

To Regain Glory

by phoenix

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Chapter 1

Chapter 1 of 3

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A/N: Great big thanks to Mimmy and Sinaz for betaing this one for me. Especially Sinaz for helping me ensure that I keep Lucius slimy and manipulative. This is what happens when plot bunnies attack. It's also a little something to tide you over until I have time to finish up the next chapter of *Redemption*.

Episode One of the Glory Trilogy

Lucius's Tale

Chapter 1

Lucius and Draco sat by the fire, sipping fine wine. Lucius finally broke the silence. "Our world has changed."

"Yes, Father," Draco replied.

"And we will change with it. We will survive. You are the lynch pin for that survival."

"What do you need me to do?" Draco asked eagerly. His father had not yet asked anything of him in the few months since their name had been cleared. Draco was still not privy to the details on how his father had accomplished that task, but he would not complain. Miraculously, Draco had been exonerated under the pretence that he had not been acting of his free will. Snape had played a significant role in procuring that exoneration.

"You may find it distasteful, but it is absolutely necessary." Lucius paused, awaiting reaction, and when he didn't get one, he continued, "You will court Hermione Granger."

Draco jumped out of his seat. "I will do no such thing!" he shouted.

Lucius eyed his son sternly. "Sit down!" he hissed. "You *will* do such a thing. Due to the persecution the Muggle-borns received, they are quite revered, Granger in particular. You will ingratiate yourself to her and convince her to marry you. We will use her fame and glory to remove the tarnish from our name."

"You expect me to marry a Mudblood?" Draco had not anticipated his father could move so quickly and felt the sting on his cheek from his father's hand.

"You will not use that term. Surely, you aren't so thick that you can't see the political advantage of having her aligned with our family. Of the Muggle-borns out there, she

has proven herself quite intelligent. She is the most worthy of inclusion in our family. With Weasley out of the way, you should have a clear path to her, but you must move cautiously. She must not suspect your real motives. Tell her that your previous behaviour was jealous teasing, and that you couldn't show your true feelings for her because of societal pressure."

"How did you know about Weasley?" Draco knew his father was well-connected, but had been in prison until after the war was over. Lucius should not have known that sort of detail.

"Draco, pay attention to what's important. You must make her believe that you are repentant, and that you have always been smitten with her, am I clear?" he hissed.

Draco knew that tone. It was the one that said the time for debate was over. "Yes, Father," he replied sullenly.

"Draco!" Lucius waited until his son looked into his eyes. "This is *vital*. I am quite serious when I say that our survival depends on this. This is different from last time. If you wish to have a family fortune left to inherit, you will succeed."

Lucius was disturbed from his memory.

"Father? You sent for me?" Draco asked.

Lucius poured a glass of port, admiring the rich ruby colour, before taking a seat. He was pleased by the dour look on Draco's face when he was not offered a glass. "Have a seat," he ordered, indicating that Draco was not to indulge in a glass of his own. "I was considering your upcoming fifth anniversary party, and I recalled a conversation we had more than five years ago. Perhaps you remember it? The one where I told you how vital it was to our family's survival that you marry Hermione? Do you recall it?"

"Yes, Father. And I did as you asked," Draco replied simply.

"In the barest sense, yes, you did. It occurs to me that I still do not have a grandchild. Why is that?"

"I can't answer that. We've been trying, it just hasn't happened."

"Is that so?" replied Lucius sceptically. "I was under the impression that you explained to her what it meant to be part of a pure-blood family. After all, she has done quite well socially. Everyone thinks highly of her, and she has impeccable manners. I would think you would have *tried harder*."

"I've tried, Father. Perhaps there's something wrong with her that she can't conceive?"

Lucius tried hard not to lose patience. At his core, Draco had never been as strong-willed as Lucius would have preferred. "Or perhaps there's something wrong with you. See Healers, Seers, Hags, whatever it takes. But I expect the two of you to announce an addition to your family by the end of the year."

"By the end of the year? You're being unreasonable," whinged Draco.

"You have had five years. Be a man and do your duty. You don't want to be a failure, do you?" He waved dismissively at Draco. At times like this, he could definitely see Narcissa's influence on his son. She had coddled him far too much.

After throwing back the rest of his wine, he decided to seek out Hermione. He had the feeling that Draco was not being completely honest with him. "Ippy!" Once the house-elf materialized in front of him, he asked, "Where is Mrs. Malfoy?"

"She is in the conservatory, Master," the elf replied obsequiously.

