

Ready to Jump?

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Chapter 1 of 1

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Disclaimer: I don't own Harry Potter, and I do not intend to make any profit of this fic.

Warnings: Post-DH, EWE and the rating is for some swearing

A/N: Thanks to nikkilicious, who inspired this drabble turned one-shot, and hathorx, who was kind enough to do the beta for this.

Draco took a healthy sip from his glass of Ogden's Old Firewhiskey and sat down on the edge of the roof, dangling his feet in the air. He could hear the music and the chatter from Anthony Goldstein's birthday party five floors below. Having grown bored of the boisterous calamity, Draco had escaped to the rooftop to enjoy his whiskey in peace.

His solitude didn't last very long though. Hearing steps on the staircase, Draco sighed, hoping that the intruder wasn't one of his friends coming to persuade him to rejoin the party.

Why Draco had allowed his current girlfriend, Parvati Patil, to drag him to this party was beyond him. Of course Parvati hadn't told him that the party was Muggle themed. Draco had almost hexed the wizard at the entrance who tried to confiscate his wand.

Only Parvati's promise to make it up to him with one hell of a blowjob later had persuaded Draco to play along. Still, he would have to break up with her soon. She was too high-maintenance for his taste. Her double Ds and outstanding oral performances weren't worth all the trouble.

Turning towards the door, Draco looked up in time to see a very distressed Hermione Granger rush onto the rooftop. The woman was so upset that she didn't even notice his presence. Instead, she stopped at the wall, leaned against it and started crying pathetically. Draco snorted.

"Must you have your hysterics here, Granger? I quite liked the silence."

She wheeled around at his words, trying to wipe away her tears quickly, but only succeeded in smearing her mascara around her eyes.

"Malfoy, what are you doing here?" she asked.

"I fail to see how this is any of your concern," he replied loftily. "Run along now. Find someplace else to have your pathetic meltdown."

She glared at him, although the effect was slightly diminished by her swollen, red eyes.

"Malfoy, the rooftop doesn't belong to you. You can't just send me away like some mindless idiot."

"As a matter of fact, I do own this building. Anthony rents his flat from me," Draco corrected cockily. "Off you go."

"It's amazing how after all these years you still manage to astound me with your arrogance," Hermione spat, showing no signs of intending to leave the roof.

"Pathetic comeback, Granger," Draco commented, entirely unaffected by both her insult and her patented death glare.

Hermione didn't reply further, apparently torn between defending her claim to the rooftop and wanting to curl up and wallow in her own misery...there were still a few tears streaming down her cheeks. She angrily ran her hand over her face.

What had caused the woman to be so upset that she seriously considered yielding an argument with him didn't interest Draco in the slightest. As far as he was concerned, she could either go, leaving him to finish his Firewhiskey in peace, or she could stay and continue arguing with him. Both options promised to be more entertaining than the party downstairs.

However, before Hermione had made up her mind, the door to the rooftop suddenly slammed with a deafening bang. Both Draco and Hermione wheeled around at the noise, far too late to prevent the door from closing.

"What have you done now, Granger?" Draco accused annoyed.

"Excuse me?" Draco barely resisted the urge to cover his ears to spare them the pain of her high screeching. "I'm nowhere near that door."

She was right, of course. Draco had just wanted to rile her up. Which had worked rather nicely. She was looking ridiculous, standing on the roof in her black party dress, make-up a mess and hands stemmed to her hips. Her infamous bushy hair was already escaping its fancy up-do and her nostrils were flaring.

"Stay like this, Granger." Draco got up and walked to the closed door. "I'm going to get a camera. I'm sure every freak show would pay a fortune for a picture of you looking like this."

When Draco reached the door to the staircase, however, he stopped dead. Hermione screeched her reply to his earlier insult, but Draco didn't pay her any attention.

Where was the door handle?

It took Hermione a while to realise that Draco had become completely unresponsive, but she eventually joined him at the door.

"Don't tell me we can't open this from the outside," she moaned.

Still ignoring her, Draco tried pulling the door open, but he couldn't even get a proper hold on it without the handle.

"Malfoy, this won't work," Hermione admonished. She pushed him aside and started banging at the door.

"Hello, hello? Anyone there? Open up," she screamed while hammering her fists against the door.

"Granger, this door is made of solid iron. No one's going to hear you."

"You've got a better idea?" Hermione asked, but stopped the shouting.

"I'm thinking about it," he replied.

"Don't strain yourself."

Hermione sighed exasperatedly. Then she walked over to the edge of the building.

"If you want to throw yourself off the roof, don't let me stop you," Draco called after her. "You'd be doing the world a favour."

It was Hermione's turn to ignore him. She squatted down at the edge of the roof and began shouting for help again. Anthony Goldstein's flat was only five storeys below them, and the windows were open, but the music and chatter of the party were too loud for anyone to hear Hermione's cry for help. She eventually gave up.

"We're stuck," she announced.

"Way to state the obvious," Draco rebuffed, then sat down on the edge of the roof, too.

