

An extra long chapter just for you.

This chapter was edited by Gladiusx.

Saturday 12th of June 1993

Early morning

Malfoy Manor, Wiltshire England

Narcissa Malfoy shifted in her sleep, her eyes shut tightly as she tried to ignore the bright light streaming through the window.

Morgana's hat, who had left the curtains open?!

... Right, she had.

A few minutes of restlessly tossing and turning, shuffling from one side to the other, had Narcissa give up on the endeavour and her hands unconsciously sought through the soft, silky sheets for her husband's. After a minute of mindless search, she finally opened her eyes, finding her marriage bed cold and empty.

After an annoyed sigh rolled off her lips, the blonde woman sat up and removed the covers, rubbing the sleep from her eyelids. Her drowsy eyes roamed the empty room, noticing how messy it had been since that fateful day she confronted Lucius. A vase was shattered on the wall, upturned chairs and tables, and a broken mirror from a thrown hairbrush. Narcissa was about to instinctively call for their house elf, only to remember that her husband had lost Dobby in some silly bet he wouldn't tell about.

Her eyes settled on the bed beside her as she stared forlornly at the spot where Lucius usually slept. They each had private rooms, of course, but they normally shared a bed when they went to sleep. Whilst their marriage had started rocky, Narcissa would admit that the Malfoy Lord had done his best to accommodate her since she had produced him an heir. Yet, they had rarely copulated again, no matter how many times she tempted him for more children, almost as if her husband feared getting her with another child.

It had taken her some time to notice that in the past few generations, the Malfoys did not have more than one child. On the rare occasion when there was a second sibling, they were *quietly* made to disappear. Narcissa recalled an older Malfoy girl a few years ahead of her in school, but she suddenly vanished in her seventh year, conveniently when Lucius' father, Abraxas, became

head of house. Unwilling to think of the dreadful prospect of kinslaying, Narcissa swept it away from her mind.

Shaking her head to get rid of the last bit of lethargy, the Malfoy Matriarch got off her bed and grabbed her wand. The heat of summer did nothing to the fabulously warded Malfoy manor that, amongst plenty of other features, kept the interior at a pleasant and even temperature, no matter the weather. It might have cost a king's ransom to install and a princely one for its yearly maintenance, but Lucius had insisted that it was a good investment. Narcissa tended to agree as she disrobed her sleepwear and strolled naked to the accompanying washroom to prepare for the day. Not having to worry about the cold or the heat in her home was satisfactory; not even the Black manor had such features, considering Lucius had the enchantment placed a few years ago when her maiden house was in its death throes and could not compete.

As she entered the expansive bathroom, which immediately turned on its lights the moment she stepped in, Narcissa's eyes sought the massive mirror covering an entire side of the wall, which had an equally large marble sink. Approaching the sink, the blonde woman turned on the tap and washed her face before staring at her reflection for a moment; tired grey-blue eyes set on an impassive face stared back at her. As usual, the reflection eyed her up and down, then groped its teats and leered at her.

Looking good, girl.

Shaking her head at the antics, Narcissa walked to the showers and turned on the water, placing her wand on a nearby shelf. Enjoying the hot water on her body, she scrubbed herself clean and washed her long platinum-blond hair before finding herself lost in thought as she stared at her wet reflection in the mirror. Tired eyes traced down her body as she idly rubbed her wide hips, ample breasts and flat belly with a loofa and sighed. She wondered what the use was in having such good looks, a fertile constitution and a fecund body if her husband refused to put any of it to use. The more she thought about Lucius, the angrier she felt over his actions.

Yet, more than anger, she felt wistful for what could have been. Narcissa had always known Lucius was a cut-throat man who would not hesitate to grab any opportunity to improve his fortunes, even at the expense of others. Yet, she had respected that in him and would not deny that she found it attractive. Furthermore, most of his adversaries were upstarts who knew not their betters or their peers. Lucius, however, had never lowered himself to swindling the pitiful and downtrodden, for it offered a poor reputation in return for negligible profit, and reputation was paramount for the Malfoys, especially after the downfall of the Dark Lord.

She drew the line, however, when that entire scheme of his offered no benefits whatsoever to House Malfoy and put her precious Draco in danger, and for what? To annoy his rival? Attempt to kill his daughter? After so much bragging about how he never saw Arthur Weasley and his Muggle Protection Act, which admittedly was as ridiculous as it sounded, as anything more than a nuisance. To think he would unleash a bloody, feral Basilisk in the school where her son studied along with hundreds of children, the future of their nation?

