

# The Only Constant

*by LiteraryBeauty*

Sequel to Some Things Change.

A year after the triad marries, they find life together is not exactly simple. Things are still changing--but is it for the better? Draco's feelings for his father are intensifying, and what Lucius wants is complicated, too. How will they make it together without falling apart?

## Chapter 1

*Chapter 1 of 12*

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**Disclaimer:** I do not own Harry Potter and I make no money from the writing of this fiction.

**Pairings:** Hermione/Draco/Lucius and *all* permutations thereof.

**Dedication:** This fic is dedicated to keppiehed, my amazing firstreader and friend. Thank you for everything!

**Beta:** Krystle Lynne

**Author's Note:** This story is a sequel to the completed fic *Some Things Change*. As such, it might not make sense without having read that first. This story will contain details of a consensual sexual father/son relationship. There are many things in fiction that I disagree with in real life that I enjoy writing, and I'm sure my readers are the same. Please keep in mind this is fiction.

I hope to maintain a weekly posting schedule...every Tuesday. Also, if anyone is interested in being a beta for this, I'd love to hear from you. I'm looking for someone with a little experience and who has a good handle on grammar and punctuation. It'd be a bonus if you've read *STC*, but it isn't necessary. Please email me at [literaryspell@live.com](mailto:literaryspell@live.com).

Lastly, this fic will also be posted on my livejournal ([literaryspell.livejournal.com](http://literaryspell.livejournal.com)) for those who'd prefer to follow there. It is easiest for me to respond to reviews/comments there...feel free to friend or just read, as it won't be friendslocked.

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*The only thing constant in life is change.*

-Heraclitus

### One year after the events of *Some Things Change...*

"You have *got* to be kidding me, Granger." Unbelievable. And yet so *typical*.

"It's my money, Draco. I'm allowed to do whatever I want with it. That's what we said in the beginning. Your income is yours, Lucius' is his, and mine is mine."

"Exactly, it's *yours*. So why are you giving it away?" Draco exclaimed. Six damned months and he'd never even realised she'd been funnelling her income right back into Outreach, keeping only enough to purchase new clothes and the like every now and then.

"What do I need it for? You and your father are perfectly content to take care of everything, aren't you? I'm not even allowed to help out *at all*."

"What, do you think we need help with the mortgage or something? Here's a hint...there isn't one and never has been! Malfoy Manor was built..."

"...By house-elves under Malfoy employ eighteen million years ago, I know. You didn't purchase it like some common person, right? I've heard the story, Draco. It doesn't matter. If I can't help out here, I want to use my money to help those who need it. You don't even have a right to be telling me what to do!"

Draco's mouth opened and he was *this close* to telling her what he thought about that when Lucius groaned and rolled over.

"Draco, enough. I have to be at work in two hours. She's absolutely right and you know it. It is her money. Why are you so opposed to this?"

Draco tried not to pout. His father usually sided with *him*, Malfoy minds thinking alike. "I don't know. It just seems wrong. She's basically working for free!"

"We're lucky Outreach even makes enough money for us to take a salary, Draco," Hermione said softly, reaching out and curling her arms around his neck. It was still very early morning and he couldn't see her clearly, but he knew her face like he knew his own. She was currently smiling in a placating sort of way, eyebrows drawn a little together in hopes that he would accept what she was saying.

Yes, he knew her very well. But that didn't change the fact that he didn't bloody *understand* her.

"Whatever," he said, knowing he was being sullen and bratty and not caring. "I just think you should be a little greedy for once in your life. You *work* for a charity...hell, you founded the charity! Haven't you given enough?"

"Your father gives me an *allowance*, Draco! An allowance! Like I'm eight! I could never want for anything here...I couldn't spend the allowance if I shopped for eight hours a day, every day. What are you worried about? That if this doesn't work out, I'll be penniless? Well, I won't be. Sorry, Lucius, I wasn't going to tell you this, but I haven't even *touched* that allowance. In the year that I've been given it, I've saved enough to live off of for *years*. So I'll do what I bloody well please with my own income, thank you very much!"

Now she was panting, Draco could very clearly hear it. He could also sense his father's smirk, which annoyed him to no end.

Hermione climbed over Draco gracelessly, landing hard on the floor beside him with a huff. She dressed in the dark, and Draco only hoped that her clothes at least matched. "I have a meeting with Thello on the Wolfsbane trials. I'll be home in a few hours. Lucius, have a good day at work. Draco... Ugh."

She stomped out of the room.

"Well, Draco?" Lucius voice was amused.

"I know, all right?" Draco threw on his dressing robe and ran after Hermione, not pleased with the turn of events but knowing waking her up to ask about the Outreach donations that suspiciously matched her own paycheques hadn't been the best idea. He'd intended to wait until morning, or even dinner, but he'd slept poorly and didn't want to be the only one awake and cranky...not that he'd ever admit that.

"Hermione!" he called.

She paused at the bottom of the stairs and waited for him, arms crossed over her chest.

"I'm sorry, all right? It really isn't any of my business. And I didn't know you weren't spending the allowance. I guess I just thought... because my mother..."

"I'm not Narcissa. I won't spend your family's money just because I married into it. Lucius won't take it back, but I'm keeping it for our kids, or else the donations would probably be even larger."

"It's your family, too," Draco said, deeming it safe to take her into his arms. She was stiff at first, but resistance was futile against the Malfoy charm. She melted into him, and he held her tightly against his chest.

"I know... It's just been a huge adjustment. I know it makes Lucius feel better to give me that money, but I don't like it. And because I can't and wouldn't tell you two what to do with your money, I don't appreciate it when you try to do that to me."

"I understand. And I know you're simply being the good person you are. I guess I just want to see you happy, you know? I want you to be able to buy nice things and not worry about the cost, or get your hair done or something. Pamper yourself."

"Are you saying my hair needs help?" But she was smiling.

Draco shook his head. He loved that crazy nest. He did hope she planned on brushing it before she went out, however. But he didn't dare say that.

"I do pamper myself, Draco. Or rather, I let you and your father do it because it seems to make you both happy. But I've never been interested in that sort of stuff. It's fun, but only when it's rare. It becomes a chore, otherwise. And I know that my donations help make a difference. I know some of it goes to Thello's research, and that helps werewolves, and that's more important than manicures and deep pore cleansing."

"You're not wrong," he conceded. "Though gaping pores are very unsightly."

"Draco!" Hermione smacked his arm, but he grabbed her hand and pulled her in again.

"Go to your meeting. I won't say anything else about what you do with your money."

"Swear?"

"On my honour. But I expect the same from you. You can't tell me not to spend money on you, and that goes for my father, as well."

Hermione frowned before apparently deciding it was the best deal she was going to get. "Fine. Go back to bed."

"Love you," he whispered, kissing her still-pouting lips.

"Love you, too. And tell Lucius I love him, too." She kissed him again. "And that's for him."

"See you soon."

Crawling back into bed after being awake wasn't exactly a chore. He still had a few hours of sleep owed to him, and he planned on collecting on that debt.

"You know," Lucius drawled as Draco climbed under the duvet. "When we agreed to this bed-sharing arrangement, I wasn't informed of your penchant for starting fights while certain people are still sleeping."

Draco laughed. "And I wasn't informed that you are a colossal blanket hog, but have I said anything?"

"Only every single night for over a year."

"Well, we all have our quirks." Draco tugged pointedly at the blanket, and Lucius relinquished a few more inches.

"Still, I wish you didn't fight so."

"It's perfectly healthy to argue, Father. It's not *fighting*. It's just how we work things out. And you can't act like the two of you haven't had matches I could sell tickets to. And Merlin knows you and I bicker. So what's the problem?"

Lucius turned onto his side, facing Draco. His face was serious, but Draco was struck by his eyes. He was concerned; Draco hadn't realised the argument had warranted that much consideration.

"I worry, sometimes, that..."

"That?" Draco prompted. It wasn't like his father to hesitate.

"That you'll push her away when you try to control her life like that."

"I'm not trying to control her!" he objected immediately. But he wasn't unaware of how the argument would have looked to an outsider. "All right, you're right. I pushed her too hard. But she's not upset with me. It was just a tiff."

Lucius nodded, seeming content to drop it. Grey dawn light filtered in through the crack in the curtains, lighting his father's eyes as the sun peaked behind Draco's back.

"She said to say she loves you," Draco whispered. He liked the warmth his father's face took on at the words. He leaned over and kissed Lucius...very lightly, barely a brush...on the lips and said, "That was from her, too."

Draco couldn't look at the shock that was undoubtedly painting his father's features. He closed his eyes and just... tried not to think about it.

Because the kiss hadn't really been from Hermione at all.

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"Oh, stop, stop!" Hermione cried, smacking the crushed sage from Draco's hand.

Draco looked at the mess and gave a baleful glare to his wife, unimpressed.

"Don't you look at me like that, Draco Granger!" Despite her scolding tone, Hermione's wide smirk elicited one of his own.

The last name challenge had come down to *I will if you will*, which essentially meant that neither would. Hermione kept her last name, Draco and Lucius theirs, and it was a running joke between all of them, though Draco knew it was something of a sore point for his father.

"You were about to put sage...*sage!*...in Wolfsbane. Don't even get me started on the utter ridiculousness of that, seeing as how all the ingredients were right in front of you and you had to actually go out of your way to get sage. What is going on with you?"

Suddenly the sage mess looked a lot less annoying when compared to the disaster that would have come from tainting the huge vat of Wolfsbane.

He dropped his head into his hands. "I don't *know*. I've been feeling like crap for weeks. I can't focus, I can't concentrate, I'm irritable. *don't* say it!" he added quickly, warding off Hermione's agreement.

"Maybe you're pregnant," she offered, a fount of aid in troubled times.

"Well, at least Father would be pleased," Draco quipped, but the look on Hermione's face made him regret his thoughtless words. "I didn't mean that. You know he understands. You're still young."

Hermione propped her hip against the table and stirred the potion. They were using the lab attached to Michael's apothecary. Thello usually didn't let them back there without his supervision, but he was delivering the potion to those who couldn't make it to the shop. The week before the full moon was pure hell as far as brewing went. The demand was increasing every month, but Thello refused to hire help, so it was the three of them with Michael's well-meaning but inadequate assistance, and it just wasn't enough.

"I know he understands, but he doesn't like it. *I want* to have a family, I do. I just want us to enjoy our marriage first."

"Do you think we won't enjoy it once we have kids?"

"That's not it. It's just that a family dynamic is different than a marriage dynamic. Our focus won't be on each other any longer."

"I'd never thought I'd hear you worried about not getting enough attention," Draco joked, dodging the ladle that flew at him.

"Maybe I'm worried about how my poor little blonds will bear it," she retorted with a haughty look.

"Us blonds will stick together, don't you worry. And the kids will be blond as well, so maybe you're afraid of being left out."

Even though it was a joke, Hermione's tight smile revealed more than her words, even sincerely spoken, could.

"Oh, love," he crooned, pulling her against him. "You know it'll never be like that. You're the head of this triad, after all."

"But Draco... I don't think it's supposed to be like that. All points of the triad should be connected."

Draco pulled away, not looking at her. "That's a pretty fancy way for saying you think my father and I should fuck."

"Do you have to be so crude?" she chided, wincing.

It made him smile. The things she said and did in their bedroom would shock the most twisted pervert, and yet in the baring light of day, she had trouble even saying curse words.

"Yes. It is crude. It's crude and wrong and it can't happen."

Hermione hummed and stirred the pot...and not metaphorically, for once. The Wolfsbane took their attention for a while, but it wasn't long before she started up again, a variation on the theme she'd been harping on for almost six months when he'd first told her about the dream.

He should have known that was where she'd planned on going next.

"Did you sleep well last night?" Her voice was deceptively sweet. She was lucky he loved her so damn much, or he might have given her a smack...on the arse, of course...to shut her up.

Actually, there was no reason he couldn't do that anyway. But the timing didn't seem right.

"You know I didn't, so you might as well just say it."

"You dreamt about the other man again, didn't you? I wish you would pull your head from your admittedly fine arse and just admit it's Lucius."

"And what if it is?" he cried, frustration getting the better of him. The kiss he'd given Lucius was weighing heavily on his mind. He almost felt like he'd cheated on Hermione, even though she'd probably be thrilled to hear it, the kinky bint. "He's my *father*."

"Yes, and you're *married* to him! You are, Draco. Maybe not in the eyes of British law, but in spirit, and *imagic*, you are."

He hated when Hermione brought that up. He knew it; there was no need to dwell on it. He loved his father. But it wasn't how he loved Hermione. He didn't want it to be... he was pretty sure.

Draco rubbed his eyes wearily and sighed. The fumes always got to him around this time of day. The potion was starting to smoke, which signalled its near-completion.

"Go home," Hermione said, leaving the potion to wrap her arms around his waist.

He held her against him. She was so soft, so supple and sweet-smelling. It would be strange to be held by a man like that. Not his father, just any man. Strong arms folding him against a hard body. No breasts to press against, no flaring hips to grip. Someone as tall as him, but broader. Firm lips forcing him to bend, to *take* the kiss instead of give it.

Draco'd never really thought of his relationship with Hermione in terms of giving and taking, but he supposed she really was in the passive position. She wasn't *submissive*, exactly, but she did let them do pretty much whatever they wanted. And they wanted *a lot*.

When it came to being with a man, would he be passive or active? He tried to imagine it. Him pushing a man onto a bed. Crawling over his fit form, straddling him. Holding him down. That was dominant, wasn't it? He'd then make the man feel good... those thoughts were more abstract... and then he'd bury his hands in long, blond hair and lower himself onto the man's thick, steel cock...

"Oh, fuck."

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After his rather startling revelations, Draco had agreed to go home. He was of no use to Hermione, especially after he'd confessed the kiss to her and she'd become nearly incoherent in his presence. She'd said she couldn't concentrate with him there, and he wasn't exactly in the mood to argue.

Now he was sitting in his room...their room...and thinking about why things in his life always had to be so fucked.

Follow his father blindly into service to a madman? Check.

Nearly kill the headmaster and indirectly cause the deaths and maiming of his schoolmates? Unfortunately, check.

Hide like a scared little first year while the heroes fought and won the war? Yeah, that too.

Fall in love with possibly the only person besides Potter for whom he'd felt real acrimony for almost a decade? Why the hell not.

Marry his father? He was so fucked up.

And now... He's realised three things. He wasn't sure which shocked and horrified him most, but they all tumbled together in a big mass of shock and horror so he didn't really need to choose.

First, he was sort of all right with the idea of being with a man.

Second, he wasn't entirely opposed to the idea of taking it up the arse from said man.

Third, and yes, definitely worst, there was a part of him that very much wanted the man...whose cock would be up his arse, lest we forget...to be his fucking *father*.

"I thought I heard someone Apparate in."

Draco looked up at Lucius, who was leaning against the doorjamb, looking at Draco with concern.

"Sorry, I wasn't in the mood to go through the door the old fashioned way."

Lucius sat on the bed and put his arm across Draco's shoulders, unaware of the turmoil that raged inside his normally unflappable son. "Did you have another fight with Hermione?"

"You make it sound like we fight all the time," Draco snapped, projecting his anger and knowing it.

"I'm just trying to make sure everything is all right with you, Son."

*Oh, Merlin, don't call me Son in that voice when I want to kiss you. That is so wrong.*

"I'm a little... confused," Draco admitted. He couldn't say *why*, but he always felt better after talking to his father. He liked the safeness he felt with Lucius, the way it seemed like he could take care of everything, that Draco could just let him be the adult.

Lucius' hand squeezed his shoulder. "What's the problem?"

Dropping his head into his hands, Draco groaned. "I've been having... strange dreams. And... feelings." That was probably enough information...Lucius could just do his fatherly magic and make him feel better now.

"When did the dreams start?"

That was something Draco didn't even like to admit to himself. "Since before Hermione," he mumbled. That was how they divided their lives. Pre-war, during war, post-war, and Hermione.

"And the feelings?"

"More recently."

Lucius nodded, his hair, so familiar, brushed Draco's shoulder. He turned to look at it, entranced by how it was so like his own. The action brought his face close to Lucius', much closer than he'd like. Closer than was safe. Normal.

"What are the dreams about, Draco?" Lucius said very quietly in the tone of a person who knew *exactly* what the dreams were about.

Draco opened his mouth to tell him, Lucius would understand. He was Draco's father, he...

He was Draco's *father*.

"I can't do this," he blurted and ran from the room.

## Chapter 2

*Chapter 2 of 12*

Sequel to Some Things Change.

A year after the triad marries, they find life together is not exactly simple. Things are still changing--but is it for the better? Draco's feelings for his father are intensifying, and what Lucius wants is complicated, too. How will they make it together without falling apart?

### Chapter Two

When Hermione came home from her work at Thello's potions laboratory, she was a total mess. Her hair was slick with grease from the potion fumes, and for the first time in her life, she felt sympathy for Severus Snape (besides for the espionage business, of course). If she had to deal with potions every day, she would lose all hope for personal hygiene as well.

Hermione hated coming home like this, looking a fright, but she didn't really have a choice. She could shower at the flat Thello and Michael shared above the shop, but they were usually so relieved to get to be together at the end of a long day that she didn't want to intrude. She understood the feeling.

She worked with Draco almost every day in close quarters, but it was Lucius she never got to see. He usually left before Hermione and Draco got up for work...unless one of them had a meeting like she had that morning. He was also considerate of their need for sleep, unlike *some* blond brats who insisted on waking her up to pick fights. Lucius was soundless as he left each morning, though he did say that he kissed them both good-bye...Draco on the forehead, he'd insisted last time she'd asked.

As if she'd mind if the kiss landed elsewhere.

She'd known for longer than she'd cared to admit that Draco and Lucius were meant to be together. She didn't like thinking that their lives were dictated by fate or some other outside circumstances, but there had to be a reason for Draco's dreams, his restlessness, and Lucius' sidelong glances and the way he always seemed on the cusp of saying something.

When Draco had confessed to her that day about the kiss he'd given his father, Hermione had thought it was a step in the inescapable direction. Still, Draco's reaction had been less than encouraging.

"Hello?" she called into the house, hearing her voice travel over the walls and high ceiling. She hated that echo. The Manor was too big for just the three of them, which was something that she knew bothered Lucius, especially.

No one responded to her call. Hermione figured that was probably for the best, as a shower was desperately needed.

Once in the bedroom...her old bedroom, which she used only to get ready or shower in...Hermione left the clothes she wanted laying on the bed and hopped into the shower, her thoughts on her husbands.

Hermione didn't like feeling torn. Once a decision was needed, she liked to make it, present her thoughts and findings, and be done with it. However, she'd never been married before and certainly not to two people. It was difficult. The argument with Draco that morning was nothing compared to the ongoing one with Lucius.

It couldn't even really be called an argument. There were no raised voices and no long discussions. It was just...*dissent*, and it made her uncomfortable. She wanted to give him everything he needed. It bothered her that she couldn't, and yet she wasn't ready.

She knew it in her heart that she just wasn't in a place to be a good mum at the moment. *Soon*, she knew. She could feel, almost daily, herself growing more and more ready. She wanted children...she *loved* children. And she wanted Draco to be a father, and Lucius, too. She wanted to be a mother.

But even Draco wasn't ready, and since his child was to be first in order to inherit, the triad found themselves in a complicated position where it wasn't really Lucius' decision, even though they'd discussed that any life-altering events would be decided by all three. So all he could really do was make his opinion known and wait for Hermione and Draco to catch up. It wasn't fair, and Hermione didn't like unfairness any more than she liked indecision.

She stepped out of the shower and eyed the potion Draco had made for her hair. It took down the frizz and made her hair almost unrecognisable in its flowing softness. She sneered at it. It smelled like orchids and she hated orchids but Draco loved orchids so he wouldn't change it.

*Not today.* She bypassed the potion and re-entered her room.

"Holy...!" she cried, startled by Lucius sitting on her bed. "You scared the life out of me!"

"I apologise," he said, lips twitching in a way that showed how much he liked catching her unaware. "I thought I'd talk to you about your husband."

Hermione rolled her eyes. "How comes he's always *my* husband when he does something bad?" she teased.

"Come here," Lucius said, patting the bed beside him.

"I'm all wet."

Lucius' eyes went dark and she laughed. "I have to get dressed."

"But you haven't moisturised. How will you keep your skin so soft and supple without the proper care? Don't you want to look your best for your husbands?"

Knowing Lucius was after something, she just smiled. "Oh, so the three hours that you and Draco spend in the loo every morning is for my sake? In that case, don't bother. I'd love you no matter what, scaly skin and all."

Lucius made as close a noise to harrumphing as his upbringing would allow and reached up to pull Hermione onto the bed. After he'd arranged her onto her back, he disappeared into the bathroom for a moment.

Hermione knew he'd have a hell of a time choosing a moisturizer from the obscene variety he and his son had gifted to her during their time together. She would use each only once or twice before it was replaced with something newer, better, shinier (more expensive).

Lucius came back out with a smoky grey bottle that glittered. She'd been avoiding using that one, as the packaging was a little intimidating. She wondered what it said about her that she was afraid of a little wrapping...had Narcissa Malfoy ever shied away in the face of a bottle?

"What are you thinking about?" Lucius asked, spreading her legs without preamble and kneeling between them.

Hermione gulped and hurried to cover her parts with the too-short towel, still a little shy about herself at times, but Lucius just laughed at her.

"Every time you ask that, it seems like you already know the answer. Don't you ever want to ask when you *don't* already know?"

Warming the lotion up in his hands, Lucius quirked an eyebrow at her. "I always know."

"Oh, of course." Hermione rolled her eyes, but she forgot to snipe when Lucius' hands smoothed up her leg from ankle to thigh, spreading the sweet-smelling moisturiser.

"Draco and I almost had an interesting conversation earlier." Lucius' voice was casual, but there was a pensive undercurrent, making Hermione take note.

"Regarding what?"

"His dreams. His feelings." Lucius' fingers worked the lotion in methodically.

"And did you come to any sort of... conclusion?" Hermione was almost positive Lucius had had the same thoughts as she had...possibly before she'd had them herself.

Draco's dreams about a man...dreams he'd had even before the triad had gotten together...seemed to be a way of pushing him into making the triad equal. When he'd told her about the dreams, he'd tried to play it off as though they were merely aberrations, but Hermione knew there was no such thing when it came to complicated magic such as theirs.

Hermione'd had dreams of her own... For her, it was just a little more difficult to differentiate between fantasy and prophecy.

"That he isn't telling me something," Lucius said, bringing her back to the issues at hand. His fingers were working nimbly on her arms, and she shivered, clutching the towel in an effort not to grab him.

"Lucius..." Hermione hesitated before putting into words something that had been bothering her for quite some time. "Celeste and Thello and Michael... They were together for some time, weren't they?"

"Years," Lucius confirmed, swatting her hand away from the towel and lowering it so her breasts were only barely covered.

"And their triad was never completed...Thello and Celeste were never together."

"That's right."

"And they broke up. What happened to their triad is supposed to be impossible." Her voice was flat as she thought about the parallels between their relationships. The only thing that was consoling her was the fact that they'd lost their magic when Lucius had left them the year before...Thello, Michael, and Celeste hadn't when they'd split. So for some reason, Hermione's triad was stronger, but not as strong as it could be.

That was just common sense.

"It isn't like you to skirt the subject," said Lucius. "Tell me what you're really thinking."

Hermione was torn. As much as she wanted to tell Lucius her suspicions, it felt like a betrayal to Draco, who should be able to do things in his own time. On the other hand, if she left it to Draco it might never get addressed...he was quite practised at self-denial.

"Well, it's just that I think the triad would be stronger if all points were connected, so to speak," Hermione said in a rush, sitting up and pulling her towel tighter as if the scant cloth could protect her from whatever she was afraid of.

"Yes, that's quite obvious, I would think." Lucius didn't even pause in smoothing the cream over her shoulders.

"Obvious?" she squeaked. A year of treading lightly around the subject and it was *obvious*?

"Well, yes." He was beginning to sound irritated or confused, which were the same thing with him, one leading to the other. "The very definition of the word suggests equality. As it stands, our ground is becoming shaky because of Draco's reticence."

Hermione's eyes widened. "Just... Draco's?"

With only a murmured word, Lucius cleaned his hands from excess lotion. "I'm not unaware of Draco's... charms." Lucius winced, and Hermione knew he was trying to be nonchalant when truly the matter was complicated and it probably unnerved him. Lucius just wouldn't let her know that.

"This is about more than recognising the fact that Draco is pretty," Hermione said softly, moving to sit back against the headboard and patting the space beside her until Lucius occupied it.

"I realise that," Lucius said, sounding tired. "I know what our magic wants, what the triad needs to be complete. I've known... well, since the beginning, if I'm to be honest. I just didn't want to think it would come to that...I thought it would be satisfied with the marriage."

"But it's not, is it?"

Lucius was silent for a long time, making Hermione open her mouth several times to try to encourage him to continue, but she managed to contain herself.

"It's not," he confirmed finally. "And besides that, my feelings for Draco have long since gone beyond paternal. Before our marriage, I thought of him as my son and friend. It was thinking of him as a friend that made sharing intimacy easier. If I didn't think of it as my son fucking my wife, I was able to bear it. Not that I was jealous, but the father part of me isn't something I can turn off. At least, I didn't think it was. I still don't, not really. I'm his father. But I want him."

Hermione was thrilled at Lucius' confession...the transition would be so much easier now that she wouldn't have to convince them both. She wasn't sure what made her feel around inside her own mind for the connection she shared with Lucius and Draco, but sure enough, the silvery feeling that she recognised as Draco was very, very close. Only a few mental steps away from the golden flicker that was Lucius. If she was judging the distance correctly, he was right outside the door.

"So how do we get Draco to accept this new situation?" If her voice was louder so Draco could hear, Lucius didn't comment. "I don't want to end up like Celeste's triad." If she knew Lucius...and she did...his response would catapult Draco into action.

