

Finding Mr. Right

by magalena

Starts out where the epilogue left off. Draco runs into Hermione at the train station after seeing their kids off to Hogwarts. Originally written for one of the 2009 Valentine challenge at DramioneDrabbles. One shot.

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Chapter 1 of 1

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AN: Many thanks to my lovely beta drhermionephd.

He stood in the back amongst the shadows, watching the girl he remembered from his childhood, a woman now. Their childhood seemed far away; they were both adults now with children of their own. Yet here sat the girl he had teased and tormented and secretly wanted so very badly with all of his little black Slytherin heart, even though, according to everything he'd been taught, he shouldn't. Impure, dirty blood, far far beneath a Malfoy... It all seemed so stupid now, the things he'd been taught to believe.

The Hogwarts Express was on its way to a new school year. Families had said their goodbyes to sons and daughters, chatted with friends, and then gradually drifted away, back through the portal to King's Cross Station.

Yet she still sat here, all alone on the bench. Her friends had taken her son, their nephew, with them; her ex-husband had gone home to his new family, and still she sat. She'd been crying, he could tell. Oh, not heart-wrenching sobs, but soft, quiet tears sliding silently down her cheeks and interspersed with an occasional sniffle. He sat on the other end of her bench and just stared at her for a moment, willing her to look up at him. She finally did, giving him a little half smile of recognition combined with a sniff.

"You gonna be okay, Granger?" he asked, handing her a fresh linen handkerchief to replace the tissue she had thoroughly destroyed.

She nodded and with a small grimace whispered, "I guess I'll survive."

"It's hard putting them on the train for the first time, isn't it? Your daughter's first year, right?" She nodded. "Yeah, it's my son's as well."

"I saw you earlier with your wife. She's quite lovely."

"Ex," he stated quietly.

"Pardon me?" she asked, not sure she understood.

"Ex-wife, or very soon to be. The papers are all signed, they're just waiting to be filed."

"Oh, Draco, I'm sorry. I had no idea, I hadn't heard."

"Well, it's probably for the best. We'd drifted apart. It was never a love match from the beginning, more something both our families wanted, and we felt obligated to make it happen. It just got to the point where we couldn't remember why we were together. We've tried to keep it away from the gossipmongers in the press and out of the spotlight for our son's sake." As soon as he said it he regretted the words, remembering that her divorce had been THE hot topic in the tabloids for weeks.

Changing the subject, he asked, "So is that why you're crying, because Rose is off to Hogwarts?"

"Partially," she sighed. "And in a couple years it'll be Hugo, then I'll be all alone. It's such a depressing thought."

"Oh, come on, you won't be alone. You have lots of friends and family."

She gave him a look, rolling her eyes. "My own family consists of my parents, who opted to stay in Australia after the war, and my children of course, who, as we've already mentioned, will be off at school. My friends all have their own very busy lives.

"I've decided that I'll never find Mr. Right. I've tried dating, but it just never seems to work out somehow... either I end up going out with guys I knew in school, Dean Thomas, Ernie McMillan, Terry Boot, but they're all old school chums, you know? It's almost like dating Ron all over again, and we all know what a mistake that turned out to be. And the other guys I've dated... it's like they don't want me; they want 'the brain' of the golden trio, or the war hero, or the fame of being with Harry Potter's best friend. I don't know, maybe there's just something wrong with me. Why can't anyone just want me for me? I feel like such a failure sometimes."

As soon as the words left her mouth, she regretted them, wanted to call them back. What was she thinking, laying bare her heart and soul to Draco Malfoy of all people? He would probably be laughing at her with all his friends, telling them what a loser she was, how depressingly sad and pathetic she was.

But then something wondrous happened. He didn't laugh, he didn't sneer, he didn't tease. Draco leaned towards her and took her hand in his, lifting it up to his lips and softly kissing the back of it like something out of one of Ginny's romance novels.

"You are not a failure, sweet. You've just been looking in all the wrong places. Glory hunters, attention seekers, Gryffindors, Hufflepuffs, Ravenclaws. Oh my! What you need, my darling, is a Slytherin."

At the Ministry of Magic Banquet two months later:

Hermione smiled up at her date as he pulled out the chair for her. Laying his hand on her shoulder, he smiled back and asked her what she would like to drink. He set off to the bar.

Gazing after him she thought to herself, "He's smart, funny, polite, a real gentleman; perhaps this is the mysterious Mr. Right I've been waiting my whole life to meet."

"Maybe not," she thought three hours later. After bringing back her drink, her date had spent most of the evening gadding around the banquet hall visiting with old friends and flirting with other women. In fact, the only part of the evening he was with her was during the boring dinner filled with boring awards and boring speeches.

"Definitely not Mr. Right," she sighed.

Gathering her wrap and beaded bag, she stood to leave. As she attempted to make a discreet exit, someone grabbed her wrist and yanked her into a darkened alcove.

"Malfoy!" she gasped, "What do you think you're doing?"

Pinning her up against the wall, his lips descended to take hers firmly, with just a hint of anger. At first she struggled, but then something changed and she found herself kissing him back with wild abandon. By the time the kiss ended, they were both slightly breathless.

Leaning back to look into her eyes with that trademark Malfoy smirk on his face, he said softly, "You know, Granger, for an extremely brilliant woman you are truly rather dense at times. When I told you that what you needed was a Slytherin, Zabini was definitely not who I had in mind."