How had she known it was me? Did she somehow have a way of detecting my innate aura of natural superiority?

"I need some advice from a woman's perspective Bulstrode." I admitted.

This caused her to look up at me. "It must have something to do with Potter," she said lifting an eyebrow. "I can't think of any other reason you would come to me for your *woman's perspective*. I know that Davis and Greengrass won't speak to you, and that Parkinson has been laughing at you, so evidently you've done something stupid and that usually means you've been trying to prove to Potter your John Thomas is bigger than his. Again."

I sputtered a bit at her accusations, then settled down and described my interactions with the two Gryffindor witches and their inexplicable reaction to my reasonable requests.

"Sweet Merlin!" she swore. "You really are a moron, aren't you?" Bulstrode marked her place in her book and set it aside. "Draco, I'm going to explain where you went wrong, and I'm going to do it in small words so that you don't hurt yourself trying to understand me. When you approached Granger you told her you wanted what she was giving Potter and you were willing to pay for it, assuming that she was supplying Potter with this supposed potion. I highly doubt that she would do such a thing, given her opinion of love potions. So she thought you believed that she and Potter were having sex and that you wanted her to do the same with you for money. You called her a whore. You then turned around and did the same thing to the Weasley chit." She smiled. "It isn't really surprising that they kicked your ass. I'd have killed you."

"How could they get that out of what I said?"

She shook her head. "Moron." Then she reached out and punched me in the shoulder. I'm not sure, but I think she broke something. "Potter's not using a potion. He's pulling witches because he's rich, powerful the savior of the Wizarding World and some witches think he's good looking." She shrugged. "Personally I don't see it; I could never go for someone so... breakable. I like a man with some meat on his bones, like Vinnie or Greg, or both of them."

Potter not on a potion? The woman was raving and she wasn't done yet.

"You on the other hand are also rich and relatively powerful, not in Potter's league in power, but you could hold your own against most Wizards, but you treat women like crap. Parkinson put up with that when you had something she wanted, but now that she has options..."

The woman was obviously delusional. I let her blather on for several more minutes before I made my excuses and left her under her tree.

====oooOOOooo====

Plan 'C' was similar to Plans 'A' and 'B', only with a different target and hopefully less physical trauma.

I abandoned attempting to communicate with psychotic witches all together, this time choosing a target that was far dimmer, but less likely to immediately assault my bits.

I still wanted the meeting to be private, of course, so the planning took most of a week. Finally I was ready.

I entered the unused classroom my note had suggested as a meeting place and was only slightly surprised that he was waiting for me.

"What do you want Malfoy?" He asked from where he sat, lacking even the manners to rise to his feet when his betters enter the room. "You owe my sister a new pair of shoes."

I owed her? After what she had done? I should... Calming myself, I reached to the money bag on my belt. The remains of my quarterly allowance were in the bag, something more than fifty Galleons... What did women's shoes cost anyway? No matter, the fund would be replenished in three days. I tossed the bag of coins to the red head.

"I wanted to apologize to Ginevra for the misunderstanding, but given her excitable nature, I thought it best that I wait until she calmed down a bit before I approached her again." I said in a manner that would best show I was offering an olive branch.

His eyes narrowed as he contemplated my words. "I'd wait at least a year, though five might be better. She really didn't like whatever it was you asked her."

"Look," I interrupted. "What potion is Potter on?"

"Potion?" The lummoX appeared to be confused. "I don't know what you're talking about. Why would Harry be on a Potion?"

"It's obvious. Since the ride on the Express in September the witches have been all over him. I've seen him out with two or three at a time. It must be a potion, what other explanation might there be?"

"Well," Weasley temporized, counting off his reasoning on his fingers. "He's rich, he's good looking, he's rich, he's stupidly powerful, he's rich, he's the last Potter, he's rich, he's the head of two ancient and noble families, he's rich, he's a star athlete, and oh yeah, he's rich."

"I'm all those things." I scoffed.

"No, your father is the one that's rich. You're on an allowance until you inherit, and that will be what? Ninety odd years? You aren't the head of your family, and won't be, again for about ninety years. You're about average in power Malfoy, you couldn't possibly be fooling yourself about that. And everyone knows about the way you treated Pansy over the years, and most of the witches in this castles are supremely angry about it. Hell, even I haven't managed to piss off *all* the witches in the school at the same time. Really, you've got a gift in that regard."

"Look Weasley," I said interrupting the buffoon. "I want the potion that Potter is on. I know it uses limes and coconuts as ingredients. I'm willing to pay top Galleon for the recipe."

"Well," the red head said grudgingly, "if there is a potion, and I'm not saying there is, he's not getting it from Hermione; she would pitch a fit if he even asked."

"Who then?" I insisted.

"Well, about the only people I can think of who might be able to pull something like that off AND would give it to Harry would be Fred and George. They are justifiably proud of their inventions, this potion wouldn't be cheap."

Price is no object!" I declared.

====oooOOOooo====

Now:

The timing glass chimed for a second time.

This time the stirring was done with a rod of pure silver, and the pattern of the stir was a figure eight starting in a clockwise direction. With my left hand I turned a third timing glass set to four minutes nine seconds.

I leaned over the caldron, for this stir, I had to be in position so that the vapors from the brew would condense on my face, combining with the sweat of my body, then drip back into the caldron. A secondary keying to my person.

With each drop that fell from my face back into the brew, the color of the mixture changed, from pink, to red, to purple and finally as the timing glass chimed signaling the end of the stir, to a sky blue.

I pulled face from the heat, and restarted the first timing glass.

~ Interlude ~

Ron Weasley slowly made his way through Hogwarts Castle, thinking about what Malfoy had asked of him.

It wasn't often one was handed an opportunity like this. This could simultaneously be very profitable and extremely funny. Still, he decided, he should at least make sure that he wasn't fooling himself.

Ron made his way to the library in search of his source of all information.

"Hey Hermione," he said sliding onto the chair across from her normal study position.

"Evening Ron," Hermione Granger said, never looking up from the essay she was writing. "What brings you down to the library?"

"I heard something today that didn't make any sense, so I thought I'd ask you about it."