He strode out of the study, hoping to catch her before she left. Once he was in the conservatory, he started examining the plants, as though that were the reason he was there. He saw her sitting by the fountain, reading a book. When he came around the corner, he acted as though he was surprised to find her there. "Oh, Hermione, forgive me for disturbing you," he said apologetically.

"That's all right," she replied, barely looking up at him.

He continued examining the plants around the fountain. "If you don't mind me asking, what are you reading?"

She looked slightly ashamed when she answered, "Poetry."

He smiled at her. "There's nothing wrong with poetry. Has everything been to your liking during your stay?"

"Yes. Everything's been wonderful, as usual."

"Do you have a few minutes?"

"Sure," she replied and closed her book, marking her place with a fanciful bookmark that he recognised as the Christmas gift he had given her the previous year.

He sat on the bench opposite hers. "I'm surprised that Draco isn't here."

"Why would he be? He doesn't much care for all the plants."

"Really?" Lucius remembered Draco playing in the garden many times as a child. It had been one of his favourite places. He thought he could hear something else in her voice. Over the years, he had cultivated a friendly relationship with her, and he hoped it would pay off. "Is something bothering you?"

"What? No. Why would you think that?"

"Just something in your voice when you spoke of Draco. I thought you might like to talk about it."

"No. I'm fine."

He smiled softly. "Well, if you should change your mind, I did know Draco for twenty years before you were married. Perhaps I can help you understand him." He rose from his seat. "I'll see you at dinner."

When the day of the anniversary ball arrived, Lucius was busy seeing to the last minute details. He had not entertained much since his release due to Narcissa's untimely passing near the end of the war, mostly because he detested overseeing domestic affairs. The house-elves were being pushed to their limits. When he was finally sure that everything was taken care of, he made his way to the ballroom. Once there, he was obliged to mingle. Several women his age, who had lost their husbands, flirted with him, hoping to become the next Mrs. Lucius Malfoy. He was polite and non-committal. If he were to remarry, it would be with a younger woman, one who could give him a family.

Once he finished his political mingling, he looked around the room for more pleasant company. He noticed Hermione standing with a couple of the other young wives. Scowling, he searched the room for his son and found Draco laughing and drinking with some of his cronies.

Rather than confront Draco at the party, he decided to ask Hermione to dance, hoping that would spur his son to act properly. As they danced, he said, "You should smile."

"I am smiling," she replied.

"Not that sort of a smile, a real one. You're quite lovely when you smile."

She laughed softly. "Be serious."

He could tell that something was bothering her. "Come with me," he said softly and led her to a secluded part of the garden. Once they were alone, he asked, "Has he spent any time with you this evening?"

"A little, at the beginning. But once everyone was here and dancing started, he went off with his friends."

He could see the tears glistening in her eyes and handed her a handkerchief. "Don't cry, my dear. I will speak with him and remind him that he was raised with better manners."

"Oh, no, don't embarrass him. If he knew I've talked to you about this..."

"Don't fret. I have already discussed this with him. Besides, he knows that I would have noticed you were alone this evening. Wait here." He headed back to the ballroom to find Draco and attempt to modify the boy's behaviour.

After a quick scan of the ballroom, he didn't see Draco. "Ippy," he whispered. Once the elf was by his side, he asked, "Where is young Mr. Malfoy?"

"Young master and some of his friends left a few minutes ago. Apologies, Master, Ippy is not knowing where they were going." The elf cringed, awaiting punishment.

Lucius clenched his jaw and walked back to the ballroom. He signalled the band to wrap up the song they were playing. Once they were done, he stepped onto the small stage. "Ladies and gentlemen, if I may have your attention. It seems that our happy couple has snuck off while we weren't looking. On their behalf, I thank you for your attendance tonight."

Everyone knew that was the signal that it was time to leave. Lucius positioned himself close enough to the door so that anyone who wanted to speak with him could do so. He was somewhat surprised when Walter Whiting and his wife stopped to speak with him.

"Excellent party, Lucius. I must say that Draco and Hermione make a lovely couple."

Lucius smiled politely. "They do indeed."

"Any chance you might be throwing your own anniversary parties in the future?"

Lucius arched his eyebrow. He knew that the Whitings had a daughter, Phaedra, who was a year older than Draco, but had been widowed during the war. He was actually surprised that she had remained unmarried for so long and wondered if she had been that attached to Marcus Flint.

"I have no plans for marriage right now. I will confess that I have been devoting most of my time to work, but it may finally be time to start thinking about other things." The Whitings were a moderately influential family, but some of their holdings would complement his quite nicely. Aligning himself with the Whitings could be quite beneficial financially.