The Malfoy matriarch hoped her husband would see the error of his ways and return full of repentance. She would have welcomed him with open arms, for it was the wife's duty to support her husband in good or ill. Even the fleeting idea of trying for another child crossed her mind more than once! Yet instead, when he did return, he *dared* to demand she become a sacrifice for some harebrained ritual?!

"Do you not understand the danger you put our son in?" She had asked the cold and shivering man she agreed to meet again, hoping for a smidgen of guilt in his eyes.

"W-what danger, w-woman. He's a Mal-lfoy, nothing would h-have happened t-t-to him." The arrogant proclamation that would once have been true was ruined by the pathetic stutter.
"W-worst thing that would happen, I would put another b-babe in you as you consistently nag w-with your pathetic attempts of s-seduction."

It was the final straw for Narcissa, and she had sent her husband away. Normally, it would have been impossible as this was still his home, even the wards were still keyed to him. However, for some reason they did not follow his commands, and he had trouble casting the simplest of magics. The blonde woman even wondered if whatever was ailing him had caused him to lose so much control of his senses and thought process, along with his ability to reliably use magic. Normally, Lucius would never have allowed his inner thoughts to come out like this, and she felt nothing but pity as he failed even to pull his wand when she asked him to leave.

Perhaps he was truly hurting, and she should have helped him?

No. The woman scowled at her reflection before turning the water to cold, the abrupt change in temperature causing her to flinch slightly before relaxing. If Lucius could not control his mind enough to not reveal his true thoughts, then good riddance.

A few minutes later, the woman sighed and turned off the showers. Drying herself with a towel, she enjoyed the feeling of the fabric on her skin before using her wand to dry her hair and trace it down to her waist. Stepping out, Narcissa walked to the sink and glanced at her toothbrush. Clicking her tongue at the thought of using it like a muggle, she opened her mouth and washed her

teeth with her wand, causing water and toothpaste to follow the wand's movements and scrub her mouth clean.

Normally, such a procedure would be dangerous, yet she was proficient enough in charms to take the risk, and within seconds, her mouth smelled fresh, and her teeth were shiny. That it took longer than it should have compared to the muggle method was conveniently ignored.

There was a mouth and teeth cleaning spell, but neither left your mouth as refreshed as proper toothpaste.

Humming to herself, the blonde woman dressed in a bathrobe and exited back to her room. Glancing at the mess from a week ago, she hesitated for a moment, glancing at the clock showing half-past seven, and convinced herself there was no time for cleaning. After all, why would she ever bother learning household charms when house elves did such mundane tasks? Still, she might need to see into hiring servants or acquiring a new house-elf soon.

Narcissa walked to her closet room and spent a few minutes choosing her outfit for the day before settling on an elegant black and blue dress that matched her eyes with flowing flounces that would flare in the wind. That it showed her collarbone and a fair bit of her ample cleavage was a bonus – men staring at her with unbidden lust always amused her, and women glaring at her in envy made her titter. It was a good thing she was wicked with a wand, as anyone who dared to get smart with her would be reminded that she was still a daughter of the House of Black.

Making her way to the vanity, she mused on what accessories to wear today and decided on something less exuberant considering her young companion. A pair of sapphire earrings, a pearl necklace with a lapis lazuli stone and gold bracelets should be enough to showcase her wealth and power without going overboard. Oh, and a black hair ornament with an onyx jewel to hold her lovely hair, of course.

As she put on the jewellery, Narcissa noticed her ring box, where she would normally place her wedding ring whenever she returned home. She opened the box and stared at the beautiful Goblin-wrought silver ring with a mithril gem mined from the mountains of the mainland. It was an exquisite thing, with built-in charms and protections that would have bankrupted any other house aside from the Malfoys. She bit her lips in indecision before remembering her last encounter with Lucius. Frowning at the memory, she also remembered how this was supposed to be her sister's ring, which caused her to scowl as she thought about her cowardly sister. Let her have her mudblood toy, Narcissa still got the last laugh with her high life compared to the drudgery Andromeda had to endure.

Slamming the box shut, Narcissa put on a pair of black high-heeled shoes, then left the closet and made her way out of her room.

The Malfoy Manor of Wiltshire was the ancestral seat of the Malfoys, built by Armand Malfoy when he *accompanied* the muggle king William of Normandy in his conquest of the isles after these lands were seized from their previous owners. The Malfoys would insist on that word instead of the reality of their situation: they were *servants* to a muggle king. Narcissa smirked inwardly as she walked in the marble corridors of the manor, ignoring the multitude of tapestries and portraits wishing her good morning. She glanced outside one of the windows and inspected the vast expanse of the grounds of her home, lands that, over the centuries, the Malfoys had seized from their muggle owners through dealings and businesses. Something that they had to stop once the statute was implemented.