"Ok?" That caught her attention. Hermione finished the thought she was jotting down, and then looked up into the eyes of the tall red head. "What did you want to know?"

"Someone tried to tell me that there was a potion that someone could take that would make other people love you. That sounded like skrewt dung to me, given what you told Harry and me about protecting ourselves from being dosed."

A smile spread across the young woman's face. "So you do listen to me. Ok, in answer to your question, no a potion couldn't do that. A love potion has to be keyed person to be loved and that keying agent has to be introduced to the one affected by the potion. There is no way for a potion ingested by one person to affect others, if one were to do so it would violate several of the basic principles of Potion making, such as Blot's Uncertainty Principle, Wallace's Rule of Alcohol Infusion, and Becerra's Law of Unknown Knowns."

"Wallace's Rule of Alcohol Infusion? Isn't that the one that basically boils down to 'No matter how much you drink, you're the only one it'll get drunk'?" Ron interrupted.

Hermione was a bit shocked that Ron even remembered that obscure bit of trivia. "Well, that's a very basic gist of Wallace's work, but the actual theory and proofs are among the most brilliant and well thought out in the business. I'm surprised you remember it."

"Hermione, the man writes in a Scots dialect, he's bloody hard to forget." Ron shook his head. "Harry and I had to go to McGonagall to get her to translate some of the words."

"Language Ron!" Hermione huffed. "Geniuses like Wallace tend to be a bit eccentric, and his phonetic spelling of his own speech patterns in his scholarly work is a bit... odd, but the quality of his proofs is beyond dispute. The man proved beyond a shadow of a doubt that..."

Ron nodded as he usually did whenever Hermione went into lecture mode. So he had his answer, just as he suspected Malfoy was wrong. While his best female friend droned on, Ron completed his plan, checking through each step to see if it could possibly be made either more profitable or funnier. After another fifteen minutes of Hermione's in-depth explanation, he excused himself and headed for the dorms.

On his way there Ron was surprised to find Harry backed in to a corner by a pair of determined witches.

"Need any help there Mate?"

Harry looked out from the darkened space, with his hair messier than normal and his glasses askew. "No Ron, doing fine." The Savior of the Wizarding world snaked his arms around the waists of Sue Bones and Hannah Abbott with a very silly grin on his face. "Doing great here. No worries."

"Ok." Ron started to back away. "Oh Harry, could I borrow Hedwig?"

"Sure Mate," Harry called back before he disappeared behind the girls.

Entering the Gryffindor common room, Ron found Ginny sitting at one of the tables working on an essay. Ron stopped at her table, and laid the money bag he had been given in front of her. "Malfoy sent this to pay for the shoe you lost."

Ginny's brow furrowed at the thought of receiving anything from Draco Malfoy. After shaking the coins from the pouch, she looked up at her brother in shock. "Ron, there's fifty eight Galleons here."

"Not enough?"

"Ron," she sighed. "I could replace almost my entire wardrobe with fifty eight Galleons."

"Oh. Well, consider the excess a penalty for how upset he got you."

Leaving Ginny to her studies, Ron made his way to his dorm and was happy to find Hedwig resting on her perch. The redhead pulled a sheet of parchment from his trunk and sat on his bed to write.

Dear Fred and George.

~ End of Interlude ~

====oooOOOooo====

Now:

The timing glass chimed for a third time.

This iteration of the stir was easy. All that was required was two quick clockwise rotations while adding three strands of my hair.

The color of the brew deepened to a dark midnight blue. Perfect.

I restarted the timing glass.

====oooOOOooo====

The wait had been agonizing. Weasley reported that his brothers had refused to help and that he would have to raid their files to find out what the Weasley twins were doing for Potter.

In the mean time, Potter moved on from the pair of Hufflepuffs he had been dallying with to Daphne Greengrass. The girl was forever returning to the dorms smelling of coconut and giggling like a first year.

Then came the day that when passing in the halls between classes, Weasley gave me our agreed upon signal, a nod. Did the buffoon actually understand security? I was amazed.

I entered the unused classroom we had used before following the evening meal and had to wait only a few moments before he entered the room.

"Well, it wasn't easy." He said, obviously starting the negotiating. "The Twins refused to tell me what they were doing for Harry, but this last Hogsmeade weekend I snuck out of town and visited them at their shop in Diagon Alley telling them I was looking for a weekend shift at their shop to pickup a little pocket money."

"So you've got it?" I asked wondering why anyone would need to 'pick up a little pocket money.'

"Well, I've got THEM." He said pulling a small roll of parchment from his robes. "I dug through their files and found an entire file dedicated to Harry and projects for Harry. I found three potions that have limes and coconut as ingredients, but what they do isn't defined." He unrolled the parchments and flattened them on the table between us. "They don't even have names, just 'Harry 1 through 3'."

Three potions? Well, it couldn't be helped. I'd have to try them until I found Potter's secret. "Let's have them then."

"I don't think so. I took a bit of a risk getting these."

I closed my eyes and sighed. "How much?"

A grin crept across the buffoon's lips. "150 Galleons."

"That's a bit stiff for three unknown potions."

"It is." Weasley agreed. "But this is sort of a seller's market isn't it? After all, you want to buy them a bit more than I want to sell them."

Why had I told him that price was no object? "Fine," I said counting out the coins.

Weasley would pay for this once I had what I wanted. Perhaps I'd add his sister to my harem. Wouldn't that bring a smile to the red headed clown's face?

====oooOOOooo====

I spent a week studying the three potions recipes. Leave it to those idiot twins to have potion recipes unlabeled as to what they did. Lacking any other method of determining which to try first I simply picked the one labeled #1 and set to collecting ingredients.

The brewing of the first potion was time consuming, but not overly complex. It took six days to produce a translucent fluid that filled the air with exactly the same scent that Greengrass had been reeking with. I smiled to myself. Perfect.

It seemed odd that the recipe produced so much of the potion. Where a normal brew would produce enough of a potion to deliver three doses in a standard #2 vial (call it six fluid ounces) this recipe produced a full quart of fluid.

Another flaw with the potion was there were no dosing instructions. None at all.

Still, as father has always said, no gall no galleons. I measured out a standard dose, and tipped it back, swallowing the malodorous concoction in a single gulp.