"Perhaps it is," said Walter and shook Lucius' hand one last time before leaving.

With the guests departed, Lucius returned to the garden. Hermione looked up expectantly. He could see her expression change to sorrow when she realized that Lucius was alone. "It seems that Draco slipped out of the house," Lucius said sadly.

She bowed her head and choked out, "I see."

He sat next to her on the bench and wrapped his arm around her. She collapsed against him, and he could feel her crying. "He's done this before, hasn't he?"

She nodded. "Quite frequently."

Lucius buried his anger at his son. Draco would be dealt with once he returned. There were no words that would make her feel better. When her sobbing subsided, he rose and took off his outer robe and wrapped it around her shoulder. "Come, my dear. Let's get you out of the chill and to bed." After they were inside, he sent Ippy for Dreamless Sleeping Draught.

"Drink this and get some sleep."

She took the potion. "Thank you."

He kissed her cheek. "You are a Malfoy now, and I will take care of you. Goodnight, Hermione."

"Good night, Lucius."

Once Lucius was downstairs, he called Ippy. "Go to my son's house, and move out all his belongings. Store them in a spare room until Mrs. Malfoy is awake."

"Yes, Master," the elf replied and popped away to do as he was told.

Lucius suspected Draco would try to sneak back in the house, so he charmed the back stairs to prevent anyone from using them. He then returned to the parlour at the base of the stairs to wait.

Several hours later, he heard someone stumble down the hall. "Bloody hell! Stupid stairs," Draco shouted.

Lucius waited, knowing Draco had to come this way. When Draco came into view, he was clearly inebriated, barely able to stand. His shirt was unbuttoned and only half tucked in. The tail from that half was sticking out his fly. Lucius looked closely and thought Draco's shoes were on the wrong feet. "Draco!" he said sharply.

Draco squinted into the parlour. "Pop! How good to see you. What you doing up this late?"

"Do you know what today is?"

Draco squinted, trying to read the clock. "I think it might be tomorrow now."

Lucius was quickly losing patience with his son's disgraceful behaviour. "Today is your fifth anniversary. Do you know where your wife is?"

Draco tried to back away from his father, but found his feet weren't responding. "I 'spect she's in bed."

"Indeed she is. That begs the question of why you aren't with her?"

"I'm not sleeping with that Mudblood."

Lucius pushed his son against the wall and growled. "You are *never* to call her that. She is a Malfoy!"

"Only because you made me marry her!" Draco protested.

Lucius wanted to strike Draco, but restrained himself. "She is the future of our family. Her reputation allowed us to regain our status. Would you rather be like the Goyles? Fighting for survival? She *will* provide the Malfoy heir; do I make myself clear?"

Draco swallowed nervously. "Yes, Father."

"You have been moved out of your house. I want you here where I can keep an eye on you. Your business education will begin in earnest. We will speak more in the morning, when you are sober." He released Draco and stormed upstairs, trying to determine what had happened to produce a son that was so insolent. The only answer he had was that Narcissa had spoiled the boy and made him weak. Perhaps courting Phaedra Flint was not a bad idea. It would prove to Draco that his position as heir was not guaranteed.

Draco returned to his room after his first 'lesson' with his father and kicked the small table next to the loveseat. It fell over and there was a satisfying crash as the vase shattered into a thousand pieces. Taking out his wand, he took aim at the bed and experienced the satisfaction of the pillow exploding in a cloud of feathers.

His father had treated him like a child. Not only had he lost a measure of freedom by being forced to move back home, but now he was being told when and where to be at work. Draco had been happy with his existence. He would make token appearances at various family holdings, feign interest as the managers fawned over him, and then he would meet up with his friends, or preferably his lover. Now that was being taken away from him.

And it was all Hermione's fault.

He had tried explaining to his father that she must be barren, but Lucius was unconvinced. Draco had been told that it would take a respected Healer declaring Hermione barren before Lucius would allow Draco to pursue an annulment. Draco had been petulant, but that had only made his father's ranting worse.

While Draco had not been pleased when told that he would marry Hermione, he had decided to make the best of it. Pansy Parkinson had been his pseudo-girlfriend while at school, but his mission for the Dark Lord in his sixth year had ostracised her, and she had found comfort with Blaise Zabini. At the time, Hermione had been better than his other options, mostly girls from poorer pure-blood families. And he had been forced to admit that she had become quite a pleasurable lover.

