

Unexpected Class

by blue artemis

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Chapter 1 of 1

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"Bloody fucking hell!"

Hermione was certain she wasn't supposed to hear the rather common curse coming from the far from common Lucius Malfoy. She was attending to the exchange of keys and the dropping of the wards that was required of him by the Ministry. He had been forced to give up his home to the highest bidder as part of the "war reparations."

"I'm sorry, Mr. Malfoy. I need you to give me the keys and drop the wards in the next five minutes or I'm going to have to call the Aurors."

"Of course, Miss Granger. I was just realizing the extent of the warding. It would be easier to transfer the wards to the new owner via a rite of blood exchange. It would give him or her better control of them, as well." Lucius looked as if he would rather someone stab him in the eyes with hot needles than require that he participate in this exchange.

"Ron, are you and Millie willing to do the blood rite?" Hermione asked the new owners of Malfoy Manor.

Ron and his new wife looked at each other then nodded.

"Do you know how to conduct the rite, Hermione?" Millicent asked.

"Yes, I had to study various rites as part of my training. It will be no problem. Since we have the keys and the holders of the wards here, it should be easy. Now, if you and Ron will stand here, and Mr. Malfoy, if you will stand there." Hermione indicated places to her right and left, six feet from the front gates. She then pulled a silver knife from her beaded bag. "Do you accept this blade, Mr. Malfoy?"

Lucius nodded

"Do you accept this blade, Ronald and Millicent?"

The couple also nodded.

Hermione took a deep breath. She then asked the three to hold their right hands out toward her. She quickly pulled the blade across their hands starting with Lucius, then Ron, and finally, Millicent. She looked at Lucius expectantly.

"I, Lucius Malfoy, do hereby relinquish control of the land of my blood, along with any building and ward to Ronald and Millicent Weasley. May their bloodline prosper here for as long as they wish."

Hermione turned and looked at Ron and Millie.

"We, Ronald and Millicent Weasley accept control of the land of your blood along with any building and wards."

Hermione then took the blade and wiped it in an arc on the grass in front of the gates between the three. Sparks flew from the knife and enveloped all of them. Lucius looked a bit lost, as though part of him had gone missing. Ron and Millie took the keys from Hermione, thanked her and Lucius for a painless transfer, then entered their new home. Lucius winced as he heard Millie's plans to knock out most of the walls on the lower floor so that their children would have lots of space to run around.

He turned to Hermione and said, "Thank you, Miss Granger. You conducted the rite with power and grace. You did nothing to humiliate me. I appreciate that."

"I would never do that, Mr. Malfoy. I heard about some of the more painful transfers, such as the Notts' and the Parkinsons'. Ron and Millie luckily did not feel the need for any such drama. Had they wanted that, I would have not agreed to participate."

"Then I doubly appreciate it, Miss Granger. I never thought I would live to see a day when you behaved with far more class than my hand-picked, pureblood ex-wife."

Hermione smiled to herself. It was no secret that Narcissa had been very upset when Lucius had been forced to give up the Manor, or had left him for greener pastures. Or in this case, redder. Who could have guessed that she secretly wanted to keep dragons? Charlie Weasley still wasn't sure what had hit him.

"Well, Mr. Malfoy, we are done here. Would you like me to see you home?" Hermione asked solicitously.

"I did not know it was part of the service, Miss Granger."

"It is not; I just thought you might want some friendly company for a while."

Lucius considered the young woman carefully. The Slytherin side of him was dancing a jig rather sinuously; having the heroine of the War seen on his arm was a victory. The male side of him appreciated the beauty and sharp mind she had. The part of Lucius that rarely saw the sun appreciated the sincere offer of kindness. But he wasn't about to let her know that, not yet, anyway.

"You know, I would, my dear. Would you care for some ice cream? I find myself in need of something sweet to take away the bitter taste of the day."

"And it wouldn't hurt to be seen with me in public," Hermione stated wryly. "But don't worry, I accept. Something in your face this afternoon makes me want to get to know you a little better. And coddle you a bit." The last was said rather quietly.

Lucius smiled and held his arm out to the little witch. He certainly could use some coddling.

A/N: dynonugget's prompt:

After Lucius loses the Manor and Narcissa leaves, he finds comfort in an unexpected place.

A/N2: Thank you to janus and Southern_Witch_69 for the beta! Both you ladies helped me quite a bit.