"My son is not a coward," Lucius said, his voice strong and brooking no dissent. "He just doesn't fully comprehend what is needed of him. If he did, I am certain he would not hesitate. I won't force him into anything, Hermione. I love him too much and I won't risk that by pressuring him. If it isn't what he wants...if *I'm* not what he wants..."

Hermione didn't prompt Lucius to finish speaking. She didn't get to hear him voice his concerns so freely very often, and she didn't want to lose that. His vulnerability made him human, something that was easy to forget when he held himself away from her, which he would do if she pressed him.

"He wants you," Hermione whispered, pressing herself against Lucius' side and kissing his neck. He must have showered as soon as he'd gotten home, because he smelled amazing, like cedar or something equally earthy. "I want you. And like it took me a while to see the light, it will probably take Draco some time, as well."

"I won't force him."

"Of course not." *But a nudge in the right direction from a well-meaning wife couldn't hurt, could it? Especially not when the husband in question is eavesdropping outside the bedroom door,* Hermione mentally reasoned.

They rested in silence, both thinking about the direction their life was going to take if Draco could just be convinced. After a few minutes, Draco's silver feeling inside her mind moved away, and she stopped focusing on it. It was strange how she'd become so used to being able to sense them that it was almost second nature now. She didn't know what people did without that ability...she never had to worry about her husbands' safety. She wondered for the first time whether it annoyed them...not that there was anything she could do about it, really.

Lucius' fingers drew designs up and down her arm. Hermione thought about whether she would share that connection with her children. Whether she'd be able to sense where they were and if they were in danger. She hoped so. But maybe she wouldn't tell them. Maybe she'd just let them think she wasn't watching over them all the time.

If she did have that ability, she wouldn't tell Draco, either. He'd probably make her turn it off to give their children freedom. Or maybe he wouldn't. It was hard to predict what sort of father Draco would be, but there was no doubt in her mind he'd be a good one.

"How should we address this with Draco?" Lucius asked, breaking the long silence.

"I have no idea. I can't even imagine how I would handle it if I were him. Maybe...do you want me to talk to him first, make him listen?"

"Can you do it without making him feel cornered? I just don't want him to do this because he's afraid to lose us if he doesn't."

Hermione didn't say anything, but she knew that was exactly what was at stake. Lucius might not want to pressure Draco, but if things continued the way they were, she was afraid they'd end up like Celeste, Thello, and Michael after only a few years. And if she had children, what sort of home would that give them? She wanted her children to have all their parents happy and together.

"I promise not to make it seem like everything is riding on his decision."

"Excellent. Now that we have that sorted out..." Lucius tugged at a corner of her towel, expertly disrobing her...all her tucking and tightening had been for naught under the skilful fingers of her husband.

"We'll be late for dinner," she protested, but it was weak and they both knew it. She wondered about Draco and what he was feeling, but his silvery light didn't seem agitated or cold. If she focused really hard...which was quite difficult with Lucius' mouth on her nipple...she could almost sense what he was doing. Something about animals. Dogs. No, werewolves.

Draco was working on their petition to the Ministry to pay for Wolfsbane.

"Holy crap," she whispered, amazed. She'd never been able to delve so deeply into the bond. She opened her mouth to tell Lucius, but he covered it with his own, and she forgot what she'd meant to say.

Allowing Lucius to move her, as she usually did, Hermione settled onto her knees as Lucius lay on his back, his face between her open thighs.

"Oh, Merlin..." she moaned when his hands on her hips lowered her onto his face, his mouth immediately seeking her centre. "You don't play very nice," she chastised, her mind fragmented.

"I play *too* nicely," he corrected her, flicking her throbbing clit with his tongue.

Hermione enjoyed the lazy sensations for a few moments until she realised she'd been staring at Lucius' bulging trousers without blinking. Trying not to lose contact with Lucius' sinful mouth, Hermione leaned over and unbuttoned his trousers, pulling his thick cock out.

She stroked him to full hardness, trying not to grind her pussy onto Lucius' face, and that took more presence of mind than she could really claim at the moment. Luckily for him, Lucius had a grip on her hips and arse and wouldn't let her suffocate him.

"Suck me," he ordered huskily, his prick throbbing in agreement against her palm.

Hermione had tried...really tried...not to let Lucius and Draco know how much she liked it when they gave her orders like that. Their bossy and dominating personalities, instead of overwhelming her, made her feel safe and cherished. It was impossible to hide her reaction to his demand, and she decided maybe she should just go with it...it wasn't like they would take advantage of their power over her. She had her own power, anyway, which she demonstrated by taking Lucius into her mouth with one long suck.

His responding moan had her quivering. His fingers were inside her now, filling her steadily. She wanted it to be his cock, but she also didn't want to give up the taste of him in her mouth.

As always when Draco wasn't with them, just as when she and Draco were together without Lucius, a part of her was missing. It was hard not to notice, but she tried to focus on the amazing things Lucius was doing with his tongue.

It was always harder to reach climax without all three, but finally Lucius filled her mouth with come that she swallowed quickly, eager to come herself.

Using his fingers on her now, Lucius manipulated her body liked he'd been playing with it for decades. She pressed hot, wet kisses to Lucius' golden thigh before her teeth clamped down and she came, crying out as her body trembled.

"And you say *I'm* the biter," Lucius said moments later, voice sounding distinctively dazed.

"We're all biters," she reassured him, her thumb caressing the spot on her hip that still sported a bruise from Draco's passion a few days before.

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When Hermione dressed and went to find Draco, she told Lucius to give them some time to have the talk. She had absolutely no idea what she was going to say.

But as it turned out, she didn't have to worry.

Not about that, anyway.

When she got to the dining room table where she and Draco usually spread out the work for Outreach, he wasn't there.

Biting her lip, she reached into their bond to see if she could find him, but he wasn't there. Not in the way she was used to. His silvery light was sort of spread out, enough that she couldn't narrow down on his presence. Normally, that wouldn't have stopped her from searching the Manor for him, or asking a house-elf, but she had a feeling that it was Draco blocking her from finding him. It made sense that he'd be able to control it, though she'd never considered it before. She'd respect what he wanted...for a reasonable amount of time, anyway.

Hermione sat at the table and opened the file Draco had obviously been working on last. There was a note inside in his small, finicky handwriting.

*I know. I just need time.*

## Chapter 3

*Chapter 3 of 12*

Sequel to *Some Things Change*.

A year after the triad marries, they find life together is not exactly simple. Things are still changing--but is it for the better? Draco's feelings for his father are intensifying, and what Lucius wants is complicated, too. How will they make it together without falling apart?

Knowing what was meant to happen didn't make waiting for it any easier.

After Hermione had shown Lucius the note Draco had left, asking for time, Lucius had promised that time was exactly what his son would get.

Lucius had always given Draco whatever he needed and then some. But this was harder than it should have been, harder than it had ever been before. Lucius wanted to force Draco to talk to him, so he could tell him that nothing would change, not really.

Instead, nearly a week went by, during which Lucius only saw his son in passing...in the corridors or in the kitchen, but not in their bed.

With just him and Hermione in it, the bed seemed almost comically large. He hated that Draco wouldn't even sleep with them. No matter what the fight, no matter the circumstances, they *always* slept in the same bed. Lucius didn't want to take that as indicative of how things were going to turn out, but it made him nervous nonetheless.

Things couldn't continue that way forever. Draco would eventually have to make up his mind.

The wait would have been much less stressful if Lucius himself were less certain about what he wanted. As he'd told Hermione, he'd suspected that intimacy with his son would make the triad stronger and more complete, but he'd never seriously considered following through on that. He'd assumed the wedding would be enough, that intention counted for more than action.

But he'd been wrong.

Lucius had had dreams, just as he knew Draco had, insinuating that their triad wasn't complete. But now the need had extended beyond his sleep and into his waking hours. He found himself watching his son, studying him, learning him. He knew Draco even better than he knew himself...he spent hours every day with him, or used to. He was more familiar with Draco's features than any other person on the planet, and he could easily say they were the most handsome he'd seen in an age. Even more than his own, though in a different way. Youth was something with which he'd parted ways, not that he was bitter about it. After all, he had Draco, an only slightly altered mirror of himself at that age.

Looking beyond aesthetics, Lucius could see why Draco was easy to love. He was charming and knew how to say all the right things; he was funny and chivalrous and intelligent.

That was why Hermione loved him, though. Not Lucius. Lucius loved something even deeper within, something more hidden that Draco didn't usually let show. He had a core of decency that was unassailable. Surrounding that core was a mire of confused morals and questionable tactics. That was what Lucius loved. Draco wasn't just one thing...he was *everything*. He was strong and scared and determined and angry and just... He was free in a way Lucius had never been.

Lucius didn't love that Draco was from him, *of* him. He loved that Draco was the things Lucius was never allowed...and had never allowed himself...to be.

A knock on his study door made him start in surprise. He'd been staring at the fire, wishing an answer would just come to him...and hopefully one had.

"Come in," Lucius said, though both Draco and Hermione knew they didn't have to wait for permission to enter.

The door opened slowly and Draco slipped through, closing it tightly behind him and leaning back against it.

"Hey," Draco said, full of false confidence and awkwardness.



"Draco," said Lucius, voice infused with warmth. "Please, have a seat."

Lucius was reminded, as his son sat in what had long ago been designated 'his' chair, that besides Hermione, neither of them had actually courted anyone. His own marriage had been a business transaction that had, very luckily for both of them, inspired mated magic and even love. Draco had almost had the same fate, but after the defeat of the Dark Lord, Lucius had taken any prospects of arranged marriage off the table for his son.

So whatever they were doing right now was completely new ground for both of them.

"Actually, I think this would be much more comfortable in our room," Draco said. He was nervous and trying to hide it, but Lucius knew all his affectations...the slight twitch of his ring finger, the way he would duck his head forward to hide behind his hair. Draco could hide nothing from his father, and Lucius hoped he didn't want to.

"Of course." Lucius stood and preceded Draco from the room, holding the door for him. The walk to the bedroom was tinged with discomfort...both knew something important and life changing was about to happen.

Lucius wished Hermione could be there, but he knew that if Draco had needed her, she'd have been. This was something Draco evidently needed to do without her. Lucius hoped she wouldn't be put out by that, but he doubted she would. This was something Hermione wanted just as much as Lucius himself did...more than anything, the little minx probably just wanted to watch.

Taking a seat on the bed...a good sign, as he could have chosen the armchair or even the sofa in the sitting area...Draco tucked his hands under his thighs, sitting on them. It was a habit Narcissa had nagged out of him at a very young age...he must be extremely nervous if it was recurring now.

"May I?" Lucius asked, indicating the space on the bed beside Draco.

"Of course. That's... that's what we're here for." Draco swallowed.

Lucius sat. "I know this is... strange, to say the least, and if it isn't what you want, then we can stop it right here."

"But that's just it, Father. If we stop it right here, we have no idea what might happen to our marriage." Draco ran the fingers of both hands through his hair, a sure sign that he had gone over things a thousand times already.

"True, but we could always just wait to see what, if anything, happens. It's possible nothing will. We could go on as we have, if that's what you want."

Draco mumbled something, a curtain of hair concealing his face from Lucius.

"What was that?" Lucius prompted gently.

"I said, it's not. What I want." Beneath the cover of hair, Lucius could see his son's pinked cheeks.

"I'm glad to hear that." He wanted Draco to make the first move, but his son seemed frozen. "Is there any way I can make this easier for you?" he asked finally, once it had become obvious that Draco wasn't going to say anything else.

"Just... don't talk. And... close your eyes."

Lucius nodded but had to ask: "Are you sure you wouldn't rather close yours?"

Draco looked torn. Lucius knew exactly the battle he was raging inside his head. If he closed his eyes, he could pretend Lucius was someone else. But then Lucius would be looking at him, and that embarrassed him.

"Or we could spell the lights off completely so neither can see," Lucius offered, not just for Draco's comfort. A part of him was rejecting the *very thought* of being naked with his own son. Even when Draco had been very young, Lucius hadn't bathed with him or anything like that. He'd probably only seen Draco nude a handful of times, and those had almost always been during the struggle to dress him...Narcissa's struggle, not his.

"No, it's okay, just don't, you know... stare. And again, don't talk." Draco laughed nervously and dropped his head into his hands.

Lucius pulled Draco into a loose embrace and kissed his ear lightly. "Hush, pet," he said soothingly. "It's all right."

Draco went stiff at the soubriquet, looking up with wide eyes.

Wanting to kick himself...Draco had been clear on the 'no talking' rule, and things like that were exactly why...Lucius went to move away, but Draco closed the space between them and planted an inelegant kiss on Lucius' lips.

They both held the kiss for as long as possible, but Lucius drew back first. It hadn't been unpleasant, just... not the way it was with Hermione. He could see from the confused look on his son's face that it was the same for him.

"Er, should we just...?" Draco tilted his head toward the centre of the bed.

Lucius closed his eyes. Draco's nervousness and anxiety was practically tangible...they'd never be able to get through this if he continued to be so stiff. *And getting through this* wasn't exactly what he'd had in mind. He wanted to *enjoy* it...that was how it was supposed to be, anyway.

"Lay back," he said, ready to take charge.

Perhaps it was because he'd been raised to obey Lucius or maybe it was simply so he wouldn't have to decide for himself, but either way, Draco positioned himself on his back with his head resting on a pillow. His eyes were closed tight and he looked too much like a stereotypically nervous virgin come wedding night. It was ridiculous, considering the things they'd gotten up to with Hermione between them.

Lucius leaned over and kissed Draco's jaw. The skin was smooth, unlike his own, which was beginning to bristle. Draco turned his head away and Lucius sighed. ~~It~~ had been Draco's idea, after all...what made Draco think this was any easier on him?

Then Lucius had a brilliant...if he did say so himself...idea.

Loosening and removing his tie, Lucius pulled it taut between his hands, letting Draco come to the conclusion himself. It was no more than what they'd done with Hermione, and Hermione had once done it to Draco herself, so it shouldn't be a complete shock by any stretch.

With a nervous look and a lip drawn between his teeth, Draco slowly raised his arms over his head, crossing them at the wrist and gripping the bar of the headboard.

Despite the enticing picture Draco made...and that was rather a strange thing to think, but there was no denying it...Lucius needed things to go more slowly. He placed the tie on the pillow beside Draco's head and ran his hand down his son's body. Resting over his heart, Lucius could feel the rapid beating and wished there was a way to make things easier. It didn't help that he *liked* the way Draco's heart raced for him.

After tracing the rough ridges of his abdomen, Lucius' hand travelled to the hem of Draco's shirt. He tugged it experimentally, looking at Draco's face to make sure what he wanted was all right. Draco's face was unreadable but not uncertain. Lucius pulled the shirt up and over...when it bunched around Draco's hands, Lucius had to pry them

from their grip to remove it completely.

Sitting closer beside Draco on the bed, Lucius allowed himself the privilege of studying him closely. The similarities were there, of course. The same bone structure, just muscled differently. The nipples, in particular, were identical. Strangely Draco's navel was slimmer, more like a slash than an indent like Lucius'. He decided he quite liked it and dipped his finger into it. Draco's breath hitched and he quivered a little, but there was real desire in his eyes.

"Are you going to use the tie?" he asked hoarsely. His hands were back on the bar, life obviously hanging in the balance.

"Do you want me to?" *Do you need me to?*

"Yes."

Lucius nodded and threaded the tie around the headboard and Draco's wrists, which were thinner than his own with a protruding bone that was delicate but somehow hardy. Draco would be fine.

The tie was snug but not unbreakable...Draco would not be held if he didn't truly wish to be. And by the look on his face when he tested the bonds, he knew it as well. He didn't ask Lucius to tie him tighter, so Lucius took that as a good sign.

Stretching out beside Draco, Lucius settled himself more comfortably. He wanted to feel the skin of his chest against Draco's, but that seemed a rather large step. He also, very badly, wanted to kiss him. He didn't, though. That was something he wanted Draco to initiate. He had been the first to do it, after all. If Draco's bound state precluded that, then so be it. Lucius was nothing if not patient.

Again, Lucius wished for Hermione's presence. There was a calmness about her, an acceptance that made things easier. Lucius also felt Draco would be just as comforted by her.

Brushing his thumb over Draco's nipple elicited a sharp inhalation, and Lucius looked at Draco's face to see his eyes tightly closed. His mouth was open and his breath was coming fast; heartened, Lucius pressed his lips against Draco's pebbled nipple, the replica of his own.

Everything to that moment had been fairly platonic, in action if not intention. But this was sexual, this was charged. Lucius felt a thrill of the forbidden run through him even as the concern for his son overtook it.

"All right?" Lucius asked, his hand on Draco's belly, thumb smoothing over the skin.

Draco gave a shaky nod and did not open his eyes.

Draco's body was salty and familiar in a way that confused Lucius; he wanted this, but he also wanted *not* to want it. For a moment, he wished he was normal. Married to one person, father and not lover... Was what they had really worth risking his son in this way? Was he risking Draco? What about himself...was he destroying the most important relationship he'd ever had: that with his son and heir?

He didn't think so. He wouldn't be doing this if he truly believed everything he cherished was at risk.

"It's okay," Draco said, moving a little beneath his bonds.

Lucius raised his head, realising he hadn't moved for a few moments. "I just don't want to..."

"You aren't," Draco said quickly. He opened his eyes, and while nervous, they were sure. "I want this."

"Is there some way I can make this easier?"

Draco bit his lip. "Just... do it. Okay? Don't be unsure. I need you to be the strong one, the certain one."

That was quite an admission, coming from Draco, and they both knew it. All doubts left Lucius as he leant over Draco and kissed him softly on the mouth. Draco kissed back, but only slightly, and Lucius pulled away.

"I love you, Draco," Lucius said. The words were almost unfamiliar. He'd said them too few times when Draco was growing up, and even less when he'd become an adult. Only when Hermione had come into their lives had he become less stingy with the words, but even still it was not something he said every day, even if Hermione made sure to.

Draco's response was only a whisper, and his eyes were closed again, but he said the words and that was enough.

Lucius' hand brushed over Draco's lower belly, the trail of hair directing his movements until his fingers reached the trouser placket. Without hesitating, Lucius opened it, stifling a groan when Draco's hard cock strained up to meet his hand.

He wanted to say something, to make the moment less or more important, but he couldn't. The fact that Draco was hard was the turning point...there was no coming back from that, and he didn't want to. Not now.

With Draco tied like that, obviously not wanting to make any major decisions besides the first one of coming to Lucius, it fell to Lucius to take charge. He didn't mind doing so...he was familiar with that position in his work life, certainly. But over their year of marriage there had been a shifting of dynamics, with Draco falling into the directorial role, and Lucius obeying his orders. Lucius wouldn't say he was submissive to Draco in any way, just that he'd become accustomed to letting Draco call the shots. Now with him steering the broom it was almost unnerving...Lucius almost felt like it was his first time.

A deep breath and a gathering of his not inconsiderable wits had Lucius steadied. He divested Draco of his trousers and pants...and his socks as an afterthought, because he knew Draco would never live down the shame of having kept them on...and set about admiring Draco's body. It was true that Draco hadn't wanted Lucius to look, but Draco wasn't in charge anymore, and unless he felt that his son was unduly uncomfortable, he would look his fill.

He tried to start at the top, at Draco's slightly reddened hands in their bonds. It was an alluring sight, appealing to any man with an affinity for bondage, which Lucius certainly had. Somehow, though, it just wasn't enough to keep his interest... His eyes kept steering back to the throbbing length of Draco's cock.

Shaking himself, Lucius cast his gaze down to Draco's feet next. Long and slender, they were aristocratic feet, pale with blue veins if one cared to look closely enough. But despite Lucius' determination *not* to, his eyes returned to Draco's groin until he could bear it no longer.

When he slid light fingers up Draco's lightly haired thigh, Draco moaned softly and parted his legs a little. He didn't seem to realise what he'd done, or what it was doing to Lucius. Having Draco naked before him was an intense aphrodisiac, and it served to help him forget everything other than the fact that he *wanted* him.

Lucius' fingers closed around Draco's prick, and the ensuing whimper was so unlike Draco that Lucius almost had to check and make sure it was still him. Draco's eyes were clenched shut and his lips were parted, the upper one raised a little in what might have been a sneer if Lucius hadn't had proof that he was enjoying himself.

Draco's cock was so hot, so achingly and strangely familiar. It wasn't so similar to his that it brought him out of the moment, but the fact that it was ~~Draco's~~ was what was difficult to get his mind around.

Deciding that thinking was getting him nowhere, Lucius abandoned himself to the act. Long, slow strokes, a twist of his wrist that had Draco crying out, and tug, a squeeze, a pinch, even. Draco's body was an instrument that Lucius himself had cultivated for decades. It was *his*. Draco belonged to him in a way no one else could...to Lucius, Draco was everything a person could be.

When Draco came, it was almost anticlimactic. White spurts shot out over Lucius' fist onto Draco's belly, and Lucius continued stroking until Draco made soft, protesting noises. His eyes were still closed, and Lucius took a moment to really absorb the inhibition of the moment. He'd never seen his son so willingly give up control; it was a heady thought because he *knew* he was the only one who could inspire that level of trust. And Hermione, of course, but still, this seemed different. Even when Hermione had tied Draco up, he'd still somehow been in control. Now there was not even the illusion of that.

With a practised wandless action, Lucius banished the mess on Draco's body and his own hand. Even though he was fully dressed, he felt naked all of a sudden. His desires were open and so obvious...he hated letting so much of himself show, even to Draco.

He pulled the sheet over them both, and finally Draco opened his eyes. They were soft and lambent in the low light, and Lucius was pulled in.

"Are you all right?" he asked quietly, knowing it was he who needed the reassurance.

"Better than all right. I want to..." Draco tilted his head in the direction of Lucius' lower body, wriggling his hands a little. "But I'm..."

"It doesn't matter. There's time for that. I wouldn't want you to feel obligated."

"I don't!" Draco protested, but despite his words there was relief in his voice. Faint, but there. "It won't always be... one-sided."

"I should hope not," Lucius said haughtily, but he smiled to make sure Draco knew he didn't mind. And truly, he didn't.

Draco yawned, trying to turn his head to hide it in his arm since he couldn't cover his mouth with his hand. "Sorry," he said sheepishly. His eyelids looked heavy. Lucius kissed them, and then his lips.

Draco kissed back, a languid, easy kiss that demanded nothing.

"I think I'll have a little rest," Draco said, his words slurring a little in his evident exhaustion.

"Of course." Lucius leant over to untie the bonds, but Draco stopped him with his eyes.

"Leave them." His voice was quiet but insistent. Lucius was entranced by his blush and chuckled.

"I'll be in to check on you shortly." Lucius placed one last kiss on his forehead and rose, tucking the sheets around him before he left.

As he shut the door securely behind him, he almost jumped when he saw Hermione slouched against the wall, hastily pulling her hand from inside her trousers.

"Oh," she said, voice laden with guilt and lust. "You're all finished, then?"

Lucius grinned with sharp teeth and advanced. "Naughty pet. Who said you could listen?" He took her wrist and lifted her hand to his mouth, her fingers slick and heavy with her intimate scent. He bit one. "Who said you could play with yourself?"

"I was just..."

"Listening to me have sex with my son and masturbating," he finished, advancing her body against the wall and pressing his against it.

"I was bad," she whispered, half mischievous, half needy.

"And...?"

"And I should be punished." She grinned her own shark's grin.

After Hermione's punishment...which ended up being more like a reward, but Lucius wasn't one to quibble over such matters...the two checked on Draco. He was sleeping soundly, the tie still secure around his wrists.

Hermione didn't ask about the bonds, simply crawling into bed and resting her head on Draco's chest. With Lucius on the other side of his son, nothing had really changed after all.

## Chapter 4

*Chapter 4 of 12*

Sequel to *Some Things Change*.

A year after the triad marries, they find life together is not exactly simple. Things are still changing--but is it for the better? Draco's feelings for his father are intensifying, and what Lucius wants is complicated, too. How will they make it together without falling apart?

The reason, Draco mused as he listened with half an ear to the ceaseless blathering of a Ministry housewife, that Outreach was so successful was because people were inherently *lazy*. Good, mostly. But lazy.

Take Melisanne Phimzer. Disposable income that would put most pure-blood families to shame, heart that was big enough to feel sympathy, conscience just slightly larger. Melisanne was one of their most prolific donors. She made substantial contributions every time that nasty little voice inside her head spoke up and demanded that she do more than she already was...which was nothing. Except for her charitable offerings to Outreach by way of Gringotts, she did absolutely nothing to further humankind...or wizardkind...whatsoever.

Not that Draco really cared about what other people did with their money, not really. Outreach was doing very well, and donations beget donations, but if it meant he didn't

have to hear about the cost of magical spaying for her herd of cats, Draco would have happily covered the lost revenue himself.

Hermione had qualms about that sort of dealing, though. Her theory was that if Draco simply donated his own money rather than deal with the people donating, they might as well shut down the programme and just call it the Draco Malfoy Dear Merlin Why Don't You Shut Up Fund.

Draco rather liked the sound of that, himself, but he knew better than to say such a thing.

"I had no idea," Draco enthused, his smile tight as he glared at his wife across the dining room table.

Hermione's saccharine smile was enough to make him reach over and mess up her pile of envelopes and letters, theretofore neatly stacked.

Hermione's lips pursed together in a muted shriek, her eyes wide as she surveyed the damage. Draco wouldn't bet on it, but he thought he saw her mouth a death threat at him.

She was so *feisty*.

"That's truly abysmal," Draco commiserated before he remembered he was supposed to be congratulatory. "I mean, of course, magnificent. Ms. Phimzer... Oh, yes, if you insist, Melisanne. I do hope the werefleas clear up. I'll send you a full write-up on the allocation of your donations based on the forms you filled out. Thank you so much for your continued and generous support."

Draco hung up the telephone...a new addition to the Malfoy-Granger household and equally despised by father and son. Or perhaps more by son, as he actually had to use the damned thing.

"Werefleas?" Hermione asked, an eyebrow quirked.