For those six hundred years from the conquest to the statute, the Malfoys had disdained marrying into the local magical nobility, just like their muggle counterparts. Instead, they opted to marry from the mainland, such as their homeland of France, where she suspected a Malfoy branch existed, but no matter how much she asked, Lucius had neither denied nor confirmed. Still, with the statute implemented, the Malfoys were forced to look in Britain for marriage prospects as most nations had become even more insular.

Narcissa continued walking for a few more minutes until she turned a bend in the corridor and arrived at her son's room. If there was one thing she did not like about this mansion, it was the long walks to reach anywhere. She was about to open the door before she heard pages turning and her son's unmistakable heavy breathing. Frowning for a moment, Narcissa stifled a giggle once she realised what was happening.

Her baby boy is not that much of a baby anymore.

Figuring that there was no need to embarrass her Draco, the beautiful blonde mother sneakily traced her steps back to the bend before *accidentally* bumping into one of the many vases, causing it to tip over and shatter loudly.

"Oh, dear me," she called out loudly. "*Reparo.*"

Fixing the vase and placing it back in its original spot, Narcissa gave it a minute before she walked up to her son's room and knocked on the door.

"Draco? Are you up?"

"Yes, Mother! Come in." Her son's voice squeaked out.

Smirking inwardly yet maintaining a neutral expression, the Malfoy matriarch opened the door and found her son standing in the middle of the room, looking for all the world like the obedient son greeting his noble mother politely.

"Good morning, Mother." Except his grey eyes refused to meet her imperious blues. "Are you off for your outing?"

"Indeed, I am." She replied stoically. It was a difficult decision for her to be strict with her son and act like the stern mother in an attempt to curb the extreme pampering that his father's methods had instilled in him. Narcissa wasn't innocent either, as she had spoiled her beautiful son rotten growing up, which adversely affected how he socialised with his peers. Lucius could harp all he wanted about how the Malfoys were above all, but she knew better, not even the Blacks could afford to offend everyone.

It tore her heart to do it, but Narcissa soldiered on, knowing for certain that it was for his own good. "I have arranged for breakfast and lunch to be delivered via Floo, so keep an eye on the fireplace."

"Understood, Mother. Mind if I ask what food to expect?" Draco still wouldn't meet her eyes, and Narcissa frowned inwardly. Perhaps she had overused the stern mother act?

"It's your favourite, dear. From the Cauldron Cuisine." She smiled softly at him, causing the boy to finally look at her and smile back.

"Thank you, mother." She nodded to him and turned to leave when he coughed. "Where are you going with *Potter*, of all people?"

She froze and pursed her lips at her son, "I do not believe it would be proper to speak about other people's affairs."

"But you are my mother! That makes it my affair, and Potter is dangerous." Narcissa frowned at her boy's tone; this seemed more than a simple school rivalry.

"Did I not ask you to avoid provoking the boy? What did you do, Draco?"

"I did nothing!" At his mother's continued gaze, he gulped heavily. "Okay, I might have bumped into his mudblood friend, and things got a bit out of hand, but I didn't intentionally provoke him. Yet, he still threatened and nearly strangled me."

"Strangled?" Now that was serious, she would not allow anyone to threaten her precious boy, regardless of who it was.

"Yes!"

"Mind if I see?" At the boy's uncertain sideways look, Narcissa raised her eyebrow. "Were you *lying* to me, Draco?"

"Of course not! It's just... fine, I might have bothered Granger, but I swear I didn't provoke Potter. You can see it yourself, I have nothing to hide."

Narcissa wanted so much to rub the bridge of her nose, but she couldn't show weakness to her dear boy. This was why she needed to be firm with him; they were above seeking issues with lowlifes, yet Draco demeaned himself for it.

"Prepare yourself and don't struggle." She waited until her son was ready and stared into her eyes before pointing her wand and whispered, "*Legilimens*."

Using Legilimancy was incredibly dangerous for anyone, let alone a child, yet if the user was gentle and the target was ready and trusted the user, then it was no different from using a Pensieve. Except Pensieves were incredibly rare that even the Malfoys, for all of their vaunted wealth, were unable to acquire one. While Narcissa was accomplished in the mind-arts, as any daughter of House Black should be, she was not a master to enter someone's mind without a wand. Surface thoughts, sure, that was the most basic form of Legilimancy, but deep dives? Only the Dark Lord was known to be capable of that with a single glance, at least according to her husband and her mad sister.

