

# Life After Canon: Dramione Fanfiction's Literary Reconstruction in Harry Potter Fandom



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## Why Dramione?

- Dramione is a fan-made name for the speculative romantic pairing ("ship") of Hermione Granger and Draco Malfoy from J.K. Rowling's Harry Potter series.
- The Dramione fandom is a prime example of what Kristina Busse calls "interpretive community" (2017), or a community actively engaged in communal interpretation and transformation of a given canon.
- As a community, Dramione shelters enough sub-genres and tropes within its macro- and micro-fanons to arguably constitute a unique romance genre on its own.
- Of all ships, Dramione has been particularly vulnerable to commercial interests within the last few decades, which speaks to its cultural impact.

## Why Fanfiction?

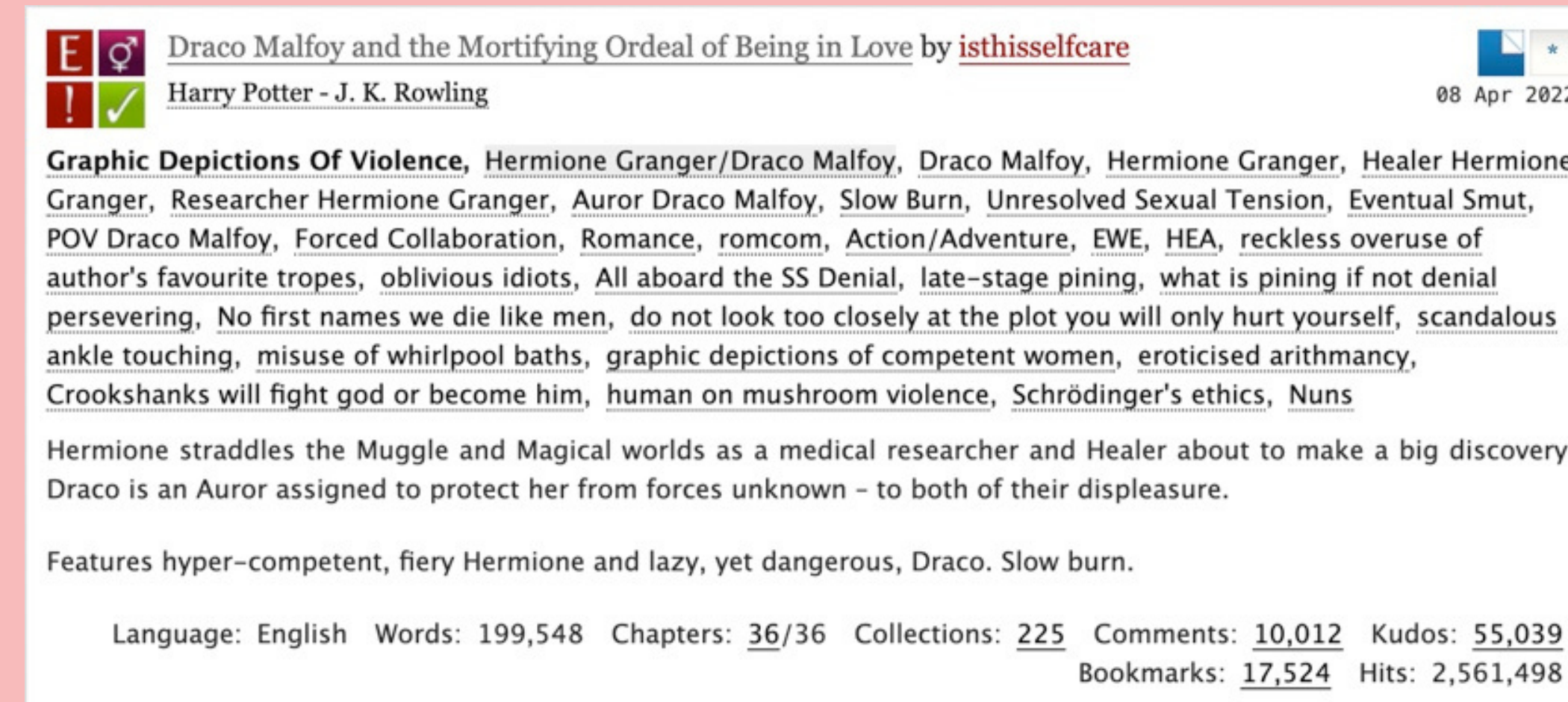
- Fanfiction is a form of literary interpretation—often as intellectually engaged with the source material as academic scholarship (see Busse 2017).
- Fanfiction and fandom have a direct impact on trends in the commercial book trade, meaning that literary scholars should be wary of overlooking fanfiction in studies of contemporary literature.
- As a fanfiction reader and writer, my literary research bends naturally towards fan and reader-response studies.

## The Fan/Study Contradiction

- Fanfiction cannot truly be understood outside of its context...
- ...but an academic treatment of the genre demands a certain amount of distance.
- This essential contradiction is fundamental to fanfiction studies—fan scholars often adopt auto-ethnographical approaches in their research. Studying fans as a fan means grappling with continuous duality.