Draco wondered if she'd learned that from him. She could raise her pretty little brows all she wanted if it meant she wasn't going to get back at his petty shenanigans with something time-consuming and wearying.

"Happens to the best of us," he said in his haughtiest voice. "And our cats."

"You get all the nutters," she said, laughing. She settled the last envelope in the new pile and glared at it and Draco in turn.

"True. I got you, didn't I?"

Easily ducking the stack of little yellow sticker things Hermione lobbed at him, Draco tried to ignore the wriggling sensation in his stomach that had been plaguing him ever since...

Well, ever since what had happened before he'd woken up tied to a bed being mauled...in their sleep, so they could be forgiven...by his father and Hermione. Draco rubbed his wrist where a light indentation still displayed his weakness and a discoloration declared his deviance.

Just because it had *felt* right didn't make it so...did it?

What was the differentiation between feeling right and being right? They weren't hurting anyone. It was completely informed... consensual. If he'd wanted his father to stop, Lucius would have without a pause. Draco knew he could count on him for that, more than he could even count on himself.

Still, he went stiff and his stomach roiled when the door opened to signify Lucius' return from work. His hours were getting longer as he took on more responsibility with the Board...Draco would be shocked if his father wasn't made Chairman in the next year.

There would always be detractors, of course, but Hermione had done wonders for their reputation, even if she didn't really like thinking about it like that. Draco was a pragmatist; he would take the help where he could get it, especially if he hadn't had to ask for it.

It felt strange, sitting in his chair and waiting for Lucius to enter the room, as was the routine. Draco's nerves were frayed raw, even though nothing outward was any different. He could feel Hermione's keen and sympathetic eyes on him, ready to give him a soft smile if he looked up, but he didn't. This whole... *thing* with his father was something he had to deal with on his own. He couldn't let her direct, much as he might have wanted to at times.

Even so, the twitching of his fingers was a sure giveaway when Lucius came in, his presence a tangible force.

Feeling detached from himself, Draco watched as Lucius went to Hermione and gave her the traditional kiss hello. Draco'd never before felt jealous that Hermione always got the first kiss, but for some reason, an unfamiliar twist in his gut made him frown.

Shaking off the foreign discomfort, Draco plastered a smile on his face that was so fake he chided himself and pretended to be engrossed in the notes of his phone call.

He looked up when Hermione pushed her chair back and stood. She nodded at Lucius, kissed him on the cheek, and left the room. Draco watched after her, strangely put out that she hadn't kissed *his* cheek, and what was that about?

Then he could put it off no longer. He had to look at his father. Wary as if expecting a fight, Draco met Lucius' eyes.

"Hey," Draco said, and then remembered, as did Lucius, it seemed, that he'd said that exact same silly greeting when he'd entered Lucius' study before... before everything had changed. Again.

Lucius moved to stand beside Draco's chair and rested a hand on his shoulder. "Draco," he began, obviously intending to say more, but Draco couldn't allow it.

The tension was too great, too confusing. He'd never been so uncomfortable around his father with the exception of the war years. He had to get away...

When he stood, however, he was gathered into arms too strong to resist...or so he convinced himself as he sank into the embrace. He felt stupid and embarrassed and nervous and *ugly* for some strange reason. He felt out of control and odd and complicated... and in the easy hold, tight but yielding, Draco felt safe. He should have remembered that. *That* was what he'd gotten from the bonds the night before. That safe feeling, artificially recreated with a tie, had originally come from Lucius himself and this tight grip that was unassailable and somehow taming.

Draco had ducked his face into Lucius' shoulder, hiding himself. It felt childish because they were almost the same height, and Lucius compounded that feeling when he tipped Draco's chin with a curved forefinger as he had when he'd known his son was telling a lie so many years ago.

"I've missed you," Lucius said, pinioning Draco with the honesty in his slate grey eyes.

Wishing he could be half as candid, Draco tried to bluff. "And for good cause, one would think."

Lucius only smiled the smile of someone who, without even expending an iota of extra effort, saw right through the charade. Draco's own transparency made him want to turn away, to run as he had whenever anyone had ever called him on his bullshit.

"I didn't want to leave you this morning."

Draco half-smiled. "I don't think Hermione wanted to untie me, the saucy chit." Avoidance and superficiality...it had saved him before.

*Never with Father*, his mind reminded him too late.

"I find that to be understandable in the extreme," Lucius murmured, leaning in slightly and curving his lips against Draco's suddenly flushed cheek.

Why was *he* the blushing virgin? Draco's upper lip twitched in disgust with himself. *He* had been the one to properly seduce Hermione, to get her swotty arse into bed the first time. Sort of. Lucius shouldn't be so difficult to manage...after all, Hermione had *hated* him during school; Lucius had always loved him. There was more to work with there.

And yet... Draco just couldn't bring himself to turn into those teasing lips, to press his own against them until ~~the~~*wrongwrongwrong* went away forever.

"I can't," Draco whispered, not bothering to specify what he meant. He knew Lucius would know. He squirmed a little, hoping Lucius would let go, but the arms only tightened.

"Don't go, Draco." Lucius' hand came up to push the hair from Draco's face, but Draco just buried himself deeper into Lucius' shoulder, hiding. He felt about twelve years old, though his body was reminding him he was an adult. He would just have to ignore that knowledge until he understood his feelings a little better. And if that never happened, then he would just avoid, avoid, avoid.

"This is just... It's too soon. It's..." Draco tried to pull away again, but it was half-hearted and they both knew it.

"I know. Believe me, I do know. But it's not *bad*, is it?" Lucius' voice was low and thick, and it reminded Draco of the way he'd spoken to him in the bedroom the day before. When had that voice gotten all mixed up with his normal voice? Would Draco ever be able to differentiate between his father and his lover?

Was he supposed to? Had he lost his father?

"It's not bad," Draco admitted quietly. He had to know. "So now that we... you know. Are we only... you know?"

All at once, it hit Draco that he was being a complete fool. This was *Lucius*, his father! If Draco could talk to anyone, it was him. He was just embarrassing them both with his immature reactions and inability to face the truth.

Because the truth was that he wanted *more* of what had happened the day before...he wanted more and harder and longer and ~~he~~ wanted to touch *Lucius* and not just the other way around.

Taking a deep breath, Draco clarified his last half-thought. "What I mean is, now that you're my lover, are you still my father?"

When the silence stretched and Draco braved leaning back away from the hard comfort of the embrace to see Lucius' face, he was transported to his childhood. It hadn't taken Draco long, as a child, to realise that his father had only smiled a certain way for him. For other children, there was no smile at all, even Draco's cousins who'd visited on occasion. For his mother, there was a different smile, but for Draco, there was *the* smile, and it was the same one that graced Lucius' face at the moment.

It was pure comfort, true and honest and with a touch of fond exasperation, like when Draco had demanded a real dragon for his birthday or when he'd blamed the house-elves for his own misdeeds.

"Of course," Lucius said simply. It made Draco think that maybe it *was* that simple. Or that maybe it could be...if he'd let it. "No matter what happens between us, regardless of any title bestowed upon us, we are always and first father and son."

"Always and first," Draco repeated. The words rang true, like something he'd always known but just had to be reminded of. He absently wondered if he ought to have felt strange, standing in the middle of the dining room in his father's arms having a discussion, but he only felt right.

Pulling back only slightly, Draco met his father's eyes. They were familiar in one way, and foreign in another. He'd never seen Lucius look at him with such *raw* ~~want~~, and that made Draco shiver deep inside. With Hermione between them, Draco had always been able to distance himself from his father's desire, almost as if it were incidental, just something *there*, alongside his own more important needs. Now, though, there was a connection between them, something alive and fervent that demanded his attention.

"I want to kiss you, Draco." The words were simple and plainly put, and yet there was a world of import behind them. He could say no; that was very clear. He could say no, and Lucius would nod, maybe a little sadly, but he wouldn't press. And then it would be up to Draco to make the next move, and he might never work up the courage. It was easy, really, to let Lucius take control now, so Draco wouldn't have to later.

Draco nodded. Every other kiss had been in passing, or too timid to be called anything other than a peck. He wanted more.

So when Lucius leaned in, so slowly, like Draco was a wild animal, Draco tilted his head to the side, indicating that the kiss could be deep and he wouldn't run away. The first brush of his father's lips against his was *strange*. Lucius' lips were wider than Hermione's, thinner and more demanding. Even though the pressure was light, the intent seemed very heavy. Lucius pressed forward so that Draco had to bend back a little, and there was a moment where he wanted to protest being the *girl* between them, but he realised there was nothing feminine about what was happening. Getting kissed and kissed hard didn't make him a woman any more than it did when Hermione took control. And all the proof he needed of his manhood was heavy between his legs.

With that in mind, Draco didn't let himself feel silly when he wrapped his arms around Lucius' neck and moulded his body against his father's. He could feel hardness there and it scared him a little, but he tried not to think about that, only about how he was feeling inside. Lucius moaned when Draco adjusted his hips slightly, and the sound drove Draco into madness.

When Lucius' tongue licked, so gently, at Draco's lips, there was no other choice. He parted them. With Lucius' tongue inside his mouth, Draco went passive, submissively allowing his father to explore him, doing nothing in return except accepting it. His hands clenched reflexively in Lucius' waterfall of hair, and he just might have whimpered but wouldn't admit it on pain of death.

Then Lucius pulled away. His cheeks were pinked and his eyes dark, but Draco couldn't look away from his lips. They were softly open, and Draco could see just a sliver of white teeth beyond, sharp and greedy. Draco felt devoured. He felt aroused. He felt protected.

Relaxing against Lucius, Draco just allowed the comfort to wash over him for a few moments. The kiss had allayed his concerns, alleviated his fears, and really, everything was okay. Draco knew that, eventually, he'd have to move away, but for that moment, he needed nothing else.

Except maybe Hermione. And since she was poking her head around the corner to check up on them, Draco considered that lucky.

"Come here," Draco said, loosing one arm to wrap around her when she came near. He wanted her to be a part of his post-kiss bliss.

Easily folding herself into the three-way hug, Hermione whispered to Draco, "Okay?"

"Okay," he confirmed.

"Good, because the house-elves have been waiting outside the door for ages to set the table. Poor things!"

Lucius rolled his eyes and pulled away. A neat spell had all the Outreach papers organised on the sideboard and the table cleared for dinner. "Come in, then," Lucius said to the elves, who scurried in en masse and set the table with traditional efficiency. As always, Hermione watched with pursed lips and narrowed eyes, but she said nothing. It was another compromise...Hermione could use the Manor to house werewolves for their first transformation on Wolfsbane (after that they went to the Shrieking Shack, which Hermione had completely overhauled until it was werewolf-friendly), as long as they got to keep the house-elves. Draco thought it was quite fair, especially since it meant they got to take a short vacation every month.

Just as the three sat down for dinner, another house-elf brought in an owl letter on a silver platter. The harried-looking elf hovered for a moment, as if indecisive as to who should get the letter, before finally presenting it to Lucius with a bow. Draco chuckled at the silly thing, but stopped when Hermione glowered at him, exchanging a look with his father when she turned back to her meal.

"Lucius, Draco, and Hermione Granger Malfoy," Lucius read, an eyebrow raised. "Have you been telling people those are actually the names we're using?"

Hermione laughed at Lucius' consternated expression, and Draco snorted. If the inside joke had got outside, he'd have some damage control to do on his reputation...he preferred that people not think Hermione walked all over them.

"No!" she protested, reaching for the letter, which was held out of her reach. "I swear." Pouting when Lucius wouldn't hand over the missive, she turned on Draco. "It must have been your son."

"Oh, yes," Draco drawled, but whatever sarcastic response had been building on his tongue was ceased when Lucius made a surprised sound in the back of his throat. "What is it?"

"It appears," Lucius began, turning the letter, now opened, over in his hands, "that Thello and Michael are eloping."

"Well, then they shouldn't have told us...that rather ruins the intention, doesn't it?" Draco asked. He was happy for the couple, though he wished things with Celeste had been more positive. It was difficult to think of Michael and Thello without wondering what would happen to their own triad if a similar situation happened to them. To Draco, Michael and Thello would always be two-thirds, not a whole.

He wondered if Celeste had heard about the wedding.

"Actually, they've invited us," Hermione said, having snatched the invitation for herself. "They're going to Canada, to Ilsa, in fact."

"We're invited to an elopement?" Draco was puzzled...he'd thought elopements weren't made public until *after* the deed.

"It's really more of a destination wedding, really," Hermione said. "And isn't this stationery lovely?"

Draco and Lucius both absently agreed that yes, the filigree was stunning and the embossing superb. Draco wondered where Hermione had even heard such words...their own wedding hadn't exactly been a gala. There certainly hadn't been invitations.

"It's in two weeks. What do you think, Draco? Lucius?" Hermione was practically bouncing in her seat, and Draco immediately knew that regretfully declining wouldn't be an option.

"It sounds lovely," he said. He didn't relish going back to *Canada*, of all places, but it had been where they'd cemented their own triad, where he and his father had proposed to Hermione, where they'd gotten married. Yes, he supposed it would be a nice anniversary.

Even if it did snow.

## Chapter 5

*Chapter 5 of 12*

Sequel to Some Things Change.

A year after the triad marries, they find life together is not exactly simple. Things are still changing--but is it for the better? Draco's feelings for his father are intensifying, and what Lucius wants is complicated, too. How will they make it together without falling apart?

"Has it really been a year?"

The words were said not with a reminiscent wistfulness, but with a disbelieving drawl. Lucius smirked to himself as Draco took in the hotel room. It was the same...down to the room and possibly even the sheets...as the last time they'd been there.

In *Canada*.

Hermione was unfortunately absent for Draco's humorous reaction to seeing that some things *never* changed. Kent and Marta, the owners of the local general store and the people who'd sworn as witnesses to Hermione, Draco, and Lucius' wedding the year before, had fairly kidnapped Hermione to show her the changes to their shop.

Lucius had thought it was strange that he and Draco hadn't been invited before he saw the gleam in Marta's eyes that meant gossip was to be had. His poor wife. Lucius didn't feel *that* sorry for her, because Draco's spoilt behaviour was equally frustrating to deal with.

"I mean, it's a *wizarding* town, isn't it? Why can't they just use magic to spruce the place up a bit?" To showcase what he meant, Draco waved his hand about the room, muttering spells with a look of discerning concentration on his face.

When he was finished, the décor was marginally more agreeable, the furniture more tasteful, and the two queen-sized beds merged into something hedonistically appropriate. Lucius didn't follow...or comment...when Draco disappeared into the bathroom, likely with more 'renovations' in mind. Lucius just hoped they remembered to change things back when they left...he didn't want to give housekeeping a heart attack.

Though the Portkey that Michael and Thello had provided was significantly less exhausting than Apparition would have been, Lucius still felt a little under the weather; though who wouldn't be, when the storm blustering just beyond the door would make even the most hardened Canadian quiver. Except, of course, Kent, who'd greeted

them in strange, puffy clothing, covered so completely that Lucius had almost spelled him immobile at first.

Lucius had mentally scoffed at the sight, wandlessly casting warming charms on himself and his lovers...warming charms that were ripped apart in moments by the violent wind while Kent looked on with what was probably as close to smug as the cheerful man could manage.

Michael and Thello were staying in the same hotel a few rooms down, but Lucius wasn't exactly eager to knock on their door in case they were indulging in some pre-nuptial coitus.

Lucius sat on the bed and opened up his valise, searching for a headache potion. Portkeying always left him out of sorts, and the temperature change...though England had been cold in its own way...had created a storm inside his head.

"Oh, thank Merlin," Draco said, exiting the bathroom and sitting heavily next to Lucius. "My head *isthrobbing*."

The almost-innuendo made Lucius smirk as he handed over what was left of the draught. He watched Draco knock it back, relief immediately saturating his features.

Draco gave Lucius a look of gratitude, and there it was: Lucius really wanted to kiss him.

It had been like that for some time, but especially bad since the kiss they'd shared in the dining room the day they'd received the invitation to come here. Draco was kissable; there was no denying it. He'd even spoken to Hermione about it, and they were in agreement: Draco should always be kissed.

The jealousy he felt of Hermione was both unfamiliar and unwelcome. She had such an easy relationship with his son...she was able to kiss him at any moment and be completely at ease about it. It was expected, desired. Lucius, on the other hand, had no idea where he stood with Draco. In the week since they'd shared that kiss, Draco had run hot and cold, sometimes kissing Lucius good-bye in the mornings, but shying away from Lucius' attentions at other times.

Like it had been with Hermione, Lucius wanted to give Draco time, but he also wanted to force him to hurry up and accept things. If only binding him could be the answer every time.

"Are you all right?" Draco asked, a hand resting on Lucius knee in concern.

Smiling wanly, Lucius placed his hand over Draco's. "Fine. Just a little travel-weary. And there were some concerns about me taking the time off during the quarterly budgetary session, so I imagine I'll be dealing with that backlash when I return."

"Oh, sod those dusty old hacks. You're practically the only one who does any work to begin with."

Lucius laughed, wrapping his arm around Draco's shoulder and privately rejoicing when it wasn't shrugged off. Though not entirely true, Draco did have a point. Lucius took care to make sure he did as much, if not more work than the other men and women on the board committee...sins of the past not being easily forgiven and all.

Lucius was so wrapped up in his own thoughts that he hadn't realised how Draco's hand had tightened on his thigh, or the way his shoulders were twitching slightly under Lucius' arm. Lucius' hand came up and buried itself in the soft hairs at the back of Draco's neck. They were fine, even more so than his own, he thought. He let them fall over his fingers, lost in thought.

"Father," Draco whispered, shifting so he was facing Lucius, though not enough that Lucius let his hand fall from his hair. "I don't want this thing between us to become awkward." He laughed a little and shook his head. "I mean, I don't want it to *keep* being awkward."

"I don't think that's something that will solve itself immediately, Draco," Lucius said, only half-focused on the conversation. Draco's hair was lighter, softer than his, and he liked the way it fell through his fingers, cool as silk.

"I know that." Draco sighed and leaned slightly into Lucius' touches. "It's so hard to... put aside what I know, what I grew up with."

Lucius used his light hold on Draco's hair to tip his face up so he could press a kiss to Draco's temple. "You don't have to put it aside, you know. It can stay in the past while you focus on what's real right now. That's how I've been dealing with the changes." He hadn't wanted to admit just how difficult things had been for him as well, knowing that Draco needed someone to be strong for him so could focus on his own development, but it appeared that acting as though he wasn't going through the same turmoil had made Draco feel alone.

"At the same time, though," Draco continued, "it's easy to forget everything else and just...*want* you." He couldn't seem to meet Lucius' eyes.

"And do you? Want me?" Lucius didn't hold his breath. He didn't.

Draco nodded, stilling looking down. "I do. That's the easiest part of all this."

"Ah, so then you only like me for my looks," Lucius joked, tugging on Draco's hair.

But Draco looked offended by the idea. "If that were true, I'd just jerk off in front of a mirror. Though it certainly doesn't hurt that you're... very fit." Draco's fingers grazed Lucius' chest and trailed down his stomach, but despite his forward action, he still wouldn't make eye contact.

Lucius hissed when Draco's fingers slid along his thigh. He didn't want this half-blind seduction; he wanted Draco to ~~see~~ see him.

How much was too much to demand?

"Draco," he said quietly. "Look at me."

Dutiful son that he was, Draco did. His eyes were wide, his cheeks flushed with blood. Lucius had never seen his confident and aggressive son so at odds. "You're thinking too much... Just feel."

Lucius leaned in and kissed him, noting that Draco's eyes fell closed immediately. Was it because he was thinking of someone else, detaching himself from the situation? That didn't really fit with what he knew of his son...Draco wasn't one to just suffer through something.

Like all his kisses with Draco, this one was intense from the beginning. The thrill and discomfort of the taboo ran beneath the surface, but mostly there was just real and easy passion, like the kind they both enjoyed with Hermione.

When Draco brought the kiss to a higher level by touching his tongue to Lucius' lips, Lucius abandoned all pretence of control. He *wanted* Draco, wanted to touch and taste him, wanted inside him, wanted to feel that completion. He wanted to press and demand, but he knew that wasn't the way. Draco had to be in charge, had to be the one to initiate each level.

Draco seemed as eager as Lucius, leaning back and taking Lucius with him until they were arranged on the bed, heads on the same pillow and facing one another.

"I want to touch you," Draco whispered. His hand rested on the bedspread between them, fingers stretching out as if waiting for permission.

Lucius gave it with another kiss, taking Draco's hand and pressing it against his chest, implicitly approving anything Draco wanted to do. What Draco wanted, it seemed, was to undress Lucius. Without breaking the kiss, Draco unbuttoned Lucius' robes and tried to push them over his head. It was awkward and Lucius took over, undressing until he was only in his pants.

With gestures slow enough to be halted if Draco needed to, Lucius began to return the favour, undressing his son with more aplomb than Draco had showed. Alike right down to their identical black silk pants, the two moved in unison against each other, Lucius taking the lead only minutely.

Draco's skin was soft and hot, making Lucius feeling cold in comparison. Everywhere he touched seemed to elicit reaction. Fingertips on Draco's nipples brought a moan; his mouth on Draco's ear earned a whimper. When his hand rested on Draco's hip and began to smooth down his pants, Draco hesitated, though his body seemed to scream for more.

"All right?" Lucius asked, a whisper against Draco's wetted lips.

Draco's hand was trembling slightly as he rested it on top of Lucius', encouraging him to go on.

"Lay on your back. Put your arms above your head like last time."

Draco did, crossing his arms at the wrist and clenching his fists. "Do you want to tie me?"

"Do you need me to?"

It was a long time before Draco answered, and Lucius did nothing in the interim, simply sat beside Draco's legs with a hand resting on his jagged hipbone.

Finally, Draco looked at his father and shook his head. "No."

It was an important concession but Lucius didn't dwell on it. Draco wouldn't want it acknowledged. Instead, he tugged down Draco's pants and spread his legs, settling between them.

Draco, to Lucius' surprise and delight, was watching him with needful eyes. His long, pink cock was hard, resting heavily against his belly. Lucius bent and kissed each of Draco's hipbones, the joint of his leg to his groin, the inside of each pale thigh. After what seemed an eternity, he took Draco in hand, stroking lightly and watching for reaction. Draco arched slightly into the touch, his eyes closing and head falling hard against the pillow.

Lucius' own neglected cock was throbbing, and that alone told him just how much he wanted this. There was a part of his brain delegated to dealing with the emotional side of what was happening, but his body was very happily doing most of the thinking. He took the head of Draco's cock into his mouth, not wanting to frustrate Draco with teasing. This was about showing Draco that Lucius could make him feel good, in the hope that soon, Draco would be okay with whatever was happening between them, and would maybe, one day, want to reciprocate.

The noises Draco made as Lucius sucked him were so seductive and gratifying that he thought maybe it wouldn't matter if Draco never returned the favour. He had no problem going on like this if that was all he could get. He vowed to himself at that moment to never demand more than Draco was obviously willing to give.

A frightfully chilly breeze and a gasp that he hoped was the wind startled him into raising his head.

"Oh, my..." Hermione stood at the door to the hotel room, key in hand and door opened behind her.

"Hermione!" Draco groaned, waving his hand wildly even as he panted.

Hermione got the picture and closed the door. She rested a bag of take-away on the sideboard, almost missing it completely because she couldn't seem to tear her eyes from the scene on the bed.

Lucius was frustrated to feel heat in his cheeks. When Draco blushed, it was sweet and pretty, if out of character...Lucius Malfoy just didn't blush, full stop! Except that he was. He tugged at the sheet until Draco was covered, uncaring about the bulge in his own pants.

"You two are acting like I caught you doing something wrong," Hermione said softly. She approached the bed as one might a wild animal. "I was just surprised by how... perfect you look together." Her fingers trailed on the counterpane, but she didn't sit. There was a wistful look in her eyes that was entirely different from the lust he'd seen the time he'd caught her in the hallway after he'd left Draco tied up.

Draco saw the same thing Lucius did, for he said, "Hermione, come here," and opened his arms to her.

Relief washed over her features as she undressed with a speed heretofore unseen. Lucius' body gave renewed appreciation as she crawled onto the bed, her breasts bouncing slightly as she lay next to Draco, kissing him deeply.

Beneath the sheet, Draco's arousal returned, and Lucius continued his attentions, lowering his head after a moment of watching his son and wife kiss.

He heard Draco take a sharp breath, heard Hermione murmur, and felt Draco relax. *This* was why Lucius had wanted Hermione with them all along...she brought comfort and familiarity that was needed when everything seemed to be moving so quickly.

It wasn't long before Draco stopped Lucius and pulled him up...Lucius allowed himself to be directed onto his back. Having Draco back in control like that made things more familiar. This was the way it had been before Lucius and Draco had started down a new path together. Let Draco fall back into that role; Lucius had no objections. Especially not when it meant Hermione's slick heat was surrounding him as she lowered herself onto his cock.

Draco watched from beside them for a moment, his detached stance belied by the fullness of his erection. Lucius reached out and began to stroke it, memorising the movements that made Draco squirm, made him roll his hips, made his mouth fall open.

"Draco, I want to taste you," Hermione said, sitting up straight to give Draco room to stand, one foot on either side of Lucius' ribs so Hermione could lean forward and suck him.

With his hands on Draco's firm calves, Lucius recalled back to a few months ago when Hermione had mentioned feeling incomplete without both of them inside her in some way. He wondered if that would change once the dynamics shifted, if she'd feel just as good with Draco fucking her while he was inside Draco. Lucius hoped so...no image frequented his thoughts as much as that one.

Lucius' hand skimmed up Draco's legs to his arse, gently cupping and kneading. Draco turned, a little unsteady on his feet but supported by Lucius, and gave a look of such basic *want* that it took Lucius' breath away. Emboldened, Lucius slipped one hand between Draco's thighs, propping himself up so he could reach properly. He stroked Draco's tight sac, damp with Hermione's saliva, before moving back and pressing against his perineum. Lucius knew he'd done it right when Draco cried out and thrust into Hermione's mouth.

