

Accepting and Acceptance

by Rheenie

A tale of Draco and his love for Hermione. A tale of his accepting and acceptance of that love! This was originally a one shot, but has now become a multi chapter in future. Beta'd by blueskyshymoon-olgameisterfunk and E Mitchell and SilverLunarStar. A huge thank you.

Coming to terms.

Chapter 1 of 1

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Alas, I own nothing but the plot *cries* JK owns all characters.

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Yes, he was infatuated with that famous know-it-all. Did his father know? Had it been worth all the trouble so far? He wasn't sure, but he was going to take a chance.

The whole situation started in third year after the slap. She was so close he could smell her honey musk perfume...so much that it overwhelmed his senses and he didn't see the slap coming. When she ran away all he could do was shout after her. From then on he took every opportunity to grace the 'golden trio' with his presence, starting the habit of watching Hermione when she studied in the library. He would watch as her hair fell slightly in her face, the brunette unconsciously pushing it back behind her ears.

Coming to terms with liking the know-it-all was hard. He went through different stages. The first stage was lust. He thought he was only lusting after her, the only girl who would stand up against him. Since he had finally shaken off Pansy for good, he had no way to expel these frustrating feelings unless he became best friends with his hand again. After he saw Hermione during the Yule Ball, he knew differently. He knew it wasn't lust, knew it wasn't like, it was definitely Love.

Stage two: Denial. He was the next heir to the Malfoy family, the family that hated all Mudbloods and half-breeds. The irony was in the fact that he was now in love with one.

During the school break, his father took Draco aside to discuss arranged marriages. Finally, Draco decided that while they were in the privacy of his father's study, now would be the best time to confess to his father his own plans.

"Father, with all due respect, I have different plans for my future, and they involve Hermione Granger," Draco said, bowing his head.

After the sentence left Draco's mouth, a curse was flung and Draco was withering on the ground in pain.

After a few minutes, the pain stopped and his father waited for Draco to get back on his feet.

"Draco," Lucius drawled. "You do know that you are defying the family name, even by having thoughts about the all-famous Mudblood." After a few minutes of silence, Lucius sat back down in his seat.

"Son, I apologise for my actions just now. I am a servant to the Dark Lord and, if he looks into my memories, it is best for him to see that I am no longer in league with you because of your decisions. It not only saves me, but your mother as well. Forgive me for this moment of weakness, but I shall explain something to you that I will never repeat.

As the sole heir to the Malfoy name and my only son, I shall support you in your decision." Lucius took a sip of his Firewhisky. "When the Dark Lord first rose to power I didn't want to join his league, but my own father thought if I joined it would be a means to more power and control." Lucius Malfoy's face scrunched up in a scowl.

"Your mother and I are an arranged marriage; both our fathers were Death Eaters, and they thought we would make a great team. Don't get me wrong, boy, I feel nothing but love for your mother. To make this easier on you, seeing as your future will be hard, I will tell you this; although I didn't join the Order of Light as Snape did, I became a contact, someone who stayed in the ring of Death Eaters. I only contacted the Order when a secret attack was being organised. My role was similar to Severus's, but only three people in the Order and your mother knew of its existence."

Lucius looked his son in the eyes. "I will never make you join the Dark Lord, son, but do not take your decision lightly, as it will affect you for the rest of your life. Now I'm off to inform your mother." His speech finished, and Lucius turned and strutted out of the room with the look only a Malfoy could muster.

To say that Draco was stunned by what his father had revealed would be an understatement...he could not easily come to terms with what his father had said, as it contradicted what he had been taught growing up. Now he set aside his conflicted feelings towards his parents to focus on his future. Draco was positive he still wanted a chance at having a future with Hermione, so he knew what he had to do.

He stayed in his room for the rest of the holidays, planning his next moves and sending owls to Professor Dumbledore. He ended up only coming out of his room when necessary, more for his parents' safety than his, as he knew that the Dark Lord would try to use his parents against him and his decision.

When Draco had digested all the information and came to terms on why his parents hadn't told him sooner, he came to a firm resolution: They hadn't told him so they could protect him. The school holidays were almost over. This led Draco to the last stage: Acceptance. On the second to last day of the school holidays, Draco visited Dumbledore.

"My dear boy, what can I do for you today?" Dumbledore asked while handing Draco a tray of sweets.

Draco shook his head to the offer. "Sir, I want to join the Order. I will do anything that you ask except join the Dark Lord himself."

"You understand what you ask of me? You will have to take the truth serum and answer my questions now and then later in front of the entire Order."

Draco nodded.

