

A Meeting of Destiny

by phoenix

Yet another boring ball to commemorate Voldemort's defeat until Lucius sees another lonely soul across the dance floor.

One Shot

Chapter 1 of 1

Yet another boring ball to commemorate Voldemort's defeat until Lucius sees another lonely soul across the dance floor.

A/N: Lady Karelia, thank you so much for everything that you do for the Harry Potter fandom. From one Lucius/Hermione shipper to another, I hope that you enjoy this story.

Many thanks to beawesley2 for her beta input. :)

It was the fifth anniversary of Voldemort's defeat. Much had changed in the wizarding world since then. Muggle-borns were not merely accepted, but were now embraced. While not every wizarding tradition was being abandoned, more and more members of the wizarding world were embracing Muggle clothing and behavior.

Lucius did not agree with this 'loss of wizarding culture'. While he was not alone, very few were willing to vocalize their dismay.

Another thing he did not agree with was yet another annual ball to celebrate the defeat. He hoped that this would be the last year. He was only here because to not attend would have hurt his standing in the wizarding world. He had worked carefully over the last five years to regain some measure of his former status. While not as powerful as he had been before Voldemort's second rise to power, he still possessed a significant amount of influence as a prominent entrepreneur.

Unfortunately, the stress of events had destroyed his family. The war had changed Narcissa. Eventually she had merely lost the will to live as she watched her beloved wizarding world change. After her death, he and Draco had drifted further apart. The last Lucius had heard, his son had taken up with a Muggle, though he was still trying to prove that. He tried not to think about that and hoped that it was only the grief of having lost his mother that had changed Draco so.

He sipped at his glass of wine as he pulled himself from the past and back into the present. The one good thing this evening was that the ball was kept dignified. Dress robes were required and wonderful classical music was being played. Once or twice that the evening, he had danced with one of the ladies there, but he had turned down at least half a dozen requests. Even with his notorious background, he was still one of wizarding Britain's most eligible bachelors behind Harry Potter of course, but the young man was hardly eligible. Ginny Weasley had long ago claimed him, but they had not yet married.

As he glanced around the room, he noticed an attractive young lady also standing in the shadows, hoping to avoid notice. Deciding he had nothing to lose, he moved to her side to strike up a conversation.

He was a little surprised at who emerged from the shadows, but he was committed to his course of action. "Miss Granger, how strange to see you standing here alone? I thought that you would surely be the center of attention this evening."

She gave him a quick glance before returning her attention to the center of the room. "I'd rather leave that for Harry and ~~Weasley~~."

He arched an eyebrow at the contempt in her voice when mentioning the name of her fiancé. He had heard that their relationship was rocky, but this seemed to more than rocky. "Indeed. The two of them seem to revel in the attention."

"Oh, yeah, *all* the attention," she replied bitterly.

Lucius saw that her gaze was fixed on Weasley and the beautiful blonde who was hanging all over him as they danced. "Ah, yes. Sadly some people do not adapt well to celebrity."

She snapped her gaze to him. "Oh, he adapted just fine. He adores the limelight and all the female attention."

Realizing her anger was directed at Weasley and not him, he replied with understanding. "Ah, then you are the one who has not adapted."

"It's insane. We only did what we had to do. Though you probably won't agree with that," she said snidely.

"To the contrary, I thank you." He raised his glass in a toast to her. "I thank you for freeing my family and me from that madman. Many years ago I realized that serving him was a mistake, but entering his service was a lifelong decision. I was trapped, a victim of my father's ambitions, much the same way Draco was trapped."

"You made a good show of it," she said skeptically.

"I did what I had to do to survive, to ensure my family's survival. I find it hard to believe that you have never lied to ensure your survival *Miss Clearwater*." He gave her a knowing grin.

She blushed at his reminder that she had pretended to be someone different to avoid capture by the Death Eaters. Looking away from him, she said, "So clearly no one is perfect. But I still wish all of this would end, that we could just get on with our lives."