Lucius continued to massage there, the cacophony of sounds arousing him almost as much as Hermione's tightness sliding up and down on him, and the sight of Draco's firm, pale arse clenching above him as Draco fucked Hermione's mouth.

Draco came first, deep in Hermione's mouth, making Lucius wonder what might have happened had Hermione not returned. Would Draco have come in Lucius' mouth? Would that have been too much for his son? Lucius thought it might have been, though he would have been more than agreeable.

Draco stumbled a little, and Lucius helped guide him down onto the bed. Satisfied that Draco was fine, Lucius sat up and tipped Hermione onto her back...he needed to take the active role, to satisfy himself with her.

Hermione moaned when Lucius gripped her hair, tilting her head back. Her eyes were appreciative when he hitched her legs around his waist, pounding into her without



concern...she could take it, she always did.

"Let me taste him," Lucius whispered into her ear. He was determined not to feel ashamed for his desires, but that didn't stop his heart from beating faster with the fear of reproach.

But Hermione just moaned and offered her mouth. Lucius kissed her hard, tongue delving deeply to find the remnants of Draco's essence. It was faint, but there.

Hermione tightened around him, her soft cries signifying the beginning of her end, and Lucius let loose, slamming into her and demanding of her more than ever. When he came, it was with his entire body, and still, there was regret.

Regret that Draco was watching passively from the side, cock quiescent and eyes searching.

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As Lucius had predicted, Thello and Michael were so caught up in each other that the triad didn't actually see them until the wedding.

Both wore black robes: Michael's were soft and flattering, Thello's were harsh and secured like armour. But there was nothing guarded about Thello's face the moment Michael said, "I do." Though Lucius felt for Celeste, it was clear to anyone who cared to see that these two were meant for each other.

Lucius kept waiting for fireworks or strange magic like he'd felt at his own wedding, but nothing happened. He wondered if Kent and Marta had felt the same, watching them get married a year ago. Had the magic he'd so strongly felt been visible? Probably not. The thought made him a little disappointed, as if such intense love should be a tangible thing.

Draco took Lucius' hand when Thello grabbed Michael's face after the pronouncement that they were wed. Thello kissed his new husband hard and deep, for long enough to embarrass the officiant and more than long enough to set Hermione to squirming in her seat. A blush kissed Draco's cheeks, making Lucius wish he could do the same.

There was just something about weddings.

## Chapter 6

*Chapter 6 of 12*

Sequel to Some Things Change.

A year after the triad marries, they find life together is not exactly simple. Things are still changing--but is it for the better? Draco's feelings for his father are intensifying, and what Lucius wants is complicated, too. How will they make it together without falling apart?

Hermione was usually the type to wake up slowly, naturally, letting the morning light course over her body, touching her skin, which she could feel inside even if she couldn't *really* feel it. So waking up with a start because her wand alarm...set to go off only if she wasn't already up, which she *always* was...was shrieking loud enough to make even Draco grumble and swat at the air in distress was *not* the best way to start her day.

She couldn't remember the last time she'd over-slept like that, especially not since starting Outreach. There was something about the work that called to her, that made sleeping in seem selfish and unnecessary. She was usually only too happy to wake up before her alarm, stretching for a few minutes, trying not to disturb her husbands, before slipping out of bed and down the hall to her room, where she dressed.

Now, though, there was only rushing and panicking, and Hermione did not do well with being rushed. She punctured her nylons twice before deciding to forgo them, despite the season. She grabbed a rubber band instead of a hair elastic and ended up making an even *worse* disaster of her hair, something that would need a spelled solution. She even made it to the door wearing two different navy pumps. *Why* did Draco and Lucius feel the need to buy her so many shoes? They were all *thesame*!

How, she wondered to herself as she tore through the closet looking for one of the matching set, would she ever manage having children if she could barely even manage herself? What kind of additional stress would children bring to her life? She'd have to wake up earlier, go to bed later, bribe for time to shower...

Finally! Hermione snatched the hiding peep toe and slipped it onto her bare foot. She buttoned her shirt as she ran down the steps, relieved, for once, that there was a house-elf waiting with her traditional breakfast of porridge and toast.

And this, Hermione mused, digging in voraciously as she cast Tempus again and again, this would take so much longer with children. She'd heard things got tougher exponentially with each child. How would she handle getting them to wizarding pre-school or day-care when she or Draco couldn't watch them? How could they run Outreach from the dining room when there were little ones all over the place?

Pretty prim, blond, wide-eyed, mischievous little ones...

Hermione couldn't *wait* to have children!

Her spoon paused halfway to her mouth before splashing back into the bowl with a clatter. Porridge splattered her cream-coloured blouse, and she thought it kind of looked like baby vomit.

*I want children? Now?* she thought, rubbing frantically at the stain, effectively spreading it into an even more impressive mess. Where had *that* thought come from?

*I didn't really mean that. It was just a reaction to the influx of thoughts I've been having lately. Seeing pregnant women, seeing fathers with their daughters, those playpens at the store the other day...*

Uncaring by now that her shoes were tromping on the marble loud enough to wake the dead...so probably Draco, too...Hermione ran back upstairs to grab another shirt. She changed quickly, considering that the red didn't really look very nice with her navy pencil skirt but deciding it didn't matter since she was meeting a man whose gaze wouldn't make it past the mess she'd made of her hair before it turned disinterested and businesslike.

She popped into the bathroom and wiped up the glob of porridge on her neck. As she tossed the tissue in the garbage, she saw, resting idly as such things were wont to do, her contraceptive potion.

It was the first of the month.

She took a dose every month without fail.

She needed to take another dose, to renew it.

But she didn't.

\*

After her meeting, during which she'd impressed a new client despite her mismatched outfit and almost-lateness, Hermione sat back on the bed in her room and watched with a distracted smile as Draco and Harry annihilated zombies...and each other...with a passion that could only come with being enemies first and friends later.

Hermione knew all about that passion.

She was pretending to read but her mind was distracted. In her purse, which sat on the end of the bed looking innocent as purses should, was an antidote. Not that she was poisoned or anything. Far from it. Unless one counted her thoughts being poisoned with images of Draco with an armful of baby and Lucius with a lapful of toddler.

No, this antidote would reverse the effects of a certain completely harmless but very helpful potion. She'd purchased it from a rather seedy apothecary, apologising internally all the while for doing business with a Potions master other than Thello.

But no one could know.

She knew why she hadn't taken it yet. She was a coward. Chicken. Yellow-bellied. Lily-livered. Hermione cursed her breadth of synonyms as she contemplated the potion. It would flush away all traces of her contraceptive potion, making her able to start trying for children immediately. She knew her schedule well enough to know that she would be ovulating in the next few days.

"I can't believe this game is rated so low," Harry said, shaking his head. The television screen was bathed in red and bits of brain matter slid down quite convincingly.

"Hermione says most Muggle kids play games like this," Draco said. "No child of mine will, that's for sure."

Hermione's heartbeat sped up even as she tried to look like she wasn't listening.

"Yeah, right. All parents say that, and the next thing you know, they're foisting their kids off to the great telly baby-sitter so they can have a glass of wine."

"That'll be the good thing about our children having three parents, won't it? It won't ever be unbearable."

"You might think so," Harry said, chuckling. "But I think even having five parents wouldn't seem like enough at times."

Draco shrugged. He pushed away the controller, conceding defeat gracefully for once. "Still, I'd rather forego even the most expensive wine than allow my children to be corrupted by this filth."

"That's big talk for someone who demands rematch after rematch," Harry quipped, turning off the console and standing.

"You'd just better make sure my heirs don't get exposed to this stuff at 'Uncle Harry's'," Draco said, smiling. He rose as well and came to sit beside Hermione on the bed. She put down her book and smiled at him, even though her insides were practically vibrating with nerves.

"What do you think, Hermione?" Harry asked with a trouble-making grin. "Children can kill zombies too, can't they?"

Draco gave her a close look, knowing how uncomfortable she was with that topic most of the time.

"Well, that'll be something I imagine it will take all three of us to decide," she said diplomatically, though she was inwardly agreeing with Draco. Sports games, sure. Racing games, even. But killing games? Not in *her* house.

"I can just picture you two explaining to Lucius the pros and cons of video games." Harry approached the bed and gave Hermione a hug. "It's been good to see you. Sorry I let Draco rope me in to another round."

"Hey! You challenged my prowess," Draco said, but he shook Harry's hand and smiled.

"No one's denying it now," Harry said wryly, alluding to the fact that Draco had lost again.

"Thanks for coming by, Harry. Next time I'll Floo you when Draco isn't home so I can be sure to have you to myself."

Draco raised an eyebrow at her and Harry laughed.

"And say hi to Ron for me, okay? Tell him he's welcome to come over with you any time." Hermione smiled softly. She did miss Ron at times. It was sort of strange to hang out with Harry without him.

"He won't be stubborn forever," Harry said reassuringly, but they both knew if Ron could be anything, it was stubborn for as long as it suited him.

After Harry left, Draco snuggled up to Hermione's side, resting his head on her breasts and giving a satisfied groan when she started running her fingers through his hair.

"I miss Lucius," she said idly. Spending time with Draco alone was always lovely, but without Lucius it felt like... eating a hamburger without the top bun.

Or maybe Lucius was the meat patty now.

"I do, too," Draco said, his hand tracing idle circles on her belly.

The innocent touched thrilled Hermione. She knew Draco was the type to absolutely dote on any children, and she suspected he'd be insufferable when she was pregnant.

"How are things going with you and him, Draco?" she asked quietly. She knew they were closer than ever, that they went beyond certain limits when it came to sex together or with all three of them. But she hadn't had much opportunity to speak to either about their feelings on the matter.

"Things are really good." Draco sighed and turned over, his head resting on her belly as he looked up at her. "It's not what I expected at all. I thought it would feel forced or wrong, but it's just... kind of awkward and really, really good."

"Do you think you're ready to take the next step?" She herself was excited for that to happen, and not only because it thrilled and aroused her to watch them together. She wanted them to achieve the level of intimacy she herself enjoyed with both of them. She felt that once they did, the triad would truly be complete. Their lives would be complete.

"Yes and no," Draco said. His cheeks were pink but Hermione pretended not to notice. "I want to. I want him. I know he wants me and that makes me feel really... amazing. I just know there will be no turning back from that. Even now, I feel like if we wanted, we could stop and things would be normal again. Not that I want that, but..."

"What do you want?"

"Simple." He smiled wistfully. "I want to make love with him. I want to touch him and feel him everywhere and I want him to do that to me. I want it all."

He was voicing Hermione's own thoughts with regards to getting pregnant. She wanted it *all*.

"I want my husband and my wife by my side for the rest of my life. I want to see you swell with life, to be with you when you give birth, to give my father the heir he wants and then have you give him the daughter he wants."

"Lucius wants a little girl?" she asked. She wasn't surprised, but she'd never heard him express that.

"More than anything," Draco revealed. "Just talking about it gets him all... well, not weepy, but as close as he would get, anyway."

Hermione's fingers stilled. It was so easy to picture Lucius walking hand-in-hand with a little girl dressed in a frilly green dress, patiently slowing when she stumbled and helping her stand again.

"What about you?" she asked. "For our first child, what sex did you picture?"

Draco closed his eyes. "I know it's politically correct to say it doesn't matter, and that's true, but I do want a little boy."

Hermione took a deep breath. "Me, too."

It seemed to take a few moments for the words to sink in. Draco's eyes slowly opened and he sat up, facing her. "You do? You want a little boy?" He didn't even attempt to hide his eagerness.

Hermione nodded. Her throat felt tight. "I want to start a family," she whispered.

"Oh, gods, are you..." Draco gave a tentative smile that exploded into a full-blown grin. "Are you serious? When? Soon? Now?"

"Yes," she said, surprising herself. "Now." And even as she said it, the *rightness* of it struck her. She'd only been waiting for herself, and now she just... felt ready.

Hermione squeaked as Draco's lips crashed onto hers. Their teeth clacked and he pulled back and apologised before kissing her again, more softly this time. His fingers twisted into her hair, pulling her closer even as he leaned back slightly.

"I wanted to say... for so long. But I didn't want you to feel pressured. Hermione, Father is going to be so thrilled. You'll... you don't even know."

"Draco, I don't want to tell him," Hermione whispered, anxious for the first time.

"What?" Draco cried, pulling back.

"Not right away!" she amended. "Please, think of what would happen if I'm not able to get pregnant." Hermione touched her belly and looked everywhere but at Draco. "I don't want to get his hopes up... You know the minute we tell him he'll be ordering furniture and demanding a nursery be set up. I can't break his heart if I can't get pregnant."

"You'll be able to," Draco said with the air of someone who hadn't considered the possibly and needed reassurance.

"I think so, too," she said. "But it may not be today, or tomorrow, or even this month. Please, Draco. Let's not tell him. Let it be a surprise." Hermione looked at him, pleading with her eyes.

Draco's slow smile was back. "A surprise. Gods, the look on his face... Okay."

Hermione threw her arms around Draco's neck, pulling him against her. Her heart felt almost dangerously swollen, like she could actually die of happiness at that moment. "I'll be most fertile in the next few days."

"Want to practise?" Draco asked with a leer.

Hermione laughed and nodded.

\*

When Lucius came home from work, Hermione and Draco were waiting by the Floo like two people who had a secret and were desperate not to show it and yet failing horrible.

But if Lucius noticed anything was amiss, he said nothing. Hermione claimed the first kiss, letting Lucius fold her into his arms. Spending the day with Draco always made her realise how much she missed Lucius when he wasn't there, and that seemed like a lot.

She couldn't help but watch as Draco stepped up for his kiss. Lucius was so tender with him, as if he were made of spun glass. With Hermione, he was rather rough and demanding, and that was just how she liked it. She'd proven to both of them she wasn't about to break, and while they treated her with respect, they weren't *gentle* with her... Draco's sweet lovemaking that afternoon notwithstanding.

With Draco, though, Lucius held back, seeming afraid that if he pushed too hard, Draco would rebel like an unbroken horse. Their kiss was short and sweet but still enough to make Hermione feel warm.

"How was work?" Hermione asked innocently after Draco broke the kiss.

"Work was work. I'm sure you've not forgotten the politics of the Ministry," Lucius said, sounding tired.

"Unfortunately, no," Hermione said. Lucius seemed so weary that Hermione gave him another hug, this time wrapping her arms around him. Though he stood a head taller than her, he let her take some of his weight, which proved to Hermione just how exhausted he must really be. She couldn't help but worry at this rarely seen side of typically imperial husband.

"Why don't you go rest until dinner's ready, Father," Draco suggested.

Lucius nodded. "Yes, I think I will." And without another word, he walked from the room, perhaps more slowly than usual, presumably to their shared bedroom.

"Hermione, don't worry. I'm sure he just had a bad day," Draco said, wrapping her up in a hug and taking her weight this time.

She hadn't realised her fears had been expressed silently. But she was worried...what if Lucius *wasn't* ready to have children? What if he liked the idea more than the fact? What if he was just too tired and too busy for children?

"I just hope he'll be happy," she whispered, smoothing her fingers up the front of Draco's robes.

"He will be *thrilled* and you know it. He'd sooner quit his job than wait to have children. He was only waiting for you."

Hermione nodded. It was decided...she'd take the antidote that night.

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Author's Note: I'm so sorry for the long delay between chapters. I've never done that before, and I hope you don't hold it against me. :D The good news is, in the interim, I wrote a "lot\*"-the slash fans here will hopefully appreciate that. :D

I know this was something of a teaser chapter, but it was meant to get me back into the swing of the story, and it worked. I hope you all enjoyed it, and you can expect another chapter from me in a week. (Also, I will begin posting my Snape/Hermione fic soon! I'll definitely make a comment when it's up.)

Reviews... let's just start over, shall we? From now on, expect responses.

## Chapter 7

*Chapter 7 of 12*

Sequel to Some Things Change.

A year after the triad marries, they find life together is not exactly simple. Things are still changing--but is it for the better? Draco's feelings for his father are intensifying, and what Lucius wants is complicated, too. How will they make it together without falling apart?

Draco was nervous.

It wasn't an emotion that he attributed to himself very often, and when he did, he often diluted the severity of it by calling it anticipation or even anxiety. But there would be no sugar-coating it this time. He was definitely *nervous*.

And all because he had a secret.

He had, of course, had many secrets over the course of his life, the last major one almost destroying him. Thinking back to sixth year, Draco knew that there was no comparison now. That secret had been the difference between life and death...first his, then Dumbledore's, then his again, once he'd failed. He'd survived, though, unscathed...relatively speaking.

This secret was different. No one would die; no one would even be hurt. Still, it ate at him.

In his entire life, Draco had never cast a spell against his father. Not in defence against the sometimes cruel things Lucius had said whilst Draco had been growing up, thinking he was turning Draco into a strong, powerful young man. He doubted he would have even raised his wand to Lucius if the Dark Lord had ordered Lucius to hurt him.

Some things just weren't done.

So casting the contraceptive spell on his father while simultaneously spelling away his clothing went against everything Draco believed in. The spell would last three days, and during those three days, Draco would do his damndest to get Hermione pregnant so he could then break down and confess.

To make it worse, Hermione, usually the triad's moral barometer, didn't seem to have the same qualms about keeping something from Lucius that Draco did, but then, she hadn't been raised with twenty-four years of *fear thy father* as he had. She was nervous about the spell working, nervous that Lucius would catch on, but other than that she had no compunction about the plan.

Draco could not deny it was necessary. The first child had to be his, had to be the eldest in order to inherit. After that, Draco planned on casting the contraceptive spell on himself so Lucius could father the next child. Draco hoped it would be a girl for his father's sake, but he knew Lucius would be thrilled regardless. After that, though, Draco didn't plan on knowing who the father was. It wasn't important to him. In his head, they would all be siblings, and they would all be his.

Knowing he had to cast the spell when Lucius was most unaware, he did it at the first opportunity, which just happened to be the first time they'd been alone together in a few days. Hermione had gone to visit Ginny and Harry at the Burrow leaving Draco alone with Lucius. They knew she was hoping to talk to Ron Weasley and get things sorted out between them. From what she'd told Draco, he knew the long-ago break-up hadn't been ugly, just unfortunate. They'd remained friends; until, that was, she'd told him about her life with him and his father. The fact that Weasley's opinion mattered so much to Hermione had bothered Draco at first, but he knew better than anyone that Hermione couldn't bear for anyone to be angry at her. She had to settle things or it would continue to bother her.

And if Weasley didn't pull his head out of his arse and get over it, Draco was more than willing to ~~help~~ help him along.

"Your mind seems to be elsewhere," Lucius said, putting his hand on Draco's jaw as it clenched with his thoughts, forcing him to look at Lucius.

Lying in their shared bed, clothes off and contraceptive spell cast, Draco couldn't help but feel that he was doing something wrong. It was both amusing and frustrating that he felt that way in reaction to casting a spell and not the fact that he was cavorting naked with his father.

Draco tried to reason with himself yet again: Lucius would be *happy* to be surprised. And Hermione was right in her assumption that Lucius would be devastated if Hermione wasn't able to conceive. Draco had noticed Lucius... not pulling away, exactly, but just not being as emotionally available as he had been before. Draco had tried to talk to his father about it, as had Hermione, but Lucius insisted nothing was wrong.

"I'm just worried about you," Draco said, telling the truth and a lie all at once.

"Worried about me?" Lucius repeated, a small smile on his face. "Why?"

"You've been distant." Draco resisted the urge to bury his face in Lucius' neck to avoid scrutiny. He still felt that this sort of talk was better suited to Hermione. He hated sounding like a nagging wife...and that was giving wives a bad name, because Hermione never... hardly ever nagged.

Lucius sighed, but Draco could sense that it wasn't directed at him. "It's the Ministry. It's so... tedious. Nothing I do makes a difference except when I least want it to. I find

myself exhausted early in the day, and the only thing that keeps me going is knowing what I'll be coming home to." Lucius stroked Draco's cheek and slid his hand into Draco's hair.

"Why don't you quit?" Draco asked, leaning into the gentle touch. "We don't need the money, and our name's as good as it's going to get. There seems to be something of a glass ceiling for former Death Eaters."

Lucius chuckled and then heaved another sigh. His caresses grew broader, his fingers sliding down Draco's shoulders.

Hearing him so listless made Draco angry. This wasn't the commanding man he'd known as a child. Lucius shouldn't let himself be brought down like this. If he didn't like the way of things, he usually just *changed* it.

"And what would I do?"

Draco shrugged. "Anything you want. Retire. Write. Work for Outreach, if you want. We could definitely use you." It was a casual suggestion, but Draco had thought about it before. It would be amazing, he'd always thought, to have both his husband and his wife home with him all day. He knew he spent much more time with Hermione than with his father, and that bothered him. Things were supposed to be equal.

Lucius was quiet for a long time, so Draco broke the silence. "I mean, you don't have to. I just thought it would be better, especially once Hermione..." Draco tried to trail off after that, looking away. The words were out there, and Draco knew Lucius would pick up on Draco's slip of the tongue.

When Lucius raised his eyebrow, Draco knew he was caught out. Instead of confessing like some Hufflepuff, Draco leaned forward and kissed his father, pressing their lips together and forcing a reaction.

When he pulled back, Lucius gave him a look that said he would not forget about Draco's comment and that an explanation was expected. But Draco had bought himself some time, more than enough to think of an excuse for what he'd meant.

"Wouldn't you like being able to see me and Hermione whenever you wanted?" Draco prodded, pressing his body closer to Lucius'. There was still something uncomfortable about being in contact with his father this way, but that feeling was becoming weaker the more time they spent together. He knew he was blushing when his cock brushed against Lucius'.

"Of course I would." Lucius' hand gripped Draco's hip, pulling him even closer. "But I wouldn't want you to grow weary of me."

Draco laughed. "If Hermione and I have been able to work together every day for a year, I think we could handle having you around, too."

"I don't know anything about charities except how good it looks to give to them." Lucius gave Draco a wicked smile as he pulled Draco's leg up and over his hip, bringing their erections in full contact and making Draco realise just how much he wanted Lucius at that moment. What had begun as a conversation was quickly spiralling into something more needful.

"That's not true," Draco protested. "You were invaluable when we set up the programme. You know all about the business side of it."

Lucius tried to end the conversation by kissing Draco, and Draco almost let him. The kiss was too good; it was hard in the ways Hermione was soft, and demanding in the ways she was accepting. It made Draco feel like he could be two different people at once; both desirable, both wanted.

Still, now that he had voiced his thoughts, he couldn't let it go. "What do you think?" Draco pressed, panting a little as he pulled back from the kiss.

Lucius looked surprised. "You're really serious about this? You're not just trying to make me feel better?"

"Well, that too. But, yes, Father, I'd love for you to quit your horrible job and spend more time with Hermione and me. What isn't there to like about that plan?"

"We'd be around each other all the time, Draco." He seemed intent on pushing that fact home.

"I realise that. But I also think that would be a *good* thing, not the negative you seem to be painting it as."

"I just think that you two need your space."

The words stung, and Draco pulled back. "You think we need space from *you*? Is that why you never seem to be around these days?"

"Now, Draco, don't twist this around. I only meant that, as contemporaries, you and Hermione have the most in common and therefore need to spend more time together."

Rolling onto his back, erection totally deflated, Draco threw an arm over his eyes. "I cannot believe you're pulling this again. I thought we'd gotten past all this a year ago!"

Lucius leaned over Draco, bracing himself with his elbow as he lightly touched Draco's cheek. "It's not like that, I promise you."

Draco caressed Lucius' shoulder and neck, taking a moment to try to understand why Lucius kept them at arm's length. "I wish you would understand that we need you as much as we need each other. This triad thing... *you* pushed for this, don't you remember? We all wanted it, but you were the one who really made us see what an amazing thing this could be. Are you saying you were wrong?"

"It is an amazing thing," Lucius said, his eyes falling closed. "I'm honoured to be a part of it."

"Then stop this self-sacrificing bullshit, because it doesn't look good on you." Draco knew his crude language would get through to his father even if nothing else did.

"Draco," Lucius said in a scolding tone.

"No, don't *Draco* me. I've had enough of you pulling away. From now on, you're going to cut that out because ~~we~~ *need* you. I need her and I need you, and I need my father, too. You've two roles to fill with me now, and if you're not here enough to fill even one, how can we ever be happy?" Draco asked earnestly, his voice low and insistent.

During the ensuing silence, Draco sat up and pushed Lucius onto his back. Uncaring about his nudity, Draco straddled him, pinning his hands to the bed beside his head. "And you know what else?" he continued, settling his body over Lucius' groin and trying to ignore the thrill that rushed through him. "You're going to quit your job. You hate it, we hate having you gone, and the time will come when we'll want you home all the time. When we start our family."

"You would want me to stay home with our children?"

Draco rolled his eyes. "Of course. We're lucky that we can afford it. I want ~~to be~~ *there* when my children grow up. *I* want to see them turn into the young man or woman that *we* helped shaped them into, don't you?" Draco knew a part of him was referring to his own childhood, when neither parent had been around very often, and when they were, it had been all lessons and rules and fancy dinners. He didn't want that. His children would feel comfortable and free in their own home, in their own skin. He'd make sure of it.

Lucius nodded, seeming surprised but newly confident. "Then I will quit as soon as Hermione becomes with child."

Draco bit his lip; it wasn't good enough. He wanted his father *homenow*; he didn't want Lucius to have the chance to pull away again. He had to hold his tongue, though, since Hermione wanted to keep the entire thing a secret until it was certain.

Still, he pressed on. "No," he said, hoping Lucius wouldn't demand an explanation. "Just... quit *now*. You said would stay home for your child, right?"

Lucius nodded, his expression sincere.

Draco took Lucius' hand and placed it over his heart. "Then stay home *forthis child*. I need you." Draco swallowed audibly.

"Draco," Lucius whispered, sitting up and pulling Draco tight against him. "For you, for my son, there is nothing I wouldn't do." He pulled Draco's face down for a kiss, and Draco returned it with fervour, hoping to express through his lips how much the promise meant to him.