Then he had met her.

She was from a good family and had been a member of his house at school, though a little older than him. He wished that he had met her sooner. He was positive he could have convinced Father to let him marry her. Of course, that would not happen while he was married to Hermione.

That had been about the same time Hermione had begun asking him about a family, not long after the Potters had welcomed their first child. When Draco and his lover discussed his dilemma, she had the brilliant idea that he could get his marriage annulled if Hermione didn't get pregnant. Since Draco had done well in Potions, he had no problem brewing potions to ensure that Hermione would not conceive.

He had not imagined that three years later, he would still be married to her. Surely, this should have been long enough to warrant an annulment. But no, Father was insisting that Hermione would bear the next generation.

Momentarily, he considered summoning a house-elf, just to hear the creature scream, but he knew that Hermione would find out and would not be pleased. That would lead to him getting in more trouble with his father, something he didn't need right now.

After breakfast, Hermione decided to see Ginny. Even though she had been accepted in society, she still preferred Ginny's honest friendship. Before knocking on the door, she heard Ginny yell, "Jimmy! Put that down this instant."

Hermione smiled at the thought of Jimmy once again getting into something. He was a very curious three year-old. She knocked on the door and waited for Ginny to answer it.

"Hermione, how good to see you, though I wasn't expecting to see you today." She opened the door and turned back to the kitchen. "Jimmy!"

Hermione followed Ginny into the house. "Jimmy, come give Aunt Hermione a kiss," she said.

Jimmy smiled and ran at her. "Mione!"

Ginny pushed her hair behind her ears. "Good, you can keep him busy while I feed Sarah. So, what brings you here?" she asked as she picked up her daughter.

"I think something's wrong with me." She sat on the floor to help Jimmy play with his blocks.

"What do you mean?"

Hermione sighed. "It's been three years and still nothing. None of the Healers have found anything, but we still can't get pregnant. I've even thought of going to a Muggle doctor. They have some that specialize in helping couples conceive."

"Are you sure it's not him?"

"I don't know. I don't think so. He wants it as much as I do, but I'm not sure how he would react to me suggesting seeing a Muggle doctor. It's just that I want it so badly."

"You've tried potions, right?"

"I've tried every potion I can find. Nothing seems to work." She paused a moment as she had a new thought. "You don't think that the birth control potion I took did something permanent, do you?"

"No, not at all. I took the potion the first year we were married, and it hasn't caused me any problems." She noticed that Sarah was done eating. "Why don't we go for a little walk? He'd love to go outside."

Hermione smiled. She loved spending time with Ginny and her kids, but it also reminded her of what she didn't have. Burying that grief, she was determined to enjoy her visit.

Lucius watched Draco working on the project. At least the boy had a decent work ethic. It had been nearly three months since the anniversary ball and Hermione was still not pregnant. Draco claimed he was trying, and that it was her fault. He found that he did not entirely trust what Draco was telling him. After all, he had noticed that Hermione was spending a great deal of time with Ginny Potter, and, through gentle questioning, he had learned she enjoyed playing with the Potter children. Even the fact

that he was courting Phaedra did not seem to spur Draco to action. Lucius would give him one more month before procuring fertility potions for the two of them.

He contemplated his upcoming evening. Tonight, he and Phaedra would be announcing their engagement. She had not been as bad as he had expected. The few younger women he had dated had all seemed very childish. Of course, that was to be expected, as most of them were younger than Draco. An unmarried woman of more than twenty years was unusual amongst the pure-blood families. Phaedra was different, more mature. He supposed that was a result of the fact she was a young widow.

It still bothered him that he had found no reason why she had not been courted by anyone prior to him. This was an answer he had wanted before he decided to marry her, but she was not forthcoming. He found it hard to believe that she would have waited years for him. There were other influential families that would have welcomed her. Unfortunately, he could not think of a good reason to postpone the announcement of their engagement. He still had six months to determine what she was hiding, not that it really mattered. After all, he wasn't marrying her for love.

He heard the clock chime. "Draco, it's time to go home. The Whitings are coming over for dinner tonight."

"Yes, Father," Draco replied eagerly.

Dinner was uneventful and Lucius was pleased to see that Draco was actually paying attention to Hermione. Proper decorum was one of the many things in which he had been schooling Draco. He was somewhat dismayed to see that Draco was being rather brusque with Phaedra. Since they would all be living under the same roof, he had hoped they would get along. Thankfully, Phaedra was being quite polite to Hermione.