I then ruined my shoes and trousers by vomiting all over them. For several minutes. I purged my last meal, and from the evidence presented,

several prior to it. My last conscious thought before I fell to the floor was that despite the evidence before me I didn't recall having eaten corn in the last week.

====oooOOOooo====

Once I came to, I signaled for a House Elf to clean up the mess, secured my lab, and hauled myself to the shower. It was under the hot needle spray that I started to think through where I had gone wrong.

I could think of no reason that Potter or the Twin gingers would want such a powerful purgative. I knew that I had followed the recipe to the letter, which meant that there was a problem with the dosing.

I hated to admit it, even to myself, but I needed help. I needed someone who knew more about potions than I. My godfather was right out. If he even imagined that I was attempting to use potions to emulate Potter he would emasculate me on the spot.

That left one person. Merlin help me.

====oooOOOooo====

I found her in the Library. Of course, where else would she be?

"Good afternoon Granger." I said sitting down across from her.

"Malfoy!" she hissed moving for her wand.

"Pax Granger," I said raising both my hands to show that they were empty and trying to calm the all too excitable Head Girl. "I want to apologize for my actions last time we spoke, it was explained to me how I had insulted you, and I want to assure you that I didn't mean what it sounded like."

She just stared at me, seemingly in judgment of me and my continued existence. "Alright Malfoy, what do you want?"

"I need some help with a potions project," I explained, pushing a hand copied version of the recipe across the table to her. "I found this recipe in an old text, but I can't figure out the dosing."

She suspiciously accepted the parchment from me, and then her brown eyes scanned down the page. "How odd," she temporized. "I don't think I've ever seen a combination like this before."

"I know what you mean," I agreed.

"Well, this potion is obviously applied topically, I mean the inclusion of Nogtail bile alone would..."

"No need to state the obvious Granger," I said dismissively. How had I missed that?

"And the fire slug slime... A person would see what he ate last week."

"At least," I agreed, wishing she'd get on with it.

"Well," she said shaking her head. "The inclusion of limes and coconut milk is odd, but it seems to be dosed as needed." She looked me in the eye. "What's this for anyway?"

"Just a little something I'm working on for NEWT extra credit." I said rolling up the sheet of parchment, knowing that wasn't what she asked. She was sharp. Perhaps I would add her to my harem, in a secondary role of course, just to annoy Potter.

====oooOOOooo====

My preparations were complete. Tonight I would take my rightful place in society as a master of women. Removing my shirt, I slathered generous amounts of the potion all over my chest and arms. If a little worked for Potter, then what would a lot do for me? I had to admit while the potion might taste vile, it had a soothing scent, and the tingle it imparted to my flesh was exciting in its own right.

I donned my robes, forsaking the shirt. No sense putting an additional layer of clothing between the women of Hogwarts and what they would desire beyond all else. I exited the dungeons in search of my prey.

There they were, two helpless Hufflepuff lambs coming to the Malfoy Slaughter. Hannah Abbott and Susan Bones, both fresh from throwing themselves at Potter. How perfect it would be to bend them to my will.

"Ladies," I said shrugging my robes off. "To night I will grace you with my body."

The two shared a look, and then gazed upon me. Their nostrils flared as the potion reached them, and I could see a deep burning need in their eyes. Perfect! "Abbott, on your knees, you may service me. Bones, lose the blouse, I want to play with those wonderful breasts!"

They again shared a look, and then as one, they rushed to my side. I spread my arms wide to welcome them to the altar that is my body. Long may they worship me.

====oooOOOooo====

I believe I've solved the mystery Mr. Malfoy." The matron said as she treated the multitude of wounds that covered my body. "It seems that the ruffian who keeps attacking you is somewhat malformed."

"What do you mean?" I asked my teeth clinched through the pain.

"Well the bruising on your left side appears to have been caused by a size four woman's shoe, while the bruising on your right comes from a size six. Obviously your assailant has feet of different sizes."

Oh laugh it up woman. I thought as the Skelgrow rebuilt my rib cage. You'll pay, oh yes you'll pay.

It was all I could do not to scream. Who knew that a pair of Hufflepuffs would react so violently? Bones in particular seemed to know many many things that caused pain. She probably learned them from her aunt.

Beyond the pain, though I was worried. If the potion wasn't an aphrodisiac, what did it do?

As if on cue Potter entered the Hospital wing half carrying half supporting one of the Gryffindor chasers.

"Madam Pomfrey?" He called. "Bludger accident."

The matron rushed to the injured student's side. "You young fools and your dangerous sports!" She ran her wand over the girl. "You've got a concussion and a cracked scapula Miss Dougal. You'll be my guest tonight."

"Don't worry about it Moira." Potter said. "Madam Pomfrey runs a first class infirmary. You'll be right as rain in the morning. I always was."

"That's ok Harry." The third year said. "I'm not... What's that smell?"

"Just Mr. Malfoy's cologne," the nurse sniffed. "I believe he bathed in it."

By this time the potions I had been given were kicking in, and I felt myself drifting off to sleep, but not before I heard Potter's final comment.

"That's just weird. He smells just like the Sun Tan lotion the twins whipped up for me."

---===oooOOOooo===---

Now:

The timing glass chimed for a fourth time.

For the fourth stir the instrument required was my wand. Twelve clockwise rotations followed by nine anti-clockwise stirs bound my magical essence to the brew.

On the twelfth turn clockwise the potion turned blood red, and following the ninth anti-clockwise stir the color changed to an iridescent chromium yellow. Then drip back into the caldron. I was over half way done now, without a single misstep.

I turned the timing glass again, having set it for the longest time of the brew, four hours. I settled back in my chair to reread the next step again, and to prepare mentally for producing the next agent used to bind the potion to me.

Where had I put that copy of Playwizard?

---===oooOOOooo===---

~ Interlude 2 ~

Hermione Granger was in the Gryffindor Heads Suite relaxing after a day of classes. Her method of relaxation would have shocked most of her classmates, as she was laying on a foam mat of the Heads Common room arching her back with her arms swept back in the full locust pose.