"I want you," Draco gasped, almost shocked by the sudden rush of blood to his cock from the powerful kiss. He wandlessly summoned the lubricant and watched his father's face as he smeared it over Lucius' cock. His heart was pounding...it was the farthest they'd gone, and just touching Lucius that intimately was enough to make Draco burn with shyness. But this was what he wanted.

He reached behind himself to slick his arsehole; he didn't have much experience in that arena, but Hermione'd rather surreptitiously given him a book on what to expect. He hadn't made it very far, but lubrication had been repeatedly stressed, so he made sure to take care of that. He reached behind himself and gripped his father's cock, biting his lip as he pressed it against his entrance. The position was somewhat difficult, but he knew when he had it right.

Draco tried to sink down, holding Lucius steady, but a sharp pain assailed him and he gave a soft cry. He'd expected pain, but this was a type he wasn't familiar with. He tried again, and the pain intensified and yet Lucius' cock didn't breach him.

Lucius reached out and stilled Draco's hips. "Stop," he said, sounding strained. "Lay back."

Angry with himself and hot with embarrassment, Draco did as he was told, manoeuvring onto his back and opening his legs. Lucius sat up, running his hands over Draco's thighs, soothing him.

"I don't think I really need to ask, but have you ever done this before?" Lucius asked, voice pitched low as he reached for the lubricant.

Draco shook his head wordlessly, flushing. Despite the soreness in his arse, his cock was hard and eager.

"I didn't think so. Just relax and don't tighten up on me, all right?"

Calmed by the familiar tones of his father, Draco inhaled deeply, letting his legs part more naturally. He closed his eyes and breathed through his embarrassment. This part of the evening was definitely not going to get transcribed to Hermione, no matter how she begged.

When Lucius' slick fingers prodded at Draco's hole, he jerked reflexively before relaxing as he'd been instructed. Lucius circled the tight ring, and Draco began to see how something like this might be pleasurable. When Lucius' finger slipped inside, there was barely any pain, just eagerness.

"All right?" Lucius asked, his other hand rubbing Draco's inner thigh in soothing circles.

"More." Draco tilted his hips up, one hand stoking his cock in time with Lucius' shallow thrusts. He groaned as another finger joined the first, and a stretch that bordered on uncomfortable had him squirming. But after a few moments, he felt he was ready, and he told his father as much.

"You'll tell me if it hurts," Lucius said, and he waited until Draco nodded to continue. A third finger made brief acquaintance with the first two, and Draco moaned when Lucius prodded what he knew to be his prostate. He wondered briefly if he could convince Hermione to touch him in such a way the next time she went down on him.

"I'm ready," Draco said, and a spill of precome from his cock confirmed the truth of his words.

Removing his fingers, Lucius brought Draco's legs up onto his shoulders, and he never stopped touching Draco all the while. Lucius leaned in, one hand guiding his cock to Draco's hole. There was an initial, near-painful resistance, but once Lucius slid past the tight ring, the pain diminished almost entirely.

"Oh, gods," Draco moaned as Lucius' slow slide brought his cock against Draco's prostate.

Once fully seated within Draco, Lucius leaned forward, folding Draco almost in half, but Draco didn't care...the position meant Lucius' cock was constantly pressed against his sweet spot, and it brought his father closer to him.

"You feel so good," Lucius said, closing his eyes. It was the closest his usually stoical father got to dirty talk, and Draco revelled in it.

"Fuck me," Draco ordered once he had his breath back. He was, after all, the conductor in the triad's lovemaking, and that didn't have to change without Hermione in the bed.

As always when Draco became vocal, Lucius followed his orders, seeming content to obey. Draco cried out with every thrust, surprised by the pleasure that came from the slight pain. When Lucius moved quickly, there was only pleasure, but whenever he slowed down, the pain returned. Draco used his hips to encourage a merciless pace. All the while, Draco stroked his own cock until he was desperate to come.

Lucius pulled back and shifted Draco's legs around his waist, leaning farther forward and kissing Draco hard on the mouth. Draco was too lost in sensation to do more than accept the kiss, but Lucius didn't mind, moving his mouth over Draco's neck and collarbones, biting and roughly sucking until Draco knew he'd be marked for days.

With his father so close, Draco gripped his upper arms, little gasps escaping him...something else he'd omit from the version Hermione got told.

"Please," he whispered, overwhelmed as Lucius continued to pound into him. "Gods, please."

Lucius reached between them and took Draco's cock, stroking it roughly in a way Draco wouldn't have been able to abide from his own hand. He cried out as he came, blood rushing through him and pounding in his ears.

He was able to float on the endorphins until Lucius came as well, his hand gripping Draco's hair and his mouth tight over the skin of Draco's neck.

A few moments to catch their breath and then Lucius pulled out. Draco winced as he felt Lucius' come follow, but when he clenched his muscles, his body didn't quite obey. He wondered how long until he was back to normal down there. Knowing Lucius' girth and having experienced his power, Draco suspected never.

He didn't really mind.

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For the next week, Draco had more sex than should have been humanly possible, he was sure. During the day when his father was at work, he and Hermione made love. It was different, having sex with the intention of making a baby. It was more sacred. He felt like he couldn't just bend her over the table or take her against a wall. He wanted to make every time special so they could always look back at the conception fondly. Hermione poked fun at him for it at first, but she'd seemed a little grouchy when he refused to even pin her hands over her head.

He felt like he should be able to *feel* when it happened, the moment, the instant. He kept asking Hermione if she felt any different, but she just laughed at him.

Lucius, on the other hand, gave Draco all the intensity he normally craved from sex. Whereas with Hermione it was sweet and slow, with Lucius... it was like a dam had burst. Whether it was just the two of them or all three, Lucius was demanding and passionate. Draco knew Hermione enjoyed it as well, especially since Draco refused to go as hard as she usually liked. Draco wasn't thrilled, but he couldn't very well tell his father to take it easy with her.

For the first time, Draco really understood how Hermione felt, being in the middle, so to speak. He was Hermione's top and Lucius' bottom; he both fucked and got fucked. He'd never felt so complete, so whole. Any lingering awkwardness between him and his father was diminishing every day. The more time they spent together, they became more lovers and less father and son, though there was always that paternal protection and love from Lucius. Draco wouldn't trade that for anything and he was glad he didn't have to.

Lucius had spoken to Draco more in detail about quitting his job. There was a lot of work involved; it would be a major transition. There were many projects Lucius would have to complete before he could leave. He'd also have to train someone to replace him. All in all, it would take no less than a month. That disappointed Draco, but he understood that the bureaucracy of the Ministry wouldn't be rushed.

So they didn't tell Hermione of that plan. Lucius wanted to wait until it was closer to the time he could leave. Another *surprise*.

Draco loved being in the middle, but these times made him hate it, too. The only positive thing about the new development was that neither Hermione nor Lucius could get angry at the other for keeping a secret, for they both were.

And Draco had to keep them all.

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Author's Note: Thank you all so much for reading and reviewing! This chapter was really exciting to write, so let me know what you thought!

Huge thanks to my betas, Krystle Lynne and she-who-must-not-be-named. My heart belongs to you two. :D

Also, my amazing fellow author and friend, labibliographe, made an awesome photo manip of our two delicious Malfoys in bed. Click on the link to see it! (It goes to my LJ, but be sure to leave some love there for labib, who is amazing). <http://literaryspell.livejournal.com/46380.html?#cutid2>

## Chapter 8

*Chapter 8 of 12*

Sequel to Some Things Change.

A year after the triad marries, they find life together is not exactly simple. Things are still changing--but is it for the better? Draco's feelings for his father are intensifying, and what Lucius wants is complicated, too. How will they make it together without falling apart?

Lucius felt as though he had rare occasion to smile lately. When he was with Hermione and Draco, he smiled most often. It was almost an unintentional reaction. The moment he stepped through the Floo, his lips twitched, a physical representation of the joy in his heart at having found himself so complete after a lifetime of feeling fractured.

When not at home, however, he knew his reputation for being strict and stiff was running away from him. At first, he'd maintained that façade in order to regain respect. It had worked too well, and respect had turned into fear. He didn't want that; that was what had happened before, and he'd vowed to never go down that road again. It was increasingly difficult to put any measure of effort into his work because all he wanted was to just *leave*, to just go home and see his wife and husband. He still did his job and well...better than anyone else on the Board, certainly. He would be up for chairman in the next year. The position would have lent power unlike any he'd personally known. It would have transported the Malfoy name from the mud for good. It would have opened doors for his family, his future children, and certainly himself.

And all he could think of how much he didn't want it.

He hadn't had to look far for incentive. Draco had as good as demanded he stay home. Lucius wanted to quit and Draco had given him an out. He would take it. He had put in his notice, such as it was, to Minister Shackbolt already, and he'd begun the training of his replacement the week before. If he brought his work home with him for about a week, he could be completely free of the Ministry's clutches in less than ten days.

There was a drawback: for those days, he would likely not see much of Hermione or Draco. The thought tugged at his heart...how had he gotten along without them, truly? The truth was that he hadn't. He'd merely lived in someone else's shadow, borrowing glory in the naïve hope that it would one day belong to him. He thanked Merlin every day that he had not damaged Draco beyond repair with his decisions. That Draco had forgiven him was an additional boon that he hardly felt he deserved.

Alas, he wasn't retired yet; the weekends were still his. He stretched leisurely, careful not to jostle Draco beside him. Ever since Lucius and Draco had made love for the first time, Draco had taken to sleeping in the middle of their wide bed. Hermione didn't seem to mind...she'd only rolled her eyes the first time he'd switched places with her, winking at Lucius in that conspiratorial way of hers.

"Go back to sleep," Draco mumbled, face buried in his pillow. Hermione was draped artfully over his back, her head resting between his shoulder blades.

Instead of heeding Draco's demand, Lucius petted his son's pale hair, and then Hermione's thick brown strands. She shifted slightly but didn't awaken. A warmth began inside him as he realised that once he retired, every morning could be like this, full of lazy awakenings and warm, sleepy kisses.

Lucius kissed Hermione's cheek and then Draco's. He couldn't help it...he wanted them awake. He felt like he never saw them, and certainly not in the mornings. Even on weekends he often worked, never allowing himself the simple pleasure of sleeping in, but he was determined to that day.

"Lucius," Hermione said around a yawn. She pried herself off Draco's back, her breasts bared as Lucius watched appreciatively.

Draco gave an unhappy grumble at the loss of warmth. He curled up against Lucius and promptly fell back asleep.

"Good morning, pet," Lucius said, reaching over Draco to caress Hermione's cheek.

She looked especially eager that morning, smiling at him and turning her head to kiss his palm. "I propose we stay in bed all day," she said, pressing herself against Draco's back and leaning over him to kiss Lucius, slowly and with some restraint.

Draco's eyes opened at that. He arched, rubbing against both of them in a most feline fashion. "I second that motion."

Lucius chuckled. "Motion passed."

There was something of a tangle of limbs as they arranged themselves more comfortably. Draco turned to face Hermione, and Lucius pressed himself against the heated, smooth skin of his son's back. Lucius watched as Hermione and Draco shared a rather secret smile. He narrowed his eyes, the Slytherin in him certain he wasn't getting the whole story. He decided it wasn't important, given that he and Draco also shared a secret: his plan to stay home. He truly hoped Hermione approved of that plan. He had to trust Draco in that regard.

Hermione made the most erotic noises as Draco slid within her. Lucius had noticed Draco being gentle with Hermione of late, and this time was no exception. On their sides, Draco could do little thrusting, and in fact, Hermione was doing much of the work, impaling herself down onto him with what little leverage she had.

Lucius spared a moment's jealousy for the fact that Hermione needed no real preparation, unlike Draco. Lucius shook his head minutely...it was impossible to compare the two. Draco was tighter, but Hermione was more...welcoming. Lucius was never afraid of hurting Hermione, but Draco wouldn't admit to discomfort, so Lucius had to be especially careful.

He prepared Draco almost lazily, enjoying watching Hermione's reactions to Draco's lovemaking, especially when Lucius grazed Draco's prostate, causing a chain reaction ending with Hermione crying out at being filled hard and fast.

Finally, deeming Draco ready, Lucius stilled him by gripping his hip. There was an air of anticipation, and when Lucius met Hermione's eyes, they were near feral with desire. Her eyes darted between his and Draco's as Lucius pressed forward, stopping only when his hips met Draco's arse. Then Hermione was kissing Draco harder than he'd ever seen, and Lucius watched, feeling delightfully voyeuristic as he thrust into Draco's tightness.

Hermione came first, shocking all of them, as she usually had to work harder for her climax. Lucius actually blushed a little at the thought that it was him fucking Draco that had brought her off so quickly. Her body went pliant, but her hips still ground against Draco's until he, too, cried out in orgasm.

Lucius hurried to finish, knowing how sensitive Draco became after coming. Draco's soft moans, half pained and half replete, combined with Hermione's appreciative murmurs and eager eyes, sent Lucius over the edge. His hand clamped down on Draco's hip at he emptied himself within him.

No one made a move to escape the tight circle of their embraces. Lucius' arm rested on Hermione's waist across Draco's, keeping them together.

Draco fell back asleep.

"I've missed you," Hermione whispered, reaching over Draco and carding her fingers through Lucius' tangled hair.

"It won't always be like this," he promised.

She smiled knowingly. "That's true."

Again, Lucius had the feeling that he should ask what she meant by that, but she distracted him by leaning over the resting body between them and kissing Lucius.

"You would think he hadn't gone to sleep at the same time as us last night," Lucius said fondly, tucking Draco's slightly damp hair behind his ear.

"He always did need the most attention, didn't he?" Hermione kissed Draco's cheek softly.

"I can hear you," Draco grouched, opening one eye to glare at Hermione.

"Did I say something untrue?" she teased.

"I don't know...did you?" Draco's voice held weight beyond the simple retort.

Lucius frowned as the conversation went from light to leaden with meaning.

Hermione looked at Draco for a long time before grinning and leaving the bed.

"Er..." Draco sat up, surprised, watching her leave. "She'll be back." He didn't sound exactly confident, but he was correct...a moment later, Hermione climbed back into the bed with two small packages. She handed one to Draco and one to Lucius, and then sat back with the visage of someone withholding great excitement.

Draco's reaction was startling...Lucius had been about to open his own curious package, but before Draco even lifted the lid, he exhaled sharply and stared at Hermione for a long moment. Again, feeling somewhat on the sidelines, Lucius just watched the interaction and tried to dissect its meaning.

"Open it, Lucius," Hermione said quietly, her face intent. She nodded to Draco, who turned to watch Lucius rather than open his own.

Feeling rather unprepared for what was obviously an important moment, Lucius opened the package.

Inside was a small green infant's sleeper. Lucius raised an eyebrow and unfolded the garment. On the chest in dark grey writing were the words, "My Daddies Love Me."

It took longer than he would ever admit to understand. He saw Draco holding a similar sleeper, in yellow, which read, "Daddies' Boy."

"I know yours is wishful thinking, Draco," Hermione said, her voice trembling. "But I got another one that says *Girl*, just in case."

"Hermione," Lucius said more sharply than he'd intended. His hand clenched on the sleeper.

"I'm pregnant," she whispered, a tremulous smile tugging at her lips. Her eyes shone. "We're going to have a baby."

Draco gave a rather unMalfoy-like *whoop* and pulled Hermione into his arms. "When did you find out?" he demanded.

"This morning, when I got up to pee. I tested on a whim, and it was positive."

"You're..." Lucius was having a hard time keeping up.

"Pregnant," she confirmed. "It's Draco's, technically, but it's really *ours*."

"But the preparations..." Lucius was certain he recalled discussing the contraceptive charm for himself to ascertain the first child was the heir. "How can you be certain?"

Draco looked sheepish and Lucius immediately realised what had happened. The plotting looks between the two, the tenderness Draco had shown Hermione lately...

"You planned this?" he asked. His eyes dropped back down to the cloth in his hand *Daddies*. Oh, Merlin. He was going to be a father. "I'm going to be a father?"



"You *are* a father," Draco said, rolling his eyes. He released Hermione and they both moved closer to Lucius.

"Of course. Yes, of course. But I'm... you're pregnant?" And then it really hit him. "Draco, *you're* going to be a father!"

Draco cheered. "I'm going to be a dad! And you're going to be a mum!" He hugged Hermione again and she laughed through her tears.

Lucius hadn't realised she was crying. "Come here," he said thickly, and both his husband and his wife folded themselves into his arms. He had wanted this, oh, gods, for ages. But things had been so near to perfect lately, he hadn't realised he had room in his heart for more. The thought, the very idea, proved him wrong. There was so much room. So much.

"Are you angry?" Draco asked tentatively, a few moments later. He looked up at Lucius with achingly familiar wide, grey eyes. Would their son or daughter have the same eyes? Or Lucius' own more solid grey? Or Hermione's warm, knowing brown eyes?

"No," he said honestly. There was not even an iota of anger inside him. How could there be, with a child on the way? It was too perfect to even contemplate. "I'm so very pleased. ...And proud. ...And anxious. I hope you've been taking the folic acid potion," he said to Hermione, who rolled her eyes at Draco and smiled.

"I've done my research, count on that." She tilted her chin up as if challenging him to suggest otherwise.

"Of course," Lucius said, the ball of anxiety relaxing just a touch as he realised that no one would be as prepared as Hermione for pregnancy. "Why didn't you tell me you were ready? I would have..."

"Put a lot of pressure on her with your expectations?" Draco finished, though he softened his words with a kiss.

Sighing, Lucius knew Draco was right. He did tend to be overbearing about things like that, and having him hovering around every time Hermione went to the bathroom wouldn't have done any of them any good. "But from now on..."

"From now on," Hermione said in a stern voice, "You will be involved in every decision. We all will."

Lucius' chest felt swollen. He remembered all too clearly the way Narcissa had spoken of her pregnancy. He'd loved his wife, but the pregnancy had been a duty. Once Draco had been born, that was when everything had changed. He hadn't felt like this during the actual pregnancy, though; so attached to only an idea. He pulled Hermione close once more, wrapping his arm around Draco as well, who was pressed against his side.

If either of them noticed the shimmer of water in his eyes, they said nothing.

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"Yes." "No." "Yes."

Hermione and Lucius turned to Draco. "What?" Hermione asked, frowning.

The Healer unobtrusively picked up a chart and pretended to look through it.

"I don't think we need to know. I think a surprise would be better."

"I've had enough surprises!" Hermione cried, making Lucius wince inwardly as he thought about his own surprise, his impending retirement.

"And I would like to prepare properly," Lucius added.

Draco looked implacable. "It's not like it could possibly be a bad surprise, Hermione. Boy or girl. There's no third option that you won't like." He turned to Lucius. "And you can easily *prepare* using gender-neutral colours. I don't want our boy wearing blue or our girl wearing pink, anyway! Green and purple are much more regal and appropriate and can both be worn by a boy or girl."

"You'd have a boy wear purple?" Hermione asked, sounding surprised.

"Of course. It's a lovely colour and looks amazing on pale Malfoy skin."

"I look horrible in purple," Hermione said, tilting her head to the side and looking into the middle distance as if picturing how their baby would look in purple.

"In any case," Lucius interrupted, catching the impatient glance the Healer sent him. "I wasn't referring to the child's clothing or the décor of the nursery. I would also like to prepare my will, as should you, Draco. A boy will inherit the estate, and a girl will inherit upon her marriage."

"Uh," Hermione said, her eyes wide. She sat up straight in her chair, obviously gearing up toward an epic fight.

"Misters Malfoy, Ms Granger, please," said the exasperated Healer, raising placating hands before herself. "Why not take a few days, talk it over. I know the sex, so you can just owl me when you know what you want to do."

"You can just tell me, then," Hermione said. She glared at her husbands, silently ordering them to leave.

Draco grabbed her arm. "No! All of us know, or none of us. Now, we heard that the baby is perfectly healthy, and that's all we really need to know."

"Fine," Hermione huffed, standing. She shook the Healer's hand, thanking her. Lucius and Draco did as well, and Hermione stormed off.

She couldn't have gone far, seeing that it wasn't recommended for expecting mothers to Apparate, and they found her in front of the Floo, about to throw powder in. They slowed their steps, relieved that she hadn't run out into Muggle London...and so they weren't close enough to stop her when she called out for the Burrow instead of Malfoy Manor.

"Oh, no," Draco said, eyes wide in horror.

"No, this is a good thing," Lucius said reassuringly. "She'll cool down and come back knowing that we were right. The Weasleys are pure-bloods, after all. They will explain how inheritance works."

Draco just shook his head at his father, pity writ across his strained features. "You have no idea what will happen. We're about to have the wrath of Harry Potter on our doorstep. He's almost as protective of her as we are."

The truth of Draco's words hit Lucius. "I don't understand what she is so upset about. This is the way things have been done since time immemorial."

"Maybe so, but Hermione's not the type to go along with something just because it's tradition...if she were, we wouldn't be together, would we? Change can't be all that bad if it brought the three of us together."

Lucius ushered Draco through the Floo, calling out for their manor, and then repeated the action for himself. Once in the parlour, Lucius immediately sat himself on the settee and gestured for Draco to sit with him. Taking his son's pale, slender hand in his own, he relished the ability to show such easy affection. There had been a time when he'd thought he'd never have a close relationship to his son. Perhaps Draco was right.

"What do you suggest?" he asked slowly, staring at the hearth as though Hermione would step through any minute.

"We don't have to change the world," Draco said. "Just our own ideas. So we'll simply switch things up a little. Female and male children will both inherit at the same age, regardless of marital status."

Lucius considered. It wasn't that much of a concession, really. When he thought about his potential future daughter marrying, his hackles went up, anyway. He would not want her to seek out an inferior husband just to inherit. "All right," he agreed. "I can accept that."

Draco grinned and stretched out, propping his feet in Lucius' lap and prodding his toes into Lucius' hands until Lucius gave in and began to lightly rub them. Draco gave a cat-like purr. "And what happens if our first child is a girl? We're going to face the same problem; Hermione won't want her daughter to not be able to inherit just because of her sex."

The whole thing was turning into an enormous hassle...not that Lucius regretted the fact that he had a child on the way. He'd simply never anticipated being married to a witch who would demand change.

"If the first child is female, she can inherit as long she keeps the Malfoy name, and her children do, as well," Lucius stated with the importance of someone delivering a decree.

"Are you sure? That goes against every custom I was raised to follow."

At this, Lucius sighed. Just the familiar way Draco talked and acted around Lucius, not to mention their intimate relationship, spoke of Lucius' willingness to forgo tradition in favour of happiness. "It will make Hermione happy, and perhaps it is time for the old ways to be reconsidered. I won't think of my children as pawns to sacrifice, or as chattel to be bartered." He gave Draco's foot a meaningful squeeze, and Draco smiled, leaning up for a soft kiss.

"You're an amazing father," Draco whispered, his grey eyes sincere.

Lucius nodded and looked away, struck by the power of the moment. Ever since Hermione had told them of her pregnancy, he seemed to be affected by her hormones...he was more emotional than a man of his status should be.

Just as he'd been about to make a flippant remark, the Floo lit green and Harry Potter stumbled through, wand drawn, his power no less intimidating for his ungraceful entrance.

"Hermione would like me to tell you that you are being barbaric, thoughtless, misogynistic and..." Harry trailed off, coughing and losing his hardened look for a moment.

Draco outright laughed at him, and Lucius stood to address him face to face.

"Sexist!" Hermione cried from the Floo before stepping through. She stood behind Harry, looking for all the world an Amazon, arms crossed over his chest, eyes narrowed and set on Lucius. To Harry, she hissed, "That was the most important one!"

"Sorry," he said sheepishly. Then he returned his glare to Lucius.

"Down, boy," Lucius said, easing the coldness of his words with a smile. "Draco and I have discussed the shortcomings of our traditions, and we've come to a conclusion."

Hermione nudged Harry, who said, "And?"

"And we will make it so marital status is not taken into consideration for inheritance. Children of either sex will inherit at seventeen."

With wide eyes, Hermione looked from Draco, who nodded and grinned, to Lucius, who simply held his back straight and waited for her...or Harry...to answer.

Standing on her tiptoes, Hermione whispered something to Harry. Harry then said, "And what happens if her baby is a girl?"

Draco chuckled, obviously remembering his prediction that she'd want an answer for that. "I knew it." But he offered an innocent smile when both Harry and Hermione's heads snapped toward him.

"Should our child be a girl, she can either take her husband's name in marriage and not inherit as the heir..." At this, Hermione half-turned to leave, but Harry grabbed her arm and held her as Lucius continued. "...Or she can either remain unmarried, or marry and keep the Malfoy name, and inherit the Manor and the title."

"Wow, Hermione, that's..." Harry began, but Hermione just closed her eyes.

"I know. More than I'd even hoped for." Giving Harry a quick hug, she guided him toward the Floo. They spoke in low tones for a moment, and self-deprecating smiles were exchanged. Harry called out his quick congratulations to Draco and Lucius. After he left, Hermione looked a little embarrassed.

"I'm surprised you let a man speak for you," Draco teased, raising an eyebrow.

Hermione toed the ground. She seemed afraid to come closer. "I just didn't want to say something I didn't mean." She took a deep breath. "Lucius, I can't thank you enough. I know your ways are the ways of old and all that, but I just want things to be fair. I'm so glad you do, too."

Lucius rolled his eyes and brought Hermione into his arms. "I've had a lot of help realising how change can be positive." He held out his hand to Draco, who took it, wrapping his other arm around Hermione's slight shoulders. "Next time, instead of running off, let's talk things through. I don't like the idea of the Weasleys all knowing our personal business."

"I only told Harry," Hermione said. "Er, and Ginny."

"So basically, they'll all know in a few hours," Draco clarified, shaking his head.

She nodded. "Sorry."

"Don't worry about it. It's not good for the baby," Draco said, placing a protective hand over the non-existent bump of Hermione's belly.

Hermione gave a long-suffering groan, but let herself be tucked into a three-way embrace. "Thank you," she said, her voice muffled by Lucius' chest.