In the end, Draco had to repeat all the information his father had told him and why he himself was so determined to join the Order. He also included information involving Death Eaters that visited the Manor.

Dumbledore didn't seem surprised by the information that Draco had told him or at Draco's true intention for joining the Order. The old man had that knowing twinkle in his eyes.

On the last day of the school holidays, an emergency Order meeting was held in which all Order members were to come to Hogwarts. Draco was again tested with Veritaserum, but Dumbledore withheld his previous personal questions. The headmaster even had the courtesy to avoid all questions that would lead to Hermione.

"Can't trust him?" a person yelled out from the crowd. Draco was positive the voice belonged to a man that had red hair.

"He went under the truth serum, answered all your questions, and I believe in him," Dumbledore said in a low, serious voice that had everyone in the room reduced to silence. "I would not intentionally harm anyone in this Order, and I believe letting Draco Malfoy join would not be a mistake."

After much debate, Draco Malfoy was admitted into the Order.

Most of the adults were wary of Draco, but trusted in the use of the Veritaserum in addition to Dumbledore's judgment. While the know-it-all in question trusted Draco's decision, the other two-thirds of the trio, Potter and Weasley, didn't. They believed he had figured a way to disable the effects of the truth serum.

"How could you do it, 'Mione? It's MALFOY!" said a very flustered Ron to Hermione when most of the adults had left.

"Don't you dare give me that, Ronald! He proved himself in front of all the Order and has been approved by Dumbledore!" Hermione huffed.

Harry stated, his voice deadly calm, "You can't believe that; he must already be a Death Eater! That's the only way that he would be able to get past the serum and fool Dumbledore! We can't let this happen!"

"Honestly, how could you both think so little of Dumbledore?" With this last statement, Hermione stormed out to go to the only place that calmed her: the library.

Draco was going to take a timid step towards getting his desire. He found her in the library, poring over books, and chose to approach her silently.

"Ron, Harry, I don't care what you say; leave me alone to study!" Hermione huffed without looking up.

Draco smirked. "Well, Granger, I thought I would join you in studying, but if you really don't want me here I'll go." Draco pretended to start walking away, knowing she'd fall for the bait.

"Wait, Draco." The use of his first name stopped him dead in his tracks. "Don't go, I wouldn't mind a study partner."

He smiled, but as he went to face her, the smile turned into a smirk. He walked back to the table and pulled his books out from his bag. "Now, what were you going on about, Granger? Potter and Weasley still being thick headed as always?"

Hermione blushed, not fully denying that Harry and Ron were thick-headed when they wanted to be. "They are not always this thick, they are just confused. Hmm, well, let's just say that they don't agree with my choice of friends."

"Is that what we are? Friends? Because I would very much like to be, Granger," Draco said with as much sincerity he could muster while under the scrutiny of Hermione's brown eyes.

Hermione looked up into his face to try to find any hint of humour in his gaze, but found none. She nodded, and together, they silently turned back to their work.

Many weeks passed in this manner. Hermione was still friends with Harry and Ron; however, they had become distant. Harry was busy trying to prove that Draco was really a Death Eater, and Ron was just acting weird. Although, Theodore Nott was not one of Draco's closest friends, the blonde still noticed the boy acting a lot stranger. Theo had become more withdrawn than normal and had turned a ghostly shade of white. Draco was worried to see that Theo was lingering around the Room of

Requirement. He could do nothing about this observation, seeing as no one but Hermione would take him seriously and Dumbledore unfortunately was not always present in the Order meetings that Draco attended.

Draco and Hermione's friendship was growing stronger. When they finished their schoolwork, they always made sure there was time left over to chat.

Draco finally decided that after one of their little chats he would take his chances.

As they were packing up to leave one evening, Draco turned to Hermione.

"Granger, let's go together this weekend to Hogsmeade. I know that your two friends are still not talking to you, seeing as they are acting like the idiots they are."

Hermione smiled, remaining silent as they walked out of the library. As they were parting ways to go to their separate common rooms, she yelled her reply over her shoulder, "Yes, I would love to. It's a date!" That being said, she ran off down the hallway.

"Get back here, Granger!" Draco took off down the hallway after her. He caught her in the next hallway, wrapping his arms around her waist and leaning down to kiss her. The kiss held all the emotion that couldn't and wouldn't be said. This first kiss held all his troubles and self-doubt, but it also held warmth and love. Hermione was the one to break the kiss.

"What's the matter, Granger?" Draco's gaze grew worried.

"I will look forward to our date." She returned his gaze and smirked, turning and strutting down the hallway like the cat that got the cream instead of milk.