"What I want to know is how a door this heavy can just fall shut," Hermione wondered. "It can't have been just the wind."

"Are you as daft as you look? Someone clearly closed the door from the inside," Draco replied. "And if I ever find out who did it, I'll make them beg for their death."

"Right," Hermione snorted. They were silent for a while.

"This would be no problem if we had our wands. Who thinks up something as stupid as a Muggle-themed party?" Draco complained.

"I though the idea was rather nice," Hermione said acidly.

"Oh yeah? Do you still think so?"

Hermione didn't reply, but stared down at the street. It seemed that since she didn't have anything left to do but wait, she had remembered her reason for coming up to the roof in the first place. Fat tears were rolling down her cheeks again.

Draco sighed, annoyed, and took another swig of his Firewhiskey, trying to ignore the wailing beside him as best as he could.

Granger, however, didn't have the grace to cry silently. Draco had made his fair share of girls cry, but his ex-girlfriends usually opted to have silent tears streaming down their rosy cheeks while their eyes pleaded with him to take them back.

Granger, on the other hand, sniffled loudly, and there were quite a few unattractive red patches appearing on her face. It made the whole experience even more unpleasant for Draco. Disgusted, he threw a handkerchief at her. Hermione had the manners to thank him, or at least that was what he thought she said. Draco couldn't be sure since Hermione was blowing her nose rather noisily at the same time.

When Hermione's tears lessened, the roof elapsed into silence, which was only interrupted once in a while by the odd sniffle from the distressed girl. Five floors underneath them the party was still in full swing, and the unlikely couple had little hope of being rescued anytime soon.

Hermione began hugging herself and shivering. Goosebumps were covering her entire body. Draco realised that a gentleman would probably offer his jacket so that the lady wouldn't have to freeze in her little party dress. Unfortunately for Hermione, Draco had no desire to be a gentleman and preferred to stay warm himself.

"Ron was snogging Lavender Brown earlier," Hermione suddenly said. "I saw them in an alcove. I just don't know what to do anymore."

"Why are you telling me this, Granger?" Draco asked bewildered.

"Because I have to talk to someone about it, and you're the only one here." Draco snorted, but offered no further insight into Hermione's dilemma.

"I just don't understand how he can do this to me," Hermione continued. "I mean, I know Ron loves me and I love him, but lately there's just so much hurt, I don't know if our love is strong enough to survive this."

I never took you as that much of a masochist." Draco sneered.

"What's that supposed to mean?" Hermione asked acidly.

"Oh, come on, Granger. Everyone knows that the Weasel hits on anything in a skirt once he's had a few beers," Draco clarified with a self-satisfied smirk. "I don't even want to know what he does with a few shots of Odgen's finest in him." Hermione stricken face told him that he had hit a nerve. *Good.*

Draco got up from the ledge and took a few measured steps towards the middle of the roof. Hermione looked ready to push him over the edge any second now, and while Draco was sure that murdering someone in affect...even ex-Slytherins...would serve Granger a guilt-trip that would surely drive her to take the plunge herself, her premature death wouldn't do him any good if he was plastered on the pavement. With his luck, he would have to put up with the silly bint in the afterlife, too.

Hermione, however, refrained from any attempts to murder him. Instead she began to sniffle again, not even bothering anymore to wipe away the tears that were steadily escaping her eyes.

"Merlin, Granger, stop bawling already. Dump his sorry arse, and then find someone to date who can match your maturity level. You're too smart for the pauper anyways," Draco finally spat out.

Hermione looked at him like he was crazy. She seemed unable to digest what Draco had just said. Draco could very much relate. He was, in fact, wondering whether the building was high enough for him to suffer from oxygen deficiency. At least that would explain why he had just paid Hermione Granger a compliment.

"Thank you, I think" Hermione finally said with hesitation. Draco ignored her.

"You came to the party with Parvati, didn't you?" Hermione asked after a moment. She seemed to misinterpret his oxygen-deprived compliment for an honest desire on his part to make conversation. *Bugger.*

Draco took the last swig of his Firewhiskey and then let the glass fall over the edge of the building. As he heard the glass shatter on the pavement with a satisfying crash, he had the ominous feeling that a couple more hours on this blasted roof and he would happily jump off, too.

"Have you two been going out long?" Hermione asked.

"No," he said, hoping one-syllable answers would quench her need for small talk. No such luck.

"How did you two meet?"

"Granger, we all went to school together, remember?"

"I know that. I was just wondering how came you two met up after Hogwarts. We graduated five years ago, after all."

"You mean the war was over, and the Ministry handed us all honorary NEWTs as an easy form of reparation," he corrected annoyed.

"Yes, if you want to put it that way," Hermione relented. "You and Parvati..."

"Merlin, Hermione. What is it with you and that inane chatter? I met the gal at a concert, thought her tits looked great and took her home with me. Would you like to know how I fucked her against the wall of the corridor before we even reached my bedroom, or is that enough information for you?"