"Just get our baby to us safely, and we'll call it even," Lucius said, his lips brushing her temple.

"But really, a boy would be great," said Draco, crying out in mock hurt when Hermione swatted him.

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Author's Note: Sorry for the mild lateness on this. I dragged my arse a bit in getting it to my betas. Speaking of, thanks, as always, go to Krystle Lynne and my anonymous friend for their hard work on this! I couldn't do it without either of you.

# Chapter 9

*Chapter 9 of 12*

Sequel to Some Things Change.

A year after the triad marries, they find life together is not exactly simple. Things are still changing--but is it for the better? Draco's feelings for his father are intensifying, and what Lucius wants is complicated, too. How will they make it together without falling apart?

By the time Lucius announced his own little surprise, Hermione was so deep into her morning sickness that it warranted little more than a weak nod and a very tired smile.

Knowing better than to take it personally, Lucius used his newfound freedom to relieve Draco from vomit detail. Hermione, flouting tradition yet again, had morning, noon, and night sickness. It was enough of a concern that Lucius had called the Healer to the Manor twice, just to be assured that it would run its course. The Healer, who Lucius just knew was rolling her eyes inside her head at the two fretting Malfoys, gave Hermione a potion to settle her stomach but warned her not to take it too often. They were also given strict instructions on what Hermione could do to keep herself healthy and nourished.

When Lucius went to check on Hermione, who was in bed but unfortunately not resting, quiet sobs met him before he even opened her door. She'd taken to sleeping in her own bedroom rather than their shared one. Despite that, one or both of her husbands would inevitably find their way back to her, unwilling to let her spend the night alone even if it meant sleeping on her sofa.

Lucius knocked on Hermione's door, knowing better than to barge in, and the cries immediately stopped. There was a raucous sniffing and then Hermione called for him to come in.

"Is everything all right?" he asked quietly. The room was a disaster...the house-elves hadn't been in because their popping made Hermione's head ache, and neither Lucius nor Draco really knew where any of her things belonged. She seemed to prefer it that way; it was her little nest.

A bushy head of hair poked up from beneath a mound of blankets. Hermione's eyes were red-rimmed and swollen. Lucius thought she looked beautiful.

"Just... having a rough go of it," she admitted, the closest she would come to outright declaring that she felt horrible.

Sitting on the edge of the bed, Lucius toed the sour-smelling wastebasket toward the wall, waving his hand at it and Banishing its contents. "Is there anything I can do?" Lucius didn't want to seem anxious, but the powerlessness was exhausting. Draco had taken on Hermione's role as well as maintaining his own in Outreach, so the job of caretaker had fallen primarily to Lucius...not that Draco exactly minded. Lucius had seen the helpless looks on his face whenever Hermione ran to the bathroom or smelled the wrong food and gagged. He was happy to let his son have a break...Narcissa had been ill with Draco, although not to this extent. She'd been surrounded by her family and friends, so Lucius hadn't really been kept abreast of his former wife's condition unless it was imperative. He certainly didn't mind experiencing these things with Hermione.

Hermione shook her head and collapsed back onto the bed. Lucius had brought up one of her restorative potions and helped her drink it through a straw...a rather ingenuous contraption brought over by Arthur Weasley of all people. This way, he'd asserted, Hermione wouldn't have to get up to take a drink. Apparently they'd come in handy when his own wife had been bedridden with the youngest Weasley child. Having Arthur Weasley in his home had been disconcerting to say the least, but a part of him was glad that rather intense enmity had come to an end.

"I was expecting you to want strange foods. I was all too prepared for cravings and the like," Lucius said. "I'm afraid I don't have much else to offer."

"I couldn't eat." She sounded apologetic, as if it were her own fault.

Lucius leaned in and kissed her. She turned her head, grimacing, letting him catch her cheek instead. Sighing, he petted her hair for a moment, holding the glass as she drank from it. They both held their breath when she was finished...the first few moments after ingesting something were the tricky ones. Once it seemed, miracle of miracles, that she'd be able to keep it down, they both exhaled in relief.

"How's Draco?" Hermione asked, rolling onto her side and facing Lucius. Her eyes were closed but her face animated. Lucius knew she was awake.

"He's fine. Working as hard as ever."

"Did he remember to call Auror Blakely about the donation she promised? She's been giving us the run around for..." Hermione trailed off, panting a little. Her face scrunched up, but after a few tense moments, she relaxed, the danger passed.

"Was it on the list of things you gave him to do?"

"Of course." She frowned.

"Then I'm sure he's taking care of it."

"You have to make sure..." Hermione's eyes opened, an obvious struggle. "It's important that we not get behind just because I'm *useless*." The last word was breathed out harshly.

"I don't want to hear you talk like that," Lucius said sternly. "You've a very important job as it is: keeping yourself and our child healthy. As to the rest, you well know Draco is very competent. He can handle the workload if he says he can, and I am able to help if he needs it." Luckily for Lucius, Draco hadn't needed the extra help yet, but it was only a matter of time. Hermione'd been at the height of her sickness for a week, and every day that passed, Draco worked longer hours, looking more and more stressed.

A slender hand escaped the mountain of covers and took his. Her grip was very firm; Lucius took heart from that. "I'm so lucky... so glad to have you home."

"I am just as glad to be home. The idea of you here without me..." Lucius shook his head. He wasn't one for sentimentalities (no matter how often he took the Daddies' Girl sleeper from Draco's drawer, just to look at it), but he knew Hermione understood.

"Everything's fine," she said, sounding just a touch exasperated. No doubt she was tired of having him and Draco fawn all over her.

"I know, pet," Lucius whispered, his thumb caressing the palm of her hand. Hermione graced him with a smile, her eyes closed again. Lucius waited until she fell asleep before slipping out. She slept a lot, but that Healer had assured him that was normal.

In the dining room, Draco was sitting at the head of the table, stacks of papers looking ready to overwhelm him, a quill behind his ear dripping ink onto his shoulder and a

smudge of said ink on the side of his nose.

"Damn it," he muttered, patting down the papers with a deep frown etched into his normally marble-smooth forehead.

Lucius plucked the quill from behind his ear and presented him with it. "Looking for this?"

Draco snatched it without a word and immediately set to signing a stack of papers, checking something from a list with Hermione's handwriting, and making a note in a ledger. "How is she?" he asked, distracted but obviously concerned.

"She's resting now." Lucius sat, unfamiliar with the seat to Draco's right; for dinners, he sat at the head of the table. The world was a little slanted from this perspective. "What can I do, Draco?"

Draco sighed and looked ready to refuse, but when he raised his head to answer, he must have seen the need to be needed in Lucius' face. He sighed and pushed a stack of parchment toward Lucius. "I need copies of all of these. Put the originals in this folder when you're through." He pushed over a manila folder and got back to his own work.

It was a mindless magical chore, and Lucius took to it with relish, despite the fact that it was the type of work for a secretary or assistant.

"Why don't you hire someone to do the more menial tasks?" Lucius suggested. "At least until Hermione is feeling up to returning."

"I can't be arsed to train someone right now. It would put me even further behind."

"If you took one day to train a competent witch or wizard, you would save yourself days of labour in the long run."

Draco paused midway through his signature. "How to find someone competent; I supposed that's the question."

When the answer came to Lucius, he almost said nothing. It was too perfect and too evil. Could he do it to his own son? He could.

"I do know just the person for the job, as it happens. Diligent, hardworking, fast learner..."

"What's the catch?" Draco asked immediately, not fooled. *Slytherin*.

"It's a Weasley."

Draco scoffed, leaning back in his chair. "You've got to be kidding me. I know Hermione is willing to bend over backwards for the arsehole, but I, for one, couldn't care less if he were to never work again. I don't owe him anything."

"It's not Ronald Weasley," Lucius said, giving Draco a disgusted look. Perish the very thought. "He'd be the last person I would suggest in a time of need."

"Who, then?"

"Percival Weasley. He made it impressively far in the Ministry, politically, given his young age. After the war, he lost his job, and he's been working beneath himself since."

"How do you know all this?" Draco asked, pulling another parchment in front of him.

"It pays to keep track of those beneath you just as it does to watch those above you."

Draco tapped the quill against the table, seemingly unaware that he was staining the mahogany. Lucius cringed and stilled the spastic movement.

"Well?"

"Owl him, then," Draco said, sounding as tired as Hermione had.

It was a testament to how very overwhelmed he was that he would capitulate so easily, not that Lucius was complaining. He wouldn't have Draco working himself to the bone when they were more than rich enough to live without working, let alone doing all the work themselves. If he were honest, he was glad that Draco was seeing the light. Employees meant more work could be done, and therefore more good could be done. It also meant that his son would spend less time working. Lucius made sure, however, to keep his less than altruistic intentions to himself.

Lucius went to his study to compose the offer. Owling a member of the Weasley family was still uncomfortable at best. Lucius didn't want to word it so it sounded as though they *needed* Percival, and he also wanted the boy to know that working for them would be in his best interests. He took his time writing the missive, finally deciding that appealing to Percival's foresight was the answer; helping to bring a fledging charity up in status would look quite impressive on a résumé.

In the meantime, Lucius returned to the dining room to encourage Draco to take a short break. "Perhaps even a nap," he added.

Draco looked up, harried. "I can't take a nap. If Hermione finds out..."

"You truly think Hermione would be upset with you for taking time to yourself? How did Arthur Weasley put it... for recharging your batties?"

"That doesn't sound right."

Lucius frowned. "Indeed, it doesn't. I'll have to ask Hermione. The sentiment stands. You're working yourself to the bone, Draco. Hermione wouldn't want that."

Scrubbing at his face with his hands, smearing still more ink...on his cheekbone this time...Draco finally gave in. Or at least that's what Lucius assumed he meant by letting his head fall forward onto the desk.

"That's enough," Lucius said. He stood and lifted Draco from his chair easily...when had he lost weight? That settled it. "I'm putting you to bed."

"Ooh, Daddy," Draco purred, giving a drunk-sounding laugh.

They both froze. Draco's face flushed red. "Or not."

"Or not," Lucius agreed, rather horrified. Opting to pretend nothing had been said, he guided Draco up the stairs. His son insisted on stopping in to see Hermione, who was still resting, though Lucius noted the wastebasket had been pulled close again. He felt a moment's rage for incompetent Healers who couldn't help his wife. What sort of medieval torture was it that made women still suffer the same ailments that they had since the beginning of time? Were they so backwards that they couldn't even cure morning sickness?

Severus Snape would have been able to help, Lucius thought. He closed his eyes briefly. That was a wound that had never really closed. Severus would have known exactly what to do. Maybe not exactly how to make it palatable or how to present it in a positive way, but he'd have had a solution, surely.

The thought of Severus made him think of Thello. Of course! How foolish of him to overlook the budding potions prodigy. Thello very well might have a solution. He vowed to get into contact with him as soon as time warranted.

Once Draco was satisfied that Hermione would survive while he rested, he led Lucius to their bedroom. As always, it was too large without Hermione in it. They'd begged and bargained...though they'd take that fact to their mutual graves...but Hermione had refused to take to their bed for her rest.

Draco removed his robe, nothing in his brisk movements bearing the usual seduction that he gave to undressing. Lucius helped him with his tie, barely slipping it from his neck before Draco fell onto the bed.

"Stay with me?"

"Of course." Lucius removed his own robes, slipping under the covers with only their pants between them.

"I'm scared for her." Draco could only confess with his eyes closed.

"She will be *fine*."

"How can you be sure?"

"Because she is strong and because we need her."

Draco nodded. It seemed to be enough.

Gathering him close, Lucius shushed him in a half-musical, half-nonsensical voice that Draco might recognise from his childhood...but if he had any compunction with being soothed so, he didn't make them known.

"I wonder what we will name him."

"Or her," Lucius said quickly, his own preferences revealing themselves. Not that he wouldn't love another son.

"Or her," Draco conceded, smiling at Lucius as he burrowed deeper into the embrace.

Lucius loved moments like this, when Draco was completely unguarded, when he just let Lucius hold and comfort him, when he wasn't sarcastic or standoffish. When he just... relaxed.

"I named you, you know. It was to be after a star, that much your mother insisted on. There weren't many good, strong names to choose from that didn't already come with a Black family history, and I wanted your name to be your own. That's one thing I'll always be grateful for: that you have no namesake. You're free to make your own way with no shoes to fill or footsteps to follow."

"Just yours."

"Not even mine." Lucius kissed Draco's temple, then his ear, and then his throat. "Just your own."

"How did you pick my name, then?"

Lucius smiled. He couldn't believe he'd never told his son this story. He almost didn't want to; Draco wouldn't like it, most likely.

"When you were a baby," he began, lips twitching, "you made the most adorable little sounds. You'd scrunch up your face really tight and *roar*. I swear to Merlin, you were roaring. Like a growl but more... ferocious."

Draco's cheeks went a deep red with embarrassment. "No, I did not!"

"You did. It was unbearably charming. You didn't cry when you were hungry, you roared. My little dragon. You went two days without a name, but once you did that a few times, the name came to me, and there was no question. You were Draco."

"I did not roar," Draco muttered, but a small smile played on the corners of his lips, and he looked up almost shyly. "You must have thought I was pretty cute."

"The cutest," Lucius whispered, lost in memory. So much time wasted indoctrinating when he should have been learning about his only child. He shook his head to clear the negative thoughts. He'd been gifted with a second chance; it was his to take.

Draco shimmied closer. "Still think I'm cute?"

Lucius shook his head, then smiled at Draco's aghast expression. "Handsome. Beautiful, even, if you'd allow it. Amazing." He chuckled. "And cute, yes."

"I love you," Draco said, kissing Lucius.

For a moment, Lucius was tugged back to over a year before. They'd been just about to give their press release. Draco had pulled Hermione back and told her those exact words for the first time. How far they'd come...how soon it would be until there was another person with whom to share that love. Love that Lucius now knew was both unconditional and limitless. How silly he'd been to once worry that Hermione hadn't room in her heart for both of them...now he understood. There was room enough and more left over.

With a devilish smile, Draco lifted his arms over his head, crossing them at the wrists and stretching. "Like the first time," he whispered. His face was tired but his eyes were eager and hot.

Returning the look, Lucius bound Draco quickly, the spell almost as familiar as the lubrication one they used. That was his second move, slicking Draco's thickening cock and stroking it leisurely. Maybe Draco wanted this to be a quick wank before his nap to relieve the stress of the day but Lucius had more intense intentions. He wanted Draco to give up, give over, and let Lucius do what he knew was best.

He kissed Draco as his hand moved expertly. He knew exactly what Draco wanted, what he needed. Draco's abandon was beautiful to witness. At first he strove to maintain composure, an impossible task as he very well should have known by now. Soon enough, the mask began to crack and little sounds escaped his swollen lips. After that, it was a quick ride downhill. Draco started to writhe, pumping up into Lucius' iron grip. He planted his feet for leverage and rutted into Lucius' hand, gasping and panting, his face pink with exertion.

Just as Draco's climax began to build, Lucius eased off, returning to the more teasing strokes. "Let go," he whispered, sensing that Draco was holding on to something, to some bit of stress or some memory or some fear. "Let it go, pet."

Draco's eyes had tears in them as he did as he was told. With a weakened cry, he first went limp and then stiff all over. His submission, if only a moment, was complete. Lucius guided him through his orgasm, his own cock twitching in response to Draco's soft sounds.

"Thank you," Draco said, and even his voice sounded lighter.

Using the come from Draco's hard belly, Lucius wet his own cock after freeing it from the confines of his pants. With Draco bound and debauched before him, there was little effort needed. A few quick strokes had him crying out, letting go just as he'd demanded Draco do. His seed mixed with Draco's, and the sight was both familiar and taboo. Before he was done looking, Draco spelled away the fluids and his bonds, though his arms remained where they were.

"Thank you for taking care of me. Of us."

"Put your mind and your body to rest, son. There is nothing I wouldn't do for our family."

Draco drifted off with a smile on his slightly sweaty face. Lucius watched him for a few long moments. His family.

He got up when he heard a pecking on the window. He frowned at his owl for nearly waking Draco, directing it to his study where he met it moments later.

Percival Weasley...or Percy, as he insisted on being called... had accepted the position after a very brave negotiation of his salary. Lucius would pay it from his own pocket so Outreach would enjoy even better profits. He keyed the wards to admit *Percy* and wrote back telling him he began the next day.

A Weasley in Malfoy Manor. For shame. And yet, things really had changed, hadn't they? A Weasley and a Malfoy, working together, helping one another.

Hermione would be most pleased.

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Author's Note: Sorry for the day's delay! Huge thanks to my lovely betas, Krystle Lynne and my anonymous friend.

As a sidenote, I suspect most readers of this story are het fans, but if there are any slashers among you, check out my original fic *At His Throat, A Promise*, posting on my LiveJournal (<http://literaryspell.livejournal.com>). It's a few chapters in and posts every Thursday. :D

## Chapter 10

*Chapter 10 of 12*

Sequel to *Some Things Change*.

A year after the triad marries, they find life together is not exactly simple. Things are still changing--but is it for the better? Draco's feelings for his father are intensifying, and what Lucius wants is complicated, too. How will they make it together without falling apart?

Draco was loath to admit it...actually, he absolutely refused to admit it anywhere but in the privacy of his own mind...but Percy Weasley was Merlin-sent.

If Draco closed his eyes to shut out the blinding ginger and distracting freckles, he could almost pretend that Percy was just another person. A very clever, very efficient person, but normal nonetheless. Unfortunately, it was impossible to get any work done with his eyes shut, so he couldn't forget that Percy was a Weasley through and through. At least it wasn't Ron Weasley, though. Draco did have limits; he wasn't a masochist.

Over the next few months, Hermione's morning sickness didn't end. It abated, and she often kept her food down an entire day. For the most part, though, she stayed in her room, uncomfortable with being that far from the safety of what Draco called her 'nest.'

Without Percy, he never would have been able to be as involved in the pregnancy as he wanted. Not only did Percy do the boring, menial work, he also took over with the phone calls and even house calls. He was better than Draco at... ahem... *weaselling* donations from people, even though Draco had years experience doing just that for the Ministry. He had a natural talent of making people feel sorry for him, Draco supposed.

It became rote that Percy would come to the Manor around eight in the morning, set to work immediately, continue diligently until noon, take a half hour break during which he *still* worked, and then go consistently until four. At that time, he'd invariably ask if there was any additional work needed or if Draco would like him to bring certain projects home. For the first month, Draco had been afraid he'd actually run out of work for Percy, but the opposite was true. The more efficient the business became, the more donations poured in, and the more charities wanted to be affiliated with their company. Their list of supported companies doubled and then trebled, and their Rollerdex (or whatever Percy called the infernal thing) of clients grew exponentially.

Hermione was, as his father had predicted with a sly twist to his lips, delighted. Still, Lucius wasn't the one who had to actually *work* with Percy, who was... talkative, to say the least.

Draco wasn't unused to having people fawn over him, but that had come to an abrupt end after the war. Now people would just as soon not look at him at all; so having Percy be so obsequious was at first welcoming, even flattering, but very rapidly became unappealing. He recognised the fact that Percy didn't seem to actually *like* him...Percy was just attuned to power. The more someone had, the more drawn to that person he became. Draco didn't begrudge him that; he had his own experiences with that sort of behaviour. It just made listening to him a trial.

Draco learned that Hermione had been the one to encourage Percy to return to the family fold and accept the forgiveness that was readily offered. Percy seemed grateful for this, even though he spoke a little disparagingly about Sunday dinners at the Burrow, and Draco knew that Hermione's hand in all things Weasley hadn't stopped even now.

Her visits to Ronald, before her pregnancy, had apparently been unwelcome at first, but she swore she was 'wearing him down' and Draco didn't confess to just how much that fact was wearing *him* down. He knew that Hermione's friendships were important and he'd never begrudge her Harry (he seemed like the sort to know what was good for him, plus he had a ginger of his own; he wouldn't dare go after Hermione), but Ronald was a different case. An unknown variant. From Percy, he heard that Ronald's main concern was actually that he was afraid of Hermione being hurt. Percy couldn't answer as to whether his brother still carried a torch for Hermione, but since he didn't deny it, Draco took it as an affirmative, just to be safe.

"Mr. Malfoy?" An obnoxious clearing of a freckled throat.

"What is it?"

"There's someone at your door." Percy sounded almost distraught at having to bring this fact to Draco's attention.

He had to stop getting lost in his own thoughts like that. Though that was the first time he'd thought of anything for so long without images of Hermione's belly and thoughts of the future barging in. That was a relief.

"Thank you," Draco said, rising to his feet. There was only one person who the house-elves wouldn't show in, and that was Thello. Since his father had seen to educate the

elves, they became more opinionated than either of them had thought possible. It only took Thello a few tries to terrify the little things into staying far, far away, forcing Draco to answer the door himself like a... well, like a house-elf.

"You know," he said after opening the door. "You could let yourself in."

Thello gave a sniff that Draco recognised as being a result of centuries of pure-blood breeding. His remark had surprised even him, but he knew that old traditions were falling by the wayside every day, and he had no reason to hold on, white-knuckled, while the rest of the world moved on without him.

"How is she?" Thello asked, his voice low and somewhat stilted, as always. He was infinitely more relaxed when Michael came with him, but only one could leave their apothecary at a time.

"Better," Draco said truthfully. He'd been tearing his hair out at his own impotence in the face of Hermione's illness, but Thello had brewed something that actually had her gaining a little weight and looking less haggard. "She's eating more and keeping more down."

"Very good." Thello handed over the potion. He'd asserted that as he wasn't a Healer, he had no reason to see Hermione. Draco figured he was, as some pure-bloods were, uncomfortable around pregnant women. Draco wanted to rail against that mentality...he'd never seen anything more beautiful than his pregnant wife. "Make sure she maintains the dosage schedule and please Owl me if anything changes."

"You won't come in for some tea?"

Thello shook his head. For the first time, Draco noticed how tired he looked. "The full moon's in a few days."

"Ah," Draco said, nodding. The shop was still inundated with werewolves looking for the Wolfsbane, and though Thello and Michael had finally worked out a brewing schedule that didn't absolutely murder them, it was still an extremely busy time. "I appreciate this all the more for your sacrifice in bringing it."

"It was nothing." Thello gave a curt nod and left the Manor, Disapparating once beyond the wards.

After checking on Percy...quite unnecessarily, of course, as he had things more than under control...Draco took the potion to Hermione. Lucius was visiting Celeste and would likely be gone a few hours. She quite liked to talk his ear off, which was why, after the first time, he and Hermione opted to stay home. She was back in the 'dating game', as she called it, and Draco's ears were much too delicate to be exposed to her exploits. How his father dealt with it, he had no idea. Lucius was a loyal friend...unfortunately for him.

Entering the room, Draco raised an eyebrow when Hermione hurriedly stuffed a book under her pillow, her face flushing. The mound of her belly...five months already and he'd never get used to the idea...was exposed and gleaming with the potion Thello had brewed that helped with stretch marks and itching.

"What are you hiding from me, wife?" Draco grinned and sat on the side of the bed. He made as if to reach for the hidden book, and she squeaked and burrowed it deeper into the bed.

"It's nothing." She cleared her throat and seemed to make a conscious effort to will her blush away.

"Are you reading something naughty?" he teased, though frankly, he'd be thrilled if he were right. He'd read that some witches became highly amorous during their pregnancies, but Hermione hadn't exhibited that...she'd only just began to feel well enough to get any exercise at all.

"Draco!" Her cheeks glowed pink again. "Of course not."

"What is it, love?" He couldn't help it; his curiosity was overwhelming. Even if it was just a pregnancy book, he wanted to know.

She looked at him for a long moment before sighing and withdrawing the book. She handed it to him.

At first glance, it seemed to be a normal notebook, not a novel or manual as he'd expected. Inside, he saw it was a journal. Intrigued, he flipped to the latest date, but Hermione snatched it back.

"I didn't know you were keeping a journal." For some reason, he felt almost cheated. There'd been hundreds of little instances where he could have added something, had it occurred to him.

She shrugged. "It was really boring at first. 'Vomited today. Crossed chicken from the lists of foods I could stand.' And, 'Didn't leave the bed today. Hate the ceiling. Threw up on Lucius' shoes.'"

Draco chuckled. His father had handled that much better than he might have. He didn't do well with bodily fluids.

"And today?" he prompted, wondering why she'd taken it back so quickly.

"Today..." Suddenly, Hermione burst into a smile. Draco almost had to look away, it was so bright. He realised it had been much, much too long since he'd seen her smile so freely, so without accompanying pain. "Today I could sense the baby for the first time."

Draco's eyes grew wide. This was something he'd wondered about from the very start, but he hadn't mentioned it for fear of giving Hermione something else to worry about. "Really? Like you can with me and Father?"

She nodded, taking his hand. "Like little lights in the back of my mind. I'd become so adapted to yours that I hardly even notice them anymore. I use them unconsciously all the time; it's quite the time-saver. But ever since I got pregnant, I tried to sense the baby and couldn't. It... it scared me, Draco. It made me feel like something bad was going to happen. That's why..."

She didn't need to say it. He knew from the way she'd asked Lucius not to set up the nursery just yet, how whenever they bought clothes and toys for the child her smile was weak, that she'd had something heavy on her mind. He'd even worried that she was having second thoughts... What a relief to know the truth.

"What's it like?" he whispered, inching closer. He rested his hand on her belly. He hadn't felt the baby kick yet, but it was a day of firsts. He didn't want to miss the chance.

"It's like... this softly glowing candlelight... kind of pulsing... It gets stronger when I'm hungry, and when I'm full and not feeling ill, it's barely there at all."

Draco bit his lip. It was the first time it'd really occurred to him that this baby was a real thing, a person just like him and his father. His child would grow up and go to Hogwarts and have relationships and get a job and maybe even have children of his or her own one day.

"Wow," he said, succinctly.

"And guess what..."

"What?" he asked, blinking rapidly. The room was quite warm, but he supposed Hermione liked it that way. Dusty, too. He sniffed.