After Harry had finished Riddle, He and Hermione had spent the rest of the summer at her parent's home attempting to decompress from the stresses of their lives. Her mother had dragged her along to a yoga class. It had taken twenty minutes for Hermione to stop feeling stupid and awkward and begin to enjoy herself.

Hermione moved into the bow pose when Harry's distinctive knock sounded at the door.

"Come in Harry." She called continuing with her session. Harry had seen her doing her yoga for a few months now and wouldn't be shocked.

"Hey 'Mione." Harry said as he entered the room, taking a seat on the sofa facing her.

"Good Evening Harry," the brunette said, still holding the bow pose. "Missed you at dinner."

"Ah, I took Daphne on a picnic on the beach in the Room of Requirements. Then we went swimming and she did some sunbathing."

"You know, the room won't do that for anyone but you." Hermione rose up onto her knees, leaning back until her head touched the mat achieving the fixed firm pose. "Flitwick and McGonagall are both going spare trying to figure out how you do that."

Harry shrugged. "I just ask. Nothing special about it."

"Mum wrote," Hermione said holding her pose feeling the muscles in her back stretch. "She wants me to invite you to the house for the Christmas hols."

"That would be nice." Harry said as his best friend lifted her upper body back up into a sitting on her knees position, then leaning forward to rest her forehead on the mat in the half tortoise pose. "Hermione, I was wondering..."

"No Harry. We talked about this and I was very clear on how I felt. Just no."

"But I don't..."

"Too bad. My mind is made up." Silence filled the room for half a minute, then she continued. "Do you have any idea where Ron is? He missed dinner too."

"I think he's involved in some project with the twins. Wouldn't tell me what, just that he'd let me know when something funny was about to happen."

~ End of Interlude 2 ~

====oooOOOooo====

It was another week before I found the time for another attempt, this time with Potion #2. This one seemed to be far simpler than the first, with none of the more esoteric ingredients that might bring about such extreme physical reactions.

This one WAS intended to be taken internally. Try as I might though, I couldn't determine what this one did. The Brew itself was simple, taking only five minutes. Two ounces of a Muggle concoction called Rum, half an ounce of sugar, three quarters of an ounce of lime juice, one third ounce of coconut milk. Following the instructions I poured resulting mixture into a metal container half filled with ice, covered the container with its lid and shook well, and then strained the result into a glass.

I held my breath for a moment, and then tipped the resulting potion back.

How... odd. This potion tasted... good.

I waited a few seconds. Nothing seemed to be happening. So I brewed another dose. Then another. And another.

This was a good potion, that's for sure. I was feeling a general euphoria. Surely this was a side effect of the ...

I had a moment of clarity. I had been going about this all wrong, allowing the psychotic witches of this castle to run roughshod over my magnificent body. They had been overcoming my protective charms, but I had an alternative available to me.

When Father had taken Mother on an extended tour of Europe following Potter's victory over the Dark Lord, I had elected to remain behind. During this time I explored my ancestral home.

It was in my parent's chambers I found the oddest things. I'd never seen mother wearing leather, but she seemed to have quite a few outfits made of the stuff, and father seemed to have a huge collection of red rubber balls mounted on leather straps.

But the oddest thing I found in my explorations resided in my father's underwear drawer. I found several sets of odd metal underpants that, for some inexplicable reason closed with a lock. I had borrowed a pair to investigate their uses. Surely this was what they were for, protection from insane witches.

I quickly donned the protective knickers and secured them in place with the padlock. I was safe, fore and aft. I confirmed this by rapping my knuckles on the front and rear of the garment.

I giggled at my adventurousness. I then mixed two more doses of the potion and consumed them.

Good stuff.

====oooOOOooo====

There she was. On top of my protections I had decided to choose one of the least violent of the witches in the castle for my first conquest.

Luna Lovegood. Sure she was a distant cousin, sure she was borderline insane, but she was attractive and she was here. When I found her she, as she often seemed to be, was in a staring contest with one of the portraits. I carefully eased up behind her and snatched her wand from where she stored it, behind her ear.

Now she was mine.

The girl turned to face me, a curious expression on her face.

"Did you need something Cousin Draco?"

I told her exactly what I wanted and in graphic detail.

Her eyes, which normally gave the impression that she was perpetually surprised, went even wider, and she appeared to be getting angry. I've never seen Lovegood angry, and I should know; I've done my fair share of tormenting her. Potion #2 didn't seem to be Potter's secret either. Maybe Millie was right?

"You take that back, you...you...you...Nancy boy!" she sputtered. How pathetic, she couldn't even curse well.

I smiled. It didn't matter how mad she got, I was safe. Then, suddenly, she looked behind me, and said, "He made a very naughty proposition to me. It hurt my feelings very much."

Merlin, please don't let it be Potter, I thought. I had forgotten that she and Potter were friends. But there had been no one in the corridor when I approached her. There hadn't been time for someone to approach. I turned, expecting it all to be a trick.

When I saw what was behind me, I soiled myself. "Sweet Merlin on a stick! What in the nine hells is that?"

All traces of anger were out of Lovegood's voice as she answered. "That's Phil the Crumpled Horned Snorkack. He's my friend. And you aren't."

====oooOOOooo====

I came to in the Hospital Wing to find a house elf attempting to cut the mangled lock off the equally mangled metal knickers. I could hear the matron in her office laughing. When my father hears about this!

Dangerous creatures in the corridors! There was going to be a magical creature execution, let me tell you!

====oooOOOooo====

Now:

The timing glass chimed for a fifth time.

I lifted the oak spoon, and gently dipped it into the brew. One turn clockwise, one turn anti-clockwise. Repeat. And again. After the third iteration but before the fourth, I tipped the vial containing my... essence into the cauldron. This bound the potion to my sexual appetites.

I repeated the clockwise/anti-clockwise stirs twenty more time, as soon as I lifted the wooden spoon from the brew it shifted to a silver liquid, looking like a cauldron of quick silver. Just another hour, just sixty minutes and I would have what I deserved.

Trying to contain my glee, I reached across the table and turned the timing glass for the last time.

====oooOOOooo====

The third potion was... different. There were eight ingredients, all Muggle in origin. This was exceedingly odd.