"On that I will wholeheartedly agree with you." He noticed that her gaze had once again shifted to Weasley. "There is nothing to be gained by watching him." Glancing around at the rest of the gathering, he said, "I doubt that anyone would notice if we left. Perhaps you would like to continue this conversation someplace... less festive?"

She stared at him, considering his offer. "I think some fresh air would do me some good." She let him lead her out of the ballroom. "Where are we going?"

"A quiet little café. I imagine that it will be nearly deserted tonight as everyone seems to be in the mood to party," he said as they walked past a raucous wizarding pub.

As they walked in near silence, he reflected on how she had really become quite a remarkable young woman. Since he was attracted to power, he had kept an eye on what Hermione and the others had been doing. Granted she had spearheaded a lot of the movement to improve the lives of Muggle-borns, but he had to admit it had not been entirely bad. Many of his new employees were Muggle-born because they were not affected by the traditional wizarding world politics. And they were free of Lord Voldemort's taint. She was a formidable force in the Ministry.

Once they were seated in the nearly deserted café, Lucius ordered a nice bottle of wine for the two of them to share. Rather than letting the waiter pour, he shoed the man away. As he poured their wine, he said, "It occurs to me that we know precious little about each other. We have both changed a great deal since the war, and I believe that we actually have a lot in common."

"Do you?" she asked playfully.

Clearly she had been keeping tabs on his doings because she did not immediately say they could have nothing in common. "You've been keeping an eye on me," he replied just as playfully, a grin on his face.

She hid behind her glass. "Well, we had to make sure that you were really reformed."

He arched an eyebrow. "And you didn't trust the Ministry." She gave him a flat look and he replied, "I don't know that I would trust them either, not even with someone like Kingsley in charge." He took a sip of wine and changed the subject. "So... Weasley? I thought all was well between you two, at least according to the *Daily Prophet*."

"I don't want to talk about him," she replied before gulping down her wine and refilling her glass before Lucius could pick up the bottle.

"This is a wine to be savored, my dear, not gulped," he chided softly.

"Sorry. It's just that thinking about him... He makes my blood boil. And I really *don't* want to talk about him." After a brief pause, she said, "I was sorry to hear of Narcissa's passing. She was quite an extraordinary woman."

Now it was Lucius's turn to hide behind his glass. Even though it had been nearly two years since her passing, he still had a hard time believing she was gone, that he would never see her smile or hear her laugh again. "She was. There were times when she surprised even me."

An uncomfortable silence passed between the two of them. "Look at us? I thought we could have a nice talk away from the scrutiny of everyone at gala, and here we are dwelling in the past." He raised his glass. "To the future."

Hermione joined him in the toast. "To the future." After taking a sip of her wine, she asked, "What future?"

"The wizarding world. Yours. Mine. It doesn't really matter. What happened in the past cannot be changed. We must learn from the past, but that does not mean dwelling there. Now, I have little doubt that you are well aware of my plans for Malfoy Industries for the near future, but I will admit I have little knowledge about your plans for the future. Already you have enacted reforms for the treatment of magical sentients and facilitated the increased integration of the Muggle-born into our world. Surely you have not accomplished your life's work before the age of twenty-five?"

She was embarrassed by his praise. "No, I haven't, but I don't know that it's a good idea to discuss any ideas I have for future legislation."

"Probably not, but what of Hermione the woman?"

She sighed. "I don't know. I suppose I should pay more attention to her. With everything else going on, I haven't thought much about myself."

"You should always consider your needs. Burying oneself in work is not healthy."

"Then what about the future of Lucius the man?" she asked coyly.

"That is quite simple. I have mourned Narcissa long enough, and fretting over what Draco is doing serves no purpose. I have left the door open for him to return when he chooses. I have decided to get on with life."

"Oh?" she asked curiously.

"Yes, and as such, would you care to join me for dinner tomorrow?" He flashed her his most charming grin.

