

The Lines Will One Day Be Drawn Again

by *h_vic*

Rose Weasley and Scorpius Malfoy – a love that could never be, and yet it was.

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Chapter 1 of 1

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A/N: *This was originally written as a Hufflepuff Secret Santa for bewitching and beta'd by Fizzing_Wizbee022.*

"I don't understand ... I..." Rose Weasley stared, bewildered, at the young man who had already stepped away from her. His words didn't make sense, and the couple of careful paces he had put between them already felt like an ocean. It was too far for the familiar, leather-tinged scent that she had come to associate with his touch to reach her, and its sudden absence was jarring. The heat on her skin where his fingers had lingered only moments before was fading to leave an unnatural chill in its wake.

"This won't work, Rose," he said with a tired sigh. His voice was low and controlled, but there was a darker sadness that lurked in the shadows of his eyes. Maybe the emptiness meant nothing. Maybe Rose read what she wanted to in his hollow eyes. She chose to believe it was a control born of desperation though, a thin veil to mask his grief.

"We've just been fooling ourselves." A subtle bitterness rode on the current of his words like moths before the weight of a storm.

She stared at him, silhouetted against the sparkling, windswept surface of the lake by the light of the thin splinter of moon hanging gauchely above them. His pale hair glowed in the callow light, and his skin seemed almost translucent. He was a fallen angel in the night.

"It can work, Scorpius! We'll make it work! We're good together, you can't deny that!" There was a strident edge to her voice. She wouldn't let him walk away, not like this, not without an explanation. After two years, she deserved that much from him at least.

Scorpius Malfoy shook his head sadly. Blond hair fell into his cold, grey eyes, concealing them and creating yet another barrier between the two of them. "No." The word clattered into the silence between them with a dreadful finality that sent icy tendrils trailing possessively across Rose's heart.

The control in his voice was slipping, though. Rose could hear the rough edge of emotion ripping across his cultured vowels. She was determined to tear away the mask of decorum that he was so carefully erecting. She would not allow him the luxury of impersonality; he owed her better than that!

"I can't deny it, and I never would, but this is about more than us..." He trailed off with uncharacteristic hesitancy. Somewhere the mournful hoot of an owl broke the silence

that surrounded them, but Rose had no interest in the delicacies of the night and its denizens.

"No, it's not! Why the hell should it be? You're all that matters!" Rose screamed at him, unable to suppress her fury any longer. How dare he be so calm, so matter of fact! He was tearing out her heart murmur by bitter murmur, and he was doing it with perfect civility. She wanted him to rage, to fight for everything they had with his last breath, but instead his face was a cool, lifeless mask. He stood before her an empty-eyed doll, as implacable as a dust-coated mannequin. She could almost hate him for it ...

Almost.

She raised a shaking hand, drawing it back to slap him. He took a step back towards her, catching her wrist in his elegant fingers, fingertips biting deep into sinew. Rose stepped away from him, an awkward shuffling step, suddenly afraid of the fire in his eyes. She'd wanted to make him angry, but now that he was, she wished she hadn't. There was something deep in his eyes, something that spoke of his legacy, his family's fascination with the darkness, and confirmed everything he was telling her.

Rose ended the unendurable moment first and tore her eyes away from his, breaking her arm free of his cruel grasp, unable to bear the truth of what she saw. She had not wanted to believe who he truly was, but now she knew, and the knowledge rocked the secure foundations on which she had thought she trod.

Scorpius roughly seized her shoulder with one hand and forced her chin upwards with the other so she had to meet his gaze. "Did you tell him then, if no one else matters?" he demanded angrily. "Did you tell him? Did you tell your brother about us, like you were going to? Like you were going to yesterday? And last week? And the week before?"

Rose broke free of the unexpected cruelty of his hands, turning away from him. Tears welled in her eyes as she finally saw the brutal truth that he seemed to have accepted.

"I thought not. You won't tell your family, just as I wouldn't ever tell mine, because they couldn't understand." His words were quiet, as if spoken from a distance or perhaps just a painful depth. Each word was drawn out on a ragged breath that crawled beneath Rose's skin, or so it felt, burrowing deep within her. His words were parasitic; they fed on her and offered nothing back.

"We leave Hogwarts in a few weeks. We're adults. They can't stop us seeing each other!" She couldn't let it go; she couldn't stop fighting ... Even if he could.