Several images and memories flowed into her mind, and she could feel Draco watching with her. He hurriedly tried to hide his earlier *session* from her, and she pretended not to notice them. Apparently, he did not think this through when he offered to show her his memories. Finally, they arrived at a memory from a few days ago, and Narcissa watched it closely. She hummed and narrowed her eyes as she saw the events play out for a few minutes, especially when she saw the astonishing scene of the small slip of a boy lifting her son with one hand.

Nodding to her son and cancelling the spell, they were back in the room. The blonde mother hurriedly grabbed her son as he staggered and led him to an armchair, one she knew hid a certain book of photos under the pillow and waited until he recovered.

"Well then, Draco. Do you know what you have done wrong?" Narcissa stood over her son as he sat rigidly with his hands on his knees and waited for his response.

"I, er, I should have just accepted the girl's apology and walked away?" The hesitant tone did not hide the unwillingness that the idea instilled in her son.

"That was one of them, yet you chose to blow a simple accident out of proportion."

"But she *bumped* into me!"

"Indeed, and for any of the other lowlifes, you could have 'showed them who's boss', as you younglings call it these days." Narcissa shook her head inwardly at the need for boys to prove themselves. "Yet, sometimes, it is better to let bygones be, especially when there was no harm done and your target has a very protective, and as you have discovered, a very dangerous friend. The fact that Harry Potter had somehow befriended the Greengrasses and that you ran away from a duel sponsored by their heiress brought shame to your name. Be thankful that if I am only now hearing of this, it means Potter and his friends have decided not to shame you publicly."

"So what, I should apologise and thank them for not being rumour mongers?" Her boy turned sideways with a petulant pout, causing her eyebrow to twitch.

"Of course not. You should pretend the whole matter never happened and move on, just like they seem to be doing." This time, she didn't bother hiding her sigh and rubbed the bridge of her nose. "Draco... sweetie. I need you to understand our current position." She knelt to be level with her boy and held his shoulders with both hands. "Your father has made a mistake, a big, *stupid* mistake that he sadly refuses to acknowledge the consequences of. He has made many enemies over his lifetime, and they have now chosen to go after him when he is at his weakest. You cannot go around causing trouble hoping that he would bail you out of any punishment or consequences. Do you understand me, my dragon?"

The boy nodded hesitantly, "Is father ever coming back?" Her heart nearly broke at the small and vulnerable voice of her dear boy. "Will we ever recover from this?"

"Oh, my baby boy." Narcissa hugged her precious son tightly; she could not bear to lie to him, but there was no way she would let him feel so weak and inadequate. "*Of course*, your father would

return, and of course, we will recover from this stronger than ever. We just need to persevere but, I need you to learn to conduct yourself better, baby dragon. Not just as the scion of House Malfoy but potentially as the heir of the House of Black. Can you do that for me, sweetie?"

"Of course, mother. I will do everything possible to be better. Better than father and better than any previous Malfoy."

Looking at her son's face, she could tell he did not fully understand what she was asking of him, but it mattered not. His resolve had reached her, and she hugged him again, ecstatic that he hugged her back and seemed willing to improve himself. That was all she asked.

"I am getting late, and I would rather not have a bad first impression on a boy who I am hoping would become an ally, if not to me, then to you and our house." She smiled gently at Draco as he was about to open his mouth, no doubt refusing to even consider the idea, and pinched his cheeks to silence. "Next time you want some time for yourself to use *Playwitch*, make sure to use the bathroom, okay, sweetie?"

The look of utter mortification on her son's face was enough of a punishment for almost getting their family in even more dire straits. Narcissa left her son's room with a smirk as she went to the manor's parlour. Harry Potter was untouchable, that was always the first unspoken rule about the boy, but it was more true now than ever.

He had proven himself to be an accomplished wizard and warrior at such a young age, and if there was one thing that people respected unequivocally, it was personal strength. So what if you had millions of Galleons at your disposal? The Dark Lord was a penniless half-blooded bastard born out of rape, yet he had gathered so many powerful followers out of sheer power.

The blonde woman had a strong feeling that The-Boy-Who-Lived would grow to be someone on the same level as Dumbledore and Voldemort. The signs were all there, and she would be damned if she allowed him to slip from her grasp when he could have been a close friend to Draco. If that Greengrass hag and her girl toy set their girls on him, they would surely gain unimaginable control and power through him. She had seen how friendly he was with them, although she could not help but notice the youngest Greengrass's interest in her Draco despite her son's thickheadedness.