Hermione choked on her wine at the abruptness of his question. "I'm sorry? Did you just ask me to dinner?"

He passed her a napkin. "Indeed I did. I find you fascinating and would like to spend more time getting to know you."

"I...I don't know what to say." She was taken aback by his asking her on a date.

"Then say yes. It's just dinner, nothing more. If you don't have a pleasant evening, you have lost nothing but your time and gained a wonderful meal. If you do... Well, we can address that eventuality later," he said smoothly.

"But how would it look? I mean Draco was my classmate."

He wasn't about to give up. "Come now, my dear. You have been in the wizarding world long enough to realize that age differences are not uncommon. And of course you have to be aware of the fact that wizards do live longer than the Muggles. I'm in my prime, not someone at the twilight of his life.

She had to admit that he had valid arguments. "Have you been planning this?" she asked suspiciously.

"Dating again? I must confess that I have, but I had not yet decided on someone I wanted to see socially. When I saw you at the gala, your expression mirroring mine... Well, it seemed that you and I had a few things in common, perhaps a few more than one would think at first glance. You are intelligent and ambitious, traits that I admire. I would like to think there is more to you than that, just as I would like you to learn there is more to me. I don't easily reveal the real Lucius Malfoy to people. Would you like to meet him?"

She gauged him for a few seconds. "I think that I already have. Alright, dinner tomorrow. Pick me up at seven?"

He placed his hand on hers. "It will be my pleasure. Now, if I may escort the lady home since it is late."

She appreciated the gesture for what it was. With Apparition, those qualified wizarding folk could easily travel from one place to another. Her flat was not far from their current location, and she thanked him before heading inside.

She drifted to sleep, wondering how she had agreed to go on a date with Lucius Malfoy.

Hermione was spending more time getting ready for this date than she had the other two. She had to admit that Lucius had been correct they did have more things in common than she had first suspected. She was just about finished with the Sleekeazy's when there was a knock at the door. It wasn't like Lucius to arrive early; he was usually very punctual.

Slipping on her dress, she walked across the living room to answer the door. She saw the last person she had expected to see.

"Why haven't you answered my owls?" Ron asked as he invited himself inside.

Hermione remained by the door. "Because I don't have anything to say to you."

"Aw, come on. I have a hard time believing that. You *always* have something to say."

"Well, this time I have said it all. I thought I made it clear that it wasn't going to work between the two of us, and that I was moving on."

He ruffled his hand through his hair. "Well, yeah, but I didn't think you were serious." He finally realized how she was dressed. "Hey, what are you all dressed up for?"

"I told you, I moved on. I have a date if you must know. Now, he will be here soon, so you should be going." She tapped her foot impatiently.

"A date? It's with one of those brainy Ravenclaws, isn't it?"

"It's none of your business who I'm dating. Now, just go." It wasn't any of his business, and she knew that he would make a spectacle of himself.

"Aw come on. You can tell me. We can still be friends, can't we?" He gave her his best pathetic and helpless look.

She hated that look. He had always been good at using it to get her to do something she really didn't want to do. "Perhaps, but I need some time. It didn't end well, Ron. You do realize that, don't you? Now please, go. I have to finish getting ready."

He looked like he was finally getting ready to leave when he stopped dead in his tracks and pointed at the door. "What the hell is he doing here?"

Hermione closed her eyes and took a deep breath.

"Do you need me to take out the rubbish?" Lucius asked suavely. He was aware of how ugly her breakup with Ron had been.

"No thank you, Lucius. He was just leaving." She moved away from the door and gave Ron a shove from behind.

He was so dumbfounded that he was outside the door before he asked for the second time, "What the bloody hell is he doing here?"

Hermione magically locked the door to keep Ron from barging back in and put a Silencing Charm on it so she wouldn't have to hear him. "I'm sorry about that. He kind of barged in."

Lucius moved behind her and began massaging the tension out of her shoulders. "Think nothing of him." He whispered in her ear, "Think of the wonderful time we'll be having this evening."

