

A Change in the Wind

by Mandela

HBP Spoilers Galore Ginny Weasley has been captured by Death Eaters in the days following the ending of HBP, and placed under the guard of Draco Malfoy. It is up to her to convince Draco to abandon his father and turn to the right side. But is it too late? Has Draco been under his father's influence for too long?

Chapter One

Chapter 1 of 2

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Author's Note: I apologize for not updating my other stories, while finding time to upload this one. I admit that I have the attention span of a flea. In a few weeks I'll probably be to fervently update one of my other stories. All I ask is that you bear with me.

Unfortunately, classes are also starting up again, so my recreational writing time is going to be severely limited once again.

Anyway, a brief intro about the story: I've been a fan of Ginny/Draco for some time now, but I haven't found many where Draco hasn't turned into some little lovesick puppy. That, or the entire fic is a PWP (not that I don't mind a PWP every once in a while, I just want a story with a plot). So, I have endeavored to write my own version of a Ginny/Draco fic, sans the smut. First of all, it takes place directly after HBP, so Ginny is approximately 15-16, and Draco is 16-17. They can wait a few years before getting the smut on. And secondly, romances can flourish without smut. Not to mention who says there is going to be any romance in the first half of the story anyway?

Ah, well. It all remains to be seen.

Enjoy!

"Preposterous!" Rufus Scrimgeour slammed the newest edition of the *Daily Prophet* down on the desk, clearly positioning it so that the headline was visible to his seated guest. "You call yourself a journalist? What kind of unresearched, imaginary filth is this?" He scowled, jabbing a finger at the words **MINISTRY SPY OUTED! SNAPE A DEATH EATER ALL ALONG!**

Rita Skeeter glanced up at the outraged Scrimgeour through her spectacles, her long magenta nails tapping impatiently at the clasp of her oversized handbag. She dismissed the Minister's ravings, only partially listening. It was jealousy, pure and simple. He may be the Minister of Magic, but she was still the most-read columnist in Britain.

"It must have been devastating to hear that your spy was actually a double agent, for the other side," Rita said, not looking the least bit perturbed. Her bag snapped open, and she hurriedly withdrew a piece of blank parchment and her trademark quill. "What do *you* think about it, Minister?"

Scrimgeour did not speak for a few seconds, but his face grew redder as he continued to stare at the woman. "OUT!" He demanded, pointing towards the door. "Get out now!" Wordlessly Rita shoved her supplies back into her bag, shuffling towards the exit as quickly as she could in her ridiculously high pumps.

"Thank you for the interview, sir!" She called as she was ushered none too gently out the door, grinning to herself. An article was already forming in her mind. **MINISTER OF MAGIC ENRAGED OVER SNAPE DEBACLE; EXPERTS CLAIM MINISTER NOT COMPETENT TO HANDLE SITUATION.** That would sell well.

A tall, black wizard standing outside the Minister's door frowned as he saw Rita flounce by, noting the smirk on her heavily made-up face. It did not bode well for him, at any rate. Something that made Rita that glad surely wasn't going to sit well with Scrimgeour. Still, Kingsley Shacklebolt reasoned, he had a job to do. Taking a calming breath, he knocked firmly on the Minister's already open door, striding into the office before Scrimgeour could turn him away.

"Sir," Kingsley said tentatively, spotting the Minister. "I have the reports on the whereabouts of the escaped Death Eaters." He held an average sized manilla folder aloft. Scrimgeour looked up from the drink he had begun pouring himself, and nodded.

"Have you captured any yet?" Scrimgeour asked, taking a large gulp of Ogden's Best. Kingsley hesitated, trying to figure out a way to phrase the situation that wouldn't serve to further enrage the Minister. "Well? Out with it!"

"We have been able to trace many of the escaped Death Eaters, along with Severus Snape and Draco Malfoy, to the Malfoy's estate," Kingsley began. He flinched, noticing the flicker of hope that had crossed Scrimgeour's face. "But," he continued; the Minister's face darkened again, "There has been a complication."