Entering the parlour, Narcissa made her way to the fireplace but paused when she passed a mirror. Looking at her reflection, she found herself unconsciously smiling, all signs of exhaustion and stress gone from her face. Her eyes shone bright, and the blonde mother thanked the heavens for the gift they had blessed her in her Dragon. Still, it would be better not to appear overly happy when she met with the boy. Taking a few seconds to fix her expression back to her neutral and impassive

face, Narcissa walked to the fireplace and lit it with her wand. She grabbed a pinch of Floo powder and threw it in the fire.

“Leaky Cauldron.” The fire turned green, and Narcissa stared at it for a moment. If her attempts at having the Potter boy befriend her son failed, perhaps she should aim for the friend of a friend angle? Despite her feelings about the family, the Greengrasses were still old and noble, not to mention rich and powerful. She knew Lucius had been courting them for one of his many businesses, which meant they weren’t straight-laced prudes but willing to get their hands sticky. Unfortunately, Lucius never shared what those businesses were, reminding her of her duty to him whenever she asked.

Narcissa scowled inwardly at the reminder. Regardless, it would be an honour for them to marry their second daughter to her dear Draco, Astoria Greengrass would surely come with a significant dowry.

Much better than the useless elf that the Blacks gave her. She stepped into the green flames and disappeared from her home.

A*L*S*M

07:50 am, Leaky Cauldron’s taproom.

Harry adjusted the sleeve of his black half-cloak as he waited at his table. He tried not to appear nervous as he waved off the cute waitress that Tom sent. The old owner was understanding when he explained he was waiting for a friend, but he was not sure if they would have breakfast here first. The pub was already crowded with early risers, but Harry had strategically chosen his table in a corner where he could view the whole pub and the fireplace.

Waking up at the crack of dawn to continue his workout routine had become more of a hindrance than he imagined. He was unsure where he could exercise, but Tom had given him directions to a nearby park in muggle London. He had managed to finish his routine swiftly enough before trouble found him. To say it had been unpleasant to deal with the muggle policemen who questioned him why he was awake and alone at *‘five in the bloody morning’* would be an understatement. Defenceless and knowing he would be in deep trouble if he used his wand, Harry was forced to distract the officers and sprint as fast as possible to the pub. Thankfully, the muggle-repellent wards worked brilliantly in sending them away.

That was two hours ago, and Harry used that time to make sure he appeared as well-groomed and meticulously clean as possible. Yesterday's evening stroll through Diagon Alley had proven a limited

success. Many of the stores were closed, and he barely managed to catch the proprietress of Twilfitt and Tattings as she was closing the store. For some reason, she was taken aback by his appearance, which gave him an opportunity to convince her to stay open for a few more minutes. A promise of a hefty sack of gold also helped. Still, it had caused him to worry, as he had chosen to walk in Jon's appearance to avoid scrutiny rather than gain any. He would need to discover why his appearance was so attention-grabbing, as now that he thought about it, several older people in the alley did a double take when they saw him.

Regardless, after spending close to sixty Galleons to get himself measured and tailored in less than an hour, the result was what he was wearing. More than anything he had ever spent on in his life, especially as his clothes would soon get small, and he would need to be refitted anyway. Nevertheless, Harry would confidently say that he was satisfied with the money spent, and he did look dapper in some of the comfiest clothes he had ever worn.

At first, he was wary of wearing whatever magicals considered fashionable. Disregarding how the clothes appear, he cared a lot more for practicality than anything else. In that, Jon's memories of noble attire had proven essential, with the most prominent feature of his garb; the black doublet with golden stitches of elaborate wolves, with particular emphasis on a white wolf made from Acromantula silk with red eyes made from garnets on his breast.

It had two moke skin pockets where he placed his coin sack, invisibility cloak, the Basilisk Fang, and a copy of the Daily Prophet. Under the doublet was a long-sleeved white shirt made from the smoothest cotton from Egypt, assured by the proprietress to be grown over a scarab blessed land, whatever that meant. Over all of that, Harry wore a black half-cloak that covered his right arm, made from a combination of highland Cooley cattle wool and its hide. While he did not think he would have to fight anyone where he was going today, it would still allow him to discreetly pull his wand and cast before an assailant could realise it.