Still, there was no denying that the potion worked. In the last week Potter had had an amicable break up with Daphne Greengrass and had moved on to a relationship with the Ravenclaw half of the Patil twins.

Coming up with the ingredients had taken some time. Any time it takes a House Elf two weeks to come up with eight items, you know that they are rare indeed. But finally I had the 8 cloves finely chopped garlic, 2 tablespoons *lime* juice, 1 tablespoon macadamia oil, 4 teaspoons Green Curry Paste, a half teaspoon of coarsely crushed black pepper, a pinch sea salt, 14 ounces of *coconut* milk, and 6 sprigs of fresh coriander leaves. Following the instructions I combined the mixture in a glass bowl and then set them to chill for 45 minutes at 34 degrees via a cooling charm.

The timing couldn't be any better. I dose myself tonight and I will have my pick of the witches on the Express as it took us home for the Christmas Hols. I waited impatiently for the chilling time to pass.

Again the instructions held no dosing guides. Still, I wanted it to be working for the train ride, so as soon as the wait was over, I lifted the entire mixing bowl to my lips and drank the entire mixture down.

The potion was a bit... spicy, but nothing seemed to happen. Telling myself that a potion this powerful would just take time to work, I settled down to sleep.

====oooOOOooo====

I woke at 3 am to gut clenching agony, my sheets soaked in sweat. What was happening to me?

My thrashing about woke the others in the room.

"Draco?" Vinnie Crabbe called from outside the drapes that surrounded my bed. "Are you ok?"

"No." I managed to grind out through the pain.

"Should we call the nurse?" Ted Knott asked.

There is no way in hell I was going to subject myself to that woman again. "NO!" I shouted. "Get Snape."

I could hear them scamper away, only to return a lifetime or possibly a few minutes later.

"What seems to be the problem Mr. Malfoy?" I heard my godfather ask. Then the drapes were yanked open revealing me to the room.

"Stomach hurts." I gasped.

"I see. Did you eat or drink anything unusual?"

"Potion." I gasped.

Suddenly Godfather wasn't quite so amused at my plight. "A potion? Where did you get it?"

"Weasley twins."

"You took a potion developed by the Weasleys? Just how stupid are you Mr. Malfoy? Let me see this potion."

I found the recipe where I had stashed it under my pillow and extended it to my Godfather with a trembling hand.

"Professor, please, isn't there anything I can take?" I said, "Professor, to relieve this belly ache?"

Severus Snape tore his eyes from the parchment and... were my eyes deceiving me? Was he smiling?

"Now let me get this straight;" he said. "You put the lime in the coconut, you drank them both up. You called your professor, woke me up, and said, Professor, isn't there anything I can take to relieve this belly ache?"

I nodded from where I lay in my bed.

"Idiot boy." Snape smirked. "This isn't a potion. It's a marinade. It's for cooking. You've got gas."

"But Professor, what should I do?"

"Call me in the morning." Godfather started laughing and left the dorm room. Once outside the door he started... singing? "Doctor, is there anything I can take. I said Doctor!"

I missed the train the next day due to 'gas'.

====oooOOOooo====

Now:

The timing glass chimed for a sixth time.

The sixth and final stir was the step that would bind the potion to me in its entirety. Taking a silver knife I cut a deep gash into the palm of my right hand and plunged my arm into the potion to the elbow.

The pain was incredible, both from the heat and from the reaction between the potion and the open wound on my hand. With gritted teeth I spread the fingers of the hand, held them for a three count, and then made a fist, holding that for a three count. This pattern was repeated six times, before I could pull my arm from the bubbling viscous silver liquid.

I stumbled to a small basin and opened the tap on full to wash the potion from my arm before casting left handed healing and cooling charms in it. While I was involved doing this, the cauldron foamed and bubbled reducing the volume of the potion to a single three ounce dose.

I carefully ladled the resulting dose into a crystal vial before I started to laugh.

====oooOOOooo====

~ Interlude 3 ~

The night was crystal clear; from where the pair stood on the hill overlooking the town below, the stars appeared like diamonds just out of reach.

"I love this time of year," The young man said as he squeezed the young woman's hand through both of their gloves. "It feels like anything can happen."

The girl smiled. Inviting Harry home for her family's solstice celebration had been one of her better ideas. The fact that Parvati was insanely jealous was just icing on the cake. Score one for 'the smart twin'. "I'm glad you could come over Harry." The Ravenclaw witch gave a gently pull on Harry's arm that had him walking along side her on the winding path that led back to her family's home. "We've been going out for a month now; can you tell me what you're looking for Harry?"

That question seemed to startle him. "Excuse me?"

"You seem to be looking for something. A month after you got out of St. Mungos you were dating Luna Lovegood. Three weeks later, you were with Katie Bell. Then school started you were suddenly dating Tracey Davis, a month later Sue Bones and Hannah Abbott at the same time. Then you spent most of November with Daphne Greengrass, and now you're with me."

"Damn Ravenclaws." The wizard said in a tone that told her he didn't mind her question. "Every single one of you analyze everything half to death don't you?"

"And those are just the longer term relationships; you've had single dates with just about every girl in 6th and 7th year that isn't in a relationship with someone else, except the Gryffindors."

"Really? I hadn't noticed."

"Haven't noticed." She scoffed.

"Ok, you caught me. I haven't been dating Gryffs because if I screw it up, I'd still have to see them every day. When I broke it off with Ginny after Dumbledore was killed, I still ended up seeing her every single day, and even though it was me who broke it off, it still hurt a bit, you know?"

"I guess I can see that." Padma allowed. The pair walked in silence for a moment. "Won't dating me be more or less the same problem? I mean, if we end badly you'll still see Parvati every day."

"I don't understand."

"You said that it hurt to see Ginny every day after your breakup. If we broke up, you'd see Parvati every day."

"How is that a problem? You two aren't anything alike."

"We're twins Harry."

"So?"

Padma reflected that Harry seemed to have acquired a knack for saying exactly the right thing sometime in the last year. There were few things more 'right' to say to a twin than to tell her that she was an individual. She got back to her point. "Ok, you've explained the lack of Gryffindors in your social calendar, what about the rest of us? Are we just practice for when you meet the right girl?"