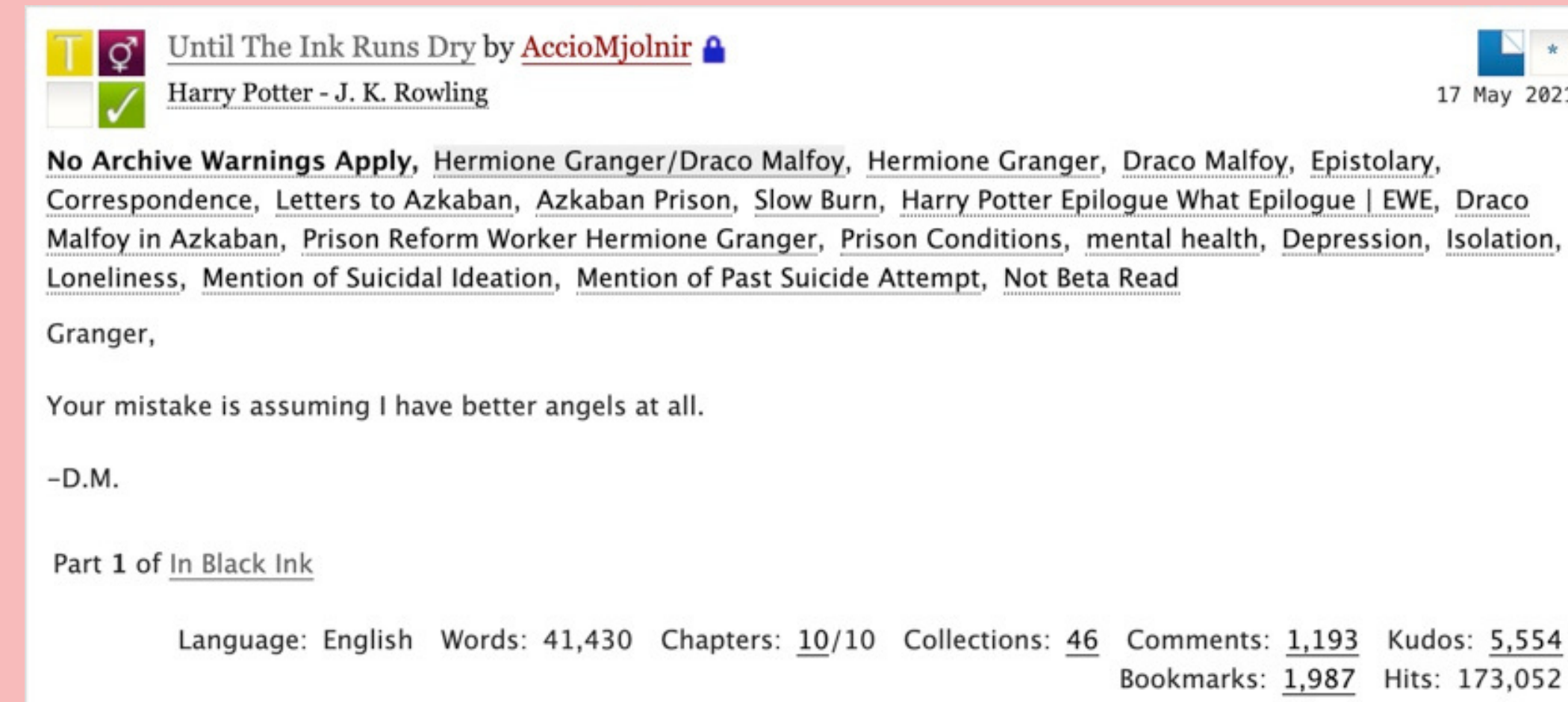
## Fan Texts

My research centres on three popular Dramione fanfictions, building on existing fan scholarship to analyse how these writers engage HP critically, transformatively, and combatively.