As dinner wound down, he and Walter shared a glance, and Walter nodded. Lucius stood and announced, "If I may have your attention? I am pleased to announce that Phaedra and I are to be married this spring." He reached down and took her hand, smiling briefly at her before looking at the others. Hermione and the Whitings were clapping politely, but Draco had a momentary look of shock before he forced a smile on his face. "We'll formally announce the engagement at the Halloween Ball next week, but we wanted our families to know ahead of time." He kissed Phaedra on the cheek before regaining his seat.

"Congratulations, Father," said Draco.

Lucius was quite pleased. Draco seemed to realize the seriousness of the situation now. Once married, Lucius would start a family with Phaedra. That would show Draco his position was not secure.

Late at night, when everyone was asleep, Draco slipped out of the house and Apparated to a small tenant cottage. He noticed the candles were lit and headed to the small bedroom. She was lying in the bed. "What were you thinking? It wasn't supposed to be like this."

Phaedra replied, "And you were supposed to have found a way to annul your marriage to the Mudblood by now. I can't wait forever."

"I'm trying, but Father won't listen." Draco began pacing. "He's insisting on fertility potions. But now it doesn't matter. Why did you agree to marry him?"

She slithered next to him. "Because I can be closer to you."

"Oh, yes, so you can get us caught."

"You saw him tonight. He has no idea there's anything between us. Besides, would he really be concerned if I became friends with my stepson?" She purred as she pushed him towards the bed.

He pulled her down on top of him. "That would work well, wouldn't it?"

She unbuttoned his shirt and started kissing his chest. "Very well. And closer to the wedding, I can ensure that I bear your child."

Draco flipped her onto her back, aroused at the idea of outsmarting his father. "I do like the way you think."

A/N2: I hope you are enjoying this story. I appreciate all feedback and conrit is always welcome. I find hearing the good and the bad will help me grow as an author.

Chapter 2

Chapter 2 of 3

Lucius Malfoy, patriarch of a dysfunctional family, tries to regain what he had before the war. Unfortunately, Draco's goals do not match his, and he does everything in his power to mould his son into the ideal pure-blood. Is it too little, too late?

Lucius had always found the holiday season tiring. This year, it was more so. He was attending parties he might not have attended because Phaedra wanted to show her fiancé off to her friends. Thankfully, she was spending the night at her parents' house. He was sitting in the library, staring at the fire, enjoying a glass of very old Cabernet.

When the lamps illuminated, he looked towards the door.

"Oh, I'm sorry. I didn't know anyone was in here," apologized Hermione.

"Not at all. I was just relaxing. Would you care to join me in a glass of wine? It's quite an excellent vintage." He hoped she would stay. There were a few things he wanted to discuss with her. Well, one in particular. This was the perfect opportunity for him to ensure that the Malfoy line continued. For months, he had been compassionate and charming, working to earn her trust and friendship, everything Draco appeared not to be. And he was succeeding. While she thought she had been discreet, he had noticed her watching him. His plan was coming to fruition.

She seemed to waver for a few seconds. "All right," she finally replied and took the seat next to him.

He poured a glass for her. "Observe the colour. This is not your average Cabernet. This particular bottle is more than thirty years old."

One thing she had learned from her father-in-law was an appreciation for fine wine. "What was the occasion for opening a bottle this old?"

"An evening of peace in the hectic holiday season. It seemed fitting enough for me. Where is Draco?" The end of the year was approaching, and Hermione still was not pregnant. Lucius had even taken to having the house-elves add fertility potions to their drinks, just in case Draco was not doing as he was told. Even that had not yielded any dividends. He had to take matters into his hands.

"It's his poker night," she replied dryly.

"Ah, I see." While he did not entirely approve of Draco gambling, his son was at least doing so with an influential circle of young men in politics.

As she was finishing her second glass of wine, he decided to ask her some questions about Draco, knowing the alcohol would loosen her tongue. "I know this may be a bit personal, but is Draco paying you enough attention?"

"Whatever do you mean?" she asked evasively.

"Well, I had rather expected the two of you to have started a family by now." He saw Hermione quickly look away from him, and in the light of the fire, he could see a tear streaming down her cheek. "Hermione?" he asked gently as he reached out for her hand. 'Trust me. Open up to me,' he urged silently.

She looked into Lucius' eyes. "Am I ugly?"

"Good heavens, no, my dear. Why would you ask that?"

"Draco seems to think so," she sobbed.