"I know the sex." She grinned but looked uncertain.

"What!" he cried, followed quickly by, "Don't tell me!"

"I wasn't going to," she huffed, crossing her arms over her chest.

Distracted, Draco eyed her rounded breasts through her nightshirt. It'd been quite some time... "That's why I didn't want you reading the last page. I wrote it there."

"How do you know?"

"I can just... feel it. It's there, in the light. And...*the baby*," she said carefully, "is healthy. And strong, magically. I can feel all that, I swear."

"I believe you." He caressed her belly, tracing the slightly darkened line that ran below her navel. "I'm so glad." He kissed the dip of her belly button, wondering if it would turn outwards like he knew some did.

When he finally looked back up, Hermione's eyes were closed. The journal lay abandoned on the bed beside her. The baby's sex was right there. It would be the work of a moment to find out.

On the other hand... there were so few real surprises in life. This was one he wanted to savour.

He got up carefully and tucked her in, kissing her stomach once more.

"Draco?" came her sleepy voice just as he'd been about to slip out.

"Yes, love?"

"Could you ask Lucius to come see me when he gets back?"

Draco froze. "You're going to tell him the sex." It wasn't a question.

Hermione's eyes opened and she gave a small frown. "Only if he really wants to know. I just want to make sure Celeste is okay and to tell him the news."

Draco felt chagrined, but for some reason, it rankled that Hermione knew and he didn't. He didn't blame her, of course...she had no control over it. He knew ~~he~~*he*ould find out; she'd tell him if he asked. That Lucius would also know bothered him, but he knew that wouldn't spoil it for him. He smiled. "Of course. Sorry, I just..."

"I know, Draco. Oh, hey...do you think you could ask the house-elves to bring me something to eat?"

"Of course. Some toast?" She'd practically been subsisting on toast these days. Which reminded him. He placed Thello's potion on the nightstand. "Same instructions as before, all right? Now, what would you like?"

"Toast," she said predictably. "With mustard on it. Actually, one piece with mustard and one with cinnamon. And another with peanut butter. No, honey. Okay, just honey on bread, not toast. And peanut butter with a spoon. And... a pickle. Two pickles. A jar of pickles."

"O... kay." Feeling like he might have caught Hermione's morning sickness himself, he relayed the menu to the house-elves after he left, and they made the food without batting an eye.

His baby was healthy and strong. Who cared if it was half pickle?

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Even though Hermione was feeling better than she had during her entire pregnancy, she still preferred to sleep alone in her bed. Draco hated to think of her in there, by herself, with no one to curl up against the way she loved to do.

Now he knew exactly how she felt...he was in bed by himself for the first time in ages. After he'd sent Percy home, Lucius had come back from Celeste's, and after hearing a few dry anecdotes about her wellbeing, Draco had relayed the message that Hermione wanted to see him. They'd been in her room all evening, probably talking about the baby's sex and all that entailed. Draco tried to tell himself he wasn't bitter, but it smarted that it wouldn't be a surprise for all of them. He knew that he'd been forcing them to remain uninformed and maybe that hadn't been entirely fair of him, but... this was his first time becoming a parent. It was just important to him.

Now he was lying in bed waiting for his father. He wasn't accustomed to sleeping alone and hadn't been able to drop off without Lucius with him. He wished that Hermione could have been there as well, the way it was supposed to be, but he consoled himself with the knowledge that it wouldn't last forever. Hermione was more than halfway through her pregnancy...and maybe she'd even come back before it was over.

The moment Lucius walked into the room, he knew that not only did Lucius know the sex, but he'd...

*Bastard.*

"You had sex with her," he accused. Then he frowned at himself. It wasn't jealousy, not really... But why was he upset? Lucius and Hermione had had sex countless times without him.

Lucius' eyebrow twitched like it very much wanted to lift but didn't because Draco looked so very serious. "I did," he said, hiding a smile.

Draco's arms crossed over his chest. "Is that safe?" he demanded snottily.

"She's perfectly fine, if that's what you're asking." Lucius undressed with the easy calm Draco always associated with his father.

"And the baby?"

Lucius sighed. "Draco, do you honestly believe Hermione and I would do anything to harm our child?" When Draco didn't answer...a pout didn't count...he continued. "The Healer said it was perfectly safe. Hermione is in no danger of miscarrying. Sex during pregnancy is perfectly natural and healthy."

Draco pulled back the covers, stilling considering his outburst. "How was it?"

The look on his father's face was the closest it had even been to dreamy. "Lovely."

"Tell me," he demanded, suddenly realising just how much he missed sex with Hermione. It just didn't seem... right, somehow. Especially knowing she could sense the baby. Hermione had said the baby's light was almost nonexistent when it was content...what if the light shone brighter for Draco, indicating that it liked Lucius better? Oh, Merlin, what if the baby *always* hated Draco?

Sliding into the bed with the languid grace of someone who'd just had an orgasm, Lucius smiled indulgently and pulled Draco against him. "Why is my dragon roaring so?" he teased, alluding, no doubt, to the story he'd told about Draco as a baby. Draco didn't really believe that story, anyway. Not at all.

"I just want to hear about it, all right?" He pursed his lips. "Fine, don't tell me." When he made to roll over in a huff, Lucius yanked him back and before he even knew what was happening, there was a hot, firm hand on his rather surprisingly erect prick.

"What's this, then?" Lucius stroked him, bringing him much too quickly to a state of full arousal. "Seems like you'revery interested in hearing about my time with Hermione."



Draco shrugged, then gasped, then tried to push Lucius away by the shoulders but ended up just holding him. "So what?"

After a long kiss, Lucius pulled back, his hand moving steadily. "We were talking about Celeste at first, then about the baby. She asked if I wanted to know the sex. I said yes. She showed me the journal. I read much of it. Then... she invited me into her bed."

"Has that happened before?" Draco asked, breathless. He pushed his hips against his father's to test for hardness there, but Lucius hadn't recovered yet. He lay back and let himself be greedy, thrusting into Lucius' almost taunting jerks.

"No. Not like that."

"What does that mean?" Draco demanded.

"It means I've given her pleasure on multiple occasions since she became pregnant. Especially after the baby started to grow so much. It's more difficult for her and she tires easily."

"So you... finger her? Use your mouth?"

"Or both."

Draco groaned, arching into the touch. He could have done that. He'd been so caught up in his concerns about sex with her that it hadn't really occurred to him what else he could do. Poor Hermione, going so long without *any* satisfaction...or not, as evidently Lucius had taken up the slack where Draco had faltered. The thought made him a little ashamed.

Picking up on it, Lucius said, "Don't worry. She understands your concerns."

Draco stilled. "But they aren't your concerns?"

"You forget, I've been through this before. Women might seem fragile in this state, but I promise they are stronger than you or I could imagine."

The words brought up the knowledge that Lucius had...obviously...had sex with *his mother*. That was awkward. "Tell me how you fucked Hermione," he asked to get that mental image of Lucius and his mother from his mind.

"I didn't *fuck* her," Lucius retorted, squeezing a little harshly in time with the raw word. "We made love. She was on top. She was beautiful. Her head was thrown back, her chest and neck red with that flush she gets whenever she knows we're looking at her... her legs tight at my sides as she moved over my cock..."

Draco flung one of his legs over Lucius' hips, squirming closer and thrusting more urgently into the tight grip. Lucius' voice poured over him, searing him like steel as he imagined how Hermione must have looked. "Did you bring her off?"

"Twice," Lucius said with a smirk. "The first time only a moment after she sank down onto me. Again toward the end. She's beautiful, as you know, in release. I had to see it again."

"What else?" Draco was so close. He wanted to come, he was desperate to...

"When she came the second time, she was exhausted. She made this weak little cry, the most amazing sound. Her wet pussy clamped down all around me and I tried not to shout as I climaxed..."

Draco wasn't so thoughtful...he shouted with all his worth as Lucius' hand twisted just so over the crown of his cock. In his mind's eye, Lucius helped Hermione off him, lying her down beside him and stroking the dampened hair from her forehead. In reality, Lucius did much the same with him, turning him onto his back and kissing him as light fingers caressed his cheek.

"No more roaring from you, little dragon," Lucius said softly, pulling the dishevelled blanket back over them.

Draco rolled his eyes and buried his smile in the pillow. He wondered if his child would roar, too.

Author's Note: All my love to my betas, Krystle Lynne and my anonymous friend!

## Chapter 11

*Chapter 11 of 12*

Sequel to Some Things Change.

A year after the triad marries, they find life together is not exactly simple. Things are still changing--but is it for the better? Draco's feelings for his father are intensifying, and what Lucius wants is complicated, too. How will they make it together without falling apart?

"Oof!" Hermione grunted, a hand on her very round belly. "Damn."

"What is it?" Draco asked, at her side in a moment. He put his hand over hers and then below it, feeling the tight skin ripple. "Is it time?"

From his vantage point on the sitting room sofa, Lucius arched an eyebrow over the morning edition of the financial section. "She still has a few weeks, Draco. Don't give the baby any ideas."

Lucius and Hermione had been very careful about keeping the baby's sex a secret, and Draco knew it was killing them. Part of him wanted to give in and let them tell him, but he'd come this far. He didn't want to ruin it for himself.

"Just a hard kick," Hermione said with a patient smile. She carded her fingers through Draco's hair in a way that made his heart swell. Instead of returning to his own armchair, he continued to kneel with his cheek pressed against her swollen abdomen.

Moments like these, when the three of them had the time, inclination, and wherewithal to take a moment's respite and enjoy some time together, were rather rare these days. Once the baby came, Draco knew they would be even more so, so he planned on relishing it while he could.

They all turned their heads when Percy poked his head in through the door and announced that there was a certain stubborn Mr. Mackison on the telephone, who refused to speak to anyone but Draco.

With a sigh, his reprieve broken much too quickly, Draco rose to take the call.

Mackison was a werewolf who Draco'd sent to Thello for the Wolfsbane. Werewolves with a lot of money were rare due to that fact that finding employment was so problematic, but Mackison was all old money and new ideas and was a very important client.

At the end of the conversation that dealt with how Mackison wanted his generous donation allotted, he commented on how the Ministry had just passed a law that permitted willing donations of blood to vampires. Draco'd heard about the motion when it'd still been in the stages of drafting; he was surprised to hear it had actually gone through. Mackison informed him that the Ministry not only supported people consensually giving blood specifically for the purpose of nourishing vampires, but the donations and consequent feedings would take place in the Ministry, once a week.

After Draco got off the phone and then repeated the news to Lucius and Hermione, Lucius said, "And that is what we like to call precedent."

Hermione was squirming in her seat. "It wouldn't be a far cry at all to demand that the Ministry provide the same essential service to werewolves!"

Draco frowned. "But the Ministry isn't *paying* for the blood... They're just providing a location for the transfer to take place, really," Draco reasoned, seeing that glint in Hermione's eyes. She'd found a new *purpose*.

"No, it's more than that," Hermione said. She tried to lean forward in earnest, but ended up huffing and sitting back, glaring at her belly before rubbing it apologetically. "They made legal the thing that keeps vampires from becoming monsters, from potentially killing people in their hunger. The law *against* willingly giving blood was barbaric in the first place. The Ministry is finally changing for the better, realising that magical creatures and beings need support, too!"

"Or maybe perhaps that they have the ability to vote in upcoming elections," Lucius said wryly.

Draco looked between his father and Hermione, anticipating what she'd say next.

"No matter!" Hermione cried, a smile breaking out on her face. "We'll use that. The Ministry can't do something like that for vampires and not werewolves...there would be an uproar. And Wolfsbane is legal already, so the only thing the Ministry *can* do is pay for it. My god, think of it...Ministry-sanctioned Wolfsbane. If we play our cards right, Michael and Thello could get funding to become the main or even the only supplier of Wolfsbane in the country!"

Seeing that Hermione was working herself up into something potentially labour-inducing, Draco called Percy into the room. With Percy there to take notes, make suggestions, and claim contacts, Hermione didn't have to do anything more than make excited exclamations.

Percy had just proved his worth. Draco decided a raise was in order.

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It didn't take long at all for the Ministry to kowtow to their proposal; not with Percy Weasley, former Ministry sycophant and knower of altogether too many secrets, Draco Malfoy, fervent and relentless Slytherin, Hermione Granger, brightest witch of her age and dangerously pregnant, and Lucius Malfoy, serpent-tongued smooth talker, all working together.

Two days before Hermione went into labour, the Ministry of Magic accepted the proposal to pay for the Wolfsbane potion (so long as it was brewed to Ministry standards by none other than Thello and his newly appointed team of apprentices), asking in return only that werewolves sign in when they take the Wolfsbane. The Ministry insisted this was because they needed to know, should anything unfortunate happen, whether the werewolf in question was of sound mind or not, but Hermione, Draco, and Lucius all knew it was just a way of keeping tabs on the creatures against which the discrimination wasn't even close to ending. Still, it was a start.

"Feels good to actually get something done," Hermione said once they'd returned from their final meeting at the Ministry. Removing her cloak, she pressed her hands into her back and groaned.

Draco had to agree, though he knew Outreach was important and did good work; it was nice to see real, substantial and tangible change. He suspected the Ministry had rushed the decision due to Hermione's state, not that he'd dare suggest such a thing. She was close enough to her due date to make people nervous around her, and that anxious energy had been sweltering in the Ministry conference room. Men in austere black robes casting sidelong stares at her belly as if the baby would jump right out and onto the table... Lucius had finally got fed up with the way people were treating Hermione, and his understated pressure had pushed the committee in the right direction just in time to get Hermione home for her banana and cereal sandwich.

"You already do too much," Lucius said, but it wasn't an admonishment; he sounded proud. He placed his hand on her lower back as he guided her up the stairs to their bedroom.

"It's just enough if it makes the lives of a few people that much easier." Hermione held her hand out for Draco, which he took, lacing their fingers together.

A *few people* was a massive understatement. The amount of werewolves who couldn't afford the Wolfsbane had been overwhelming. Now, with the payment coming from Ministry coffers, hundreds, if not thousands of werewolves would never have to suffer through the uncertainty, the pain, and the powerlessness that came with a transformation without the potion.

Just as Draco had always known would happen, Hermione had changed the world.

The three were now lying on their massive, shared bed. Hermione had taken to sleeping with them again in the last few weeks, and Draco couldn't be more grateful. The very idea that she could go into labour without him being there...

Draco, facing Hermione, caressed her belly. He never would have believed she'd be able to get so big. Every now and then he'd give a soft push, and the baby would push back, making him smile. He couldn't wait to meet his child.

Draco's breath caught as a flare of magic from Hermione...from the *baby*...rolled over him. It was like stepping from a shadow into the warm sun, all over his body and even inside his mind. The magic continued to throb and swell, pouring out with an identity of its own, a personality so clear, so strong that Draco couldn't believe he hadn't felt it before.

"It's a boy," he breathed, eyes wide. He looked up at Hermione to see her beaming at him, and Lucius sitting up behind her, looking almost as shocked as Draco felt.

"Yes," Hermione whispered, her hand on Draco's cheek. "You could feel him?"

"He is so strong," Lucius said, awed. "He will be formidable."

"Now you know what I've been feeling for months now." Hermione chuckled and tucked her hand under her cheek on the pillow. "He's been constantly barraging me with his magic."

"I've never felt it before," Draco said.

"No, it's never been so..." She paused, seeming to search for words. "External. I can usually feel it in my heart, in my mind, even if my blood. Little surges of power that let me know what he wants or needs, what he likes or doesn't."

Suddenly apprehensive, Draco said, "Does he like me?"

Hermione laughed but seemed to realise he was serious and stopped. "He loves you, Draco. And he loves you, Lucius," she adding, looking over her shoulder at Lucius. "His love is so strong and so... endless."

"I can't wait to meet you... Son." Draco didn't bother hiding the wetness in his eyes. He glanced at his own father, who looked so unbearably proud that Draco had to look away.

"He can't wait to meet you, either," Hermione whispered, a secret smile on her lips.

Draco swallowed. "You can... tell that?"

"It's more of a feeling. He's almost ready."

"Tell him we think it's time as well," Lucius said, his long, slender fingers joining Draco's and Hermione's on her belly.

Another pulse of magic washed over them; it felt contented.

Draco couldn't wait.

\*

It was three o'clock in the morning two days later when Draco was brought from sleep by a small, *Oh*.

"Wha...?" he said sleepily, blinking the tiredness away as he tried to place the sound.

"Draco, are you awake?"

Turning toward Hermione's tight voice, Draco said, "Yeah. Yes. Are you okay?"

"My water just broke."

Draco's heart stopped...but that simply wasn't acceptable, so he mentally berated it into starting again. He was about to meet his son! Nothing, not even death, would stop that.

"Are you... do you need... should we..." Draco took a deep breath. "I'll wake my father."

Draco reached behind himself and shook Lucius awake so hard that on any other occasion he would have been afraid of the consequences.

Lucius woke up with more grace than Draco did. "Hermione?" he asked, alert and wandlessly lighting the room.

"Her water broke," Draco said. "We have to go."

"Draco, just because..." But Hermione's words broke off into a moan.

"What? What's happening?" Draco was frozen; he needed to know what *todo*.

"Draco, relax. Go get Hermione's overnight bag and put it by the Floo. Get the house-elves to pack food...we're not eating that hospital dreck. There is still plenty of time before we actually need to go in."

Plenty of time turned out to be four hours. The baby let Hermione know when it was time, though her contractions were five minutes apart by the time the wave of magic told them their son was almost ready.

Hermione was the picture of stoical calm. She and Lucius breathed together; he wiped the dampness from her forehead and soothed her, and she reassured him with comments on how the baby was doing.

Draco knew he wasn't being any help; he knew Lucius was sending him from the room with busywork so he would stay out of the way, but he couldn't seem to calm down, couldn't seem to get a hold of himself. This was his baby, his child, his son! He wasn't *ready*. There was still so much to do. The nursery was set up but Draco suddenly hated the sage green walls and cherry wood furniture. Hermione's bag was packed as it had been for weeks, but he switched out the clothes...they'd be wrinkled and maybe even smelly from being packed away in her questionable luggage.

Finally, after a few moments trying to get himself together in the nursery, Draco returned to the bedroom where Hermione was on her hands and knees on the bed with Lucius rubbing and pressing her lower back.

He was about to demand, for the eighth time, that they get to St. Mungo's already, when a burst of calm stole over him, settling like a hat over his head and spreading throughout his body like spring water. His son's magic. He realised, just as if the baby himself had told him, that everything was okay.

He told Hermione and Lucius as much, but they only seemed amused, though Hermione's smile was a little strained.

"Time to go," Lucius said finally. Despite the sense of calm the baby was lending Draco, he was ready and anxious to get her to a hospital where people knew what they were doing.

"Can you walk? Should she walk?" Draco looked between Hermione and his father, unable to hide the panic he knew was written across his face.

"I might kill him," Hermione said through her teeth, letting Lucius manoeuvre her out of the bed.

"Draco, help or shut up."

It was the first time Draco'd ever heard his father use that particular expression, and it sobered him enough to make him realise that he really was able to offer assistance.

Together, Lucius and Draco guided Hermione down the long hallway, stopping occasionally to wait out contractions. Her belly was tight and hard, and Draco found he didn't like touching it as much as he used to.

The stairs were tricky, but finally they were in front of the Floo. "I'm going through with her," Lucius said, his voice stern, making Draco instinctively straighten and take note. "You're going to follow with the bag and the food."

Draco pressed a kiss to Hermione's lips, ignoring the sweat. She didn't return it, but squeezed his hand. He kissed his father as well, and Lucius seemed to try to send his

calmness to Draco through the touch.

He nodded, letting Lucius know he was all right, that he could handle the instructions. A knot formed in his stomach as they disappeared from his sight. He'd been just about to follow them through when he realised he had to tell everyone. He couldn't count on the hospital Floo to get the missives across; he had to do it himself. He scrounged up a few leafs of paper, wrote the news, and sent them to the Burrow and to Michael and Thello. He hoped that only Harry and his wife would show up, but he was prepared to face the fact that their hospital room was likely to be an ocean of feckless freckled folk.

Grabbing up Hermione's bag and the package of food, Draco called his location and stepped through the Floo.

St. Mungo's was, as always, bustling to the point of absurdity. He scanned the crowd for his father's telltale hair and finally spotted it just as it turned a corner. Draco hustled after it, catching up to them and grabbing his father's hand.

Lucius turned and gave him a tight smile. Hermione was seated in a wheelchair being pushed by a mediwizard, who steered her into a semiprivate room and helped her onto the bed.

"Is everything all right?" Draco asked, feeling breathless.

"We just have some concerns about the baby's heart rate," the mediwizard said brightly as if nothing at all was amiss.

"What do you mean?" Draco looked to Hermione. "Is something wrong?"

She only shook her head. "I don't know... everything's so... confusing for him."

"I'll be back in moment with the Healer," said the mediwizard, who'd cast a strange look at Hermione for her comment, unaware that she could sense the baby.

Draco tried to see if he could feel the baby, wanting more of that calming sensation, or just anything to tell him his son was all right.

Lucius and Draco both stood by Hermione. Draco knew he had to remain calm, that Hermione needed him to be a rock. He had to be strong for her and not let his fear and nervousness take over. It was difficult...impossible, really.

"He'll be fine," Lucius said, a reassuring hand on her belly. His cool voice relaxed them both.

"All right, what do we have here?" The Healer strode into the room, wand at the ready, flanked by two mediwitches.

"That mediwizard said the heart rate was a concern," Lucius said, his tone simultaneously dismissing the comment and demanding that the Healer do something about it.

"Let's just have a look..." The Healer cast a complicated spell, and a projection of Hermione's insides appeared in the air above her belly.

If Draco hadn't already known the sex, he would have now. The child's tiny penis was clearly visible in its slightly stretched position.

"Oh, my," Lucius said, the closest he'd come to affected since Draco had woken him.

"Holy shit," Draco said less eloquently but more succinctly. "My son."

"You're the father, then?" the Healer asked, frowning at the image and shooting a glance to Draco.

Draco wanted to strangle him for daring to frown at his child. "We both are."

The Healer looked over, seeming to take in Draco's comment. He nodded after a moment but said, "Well, unfortunately, we have a bit of a problem. The umbilical cord is wrapped around the child's neck. It doesn't appear to be causing him distress right now, but it will significantly impede birth."

"But you can do a c-section or something, right? He'll be okay?" Hermione's voice was strained and she had tears on her cheeks.

Draco wiped them away as he awaited the Healer's response. He wouldn't let *anything* happen to his family. He saw his father had the same determination.

To Draco's relief, the Healer smiled. "I'd forgotten you're a Muggle-born." Evidently the Healer knew who they were; but who didn't those days? Before any of them could snarl at him, he quickly added, "We have a more advanced method of extracting the baby. It's sort of a focused Apparition but much less disconcerting. In any case, we spell the baby asleep so he won't be disturbed by it. The baby comes out, everything is fine."

"Then why wouldn't every witch do it that way?" Hermione demanded, her hands resting protectively over her stomach.

"There is some risk of... Splinching," the Healer replied soberly.

"What!" Draco shouted, then lowered his voice at Hermione's flinch. "Sorry, love." To the Healer, he growled, "You might Splinch our child?"

"Like I said, the infant is in some danger if things progress. We can wait to see if he turns enough to unwrap himself, but with that comes the danger that it might get worse."

Everyone turned to look at Hermione, whose eyes were closed and face focused. Draco knew she was communicating with the baby as best she could through the light it gave off inside her head.

"We'll do the Apparition," Hermione said, then promptly burst into tears. She was then wracked by another intense contraction. Lucius comforted her.

"That would be my recommendation," the Healer said. He nodded to his minions and they approached the bed.

"What are you doing?" Draco asked of them, guarding his wife.

"We need to move her to a sterile environment for the procedure," said one of the mediwitches, looking nervous.

He glanced back to see Hermione nod at him and give him a weak, wet smile. He moved aside, glaring at them as if they'd caused his child to be in danger. They helped Hermione back onto the wheelchair and took her from the room...she whimpered and cast a look over her shoulder, and Lucius and Draco both began to follow.

The Healer raised his hands. "I'm sorry. Only the father may accompany her."

"You have *got* to be kidding me," Draco snarled, beginning to lift his hand to cast a nasty hex.

The Healer was unmoved, and Lucius grabbed Draco's hand to steady him.

"I'm sorry; those are the rules."

"Change them!" Draco shouted, frustrated and afraid. He hated the tears on his cheeks but a part of him hoped the Healer would take pity on his pathetic form.

The Healer only shook his head. "A mediwitch will be back shortly to bring you in." He left the room.

Draco turned to his father, mouth open and eyes wide. He shook his head in denial. Lucius reached out and pulled him hard into his embrace.

"Father, no, I can't... She needs you, not me. I'm horrible at this, and it isn't fair." He sobbed into Lucius' robes, clutching at his chest like he was seven years old again.

"It has to be you, Draco. She needs you...our baby needs you. I know you can do this. Don't let me down."

"I want you there," he whispered brokenly. "For our son, to see him born."

"I'll be right outside the door every moment," Lucius said, his voice low and rough. "Draco, I love you."

Draco forced himself, again, to calm. Taking comfort in Lucius' solidity, he breathed and straightened. "You *are* his father."

"I know that. The baby will know that. And when Hermione's recovered, we'll make sure the entire world knows it. We'll change the law. Make things better."

"No one will ever act like I'm more of a father than you to our son," Draco said, nodding. They could do it, too. They'd changed the world before.

"Go," Lucius urged, and with a final, desperate kiss, Draco left with the mediwitch who'd been waiting. Draco found he didn't even care if their kiss made it to the front page of the *Daily Prophet*.

He forced himself not to look back at Lucius, alone in the room. It was so fucking unfair. Who could decide who was a parent and who wasn't? Draco might be the biological father, but Lucius had blood in common with his son as well, and he would be doing the same amount of work as Draco would be. He certainly had more experience being a parent. And he was Hermione's *husband*! How could that count for nothing?