"Of course you are." Harry laughed. "That's what dating is for isn't it? Practice. I practice with you, you practice with me. At some point, with the right person, it stops being practice and starts being life."

"That makes sense, I guess." She stopped at the base of a large walnut tree. "This is the tree Parvati and I built our tree fort in."

"Really?" Harry peered up into the branches. "I always wanted a tree fort. Is it still there?"

"Of course!" Padma huffed. "As if my father wouldn't have placed preservation charms on our tree fort."

"He also disillusioned it from what I can see. Great! Let's go see it," Harry said starting up the ladder made of planks of wood fastened to the trunk of the old walnut.

"Harry! It's dark."

"Yeah. Come on, it'll be great!" Harry climbed up the trunk of the tree until he encountered the entrance to the fort. Suddenly able to see what he was climbing into he pulled himself up into the structure. It wasn't very large, basically a box six foot by six foot and four feet tall. Harry cast a few lighting and warming charms on the space.

"Harry!" Padma said as she entered the structure to find him leaning against the far wall under the shuttered window. "You nutter. There could have been animals in here."

Harry extended his hand to help her the rest of the way up into the fort. "If your dad went to the trouble to preserve the fort, he also would have protected it from animals. This is great."

"Well this is it. Our 'Siege Perilous. I can't tell you the number of times Parvati and I saved the world from this very spot" Padma removed her cloak in the face of the now warm tree fort. "Parvati and I spent hours here having adventures before we started at Hogwarts."

Harry looked about the room spotting a few books in one corner. "And after as well from the looks of things."

"It's a quiet place to study when Parvati has Lavender over." She watched as Harry also removed his cloak. "What did you want to do now?"

"Well," he said taking her hand. "We could always practice."

The Witch bit her lower lip. "It is important to practice, I suppose." She lay down on their cloaks, pulling Harry down on top of her.

~ **End of Interlude 3** ~

====oooOOOooo====

I waited until the after the welcoming feast that marked the beginning of the post Christmas term to confront Weasley. He had sold me worthless potions recipes and was going to pay for that.

I found the fool while he was making his Prefect patrol, alone for once.

“Weasley. Those potions you sold me were useless.”

“What are you talking about Malfoy?” the dupe asked. “They were unlabeled, you knew that before you bought them, they could be anything, and I told you from the beginning that I doubted that Harry was on any potion to pull birds. You got what you paid for.”

Rage filled my mind. I grabbed the front of his robes and pushed him roughly against the wall causing many things to spill from his pockets. “Damn you.”

“Malfoy,” he said as he grabbed hold of me and slammed me against the same wall. “I ought to take you apart for that. You don’t seem to have your body guards anymore and I don’t have to take your crap.” He stooped to gather his things. “Since I had an excellent Christmas, I won’t beat you to a pulp, hell, I won’t even take points for your being an idiot. Just stay away from me, don’t come to me or my family for anything ever again.” With that, he turned his back on me and stalked away.

This was when I noticed that he had missed a roll of parchment. I scooped it up, intending to destroy it before the buffoon returned for it, but then I noticed the word ‘Veela’ in the title on the page. I unrolled the page completely to read it.

H.E. Essence of Veela . It said, the page then detailed a long list of ingredients and instructions along with a hand written note.

Ron: This is the potion you’re looking for. I don’t care howmuch he offers you; DON T SELL THIS ONE TO MALFOY. – George

P.S. Don’t let Fred know! let you have this one, he’s get all pissy. Enjoy little brother. I’d use it myself if Angelina wasn’t so possessive.

Merlin. I thought. I have it. This is Potter’s potion.

I rolled the page and secreted it in the inner pocket of my robes. This was going to merit study. No mistakes this time.

====oooOOOooo====

Researching then verifying this new potion took weeks. In deed I had purchased most of the ingredients before I discovered that I had missed an important detail annotated in a small precise script on the fourth page of the recipe.

All magic involved with the potion, from the harvesting of the ingredients to the actual brewing must be done by the individual that would be drinking the potion. This meant that everything I had done to this point was worse than useless.

January became February as I finished my research and I threw myself into Herbology. I’m sure Sprout was as amazed as I was when I started spending every spare second in the greenhouses, helping where ever I could so that I could harvest samples of the 134 different magical plants I needed for my H.E. Essence of Veela potion.

At some point in February Potter had broken it off with the Ravenclaw Patil and taken up with Millicent Bulstrode. I’d heard the rumors, but never believed it until I spotted the pair strolling around the lake hand in massive paw on one of those rare sunny days of February. I walked away shaking my head trying very hard not to imagine them together.

March found me trying to make amends with the oaf Hagrid. After much fuss, he ‘allowed’ me to assist him in the harvesting of animal based potions ingredients, while I obtained the samples I needed for my project. I learned more about animal excretions and offal than any man should know during the 27 days it took to gather the sixty three different animal based ingredients.

April and May were devoted to preparing the ingredients. Some of the plant based ingredients had to be chopped, others shredded, and some blanched and others dried. Both plant and animal ingredients needed pickling. All in all it was an amazing amount of work.

April saw Potter taking up with Su Li from Ravenclaw, and in May I saw him with Lisa Turpin. I found myself smiling. Enjoy it while you can Potter, I thought. Lets see how many of them will give you a second glance when your potion enhances my natural beauty.

The end of May brought NEWTs, and while I did my normal exemplary job on them, I must say I surprised myself with my knowledge of the Herbology and Care of Magical Creatures sections of the tests.

The last of the NEWTs were finally history and I lacked only the Muggle limes and coconuts from my ingredients list, which leads us to where I started this story.

I bought a coconut.

====oooOOOooo====

Now:

The meal at the Farewell Feast was sumptuous, as usual. I just couldn’t stop smiling knowing that my goal was finally within my grasp.

The celebration was raucous, good cheer abounded. The Gryffs won the House cup (again) as well as the Quidditch cup. McGonagall had just awarded Potter some stupid plaque for 'Special Service to the School', when I stood atop the Slytherin table and cast Sonorus on myself.