"Complications! Difficulties! Delays!" The Minister roared, slamming his glass down on a side table. "That is all I have been hearing for the past three days. You are aware of their location, so capture them! Is it that difficult?" Scrimgeour paused, scowling. For the past three days he had not slept, he had barely eaten. All he had done was prow around his office, every so often glancing at the place where Fudge's nameplate had stood not a year ago. Where his nameplate might not be in the near future, if something wasn't done about the escalating situation with He-Who-Must-Not-Be-Named.

"The problem is sir," Kingsley said, trying to salvage the situation, "We have been unable to locate Malfoy Manor." He hurriedly continued on, before Scrimgeour could interrupt. "The location has been made Unplottable, and Lucius, it seems, has appointed a Secret Keeper to keep the manor hidden."

The Minister began to speak, but was interrupted by yet another knock. The solid oak doors creaked open as a diminutive Ministry worker crept in, making a beeline for Shacklebolt. Bryant, already small in stature, seemed to shrink under the Minister's furious glare. Nonetheless, the young, nervous man made it to Shacklebolt without difficulty, standing up on his tiptoes to whisper into the elder's ear. The auror's face darkened as Bryant relayed the news.

"It seems," he said in a slow, rumbling bass, "that there has been another development." Kingsley Shacklebolt swallowed, trying to override the dozens of emotions that were playing across his chiseled features. "Ginevra Weasley has been abducted, and it is believed that this same group of Death Eaters are behind it."

A number of images swam through Ginny Weasley's cloudy, semi-conscious mind. A crowd in the hospital wing. Her parents crying, holding each other. A nameless, faceless man standing over her, laughing coldly. She shuddered, remembering. *That* was a memory, not some false image her brain was conjuring up to fill in the empty gaps. She shuddered again, this time from the cold. Cold? Her benumbed brain asked. Why was it cold? It is July! Groaning, she rolled over on the floor, doing something vaguely reminiscent of sit-ups as she tried to lift herself into a seated position. A sharp kick to her ribs had her moaning in pain as she rolled back over onto the floor, hands still bound at the wrists.

"Shut it, Weasel!" A familiar voice demanded angrily. Ginny recognized the voice, recognized the tone the command had been uttered in. But she did not recognize the hint of fear behind it.

"Untie me!" The girl demanded, the cloth binding her mouth having come undone due to all her moving. "Untie me *now!* You can't do this! Dumbledore will have the entire Order looking for you!"

Her claims were met with a cold laugh. "That daft old bugger is dead, don't you remember?" The voice sneered. "Dead. And I doubt your precious Order is going to bother to save you now; you're just some insignificant girl!"

Tears welled up in the back of Ginny's throat as she remembered the scene only hours before her capture, but she pushed them back down as quickly as they'd come up. She would not let her captors see her cry. She wouldn't give them the satisfaction. Her captor, whoever he was, took her silence as a sign of her compliance.

"Now that you're quiet," her captor began again, a note of confidence returning to his voice, "I have a few rules to tell you. And I am not fond of repeating myself, so you'd better listen closely." Ginny scowled, but did not reply verbally. "First of all, you are under *my* control now. That bumbling old fool Dumbledore can't punish me anymore. If you wish to remain conscious and relatively pain-free, I suggest you listen to me. Secondly, when my father comes to question you, you *will* tell him everything you know about this so-called Order of the Phoenix. Lying is not going to be tolerated. Try to subdue that damned Gryffindor in you, alright? Bravery is not going to get you far here."

Suddenly Ginny knew where she had heard that voice before. "Malfoy!" She hissed, turning her blindfolded eyes to the source of her school nemesis' voice. The blonde flinched at being recognized, but quickly allowed a smirk to settle on his pinched features.

"How observant of you," the Malfoy heir sniggered, slowly walking around the bound, blindfolded girl. "Now that you know who I am, it can't possibly hurt to tell you where you are." A pause. "Welcome," he spread his arms wide, "to the dungeons of Malfoy Manor!" Ginny responded by twisting in vain against the robes that bound her. With each motion, the ropes tightened until she squealed in pain. "Never been in real dungeons before, have you?" Draco said gleefully, eyeing his captive's struggling. "Of course, all *real* wizarding families have them in their homes. But considering you're a *Weasley*," he spat out the word, "I doubt you have. In fact," he sneered, "we could probably fit that entire wreck you call a house into the dungeons."