She stared back at the castle that she knew she ought to love, but her heart was empty, and without Scorpius, the thought of returning to it was a torture. Its beloved walls would become her prison. She would rather face the echoing chill of Azkaban than the shattered familiarity of her life without him in it. The long summer days would be painfully unending without his eyes meeting hers to enliven the blurred, greying classes with their wry and secret light and the stolen thrill of murmured words whispered hurriedly in corridors.

He laughed suddenly, the harsh sound stolen quickly by the blanketing jealousy of the night; he actually had the nerve to laugh at her, and Rose felt the quick flush of anger burn across her cheeks.

"What would you have us do?" he demanded. "Elope? Don't be ridiculous, Rose. We both know you could never hurt them like that."

Ridiculous, the word crashed around inside her, flailing wildly as it washed away everything before it and resonating like a false note in the darkest recesses of her heart. She wondered if that was how he truly saw her some silly, overemotional girl. Suddenly, it seemed as if she might have everything wrong, as if he'd never felt the way she did after all. Her knees sagged uselessly beneath her, and only the cold strength of her will kept her standing.

"We stand on opposite sides of the line." He placed a more gentle hand on her shoulder as he spoke, drawing her back into the comfortably familiar fit against his chest. The heat of his embrace, as his arms encircled her and his chin dropped to rest on her shoulder, his cheek pressing against hers, brought a soft flush to her skin, even as she wished she could find the strength of will to refuse the contact.

"What line?"

"The battle-line." He spat the words as if the syllables themselves were a vile poison; the harshness in his voice and the rigidity that she could feel shudder through his slight frame sent chills spiralling through Rose. She whirled around, her face now only inches from his.

"We aren't at war, Scorpius," she whispered, her breath stealing across his jaw as she leant forward to brush his cheek with her lips.

"Don't be so bloody naïve!" he snarled, pushing her away, but catching her elbow as she stumbled on the rough ground. "The old divides still stand just waiting for someone to resurrect them. The Dark Lord may be gone..."

Rose gasped. "My father said only Death Eaters ever spoke that name!"

"My father was a Death Eater," Scorpius countered, tension drawn in every taut line of his face, the shadows lapping at it making it appear so much more ancient than his eighteen years. "The Dark Lord may be gone," he continued mercilessly. "But he won't be the last. Those lines will one day be drawn again no matter what we do."

"And when they are," Rose replied with all the conviction she could muster, "you'll choose the right side. You're a good man; I know you! You're not your father." She reached out to place her hand on his arm. He stared down at it as if it were some alien presence, but he seemed to lack either the will or energy to remove it. Instead, his face contorted with silent grief as he stared at the freckles on her wrist with all the careful focus necessary to discern a complex pattern in them.

"But I *am* a Slytherin. When the lines are drawn, Gryffindors will stand on one side and Slytherins on the other."

"It doesn't have to be that way," she pleaded, lifting a hand to place it against his cheek. He raised his hand to rest over hers, gently stroking the graceful line of her wrist with his thumb. "Not every Slytherin chooses that path. Severus Snape died to bring about Voldemort's fall. All because he loved a Gryffindor. You must know his story?"

Scorpius laughed, pulling her hand from his cheek, but not releasing it. It was a bitter laugh anger, irony and frustration melting into the dissonant sound as his fingers crushed hers in their bruising grasp. "And look at the joy that bought him! I know what I am; there are no illusions anymore. I thought perhaps I could be someone else, but the truth is: I am my family's true son. No, I would not choose that double life, not for either of us."

Rose's voice rose half an octave too high when she finally spoke, betraying all of the hurt she was trying so diligently to hide. "What gives you the right to choose for me?"

"Nothing ... except that I love you." He drew her hand reverently back to his face and kissed her fingertips, his lips barely making the briefest contact as they crept towards her wrist. They were the lightest whisper of silk rustling against her burning palm, a caress made of little more than the insipid moonlight. Yet, the fleeting touch set every nerve in Rose's arm alight. For one brief moment, she was lost in him, her biggest concern whether her suddenly useless knees could continue to support her, until his next words speared her heart, seemingly casting her silly, weak flesh aside like a knife slicing through her. Her free hand spread across her chest in reflex, and when she drew it away, she ran her thumb across her fingers without thinking, almost expecting them to be slick with blood, because it seemed to her that words alone could never be that powerful.

Scorpius Malfoy stepped away from her, blending into the night.

"Goodbye, Rose."