He had opted for a pair of black gloves, also made from silk, simply because he thought they looked cool but put a firm line over buying a top hat. For trousers, Harry had the tailor sew more pockets into the black silk pants he chose and had a belt made from Bicorn hide, dyed black, of course, with a silver wolf buckle to secure it. The final part of the attire was the pair of dragon-hide boots, also black. Jon might no longer be a brother of the Night's Watch, and the mere memory of it brought a tide of unimaginable *wrath* in him, but he had always been more prone to wearing black. Harry eagerly agreed, black looked great, so long as he showed a bit of white in his shirt; otherwise, he would be no better than a certain greasy potions master.

Harry felt ready to face the world or attend a wedding in his new clothes, though he did worry about his hair, as it had resisted all attempts to be combed. Eventually, he managed to borrow a drop of Sleekeazy from Tom, which helped greatly in taming his wild nest of hair.

Checking the clock again, Harry found it was one minute until eight, and he wondered whether the woman would show. No sooner had the thought rolled over his mind than the fireplace flashed green, and out came a vision of absolute beauty.

Dressed in an elegant black and blue dress, with her platinum blonde hair held back by a simple black ornament that allowed it to fall like a waterfall, Narcissa Malfoy commanded the presence of the entire taproom the moment she stepped in. All chatter died as men's eyes glazed over with blazing lust, while women either nodded appreciatively or glared jealously at the Malfoy matriarch. Her piercing gaze moved around the room until they met his own before making her way to his table. Harry left his seat and politely stood aside as she stopped before him, their eyes fixed on each other for a moment before those piercing orbs of grey-blue roamed him.

The woman's gaze seemed to inspect him from his combed hair all the way down to the laces of his boots, and Harry suddenly felt naked under her gaze, yet he resisted the urge to shift. It was certainly awkward for him, as he had to tip his head backwards to stare at anything aside from her bosom.

As the tall woman inspected him, their eyes met, and for an instant, he thought he felt something brush against his forehead, almost like a feather, and then he felt Ghost *growl* in his mind. The woman's face remained impassive, yet her eyes fractionally twitched. It was so subtle he would have thought it nought but his imagination if not for his senses.

"Harry Potter. A good morning to you." Her melodic voice unconsciously put him at ease, and he found himself smiling lightly. He kissed her offered hand's knuckles before greeting her back.

"And you as well, Mrs Malfoy. Please, join me." He courteously pulled her chair for her and, when she stood in front of it, gently pushed it in as she sat. Harry swiftly returned to his seat, "have you broken your fast yet, Mrs Malfoy? I can have Tom prepare his special for today if you wish."

"I appreciate that, Mr Potter." Draco's mom nodded to him. Before he could signal for Tom, the same waitress approached to take their order.

"Two of today's special, double serving for me and a pot of tea, please."

The waitress, Chiara, he thought she was called, was a recent Hogwarts graduate if he had to guess. She nodded politely to them before swiftly making her way to the bar. Her shoulder-length silver hair and slightly slitted eyes of the same colour gave her a unique appearance, and for some reason, Ghost was curious about her. A sniff had him feeling a little flabbergasted, the girl felt completely submissive and meek, almost like a pup eager to please its master yet fighting within itself to maintain its individuality.

He shook his head inwardly and filed the girl's strangeness away as Mrs Malfoy raised an eyebrow at his double order, but he simply smiled. Eventually, she retrieved her wand from the sleeve of her dress and waved it around the table with a muttered, "*Muffliato*."

"A simple privacy spell that was popular during my time in school." The blonde woman explained at his inquiring look. "Anyone who attempts to listen to us will only hear a buzzing noise, like a fly or a bee."

Nodding in gratitude, Harry made sure to file this spell for later. "I hope I did not take time from your day, Mrs Malfoy. I understand that with Draco back for the summer holidays, you would want to spend as much time with him as possible."

"I have the entire summer to spend with my son, and it is no trouble at all to help you in your matter today." For the first time, Draco's mom smiled gently at him. "Do not hesitate to let me know if you need any help. It would be my pleasure to help an up-and-coming young lord such as yourself."

That gave Harry pause. While the blonde woman did offer him her aid and favour during Ron's funeral, he was under the impression that she was simply being courteous in front of her extended family.

Before he could comment, the waitress returned with a tray and deposited their breakfast on the table before retreating as swiftly as possible. The special was a five-layered omelette stuffed with black olives, mushrooms, bell peppers, and cheese. On the side were blood sausages, biscuits, and baked potatoes. His plate was noticeably larger than Mrs Malfoy's.

They ate in silence, interrupted only by the occasional request to pass the salt or other condiments on the table. Harry had been starving, as he had got used to Dobby's cooking and the basilisk meat. Ordering a double serving for himself was his absolute compromise, as he would have needed five times the serving just to be full.