"Let me tell you about your Hero, Hogwarts. He's a fraud. We've all seen him with every witch in seventh year and most of those in sixth; he's been using a potion to have his way with them."

"Oh Bullocks!" Susan Bones stood up from the Hufflepuff table. "Harry was nothing but a gentleman, Damn it. Malfoy, you're just a jealous."

"Sit down Draco." Millie Bulstrode said from where she sat between Greg and Vinnie, "you're making a bigger fool of yourself than normal."

I looked to the Head table, where everyone was looking to my Godfather. Professor Snape was looking at me as if he was wondering what I might do next, and if he might be amused by it.

"Excuse me, Headmistress?" Potter's voice came from the Gryffindor table.

"Yes Mr. Potter?" The crone responded.

"Am I correct in assuming that the Seventh Year have all now officially finished with school?"

"Yes you are Mr. Potter." McGonagall answered.

"Thank you Headmistress. I would like to say this to the entire school." Potter held out his wand. "I swear on my life and magic that I have not knowingly taken any potion or potions intended to be used in the seduction of any witch or any woman at any time." A pulse of blinding white light filled the room.

"Well," Potter said. "I seem to still be breathing. Lumos!" the tip of his wand lit up. "And the magic works too. So I guess I can just say 'Fuck you, Draco' to sum up my feelings about that accusation."

I felt my mouth go dry. He wasn't? But he... No, he must be lying. I felt the potion vial in my pocket. I palmed the vial and thumbed the stopper off.

"You might fool the sheep with your light show Potter, but I know better. I know better because I found the potion you're using, and I've brewed it better, stronger. You don't deserve the women Potter, but I do!"

I tipped the vial back and poured its contents down my throat. I dimly recall hearing Godfather scream for me to stop, but I was focused on the power of the potion as it built inside of my body, built with an intensity that I still cannot believe, and then it released in a single unstoppable pulse of magic that issued from my body like the ripples in a pond. From my perspective I saw the very stone of the castle ripple as the magic washed over it.

I slumped forward; just barely managing to remain standing, my hands upon my knees as I panted with my eyes closed trying to regain my composure. The Great Hall was deathly quiet and I felt someone wrap themselves around my left leg, then someone else around my right.

I smiled, still with my eyes closed as I tried to guess just who the first of my love slaves would be. I stood straight as befits a Malfoy, straightened my robes and opened my eyes, looking down to greet my new lovers.

I ended up looking directly into the eyes of an elf.

A male elf.

A male elf that was busily humping my left leg.

Another male elf was on my right leg.

A sudden pop had another male elf on my right arm. Humping.

Pop! Another on my left arm. Pop! Pop! On one either side of my torso.

Pop! Another suddenly on the back of my head, humping.

The first elf finished with a squeak, and fell away from me leaving behind a wet sticky mess. He was immediately replaced by another elf. Humping.

A dark realization came to me. *H.E. Essence of Veela. H.E. HOUSE ELF!*

I'm not sure but I believe I screamed as the weight of dozens of randy humping elves pulled me down from the table to the floor.

---==oooOOOooo==---

~ Interlude 4 ~

"I swear I had nothing to do with Malfoy's little stunt tonight"

Hermione gave Harry a gimlet eye. "Hmm." The Head girl continued with her packing.

"I'm not saying it wasn't funny and that I didn't laugh," the raven haired wizard continued. "It was and I did, but even if I could manage to come up with a potion like that, I would never have done it. I like elves; I wouldn't torture them like that."

Hermione permitted herself a smile. "Alright, fine. Nothing to do with you. I think Ron had something to do with it. He wasn't laughing hard enough." She smirked a bit. "Well, at least he got lucky. Where is he anyway?"

"Lucius showed up about an hour after dinner and took Draco home. I think I overheard something about using wards against elves."

"Well that's good." Hermione moved to the next drawer in her packing. "Shouldn't you be packing?"

"All packed. Been that way for a couple of days. The only things not in my trunk are what I'm wearing tomorrow, my night clothes and this." He plucked at the clothing he was wearing.

"Are you feeling alright Harry? It's not like you to be so organized." Hermione laughed. "Well why are you here? Don't you have a girlfriend to romance tonight?"

"No, Lisa and I ended it after lunch today. Her parents are giving her an around the world trip for finishing school and she didn't want to be tied down." Harry shrugged. "It was about time to move on anyway."

"So, who's next then Cassanova?"

"No one."

"What? You've gone from girl to girl this year, what's wrong?"

"Nothing's wrong, I'm just done."

"I don't understand." Hermione chewed her bottom lip, the way she did when she was confused by something.

Harry shrugged again. "When I went over to Padma's over the Christmas break she asked me what I was looking for. I never answered her question, not really. All I really did was tell her that my theory about dating being about practicing for the person you spend your life with. She told me that she liked to practice."

"You've frustrated a fair number of witches this year Harry." She smiled at the look on his face. "What? Did you think that only boys talk about sex?"

"I didn't do anything Hermione."

"I know that Harry. That's what they were complaining about. Somehow they expected you to be more aggressive."

"I guess I'm just old fashioned." Harry seemed to want to say more, but stood and started for the door. "Good night Hermione."

"Wait!" the Head Girl called. "What is it Harry? What did you want to say?"

Harry developed a sudden interest in his shoes. "I... Nothing."

"Harry."

"Alright. When I asked you if we could be together last summer you told me that you wouldn't let me just *settle* for you, that I didn't have enough experience to know if I really wanted to be with you or not."

Hermione brought her hand to her mouth. "Harry?"

"I did what you suggested. I've dated almost every girl in the class and a fair number of sixth years as well. I threw myself into it. I gave it every effort and I had fun, really I did, more than I can ever remember having before, but it wasn't enough."

"What do you mean?" Hermione asked.

"They weren't you. Maybe we've never dated Hermione, but we've been together almost constantly for years. The girls I've dated have only seen me at my best. You've seen me at my worst and stuck around. You've seen be sad, and happy, and drunk and scared, and angry and hurt too badly to move, and you stuck around."

"I'm not asking you to marry me. I'm not asking you to sleep with me. I'm asking you to date me. I'm asking you to *settle* for me. At least for a while."

"Harry?"