She relaxed under his touch. "It will be wonderful, won't it? Though I don't know that I feel like going out anymore. I just fear that he will follow us."

"Then perhaps I can interest you in a nice dinner at the manor. The food won't be quite as good, but the new chef is learning."

She wasn't sure about how she felt about that. She hadn't been back to the manor since her captivity, even though she knew it was a much different place, a safe place. And she would be alone with Lucius, something she hadn't done other than a few minutes at the start of each of their dates. But then she reasoned she wouldn't be going on a third date with him if she didn't feel something for him, and presumably he felt something for her. This would be the perfect way to discover if that was true. "That sounds like a wonderful idea. I'll need a few minutes to finish getting ready."

"Of course, my dear. I'll be gone a moment to let the staff know that we'll be dining in, but I shall return shortly." He softly kissed the back of her wrist before disappearing with a pop and a swish of his cloak.

Hermione thought that she had never seen anyone make Disapparating so sexy. Quickly, she returned to the bathroom to finish her makeup. Yes, tonight would indeed be a special night. And she had Ron to thank for that.

During dinner, Hermione drank just enough wine to free her of her remaining inhibitions. Rather than eating in the main dining room, a table for two had been set in the parlor by the fireplace. It wasn't cold enough for a fire, but it was there for the ambiance and did not heat the room. Right now she was very thankful for magic.

Running her finger along the rim of her wine glass, she said, "Dinner was lovely."

He smiled warmly at her. "It wasn't bad."

Picking up her glass, she gracefully rose to her feet and sashayed to the nearby sofa, running her hand along Lucius's shoulder as she passed him. "I think this was a much better idea than going out to eat. Eating in can be much more romantic, don't you think?" She lounged provocatively in the corner of the sofa.

Lucius rose to join her, the look of desire in his eyes making her feel giddy inside. He took his place on the sofa and gently removed the glass from her hand. "Indeed I do." He pressed his lips against hers, tentatively as he gauged her reaction. Before long the kiss had deepened, and he slid his hands into her hair.

He broke the kiss, and her hands ran across his chest, working to undo the buttons of his shirt. The passion in their kiss had confirmed her belief that this was the right thing to do, that he was right for her.

"Hermione," he said softly.

She slid her hands under his shirt and hooked her leg around his, letting him know that this was what she wanted.

"My dear," he said as he took hold of one of her hands, trying to get her attention.

"I want this. I want you."

"Are you sure?" he asked cautiously.

"I've never been so sure of anything. You are what has been missing in my life."

That seemed to be all that Lucius needed to hear, because he released her hand and leaned down to give her a passionate kiss.

It wasn't long before they were lying on the bearskin rug, slowly removing each other's clothes. She couldn't help but admire the fact that he had clearly been taking care of himself. There were a few scars on his chest that she traced with her fingers, but she didn't ask about them. She could only hope that he found her as pleasing.

They spent many long moments exploring each other, teasing each other. His expertly moved across her body, eliciting reactions of pleasure. She tried to do the same for him, but she found she could concentrate on little but what her body was feeling.

Lucius leaned close to her and whispered, "Are you sure?"

In answer she wrapped her legs around him. "Positive."

He entered her gently, and Hermione reveled in the feel. He moved slowly at first, setting a rhythm that was pleasing. She had spent all of dinner imagining this moment and it was not disappointing. As she felt her climax nearing, she dug her heels into him, trying to draw him deeper inside. She felt as though she could not get enough of him.

He quickened his pace to meet her need, and she could feel the orgasm rush over her. Gripping him tightly she clamped down, hoping to draw him to a climax of his own. Finally she relaxed, and panting looked into his pale, grey eyes, watching the firelight dance in reflection.

Softly he brushed a stray lock of hair off her face and smiled warmly at her.

Nothing needed to be said between the two of them, their eyes conveyed volumes. Hermione was positive she had made the right choice she belonged with Lucius.