He led her over to the sofa, where he could hold her. "Oh, I don't think that's true. Draco is a little...odd at times, but I don't see how he could ever think you are ugly." Using his thumb, he brushed the tear from her cheek. "In fact, you have the most amazing smile."

"I hate my smile," she replied.

"You shouldn't. I think it's perfect." He tilted her chin, forcing her to look at him. "What would it take for me to see that smile tonight?" he asked softly. A mocking smile curved his mouth. 'Power makes men sexy,' he thought. 'She might not see that attribute in the son, but she will recognize it in the father.' And, one way or another, she would bear the Malfoy heir. Realizing she was incredibly vulnerable, he leaned forward and kissed her. His mouth brooked no defence, no argument, no resistance. Her hands crept to his neck and twined into his hair. He could feel her trembling as he deepened the kiss, devouring her hungrily. Due to the fertility potion she was taking, he knew she should be receptive to his advances. She would react to his pheromones, his desires.

She continued to kiss him, and it took little prodding for him to pull her onto his lap. When he broke the kiss, he unbuttoned her robe to reveal her breasts and began teasing her nipples. She moaned at his ministrations, and he could feel her hands exploring his body. He stopped when he felt her take hold of his erection. It had been a very long time since a woman had touched him like that. He stood, wrapped his arms tightly around her, and said, "Hold on."

With a pop, he transported them to his room. Once there, they feverishly worked to divest themselves of clothing, both giving in to the passions of the moment.

Much later that night, Hermione lay in Lucius' arms, enjoying his comforting embrace, something she rarely got from Draco. He tended to fall straight asleep after they were done. Then the realization of what she had just done hit her. She bolted from bed and started trying to get dressed. "Oh, Merlin, what have we done?"

Lucius seemed unconcerned. "I don't know about you, but I believe we had some truly marvellous sex."

"But I'm married to your son. What will he say? What will he do?" She was starting to panic.

He rose from bed and wrapped his arms around her to comfort her, unconcerned about his nudity. "He need never know. You said that he ignores you. Obviously, this was something we both wanted." He nuzzled against her neck.

"Lucius, stop, please. I'm serious. This is very wrong. I need to go." She had no idea what had come over her. Yes, he was handsome, but it never should have happened.

He released her and watched her continue to try to sort out her clothing. "Hermione, remember what you have learned about high society. Do you really think that Draco has gone without sex? Surely you suspect what I do, that he has a mistress."

She had, but she was not willing to admit it to herself. "I try not to think about that."

"If he is finding his release elsewhere, what's wrong with you doing the same?"

While she didn't agree with his logic, it was sound. "But you are engaged to be married, too. That just makes it worse."

"I have little in common with her. Ours will be a marriage of convenience, nothing more. I am merely marrying her to ensure the Malfoy line will survive, since Draco is unwilling or unable to father offspring with you." In deference to her modesty, he had donned his dressing gown. Wrapping his arms around her, he whispered, "I will be here for you."

"I really need to go," she protested weakly. How had she let this happen? Lucius had been kind to her, but that was no reason to sleep with the man. She was married to someone else. True, she did not believe that Draco loved her, not anymore, but that was no reason for infidelity.

Lucius was making the final changes for the Holiday Dinner menu. Thirty of his 'closest' friends would attend the dinner, including the Minister of Magic. He had been quite surprised when the invitation had been accepted. Since his release from prison, he had always received a polite declination, even after Scrimgeour was replaced.

"Lucius?" asked Hermione from the door.

When he looked up, he saw that she was nervous about something, as she was wringing her hands. "What is it, my dear?" he asked gently.

She quickly crossed the room, but positioned herself so she could see the door. "I'm late."

He found this statement rather odd. "I wasn't aware that you needed to be anywhere."

"Not that kind of late," she whispered. Still nervously eyeing the door, she continued, "I think I'm pregnant."

He smiled broadly, pleased the Malfoy line would continue. "That's wonderful news."

She started pacing. "No, it's not. It's not Draco's. We haven't been together for months. What are we going to do? I can't tell him."

Repressing his anger at Draco for being wilfully disobedient, he closed and locked the door with a wave of his wand, and he led her over to the couch. "He doesn't need to know. All you have to do is seduce him tonight. That way, he will believe the child is his."

"But I've been *trying* to seduce him. He just ignores me."

Lucius gave her a sly grin. "Leave that to me. This won't be a problem." This was perfect. He didn't have to disown Draco, but this should ensure that Draco was removed from the Malfoy gene pool. Clearly, the Black blood had been inferior. After all, Bellatrix had been psychotic. Perhaps Andromeda had the right idea when she had married a Muggle-born.