Ginny scowled, unable to resist the urge to kick Malfoy. Unfortunately, the ropes that bound her made this impossible, and all she accomplished was rolling over, landing in a particularly unpleasant puddle of some unidentifiable substance. Malfoy laughed again.

"Shove it, ferret!" She spat, a look of utter loathing written clearly on her face. "You're a brave one now, aren't you! Can only face an enemy alone when your enemy is bound and helpless." The smirk on Draco's face quickly melted away. "H-harry told me that he'd seen you *crying* in the girl's bathroom!" Taking a deep breath, she intoned: "You are a lousy, no-good COWARD!"

"Are you going to let a blood traitor talk to you that way?" An amused voiced asked from the doorway. Draco looked up, meeting the eyes of his father.

"N-no, sir!" He stammered, glancing hatefully down at the girl tied up at his feet. Lucius nodded in approval. Hesitating slightly, Draco stepped forward and placed a poorly aimed kick at Ginny's side. "I said SHUT UP!"

"It is better," a third voice claimed; Ginny recognized it immediately as belonging to her now ex-Potions Master, Snape. "However, brute force is such a *Muggle* way of dealing with things. A simple stinging hex is probably enough to get the chit to shut up."

Ginny's nerves, already frayed, snapped completely upon *his* arrival. "TRAITOR!" She shrieked. "MURDERER! He trusted you, you miserable!" She was silenced as a stinging hex cut into her arms, causing her to cry out in pain instead of her tirade against Snape.

"Very good, Draco," Lucius Malfoy murmured, above Ginny's wails. "However, I doubt you'll want to continue listening to this for the next few hours. *Stupefy!*" A bolt of red light flew from Lucius' wand, hitting Ginny square in the chest. She crumpled backwards with a small thud. "I daresay she shan't be moving for the next couple of hours," the elder Malfoy declared. "Come, Severus, Draco. We have other business to attend to." With that said, Malfoy exited the dungeon room, followed by Snape, and then Draco. Not one of the three looked back at the small, huddled figure lying frozen in the center of the room.

Author's Note: Is Snape truly evil? Or is he still pretending? I, personally, am still torn on the subject and have yet to develop a real opinion about it. However, I recently read a well argued post that Snape really *is* evil, and thus I have decided that in this story, Snape has formally made the decision to rejoin the Death Eaters and renounce his dedication to the Order.

Chapter Two

Chapter 2 of 2

HBP Spoilers Galore Ginny Weasley has been captured by Death Eaters in the days following the ending of HBP, and placed under the guard of Draco Malfoy. It is up to her to convince Draco to abandon his father and turn to the right side. But is it too late? Has Draco been under his father's influence for too long?

No one came back that night. Ginny lay frozen for hours, shivering on the cold, dungeon floor. Her wide open eyes stared endlessly at the walls, tears falling noiselessly down her face. A squeak in a dark corner alerted her to the presence of another creature, and had she the ability the move, she would have frozen at that point. She did not, however, have the luxury of choosing whether to move or not. She simply lay there, hearing the noise come closer and closer.

Finally the creature came within sight, illuminated by a single candle. A rat. *It could be worse*, Ginny reflected, *knowing the Malfoy's, they could have kept a far worse beast in the dungeons*. The thought offered little comfort.

The rat crept forward, its nose twitching in an absurd manner. Ginny might have found it amusing, had the circumstances been different. The rat, as if aware that Ginny was watching it, glanced up sharply. It stood perfectly still for a minute, as if it had been *stupefied* as well. Finally, judging that Ginny was no potential threat, it continued forward.

Ginny flinched inwardly as the small creature tentatively climbed onto her unmoving hands. Perhaps it felt a pulse in her body, for again it paused, looking warily at the warm flesh it stood upon. Ginny could feel the rodent scurrying over her hands, and a shiver went up her spine. If such a harmless creature as a rat could crawl all over her without even getting shooed away, what would happen later when Draco came back? Or worse, Lucius?