He still ate with a dignity befitting a noble, and judging by the lady's slight smile as he devoured his food, it seemed she approved. Harry took a discreet whiff of the air, inhaling Mrs Malfoy's unique scent of vanilla and mint. His senses told him her maternal instincts were flaring as she looked at him. The very idea that a woman would feel this way towards him was strange. Neither Harry nor Jon had ever known the love of a mother, and once the thought intruded on his psyche, it stuck.

Shaking his head inwardly, Harry blamed his raging hormones on not only affecting his lust but also his deep-seated desire to be mothered. He stabbed a blood sausage with a bit more force than necessary, scraping on the plate.

"Are you all right, dear?" The woman's worried tone was sincere, and his senses do not lie.

"Perfectly fine, just hungry." Harry smiled woodenly at Draco's mom, yet he could tell the perceptive woman was unconvinced. Thankfully, she let the matter go, and they continued their meal in silence until they were done, and the waitress took away the plates.

"So, how is Draco?" Harry drank the plain Earl Grey tea as he preferred it while gazing at his school rival's mom. The woman took her time as she stirred her teacup after placing a generous amount of sugar and milk.

"He is doing well, although he has told me the queerest of tales." The woman sipped her tea before gazing at him with a strange glint in her eyes.

"Oh? Anything that concerns me?"

"It does indeed concern you." Narcissa Malfoy placed her cup on the table before leaning slightly forward, causing her generous bust to rest on the table. She placed her chin over her folded hands and stared at him intently with an amused smile. "My Draco claimed that you attempted to strangle him over a misunderstanding."

Harry was in the midst of taking another sip before he paused for a second, he shrugged and drank deeply from his cup, draining it, and then placed it on the table.

"I might have done something like that, but I assure you I had no intention of harming your son."

"Oh? Do you take me for a fool, Mr Potter?" Her cold voice cut like a blade, and Harry frowned.

"I take you for an intelligent woman who knows perfectly well how her son behaves in school. Draco has never given me a reason to take his word in good faith. So when I discovered him and his

friends harassing my *best friend* as they had been doing all bloody year, I naturally assumed the worst.” His voice was neutral, yet he put enough of a growl into it to send the point across. ‘*Do not test me, woman.*’

Narcissa Malfoy glared back at him for a solid minute before suddenly chuckling in amusement, causing Harry's eyebrows to twitch in surprise. Breathing through his nose, Harry smelled satisfaction and respect aimed at him, and he felt his cheeks heat up.

A fucking test.

“Well said, Harry. As I mentioned, I already knew it was a misunderstanding. I would like to apologise for my son's behaviour. I would also ask that you try to find it in you to let bygones be and, hopefully, give him a chance to be a friend.” He could feel the sincerity in her words, yet he was not the type to simply forgive and forget. That mindset earned him a dozen stab wounds in his chest.

“We shall have to wait and see next term.” There, as good of a non-answer as he could give.

“Fair enough.” Draco's mom shrugged her shoulders, causing her cleavage to slightly jiggle. Whether she did that on purpose or not, probably not as he did not feel mischief from her, it made it much more difficult to maintain eye contact while ignoring the heat in his body.

“So, how is your husband Lucius doing?” The mere mention of the man's name caused the woman's brow to twitch, and Harry grinned inwardly. “I figured after our discussion at the funeral, you would have an interesting talk with him. How did it go?”

The beautiful blonde woman silently drank her tea for a minute as she gave him an inscrutable look. “Lucius...is no longer living with us.” Harry blinked in surprise. Could he have been responsible for wrecking their marriage?

“What I would like to know, however, is if you had cursed him.” At his confused look, The Malfoy matriarch continued. “I had already mentioned that he was suffering from some kind of cold malady.” Harry nodded as he did recall her mentioning that. “Whatever he was suffering from turned out to be a curse, something serious enough that he needed a very expensive ritual to cure him. He was utterly convinced you were somehow responsible for it and vowed vengeance over it.”

“I assure you I know nothing of the sort. There is bad blood between your husband and I, so him swearing vengeance does nothing but amuse me.”

"I would advise not to underestimate my husband, Mr Potter. He is a dangerous man." The woman's tone had a warning edge to it, yet he was undeterred.

"The only one who did any underestimation was Lucius, and from what you tell me, he is sorely regretting his life choices already. If he dares to attack me and mine, then I will show no mercy."

"Is that a threat, Mr Potter?" Narcissa Malfoy glared coldly at him, and Harry glared back, unconsciously deepening his voice, and he could feel Ghost adding his growl to his voice.