"But what if he suspects it's not his?"

He held her hand in a reassuring manner. "Why would he? Physically, the two of us look enough alike that he would have no reason to suspect anything. And if I pay the child a great deal of attention, he will think nothing of it. I have told him numerous times of my desire to have grandchildren." He placed his hand on her stomach. "This is a marvellous event, not something for you to be upset about. You did say you wanted to be a mother, did you not?"

"Well, yes, but I rather expected Draco to be the father. Will it really work?"

"It will. Just behave as you always have and you have nothing to fear." He kissed her softly on the lips and let her go on her way. She was much calmer than she had been when she came in to see him. He allowed himself a victorious chuckle. If his foolish son didn't want to father the next generation of Malfoys, so be it. The family was better off without him.

Draco looked up from his book and watched the mix of rain and snow beating the windows. He would be glad when the weather finally broke; it would make sneaking out of the house easier. Of course, Phaedra was spending a great deal of time with his father and had little time for him. He knew the two of them would have to spend time together since they were engaged, but he was still bitter. Phaedra had been the escape from his marriage. In a little less than two months, they would be living under the same roof, and he hoped that would improve the situation.

He saw Hermione lurking in the door. "Did you need something?" he asked politely. He had learned to be polite to her because his father always seemed to hear when he wasn't.

She had smile on her face as she approached him. "I have wonderful news, darling. I'm finally pregnant."

Draco was momentarily taken aback. "Are you sure?" That would explain the nausea she had been experiencing recently.

She sat on the arm of the chair and wrapped her arms around him. "I've just returned from the Healer to verify. Isn't it wonderful? Can we have a big party to announce it in March?" she asked cheerfully.

"Uh, sure. That sounds great." He forced himself to smile at her.

"Excellent. I'll set it up for early March so it isn't too close to your father's wedding. This is going to be wonderful." She kissed him and flitted out of the room.

Draco was left pondering how this had happened. He had been very careful about ensuring he didn't get her pregnant. There had been one night, shortly before Christmas... He had a hard time remembering exactly what had happened, but he did remember waking up with her snuggled against him. She must have tricked him.

At the very least, this should make his father happy, and hopefully he wouldn't have to hear any more about not fulfilling his duties as a man.

As the wedding approached, Lucius found he was tiring of Phaedra. She was very much like Narcissa, concerned mostly about appearances and name-dropping. Unfortunately, she was being very proper about the courting process, something he found odd considering she had been previously married. She was insisting they wait until they were married, that she didn't want to risk the scandal of getting pregnant out of wedlock. He only hoped the situation would improve once they were married. As long as she could be the prim and proper pureblood wife, the situation was acceptable. He could always find his diversion elsewhere. That arrangement had worked for centuries.

Staring at the contract on his desk, he found his attention drifting to Hermione. Pregnancy suited her and she was looking quite radiant. She was just starting to show. Normally her robes concealed that fact, but he had caught sight of her in her Muggle clothes. While he normally didn't approve of things Muggle, those jeans she had been wearing today hugged her curves and left nothing to the imagination. It had taken a great deal of control for him not to shove her against the wall and have his way with her. The thought of being with her again made him smile.

"Are you thinking of me, my love?" Phaedra asked.

"Of course I am, my dear. What else would bring a pleasant smile to my face?" he replied smoothly.

She moved behind him and wrapped her arms around him. "What is that? Some boring contract? I wonder if you might have a few moments to talk about the wedding."

"For you, anything." He let her lead him to the sofa.

"I've been thinking about your best man. Do you really want Severus Snape? I mean, you know so many other people, and he doesn't really like social gatherings."

"Phaedra, my darling, you know what Severus means to me."

"I know, I just thought it would be better for everyone. We could have someone...a little less surly, and then he wouldn't be obliged to be such a visible part of the wedding."

"He's already agreed. It's not as though I can just rescind that offer. It will be all right. He has agreed not to scowl, though I think we will all be better off if he doesn't smile."

She laughed at his little joke. "I guess I'm just getting nervous. I mean, it's only two weeks away."

He rubbed her arm. "Everything will be perfect. The meal is chosen, the flowers are in bloom in the hothouse and the invitations are mailed. And you've selected your dress, so that leaves very little to be done. If the weather doesn't cooperate, Severus and I will charm the garden so that it is sunny and dry."

"Thank you," she replied.

"Now, if you don't have any other questions, I would like to finish going through that 'boring contract' so I can have everything ready for our honeymoon."