Suddenly Ginny felt a sharp burst of pain from her thumb. The rat had bitten her! She could feel bloody slowly pooling in the wound, then gently dripping down the side of her finger. *That little bugger bites deeps!* She scowled internally. The rat continued to nibble on her bound hands, until Ginny felt an increased pressure on the ropes that bound her. The continued nibbling sound meant only one thing the rat had started eating away at the ropes. A flicker of hope, unbidden, bloomed in Ginny's chest. As the rat continued nibbling and biting, Ginny's mind flashed to the past twenty-four hours when she had been captured.

Molly had gone with Hermione and Ron to visit Bill in St. Mungo's, where he was still recovering. Arthur had gone to work, and Tonks, who was staying with the Weasleys, had accompanied Harry on his last trip to the Durlay's for a formal farewell. Ginny alone was left in the Weasley house. Well, not alone, per se. Remus had locked himself in Charlie's old room, and was currently curled up asleep on the bed. His monthly transformation had begun, and although Madame Pomfrey had managed to whip up a batch of Wolfsbane Potion for him, it wasn't nearly as effective as what Snape had usually prepared.

Thus Ginny was left to her own devices. Finally resorting to advice Fleur had given her earlier, she'd opened up one of Molly's many cookbooks and selected a fairly simple recipe for Pumpkin Cookies. Harry had mentioned he was particularly fond of them, and she was determined to have a delicious snack ready for him when he returned. Propping the cookbook up on the counter, Ginny set to work.

An hour later, Ginny was elbow deep in flour as she placed the second batch of cookies in the oven. The first batch lay cooling on the counter, and her wand supervised the stirring of a third batch on the kitchen table. There was no way only two dozen cookies could be enough for everyone staying at the Weasley house; Ginny had hurried to make two more batches. Feeling somewhat tired, she paused, glancing out the window. To her surprise and delight, she saw Neville Longbottom and Luna Lovegood strolling up the path towards the house. Grinning, Ginny had snatched up the plate of freshly baked cookies and scurried outside to meet the pair.

Something had seemed odd to her the very moment she got within speaking range. Neville and Luna had exchanged conspiratorial glances before Luna quickly turned her wide eyes on the Weasley house, looking about for other people. Neville stepped forward and threw his arms around Ginny in a rough, tight hug. A warning bell started going off in Ginny's head Neville was never this unrestrained or physical. As a precaution, Ginny began reaching into her robes for her wand, only to find that she had left it in the kitchen, stirring the cookie dough. She heard Neville utter a deep laugh, before a horrifying unfamiliar feeling took over her. It felt as if she was being suffocated and squished on all sides, and she succumbed to darkness. When she had awoken, she was bound and gagged in a dark, damp dungeon.

It was hours later, and Ginny was still bound in the dungeon, though she'd managed to loosen the cloth that was gagging her. The rat was still gnawing diligently on the ropes. It must have smelled a bit of residual cookie dough on her hands. If, no, *when* she got out of there, she was going to make a concentrated effort to be nicer to Fleur. That is, if the rat managed to chew all the way through the ropes.

Suddenly Ginny felt a release of tension around her wrists. The ropes, chewed on and spat out, had broken. Elation filled Ginny and she experimentally moved on of her fingers. Her left index finger twitched ever so slightly. The rat, noticing Ginny's movements, scurried away. The tiny movement had cost Ginny a great deal of energy, but once again hope burgeoned in her chest. All was not lost. Again she tried moving her hands, although this time she shook all her fingers. The rope slid a centimeter down her hand. She rested for another minute, then tried again. And again, and again. The *Stupefy* was weakening, but it was still working. By her fourth try, Ginny was breathing heavily. But it was worth on. On the floor, a few centimeters away from her hands, lay the rope. Her mission a success, the much weakened girl finally succumbed to the welcoming blankness of unconsciousness.

Unlike Ginny, Draco had fallen asleep in a large, comfortable bed that night. After they had withdrawn from the dungeons, his father and Snape had drilled him relentlessly in manner and decorum expected at the next meeting, as well as relating the Dark Lord's newest orders to him. In precisely three days, the Dark Lord was to visit. It was then that he would torture the blood traitor, withdrawing all the information he could about the Order of the Phoenix and Harry Potter. When he was finished, Ginevra Weasley would be turned over to the Death Eaters for them to do as they pleased. Draco shuddered involuntarily. He'd heard stories of what the Death Eaters did to their victims, and it wasn't pretty.