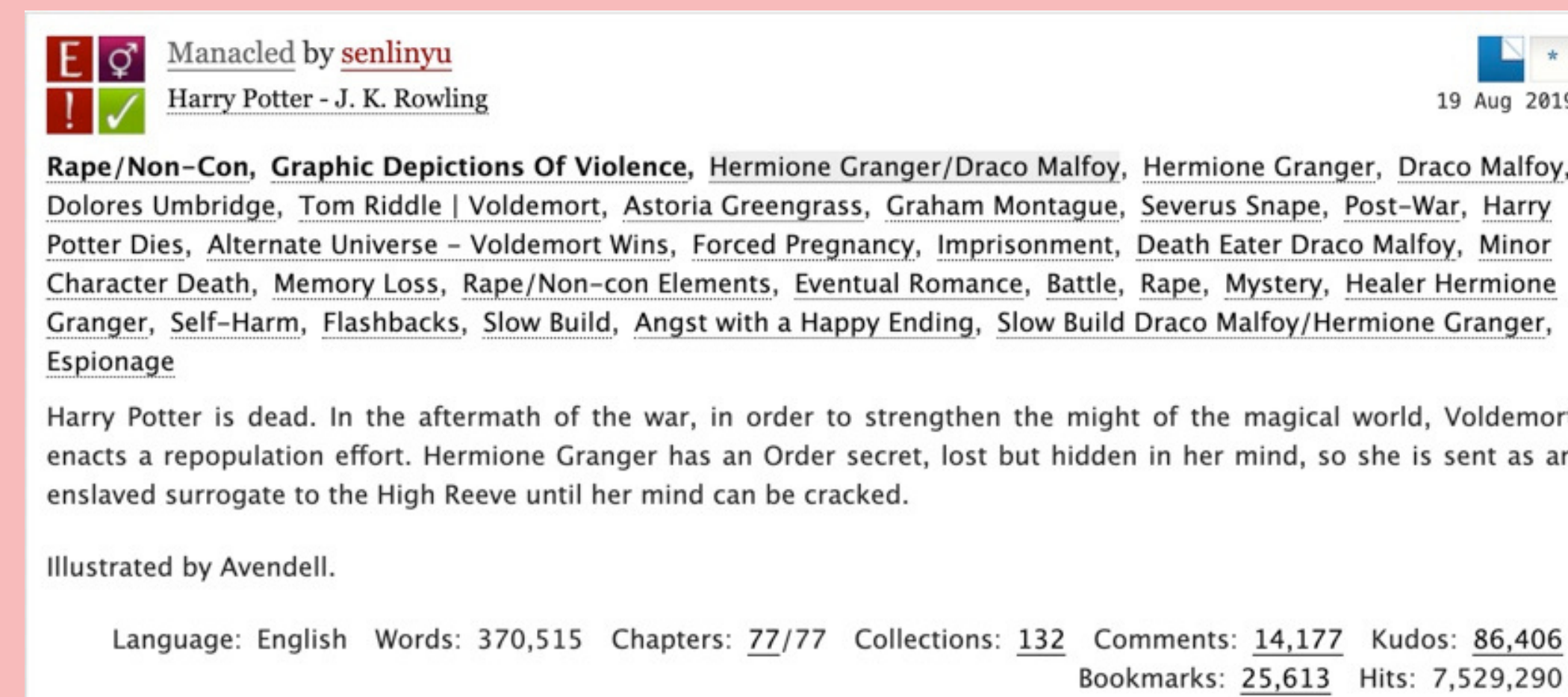
### Draco Malfoy and the Mortifying Ordeal of Being In Love (isthissselfcare, 2021–22)

Exemplary of Dramione's romance genre, its major affective tropes, and Dramione's unique relevance to cultural fan studies.



### Until the Ink Runs Dry (AccioMjolnir, 2021)

Epistolary; reads the canon combatively and overtly opposes Rowling's characterizations, foregrounding Draco's redemption arc.



### Manacled (senlinyu, 2018–19)

Giant of dark romance, represents the power of fanon to entirely eclipse the cultural and commercial relevance of canon. Also slated for commercial release in 2025.

## Harry Potter and Digital Fandom

- Fanfiction generally lives on digital spaces such as the Archive of Our Own (AO3), Fanfiction.net, Wattpad, and Tumblr.
- Scholars attribute fanfiction's movement from niche print culture to digital phenomenon to the advent of HP's online fandom.
- Nearly 500,000 fanworks exist under AO3's "Harry Potter" tag; over 600,000 exist on Fanfiction.net (March 2024).

## Literature Review

My research draws on fan studies, HP studies, and affect theory, as well as cultural analyses of fandom and digital fanfic.

- Matthew Hills defines the "acafan", a split fannish/academic identity assumed by fan scholars (2002).
- Kristina Busse notes the place of fan writers in women's literary tradition (35), as well as the precarity of pseudonymous fan identity (20) and fanfiction's distinctly postmodern impact on notions of authorship and aesthetic ownership (122).
- Suman Gupta argues for the irrelevance of J.K. Rowling in relation to the phenomenon of transnational HP fandom (34).
- Kali DeDominicis differentiates between popular perception of HP fans as noncritical, and the actual depth of analysis and engagement that they enact in transforming villains and minor characters (Firestone 90).

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## Discussion

Fanfiction as genre

- Fanwork is distinctly postmodern—thriving on pastiche, reproduction, trope, and unconventional fantasy.

Fanfiction as literary phenomenon

- Interpretive communities question the bounds of authorship and the very essence of traditional literary study.
- Fanfiction moves textual cultures beyond the delineations of the book industry.

Studying fanfiction

- The personal, legal, and affective vulnerability of fan writers necessitates a sensitive scholarly approach to fanfiction.
- Fanfiction as a cultural artefact cannot be divorced from its context without losing meaning; approaches must acknowledge paratext (tags, engagement, host site).

Dramione's fanons

- Popular fanons—ie. romcom, redemption, and dark romance—have cultural and commercial impact beyond fandom.
- Character transformation in Dramione fanon often completely transgresses the bounds of Rowling's canon.

## Acknowledgements

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