"Yeah?" He couldn't meet her eyes.

"My parents have asked me to invite you to go to Greece with us next month for a two week holiday. Would you like to come?"

Slowly he looked up into her eyes. "Your parents asked?"

"Yes. And so do I."

"I guess that it would be rude to turn them down, after all your parents have done for me."

"You know, I'm riding the Express to London tomorrow."

Harry nodded. "Head Girl stuff."

"Most of the 7th years aren't riding the train. Would you like to keep me company?"

"Yeah, alright."

"Good." Hermione dimpled. "You can show me what you've learned this year."

~ End of Interlude 4 ~

====oooOOOooo====

~ Epilogue ~

George and Fred Weasley were returning to their shop following a most fruitful business lunch where they had finalized the deal to buy out Zonkos. The brothers were walking together along the cobblestone street of Diagon Alley congratulating each other for their masterful business sense.

To Fred's immediate left (for he was walking on the outside of the pair) there was suddenly a flash of light, the light pulsed once, twice, three times then with a thunderous roar what appeared to be a rather large Muggle motorcycle, painted black and stripped to the bare bones, appeared in full forward motion. The pair watched in open mouthed awe at the machine that was hurtling down the cobblestones like a bat out of hell.

"Is that Sirius's bike?" Fred asked.

"I don't think so. That's not Harry on it." George said. "We need one of those."

"We need two of those." Fred corrected. "Bloody hell, he's parking at our shop."

The two broke into a run, but the mysterious biker entered their shop before they got to the door.

"He's inside." Fred said.

"Bloody Hell." George opined staring open mouthed at the bike. "Can you imagine what we could do with one of these?"

"Two of these. Come on, you can drool later." Fred pulled his brother into the shop.

"I told yeh I want tae see tha bludy Weasleys, lass! I dinnae want tae talk at yeh, I want tae talk tae Fred and George Weasley!"

The biker, a stout fellow about six foot tall, entirely dressed in battered black leathers, and possessed of a substantial amount of beard and hair, was speaking to the Weasley's shop assistant Verity.

"Do you recognize him?" George asked Fred via what the pair thought of as their private channel. They had always been able to communicate without being overheard.

"No." Fred answered the same way. "I can't think of anyone we've seriously pissed off outside of Malfoy."

"That's no Malfoy. Ah well, what's the worst he can do?"

George stepped forward. "Thank you Verity, we've got this." He extended his hand with a smile. "Good afternoon sir, I'm George Weasley, and this is my brother Fred."

"Calum Wallace." The man said, ignoring George's hand, "an' yair tha bludy bastits that disproved ma rule o' Alcohol Infusion. Now whit am I supposed tae do?"

"What?" Fred gasped. This was Calum Wallace? While their OWL scored didn't reflect it, the twins knew their potions. "How did we disprove your rule?"

"That bludy House Elf Veela potion yeh sneaky wee buggers inflicted on yon bludy Sassenach bastit Malfoy. Yeh gave him a potion that disproved ma rule."

"Bloody Hell." Fred breathed. "He drank and the elves got drunk."

"Aye, an' that's why I'm here."

"What are you going to do?" George asked.

"First yair goin' tae explain tae me how yeh did it. They yair goin' tae go o'er yair notes on tha potion line by line, an' then," the man smiled, though it was difficult to see with his beard getting in the way, "We're goin' tae write a book."

"Write a book?" Fred asked.

"Aye lad. That's how this genius game works, ken? Just bein' bludy clever disnae put innie gold in yair vault. Yeh hae tae write a book, an' iff'n yeh can come up wh' a few practical applications, well, that'll jist help, ken?"

There was a bright flash out in the street; suddenly a huge Muggle bus was in the middle of the alley. The driver was leaning out of the window screaming profanities at the pedestrians as he attempted to parallel park his monstrous vehicle with the steering wheel on the wrong side.

"Och, that'd be Ed." Wallace said pointing at the bus. "Goes every bludy place in that bludy Winnebago of his. Yank yeh ken. He's a mite agitated that yeh managed tae mangled his Law o' Unknown Knowns."

George paled for a moment. "Ed Becerra? Didn't he put that guy at the conference in the hospital for asking if he was sure about his proofs?"

"Dinnae fash yairseel, laddie." Wallace laughed. "Ed wants a part o' tha book. Jist mak sure yeh hae beer and whiskey tae hand."

A loud warbling tone suddenly sounded out in front of the shop, where what looked like an old fashioned police box was fading in and out of reality.

"Bloody Hell!" the twins said in unison.

"Ach, that's Blot. Bludy show-off. He'll be wantin' a piece o' tha book himsael."

"Wallace, Becerra and Blot all in our shop?" Fred wondered.

"We should sell tickets." George said.

"Yeh lads are new tae tha genius game. We'll help yeh through it." The Scotsman said. "Iff'n yeh think this shop's a nice wee earner, wait til yeh see whit book sales are like."

"Money?" George said suddenly even more interested.

"We like money." Fred confirmed.

"Ha! Good lads!" Wallace said slapping the pair on the back. "So, will yairs be a Law, a Rule or a Principle?"

The Scotsman began to laugh when he saw how pale the young men had suddenly become.

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A/N: Thanks to the gang on Caer Azkaban and my own site Deluded Muse for their inputs, most especially to Meteoricshipyards for the Luna scene, Calum Wallace for his Rule of Alcohol Infusion (a true scholarly work) and for his cameo in the epilog, and to Snipehunt2 for his suggestion for Draco's final fate. Thanks also to Ed Becerra and the inimitable Blot for their cameos. While Calum is a biker, I don't know if Ed actually drives a Winnebago and I'm relatively sure Blot doesn't have a Tardis, but it seemed to fit.

Oh, for anyone who cares, Potion 1 was sun tan lotion, Potion 2 is a fun little drink known as a 'Hawaiian Sour' (basically it's a Cuban Sour with coconut milk), and Potion 3 is a lovely Asian marinade. Wonderful on chicken and rice.

And when I think that this entire story came from a single bad joke I thought up when I heard Harry Nilsson's 'Coconut' on the radio...

No House Elves were hurt in the writing of this story, though several were sickened. Sorry.