Both Lucius and Snape had been annoyingly condescending as they described Draco's task to him: he was to guard the blood traitor, and make sure that she would be ready for the Dark Lord's arrival. The two men were each counting on him to do well, to make up for his blunder with Dumbledore earlier. Lucius saw Draco as a way to ingratiate himself with the Dark Lord. Snape was already beginning to refer to Draco as his protege, and was eagerly awaiting the praise that he would receive for training Draco to that point.

Draco had listened to his father and Snape speak until they were practically blue in the face, all the while nodding and repeating the directions until they'd become firmly tattooed on his brain. *Honestly, did they have so little faith?* Draco had fumed inwardly. Finally, Lucius had declared that Draco was ready, and the boy was permitted to return to his room. He fell asleep that night, his hand unconsciously touching the vivid Dark Mark on his forearm.

The platinum boy slept peacefully that night, awakening leisurely to find a house elf with a breakfast tray standing beside his bed. It was only as he was spreading a thick layer of marmalade on his toast that he remembered Ginny, still locked away in the dungeons. Chewing thoughtfully on the food, he decided he'd bring some water and toast down when he went to check on her. It wouldn't do to have her fainting from hunger at the Dark Lord's feet.

Stretching, Draco slid out of the bed and padded over to where his clothes lay. His grey eyes fell upon a folded black robe and white mask his Death Eater garb. Remembering how Ginny had taunted him the previous day, he scowled. *This will show her who is in power*, he decided, donning the black robe. Placing the mask over his pale, pointed face, Draco snatched up a piece of cold toast and began making his way down to the dungeons.

"Good morning, Weasel," Draco announced haughtily, striding into the cold, subterranean room. Ginny was where they had left her the previous night, huddled in the center of the room. Smirking, Draco dropped the piece of toast onto the chair he had occupied while 'guarding' Ginny. The girl still seemed to be frozen, though the *Stupefy* should have worn off hours ago. *She must be sleeping*, Draco thought, a smirk forming on his lips. Well, she wouldn't be asleep for much longer.

Draco took a step forward, then placed a well aimed kick at Ginny's midsection. His foot made contact, but not with her torso. Unexpectedly her hands unbound shot out and snatched his ankle, yanking it back suddenly. With a cry of surprise, Draco crashed to the floor. At once, Ginny was on top of him pummeling him with her tiny fists. She'd never been particularly strong, having inherited Arthur Weasley's thin frame but none of his height. Yet now her hate and anger overtook her small stature, as she ruthlessly hit the boy beneath her.

Draco flailed his arms and howled as Ginny beat him, but it was useless against the redhead's fury. Suddenly, Ginny stopped. She'd located his wand, and Draco found himself looking down his nose at the thin strip of wood pointed right at him.

"Take off the robe and mask," Ginny demanded, the eery calm of her voice belied by the angry red flush of her cheeks. Draco, not wishing to be hexed, complied. Glaring at him as the clothes were placed at her feet, Ginny raised the wand. "*Stupefy!*" The boy crumpled at her feet just as she had at his hours ago. She took the ropes she had managed to untie from around her ankles, and tied them firmly around Draco's wrists. It was, she mused, an ironic reversal of roles.

Slipping the Death Eater garb on with a shudder, Ginny exited the cell, closing the door soundly behind her. It was still early, she recalled as she hurried down the passage. Hopefully no one would be about. Clutching Draco's wand in her hand in case she did come across somebody, the girl continued forward, spying a bit of light at the end of the dimly lit corridor. A door! Malfoy Manor was built on a hilltop, and that must have been one of the many secret entrances built in the uneven terrain. It had obviously been used recently, for whoever had opened it had failed to close it properly and a sliver of sunlight had made its way into the dungeons. Wanting to cry for happiness, Ginny eased the heavy stone door open, slipping out into the blinding sunlight. She was free!
