

For Love or Money

by Lady Whitehart

Wishing to avoid a mutually undesired union with Lucius, Andormeda Black takes her future into her own hands.

For Love or Money

Chapter 1 of 1

Wishing to avoid a mutually undesired union with Lucius, Andormeda Black takes her future into her own hands.

Below is my contribution to Romancing the Wizard's Challenge Twenty-One: Winter Holidays Past. Starring Ted Tonks and Andromeda Black with a brief appearance by Anne Boleyn. The word count is exactly 500 words and uses the prompt: Goblin-made suits of armour.

It was midnight the night before the Christmas holidays were to begin, when a silent figure slipped past a row of Goblin-made suits of armour on the fourth floor corridor. Pausing at the end of the row, Andromeda glanced over her shoulder before gently tapping the portrait of Anne Boleyn.

"Sneaking about at night, my Slytherin sister?" the portrait asked, raising a dark brow.

The dark-haired girl lifted her chin defiantly. "You'd have done the same."

With a rueful laugh, the portrait swung open, revealing a narrow passageway. "Don't lose your head over a man; it's not worth it."

"*Lumos!*" Andromeda followed along until the passage suddenly widened into a small room. She ran to the room's occupant and threw her arms around him. "Ted!"

The Hufflepuff caught her in his arms, spinning her around and kissing her. "You made it!"

"I thought that little Snape boy would never close his book and go to bed."

For months they'd been meeting in secret, talking, kissing, and caressing until the wee hours of the morning. Having been raised to be so prim and proper, Andromeda found it all very exciting and liberating. Liberating enough that her spirit had rebelled against the news of an arranged marriage to Lucius Malfoy, even if she hadn't found the courage to argue. Obedience and a sense of family honor had been too deeply ingrained. She admired Lucius, but she didn't feel for him the way she felt for Ted.

"Still can't believe you're being forced to marry Lucius Malfoy," Ted mumbled bitterly into her hair.

"Lucius doesn't want to marry me any more than I want to marry him. He's been in love with Cissy since we were children," Andromeda replied, burrowing deeper into Ted's embrace. "I've no desire to be bound to someone who's in love with my sister. Lucius is the last Malfoy and must obey his father, no matter what. He's been threatened with disinheritance... We both have."

"We're adults now. We could elope," suggested Ted, his face glowing with excitement. "Go someplace they'd never find us."

"My family would have no respect for a Muggle marriage."

Andromeda had thought of a way to break the betrothal. She'd heard of the great-great-great-grandsomething who'd had to marry her Muggle devotee, but she wasn't positive that such a drastic step was warranted. Not that she hadn't considered following through with the necessary act each time she and Ted had found themselves entwined and breathless. It was something they both wanted, but not so soon... and not like this. Could living in reduced circumstances with someone she loved be worse than living in luxury with someone who loved another? Anne Boleyn's words came back to her. The ambitious queen had traded poverty and true love for infinite wealth and power, and the choice had cost her everything.

Not allowing herself time to deliberate the issue further, Andromeda slowly began opening the front of her robe.*I need to do this.... I want to do this....*

Author's Notes: Happily ignoring the Black Family Tree, I've decided to make Andromeda and Ted slightly older than but in the same year as Lucius Malfoy with Narcissa the year below them.

As for a portrait of Anne Boleyn hanging in Hogwarts, one of the accusations against her was witchcraft. Anne, if history is to be believed, had ambition to spare and would have made a perfect Slytherin.

Many thanks to seaislewitch for her helpful suggestions.