"Fine," Hermione spat, and the roof elapsed into an uncomfortable silence again. Half an hour later the party was still going strongly below them, and Hermione and Draco were bored out of their skulls.

"Malfoy, if you ever do find out who locked us up here, owl me. I'll give you an alibi for the murder."

"I'll hold you to that."

Twenty minutes later, Draco was just mentally finalising how he would make Parvati suffer for talking him into going to this stupid party when Hermione broke the silence again.

"What kind of concert?"

"Excuse me?"

"You said you met Parvati at a concert. Which band was it?"

"It wasn't a band; it was the London Symphony."

"Oh."

Silence again. Hermione took to counting the cracks in the floor.

"Have you ever been to the London Symphony, Granger?"

"Actually, no. I would like to go sometime, but Ron prefers wizard rock."

"You could always go by yourself."

"Yeah, I know." Hermione sighed. "But is it so wrong of me to want my boyfriend to come with me? I mean, I let him drag me to all those Quidditch matches, and the bars and..."

"One of these days you'll have to explain to me why exactly you're dating the Weasel."

"I used to know the answer to that question."

Draco snorted.

"Thanks, Draco," Hermione said honestly.

"For what?"

"Tonight. I mean, you're kind of being an ass, but considering it's you, you could probably behave a lot nastier."

Draco stared at Hermione in bewilderment. She looked at him then and smiled. Draco couldn't help himself but think her smile to be kind of pretty...definitely preferable to all the sniffling at any rate. Luckily though, his current bout of oxygen deficiency or whatever else caused this lunacy wasn't severe enough to make him say that out loud.

"Sort of funny, isn't it?" Hermione asked absentmindedly.

"You've lost me." Not for the first time that night Draco wondered if she was also suffering from oxygen deprivation. Then again, she used to be in Gryffindor. Maybe this was normal for her.

"If one takes away all the rivalry, prejudice and bigotry, the two of us can actually carry a half-decent conversation."

Draco snorted noncommittally in reply.

"Do you wonder sometimes how everything would have turned out if Voldemort hadn't returned?" Hermione's question made Draco uneasy, though he couldn't quite put the finger on what exactly was bothering him. He fell back to his usual sarcasm.

"I'm sure it would have been all peachy. Everyone would have loved each other, people would have been judged on merits rather than their ancestry and Snape would have handed out sweets in class."

Hermione actually laughed, and Draco felt the corners of his mouth turn up as well. He didn't know what it was about her that all of a sudden made him want to smile, but he sure hoped that the feeling would pass quickly.

"I somehow doubt that Snape would deal out anything but cleverly disguised poison...war or no war," Hermione said.

"You think?" Draco tried picturing Snape in his mind, handing a sugar quill to Longbottom and assuring him that it was no big deal that the boy just melted his 53. cauldron. The laughter bubbled up in his throat, and before he knew it, Draco was laughing so hard his sides were hurting. He hadn't done that in years.

Hermione, too, was doubling over as she pictured Snape patting Harry on the back, giving the boy a treat for a potion well brewed. She had to hold on to Draco's arm so she wouldn't fall over for laughter.

For a little while, all that could be heard on the rooftop was Hermione and Draco's joined laughter.

They calmed down eventually, feeling a bit silly for their outburst, but still too good to actually be embarrassed about it. Sitting close together, the silence that had fallen between them was strangely comfortable.

"Thanks, Granger," Draco said after some time.

"For what?" Hermione asked.

"Making me laugh," Draco replied, looking at her. To his surprise she looked just the same as always.

"Technically, it was your own joke," Hermione replied with a smile.

All Draco could think about was that this must be what true madness felt like. Nevertheless, he leaned in closer, close enough to feel her breath on his own face. Hermione's eyes fluttered shut, and Draco closed the last bit of distance between them.

BANG

The door to the roof opened loudly, and Hermione and Draco jerked apart and stood up, identical looks of guilt and confusion on their faces.

"Hermione are you there?" Harry shouted from the door.

"Yes, Harry. Hold the door," Hermione called back, and Draco wasn't the only one to notice the breathlessness in her voice. It only served to add to Draco's confusion.

"What's going on?" Harry asked perplexed, looking from Draco to Hermione. "I was looking all over for you. Thought you might be upset..." he trailed off.

"I'm alright," Hermione assured him.

Draco expected her to leave with Potter then, but to his utter amazement she hesitated. She was looking at him as if she was searching for something, but what that something was, Draco couldn't begin to fathom.

Then she smiled at him and rose to her tiptoes.

"Bye, Draco," she whispered, kissing his cheek lightly. The next second she turned and left with Harry. Draco was sure that the look on his face right then must have been almost as dumb as the one Potter was sporting.

Despite being free to go, Draco remained on the roof a little while longer, his eyes fixed on the door Hermione had left wide open. With a sigh he finally left the roof, thinking that he ought to check his family's medical history for cardiac insufficiencies. His heart was beating rather funnily.

The End

A/N: Reviews are love, guys.