"It's a promise. In fact, I will tell you now that I wish for nothing more than his most excruciatingly slow death." His sudden declaration took the woman by surprise, and he detected apprehension coming from her. "You have to remember, Mrs Malfoy, that your husband caused my friend's death. Not only that, his reckless stunt could have caused hundreds of deaths; *Including your son's*. If he continues on his self-destructive path, then I won't even need to do anything before he ends up killing himself."

Draco's mom gulped as she was reminded of Lucius's folly. An awkward silence fell upon them before they were distracted by the clock striking nine.

The last of the tea was instantly drained, then Narcissa Malfoy stood up and offered him her arm almost stiffly. Harry hesitantly stood up as well, though he felt bewildered and regretful.

His intention had not been to make a stubborn stand-off with his helper for the day...

"I do not blame you for your hatred, Harry." The beautiful mother smiled gently at him as if reading his thoughts. "But you cannot blame me for seeking answers regarding the matter. A wife's duty is to her husband, even if said husband has proven unreliable and made questionable life choices."

Relief swelled within, although he did his best to keep his face impassive; thankfully his plans for today had not fallen through. Her reasoning was something Harry could respect greatly.

"Fealty goes both ways, whether between a lord and his vassal or a husband and his wife." He left a Galleon on the table, more than enough tip for the strange waitress, and grabbed her offered arm. Draco's mother led him to the fireplace and threw some floo powder from the provided pot.

"Ministry of Magic, Atrium."

The fire flared green, and the woman let go of him, "I'll see you on the opposite side, Harry." Then, she walked in and disappeared into the flames.

Harry waited a moment before throwing floo powder and repeating after the woman. Within seconds, he was swirling in place until he was spat out of the fireplace. His head landed on something soft and bouncy, and he felt slender hands hold him.

"I forgot to warn you that the Leaky's fireplace is more temperamental than normal." An amused voice sounded above him, and Harry felt heat instantly rush all the way to his brow as he found himself face to cleavage with his chaperone.

Narcissa Malfoy giggled at his look, her laughter reminding him of clear bells and nightingales. She did not at all look like the woman whom he promised to murder her husband, and Harry was beyond confused but forgot about it as she moved aside to allow him his first view of the Ministry of Magic.

And what a view it was, they were standing at one end of a very long and splendid hall with a highly polished, dark wood floor. The peacock-blue ceiling was inlaid with gleaming golden symbols continually moving and changing like some enormous heavenly notice board. The walls on each side were panelled in shiny dark wood and had many gilded fireplaces set into them. Every few seconds, a witch or wizard would emerge from one of the fireplaces they just left with a soft whoosh; on the far right-hand side, past a tunnel leading somewhere, short queues of wizards were forming before each fireplace, waiting to depart.

"Welcome to the Ministry of Magic, Harry." Narcissa Malfoy smiled, spreading her arms as if showcasing her home, "I can assure you that by the end of the day, you will absolutely detest it here."

Starring: Narcissa 'bow to me peasants' Malfoy, Draco 'it's all Potter's fault' Malfoy, Harry 'can't train in peace' Potter, and mysterious waitress who is not at all ripped from a mobile game.

I never understood why someone like Lucius would only have one child. He's rich and can certainly support an army of children if he wanted, but then I noticed that he didn't have any siblings either. I realised that there must be something more sinister running in the background, aside from JKR not bothering to expand on families.

Think what you want about Draco, but he is still human, and he loves his parents, and would love to make actual friends. In fact, this will be a consistent aspect of my story telling; humanizing the villains. Not all of them, of course, as some people are either FUBAR (Snape),

Pure Evil (Voldemort), or in between but cursed so bad their minds are on the verge of collapse (Lucius Malfoy)

Neither Harry nor Jon had ever had a mother figure. At 12 years old, going 13, and in the midst of an unknown and chaotic ritual, with some kind of primal magic in his system, Harry is in that time in his life where he *needs* a mother's love... or to start fucking his stress and worries away.

No one can survive on their lonesome like this, and I disliked the many portrayals of *Strong Independent Harry* in most fanfiction troupes. It made me feel like they were written by edgy teenagers who were upset their parents took their Xbox privileges away.

That waitress is canon, btw. So many Spin-offs were made from Harry Potter, which are a gold mine for finding interesting characters or locations so long as you put your own twist on them. I never played Hogwarts Mystery, but it seems interesting from what I've seen on the wiki. Except it's a mobile game, which is just ew. PCMR all the way.