Deciding it was a battle for another day...this day, his son was being born...Draco let the mediwitch cast spells to make sure he wasn't bringing in any outside contaminants. When he approached Hermione's hospital bed, he saw she was drawn and pale, but there was still a look of such hope in her eyes that he couldn't help but be pulled into them.

"Where's Lucius?" she asked, her brown eyes wide and worried.

"He... they..."

"They wouldn't let him in," she answered for him. Rage, brief but fierce, flashed across her face before she settled. Draco could feel the baby's magic warming him, so he knew it was doing the same for her, calming her.

"We're ready," the Healer said. A bassinette was waiting to the side of the bed, manned by a competent looking mediwitch.

"How long will it take?" Hermione asked. Her sweaty hand reached out to grip Draco's, and he squeezed it reassuringly, feeling an answering magical caress from the baby.

"It's the work of a moment," the Healer assured them.

"And if you Splinch my son?"

"Draco," Hermione said, her tone admonishing. "He won't."

Draco gave the Healer a look that said, 'Don't make my wife a liar,' and the Healer showed his first sign of being cowed by Draco's anger. He gave a brief nod and told Hermione to relax, to clear her mind as much as possible, think of nothing.

Draco could see Hermione was in significant pain, but her features smoothed out nonetheless. A tear trickled down her temple into the mass of frizzy brown curls. Draco held his breath.

There was a whispered spell and then a great commotion. Hermione gasped and tried to move, but she was held down by a mediwitch who said, "The sensation will fade. It's just from being so suddenly empty; we've removed the placenta as well."

Draco tried to see his son, tried to understand if the swarm of people around the bassinette was a good thing or a bad thing, but he couldn't hear anything but a buzz of voices until...

A cry.

A strong, strident wail from lungs as powerful as the baby's magic.

Draco let out a sharp exhale, his knees threatening to buckle. Hermione cried into her hands before wiping away the tears and saying, "Is he okay? Is everything all right with him?"

"He's fine," the Healer said quickly, looking relieved, himself. "There was no Splinching whatsoever."

"Give him to me," Hermione demanded, her voice thick with tears.

"We just have to perform the diagnostic spells..."

"Perform them while he's in my arms, then!"

Draco took a step forward, knowing he was menacing the Healer and not caring. With satisfying haste, the Healer placed their son in Hermione's arms.

"Oh, he's so perfect," Hermione said, breath hitching on a sob.

Draco finally got a look at his son. His wife was right: he was absolutely perfect.

"I want my other husband in here," Hermione declared. She looked up to make sure her demand was heard and looked pleased when one of the mediwitches left.

The baby was still squalling, but it was so easy to look past it when everything else was so beautiful. Perfect, tiny fingers clenching around his, stronger than a baby should be. At first Draco thought the baby was bald, but when he got closer he saw there was a shock of white-blond hair, so fine it was almost invisible. The baby's eyes were closed, but they had the shape of Hermione's. Her heart-shaped face, as well, with none of Draco's rather sharp features. A perfect Cupid's-bow mouth, opening and closing with his wails. Tiny toes. A very red face.

Lucius' arms came up around him from behind, holding him tight against his broader body. "Our son," he whispered, kissing Draco's ear.

Draco moved aside and let Lucius closer. Lucius leant in and kissed the baby on his chubby cheek, and they all smiled when he quieted down a little.

"I think we know who the calming influence will be," Hermione said. She sounded tired and strained but the pride was obvious.

"Excuse me," the Healer said, stepping in and doing the tests. They all watched, awaiting the result with anxiety heavy between them.

After a moment, the Healer said, "Everything is fine. Perfectly healthy."

Draco smiled arrogantly. "Of course he's perfect." It was obvious to anyone who looked.

One of the mediwitches said, "You have a number of guests waiting to hear the news."

Hermione looked confused. "How did they know?"

"I told everyone just before I got here," Draco said. "I knew you'd want them here."

When Hermione's smile turned watery, Lucius offered to take their son. Hermione took a deep breath and handed him over. Draco was able to see him even closer now, and he saw the white eyelashes and rounded little nose. Gods, he was so in love.

"Shall we introduce him to the world?" Lucius asked.

"Yes," Hermione said. The Healer saw she meant to get up and urged her to lay back while he performed both healing and diagnostic spells on her. She looked a little less pained when he was finished. Draco helped her onto the wheelchair very slowly and pushed her into the room they'd first been taken to, with Lucius following close behind.

Inside the room, as Draco had feared but was secretly glad of, were Weasleys galore. Thello and Michael stood to one side, looking a little overwhelmed. Michael was obviously excited and Thello hid his emotions but couldn't help the way his eyes brightened when they entered the room.

Arthur and Molly Weasley were at the forefront, and they rushed Hermione. Harry and Ginny were holding hands and Harry's lower lip looked bitten through. George Weasley was standing with Percy, who looked awkward but proud, as if he'd had a hand in things. Bill Weasley and his veela wife were there. There was only one Weasley missing...the dragon wrangler.

And standing in the far corner was Hermione's former love and best friend. Ronald Weasley was twisting his hands together, his eyes darting between Hermione and the baby and back. Draco watched Hermione give him a brilliant smile, and he calmed, smiling back nervously.

"Everyone," Lucius said, bringing the baby into everyone's sight. "May I present our son, Altais Harold Granger Malfoy."

Draco grinned at Harry, who gave into his obvious urge and let his tears go.

As everyone crowded around the baby, exclaiming over him and his name, Altais opened his perfect little mouth...

...And *roared*.

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\* *Altais* is a star near *Draco*, and it is a corruption of an Arabic word that means serpent...though it might be wishful thinking that a son of Hermione Granger ends up in Slytherin. :D

This is the second-last chapter, folks. I know some people were hoping for more time with the baby, but the main points of the story, the incest angle, the furtherment of Outreach, and Lucius quitting his job, have all been addressed. If there's anything you would absolutely love/need to see in the epilogue, let me know. It promises to be quite long.

Be sure to check out my new (though I wrote it many months ago, so forgive the adverb abuse...I've moved past that, I swear) Harry/Hermione fic. And don't forget that once the epilogue for this is posted, my Snape/Hermione chaptered fic will begin!

Huge thanks to Krystle Lynne and my anonymous friend for the amazing beta work. :D

## Chapter 12 - Epilogue

*Chapter 12 of 12*

Sequel to Some Things Change.

A year after the triad marries, they find life together is not exactly simple. Things are still changing--but is it for the better? Draco's feelings for his father are intensifying, and what Lucius wants is complicated, too. How will they make it together without falling apart?

### Epilogue

Draco grabbed a chubby wrist in each hand and gave a meaningful stare to Altais, who followed as Draco walked the twins to their bedroom for the third time that night.

Altais stood in the doorway and watched until Draco beckoned him within. He approached with small footsteps, knowing his father was at the end of his already-short rope.

"Hold Carina," Draco said, and then sighed and added, "Please," because the last thing he needed was for Altais to revert to his greedy phase after they'd just gotten him out of his habit of making imperious demands.

The wriggling two-year-old didn't like being held by her older brother, but with a quelling look from Draco, she settled. He heard her giggle when he turned his back and wondered when he'd lost all his power over his children. There'd been a time...a very, very brief time, granted...when they'd looked up at him with wide, adoring eyes. He could have told them anything and they'd just accept his word as law. Now it was all, *why, how, when, why should I, why doesn't he have to, where's Mummy, I want Father...* and Draco could hardly stand it.

Orin, thankfully, allowed himself to be wrangled into his crib. His dark brown eyes were wide and almost accusing as he looked up at his father with trembling lips.

"No, no, no," Draco cooed, determined to get them to sleep. He just *knew* Hermione and Lucius were starting without him...and he couldn't even blame them. It was the first

night Draco or Hermione hadn't been working late, the first night Lucius had been able to get away from the bookkeeping, the first night Percy or Harry or Michael and Thello hadn't been around to give a hand with Outreach.

Orin's chin was wobbling and Draco closed his eyes. He could almost, almost picture the vacation house on the island in the Caribbean where they'd brought Hermione what felt like decades before. He could almost picture the shoddy motel in Canada where they'd taken Hermione down the path and proposed.

With a wail from Carina, however, he was back in Wiltshire, with puke on his dressing gown, spit from gummy mouths in his hair, and something sticky he definitely ~~didn't~~ want to know about all over his arm.

"Thank you, Altais," Draco whispered, taking Carina from his capable, if only five-year-old, hands. "Just wait for Daddy, all right?"

Altais gave a sombre nod and sank to his bum on the pile carpet, waiting patiently as Draco put down the twins. Carina was more difficult...by the time he'd gotten her to stay on her back for longer than a few seconds, Orin was out cold.

Draco hummed a tune to their favourite Beedle the Bard song, and Carina jerked her legs along to the sound for a few moments before she finally closed her eyes. Draco waited for the inevitable false-start to end, and when it did, he calmed her back down and left when he was sure they were both down for the night...or at least a few hours.

He left the room with Altais on his heels, casting the monitoring spell. He almost hoped the twins did awaken because the spell would sound in Draco's bedroom, which was occupied by his husband and wife at the moment. Then he felt bad...it was his turn, after all. Hermione had put them down first, and then Lucius when the crying hadn't stopped. Lucius had taken them from their cribs, ignoring Hermione's exasperated eye-rolling, and rocked them in the sitting room before the fire. That had been all well and good until Lucius had asked Draco to take them to their beds. They'd woken immediately, of course.

"Babies are so noisy," Altais said, patting down his white-blond hair from where Carina's hands had mussed it. "Aren't you glad I'm not like that?"

Draco was too tired to point out that Altais was just as loud during his tantrums. "They won't always be like that," he reasoned, trying not to make it sound too much like a desperate plea.

Altais made a disbelieving noise as he led Draco to his own bedroom. When Hermione had become pregnant with the twins, they'd moved Altais to a larger room so the infants could have the nursery. The room was huge for a child his age. It had been Draco's, though.

Altais climbed into his bed and got under the covers, raising his eyebrows...he hated that he couldn't raise only one like his daddies, but he wouldn't stop trying...until Draco tucked him in tightly. "Hands up," Draco said, and he tucked the sheets under his armpits. "Down." Altais' hands hit the sheets with a thud.

"Daddy?" Altais asked, grabbing for Draco's hand and playing with the Malfoy signet ring. "I have two daddies."

"I know that, love," Draco said. He stroked the fluffy hair off the boy's smooth forehead.

Altais' wide grey eyes fixed on Draco's. "Does that mean that when I'm older, I'll be a daddy, too?"

"If you want to be."

"With you?"

Draco frowned. "What do you mean?" Altais was too young *for the talk*, but he was highly observant and his mind worked in rapid and complicated ways. Only Hermione was really ever able to guess where he was going when he got started with the questions...and only she was ever able to answer them to his satisfaction.

"You're Father's son." Just this past year, Altais had begun calling Lucius 'Father', though Draco was still 'Daddy'.

"Yes, that's right," Draco said slowly, hoping the conversation wouldn't get any more complicated.

"And I'm *your* son." Altais held eye contact, looking at Draco as if he should be able to figure the rest out himself.

"Yes, but it's different between me and your father. It won't be like that with you and me. You'll find a nice witch to be a daddy with." Draco frowned...that didn't really sound right to him, but he was so bloody exhausted.

"Or wizard."

Draco laughed despite himself. How to even begin to explain...? Deciding to leave it for Hermione, he nodded. "Or wizard."

Altais nodded, satisfied. "Or both!"

"Go to sleep, you monkey!" Draco cried, laughing. He leaned over and nuzzled Altais soft cheek, blowing a raspberry as his son squirmed and tried to escape from the mummifying sheets.

"Okay," Altais said, smiling sweetly. "It's my birthday soon," he whispered.

"It *is*?" Draco asked, affecting an aghast expression. But Altais didn't fall for it, only smacked at his chest.

"Don't forget." Altais gave a stern frown, but it faltered when his eyes fluttered closed. He yawned, his mouth a perfect replica of Hermione's as it smacked shut. "Night, Daddy."

"Night, baby." Draco kissed him and re-tucked the sheets. He stood by the door for a few long moments, until he was certain his son was asleep. He turned the lights off and left.

\*

"Orin, leave your sister alone!" Lucius called, shaking his head. Beside him, Draco chuckled, but Hermione's hands were wringing together.

"I can't believe Harry got them brooms," she muttered, her eyes not straying from her children for a moment.

"Of course you can." Draco took one of her hands, smoothing it out and petting it. "He did get Altais one when he was their age, after all."

"Yeah, but I thought... because he's so protective with Lily..."

"That he wouldn't give Carina a broom?" Lucius supplied, an eyebrow lifted. "But, Hermione, you aren't saying she should be treated differently because she's female, are you?"

Hermione huffed. "Of course not. I just... I don't like it, okay? I think they are too young..."

"Father!" Carina shouted, her safety-broom hovering over to where her parents were seated on their picnic blanket. "Look how fast!"

Lucius smiled and gave her a nod. She wasn't truly going very fast at all, but it was enough to even unsettle his stomach. Orin was satisfied just puttering around the ward

limits, slowly but surely as was his wont. Carina was the daredevil.

"Slow it down, Carina," Lucius warned when she came a little close to the fountain. "And come get something to eat."

"I'm not hungry!"

"Carina." Just the one, simple word from her father...a word she would have ignored had it been uttered by her mum or her daddy...had the seven-year-old dismounting and hurrying over to where they were all seated.

"How come Orin isn't eating?" she whined, accepting a plate from Hermione and glaring at it before scarfing down the cold chicken and salad.

"Orin ate before he started flying, like we told you to do," Hermione said with a frown. But Carina graced her with a winning, if chicken-filled, smile, and her parents all melted in turn. With blonde hair just like her older brother, but with Lucius' dark grey eyes rather than Altai's pale ones that were more like Draco's, Carina was stunning...moreso every year, which made her fathers, especially, nervous about letting her out of their sights once she started Hogwarts. Her hair curled, but not wildly like Hermione's. It had taken a few years to see if Carina'd inherited anything from her mother, but she had a kindness that was all Hermione. It thrilled and scared Lucius to see it form...cunning, he could deal with. Altai's writing home and asking for certain books that no eleven-year-old should read...that, Lucius could cope with. Even Orin, 'borrowing' the wands that Lucius, Hermione, and Draco kept in their top bureau drawer, Lucius knew how to react to.

But Carina coming home with sick animals, or friends from school, or even broken robin's eggshells that made her sad... Lucius didn't quite know what to do with Carina. Still, she was his princess, and everyone knew it.

"I'm full," she said a few moments later, leaning back and pushing out her normally flat stomach with a groan. "No more."

"You barely ate," Hermione admonished, one eye on Orin.

"Have a few more bites, love," Draco cajoled.

Carina shook her head with stubbornness thrice inherited.

"Carina," Lucius said, meeting grey eyes that mirrored his own. With a heavy sigh, their daughter picked her plate back up and finished the salad and the rest of her chicken.

"When I go to Hogwarts," Carina said importantly, "I'm going to eat *or not* eat whatever I want!"

Draco laughed and rolled his eyes. Hermione nodded, distracted...Orin was getting awfully close to the fountain...but Lucius narrowed his eyes. "If you don't eat what's good for you, we will find out. And then we will bring you right back home."

Carina gave a dramatic gasp before realising Lucius wasn't serious. She launched herself at him in retribution, blonde curls flying, and Lucius caught her easily, letting her wrestle with him.

"You'll bring me home just because you miss me!" she shrieked, laughing and kicking out when Hermione slipped off a white patent leather shoe and tickled her foot. "Mummy, nooooo!" Carina couldn't struggle for her laughter, so she appealed to Draco. "Daddy, help me!"

Draco reached over and grabbed Hermione, pinning her as Lucius had Carina pinned. "What shall we do with our victims, Father?" Draco asked, an evil grin on his face.

"Tickle fight!" Orin screamed, landing hard as he tried to get off his broom. Three sets of lungs held air as he fell on his bum, but he got up and jumped onto the pile, his fingers digging into Hermione's sides as she wailed with laughter, held down by Draco.

A familiar look passed between Lucius and Carina as they decided to join forces. Hermione was utterly helpless against the onslaught of Malfoys...it was four against one. She never stood a chance.

\*

"...And Altai isn't making it any easier for me, Mum! He's kissing *boys* now!"

Hermione's eyes widened. She hoped Orin couldn't see her shock through the Floo. Behind her, sitting on the sofa, Draco and Lucius both went impossibly still. They'd both given up on trying to talk Orin out of his melodramatic breakdown...the second that week...knowing that Hermione could deal with him best. Still, this was certainly news.

"Where did you hear that?" Hermione asked, trying to keep her voice low and gentle.

"I *saw* it!" Orin buried his face in his hands. "It's bad enough with Dad and Father and everyone knowing everything about us, but with him acting like it's okay..."

"It *is* okay, Orin," Hermione said. She was gentle but stern. Orin was having a hard time at Hogwarts and had been ever since the truth of Lucius and Draco's relationship had come out in his first year. It had been hellish for all of them, but now, three years later, it was hardly spoken of at all. "And it's okay if Altai wants to kiss boys..."

"...Though he needs to learn some discretion," Lucius said under his breath. Draco snorted.

"And it's okay if you're uncomfortable with it, but you have to know he's not doing it to hurt you."

"I know, Mum," Orin said. Hermione saw him sit more comfortably, pulling his knees up to his chest and resting his chin on one. "I just wish all our business wasn't so... out there."

"I know. I wish that, too." Hermione sighed. Having Altai at Hogwarts still was a mixed blessing. He was becoming more explorative, and Hermione worried about him, but he also protected his younger siblings...not that Carina needed it. She was the most popular girl in her year, and she and Altai were in Slytherin together. Hermione knew Orin felt left out, being the only Gryffindor, but there were certainly enough Weasleys and Potters to keep him company.

"Can I come home?" Orin asked in a small voice. He tugged on the dark strands of his messy hair, and his brown eyes were earnest through the flames.

"It's almost the Christmas hols," she said, trying to placate him. She could sense this newest emergency was more dire than most, but she couldn't just pull him from school. He'd regret it, and she'd never hear the end from her husbands. Still, she hated to see her son in pain. "Tell you what. Your first day back, you and I will spend the day together. I know! Why don't we redecorate your room? I know you've been wanting to, and there's more than time enough..."

Orin sniffed and Hermione gave him a soft smile. A moment later, he grinned, wide and white...just like Draco's, and Lucius', when such a smile could be coaxed from him. "That'd be really great, Mum."

"I look forward to it, then. It's a date."

"Mum!" Orin said, looking behind him to see if his embarrassment would carry beyond himself. But when he turned back to the flames, he had a sweet, grateful smile on his lips. "Thank you."

Hermione waved him off, sniffing, and he laughed at her tearful gesture. "Love you," he said, beginning to get up.



"Love you, too, Orin," she said, and the sentiment was echoed by Draco and Lucius, who knelt on either side of her to say their goodbyes.

"And tell Altai to stop being such a slag!" Orin added quickly before the flames died, a wicked grin flashing before fading back into the hearth.

"So... kissing boys, now." Draco seemed to be aiming for unsurprised nonchalance, but Hermione could hear concern in his voice.

"He's always been really... experimental," Hermione offered. She didn't mind that her son was kissing boys, if he even was...it was just a difficult path. She hoped he would come to them if he needed to.

"He will be fine," Lucius said, his confidence in their oldest son never wavering. "We should get you two to bed. You've a long day ahead of you tomorrow."

Hermione groaned at the reminder. She let Draco haul her to her feet. They had three morning meetings for Outreach and then they'd promised Thello they'd help with a potion he didn't trust with his apprentices. Hermione just hoped he meant to help brew it and not test it.

Outreach could mostly function without Hermione and Draco at the helm, but they remained as involved as ever. Percy Weasley had taken over as treasurer, so the difficult job was really in his lap. Draco handed the public relations and Hermione acted as liaison with the charities themselves. Lucius had his own role in the business...the glue that kept everything together. He was the one they went to when they wanted to give up, to quit, to hand it over to the board of trustees and never deal with it again. Those moments were short-lived, thanks to Lucius. He was their sanity.

Hermione needed that sanity now. With Altai being in his final year, there was the stress of him stepping into the real world soon. He wanted to be an Auror like his Uncle Harry, and he was certainly powerful enough to do it. His magic, even from a young age, was unparalleled, even surpassing his parents' in raw power. He had a difficult time managing it, however, and that was where Harry had always been able to help. The two were close, and Altai looked up to Harry greatly.

Once Altai was finished at Hogwarts, Hermione suspected Orin's time there would be easier. He was a sensitive boy, and being compared to his more athletic and magically competent older brother was difficult for him. Carina would be fine either way; she was carving her own path, that much was certain.

"Come here, love," Draco said once they were in their bedroom. He undressed her lovingly, lingering over places that were practically worn with his touches. He slid her jumper off, his fingers lingering over her stretch marks...there'd been few with Altai, but the twins had brought with them a mess of scars. Battle wounds, she called them, no longer embarrassed about the way her body had changed.

Lucius leaned back against the headboard, watching as Draco finished undressing Hermione. With a light push, Draco directed her to his father, and she crawled onto the bed with a slow smile.

"Been a while," she whispered, straddling his legs and wrapping her arms around his neck.

"Too long," Lucius said. His hands cupped her bottom and squeezed, bringing her against his burgeoning erection.

Hermione felt Draco behind her, the bed dipping a little as he knelt between Lucius' knees, soft kisses pressing against her shoulder. She tilted her head to one side, enjoying the tender touch. Their lovemaking, though still thrilling and passionate, had become more patient over the years, more sure.

Draco's hands were soothing as they came around her sides and cupped her breasts, tweaking the nipples and pinching the way he knew she loved. She arched back, rocking against Lucius' hardness as Lucius fingers slipped into her, drawing out her wetness until she moaned, needing more.

Draco lifted her hips and Lucius steadied himself as she sank down on his thick cock. She moaned...it had been much too long. She vowed not to let work get in the way of their time together so much. It was important that they keep this.

Rocking shallowly on Lucius' cock, Hermione reached behind herself and stroked Draco. Part of her wanted him to stretch her and take her back entrance, but she knew he was waiting for Lucius to fuck him, and the sight was so beautiful that she couldn't begrudge him it. Still, Draco's fingers pressed against her tight hole, teasing her and making her groan and rock harder. With Draco touching her there and Lucius teasing her clit, her orgasm came fast, hard, and too soon. She cried out, slamming her lips on Lucius' as she rocked through the sensations. Even sated, she wanted more, and she hoped Draco wouldn't be too worn out after Lucius was through with him.

When she felt she could, Hermione sat back against the headboard. She and Lucius were treated to the amazing sight of Draco laying on his back, spreading his legs and reaching down, a finger, then two, disappearing inside him as his eyes darted between Hermione and his father.

Lucius could only take so much of the teasing before he pinned Draco and, using Hermione's slickness to ease the way, pounded into his pliant body.

Hermione had seen the two together hundreds of times. These days, Draco would take his father almost as often as Lucius took Draco, but there was something so beautiful and free in Draco's expression when Lucius fucked him. He always gave himself up to their lovemaking, no matter who was doing what to whom, but there was a special abandon with Lucius, and Hermione felt blessed just to see it.

Her fingers found her clit and reawakened her desire. When Lucius came, she was thrilled to see Draco hadn't; he was straining and writhing, desperate, when Lucius withdrew. He keened when Hermione knelt over him and took him inside her, engulfing his ignored cock within her heat.

With Lucius' eyes on her, on Draco, she rode him, her hands flat against his firm chest. She tossed her head back, unashamedly chasing her own pleasure because she knew Draco was only just holding back.

They came together with a cry that would have been stifled if the children had been home.

She and Draco gave a half-hearted token battle for the centre position on the bed, but Draco gave in and let her have it, curling against her and pulling Lucius closer to both of them.

Their whispered *I love yous* were as familiar as the paint on the ceiling or the shadows on the floor. It seemed strange that a habit could seem so natural and still be so important.

Hermione lay awake after her husbands had drifted off, Draco first, as always. She wasn't really worried about Orin; all her children were resilient. She wasn't even worried about Altai's rumoured proclivities, though she did wish she'd heard it from him. Not even Carina's slightly declining grades gave her much worry...she always had a bit of a rough spot this time of year.

She had no concerns. Nothing bothered her. It was a foreign feeling, after having spent so much time fretting. Her friendships were strong and loving...even Ron had a place in their lives. Her marriage was the best it had ever been and promised only to get better. Her children were brilliant and beautiful and loving. She was healthy and happy.

Still, Hermione knew, letting the shadows and the rolling breaths of her loves coax her to sleep, that though her story was slow, less exciting... it wasn't over.

She could always count on change.

*The End.*

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And that's the end! Almost exactly a year since the first chapter of *Some Things Change* went up. I'm so thrilled and grateful to have such lovely, thoughtful, and sweet readers and reviewers.

Huge, unparalleled thanks go to my amazing and just sweet-as-hell beta Krystle Lynne, and my thoughtful and lovely anonymous beta for their hard work, fantastic notes, and grace under (sometimes of a lot of) pressure. I love you both!

Thanks as well to my first reader, keppiehed, to whom this fic was dedicated. It didn't go in the direction I (we) quite expected, but I hope you liked it nonetheless.

This is the last het fic I'll be writing, so for many of you, this is the time we'll see each other! But I am posting a Snape/Hermione starting just this very next Tuesday. It's seventeen chapters and I'm quite proud of it, so I hope many of you will stick around for that.

Thank you all, as always, for reading, rating, reviewing, commenting, emailing, or rolling your eyes at yet another update from me! :D

On a (somewhat) related note, my smutty little Draco/Hermione oneshot got nominated for the Dramione Awards on LJ ([http://community.livejournal.com/dramione\\_awards/](http://community.livejournal.com/dramione_awards/)). It needs to be seconded before it will be considered, and voting is on March 23rd, so if you remember, and if you liked the fic, please vote! Sad that this fic didn't get nominated, but alas!