

Hubris

by Keppiehed

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Chapter 1 of 1

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Warnings: Uh, it has Ron. Sorry 'bout that. I hate the kid, too.

Prompt: Lucius, one of the Golden Trio; "This is but a dream"

"... and that's how the Hippogriff learned to fly!" Harry finished his naughty joke with a flourish, grinning and laughing.

Hermione turned red and cuffed him on the arm. "Harry, where did you hear a joke like that?"

Harry shrugged.

Ron smiled weakly and pretended to enjoy himself. The truth was, they were nearly at the Three Broomsticks, and he had a problem. "Hey, you guys go in. I'll meet you in a minute, okay?"

Hermione looked at him, her eyebrows drawn together in concern. "What is it, Ron?"

"Nothing. I just need to tie my shoe. I'll be there in a second." He gestured at his feet.

"No problem, mate. I'll order you a butterbeer." Harry held the door for Hermione, and they left him standing outside the pub.

Ron groaned and rubbed his nose. His pockets were empty. He didn't have any money. How was he going to be able to pay for his drinks or his time here today with his friends? He spun around and kicked at the snow angrily.

And ran directly into a tall, imposing figure who had been coming down the street. How had he missed the man standing there? As his eyes traveled up, he was horrified to recognize the cold features of none other than Lucius Malfoy.

Lucius' lip pursed slightly, as if he smelled something unpleasant. "Well, what do we have here? A pig in the street."

Ron felt his temper rise. "Better than a snake in the gutter."

Malfoy's eyes narrowed. The insult lit his viciousness aflame. He looked Ron over with studied nonchalance. "Unless I miss my guess, you are without coin, without anything at all, like a common vagrant, practically reduced to begging for charity. What I have, my wealth—" he held out his arms to show his immaculately cut clothes, his figure indisputably displayed to its best advantage "—this is but a dream to you, isn't it? Well, Weasley, I will give you the coin you so desperately seek, if you but swallow your insignificant honor and apologize to me for your deplorable lack of manners." He held up a Galleon.

Ron looked at the coin, torn. He really needed that, but it stung to lower himself. He swallowed hard. "It's you who's dreaming if you think I would ever say I'm sorry to you," he managed and turned to go.

Lucius' mocking laughter burned his ears as Ron thought about how much his pride had cost him that day.