"Of course. I'll see you at dinner."

Once she was gone, he once again started thinking about Hermione. Perhaps he would take tea with her this afternoon? He remembered Phaedra saying she was meeting with some of her friends. Draco was in meetings at the Ministry all afternoon, so no one should interrupt them. Perhaps she would be amenable to another liaison?

"Ippy, I'll be taking tea in the conservatory with Mrs. Malfoy."

"Yes, Master."

When teatime came, Lucius went to the parlour to find Hermione. "I thought you might like to join me for tea?"

"That would be wonderful," she replied as she accepted his hand.

He kissed her cheek before placing her hand on his arm. "How are you feeling?"

"Much better. I think the nausea is finally subsiding. I didn't realize how tiring it would be."

"You don't look tired. You actually look quite radiant."

"Thank you," she replied quietly, somewhat embarrassed by his compliment.

As they took tea, he asked, "Is Draco treating you any better?"

She shrugged. "He seems excited about the baby, but he's still rather ambivalent about me. I don't mind, though."

"Are you sure? I recall Narcissa... Well, let's just say that she was quite appreciative of the attention I showed her." Lucius recalled how Narcissa's sexual appetite had grown when she was pregnant. She had been open to experimentation, and that had been the best sex of their marriage. He shifted in his seat, suddenly uncomfortable from his erection as he imagined re-enacting those positions with Hermione. Hopefully, she would also experience an increased libido. The forbidden nature of their romance aroused him and he wanted it to continue.

Hermione saw the look on his face and quickly changed the subject. "I'm fine, really. I am hoping to get him interested in decorating the nursery."

He was disappointed that she hadn't accepted his offer, though it was only a matter of time if Draco continued to ignore her. Perhaps he could ensure his son had plenty of work to do? "If he doesn't help, and you would like a second opinion, I would be more than happy to provide it."

"Thank you. I really appreciate everything you are doing for me. You know..." she trailed off.

Reaching across the table, he patted her hand. "There is no need to thank me. You are part of the family, and I will do everything in my power to preserve the family and its reputation. If there's anything you need, just ask."

Hermione lay in bed, waiting for Draco to return. Her nausea had finally passed, and was replaced with something much more pleasant. She rubbed the gentle swell of her abdomen. Today, she had decided to visit her parents and let them know the good news. She never thought she would be happy about clothes not fitting, but when she had been unable to button her jeans, she had been ecstatic. After all this time, it was still hard for her to believe that she was pregnant.

Draco had been working long hours lately, but she hoped he would be home soon. She thought about talking to Lucius and seeing if he could let Draco come home earlier from time to time.

When she heard the doorknob turning, she threw off the blanket. "Draco, darling," she purred.

Draco quickly hid his surprise. "I hadn't expected you to still be awake."

She rubbed her hands along her body, fondling her breasts. "I just had to wait for you."

"Not tonight. It was a rough day. Besides, I didn't think you were feeling up to it."

Rising from bed, she crossed the room and started undressing him. "I'm feeling much better, and I've been thinking about you all day." She rubbed her thigh against him.

He gently pushed her away. "This really was quite a trying day. I had to visit four companies, I'm completely exhausted from all that Apparating, and I have a splitting headache. All I want tonight is a drink and to get some rest." He gave her a soft smile. "Perhaps tomorrow night?"

She frowned and grabbed her nightdress off the chair. "Dammit, Draco. It's been weeks and I finally feel ready and you do this."

He placed his hands on her shoulder. "I'm really sorry. This really was a bad day. With the wedding coming, I've been completely swamped with work preparing for Father's absence. Once he's gone, things will slow down, and I can find some time for you. I promise."

She pulled away and threw herself to bed, making sure to keep her back to him.

Draco quickly changed into his pyjamas and joined her in bed. Knowing that she was mad at him, he stayed on his side of the bed.

Draco waited quite some time for Hermione to fall asleep. He thought it was ridiculous that his father insisted they still share the same room. The woman was pregnant; what more did he want? After all, his parents hadn't shared a room. Perhaps he could use her pregnancy as an excuse to have his own room? After all, he needed his rest to ensure his mind was sharp at work. It would have the added benefit that he would not have to deal with situations like he had this evening. Though, he did have to admit that he had found it somewhat arousing to be greeted like that. He reminded himself that she was beneath him, no matter what his father believed.

He heard her breathing slow and knew that she was asleep. Slipping out of bed, he had only had a couple of hours before she would be waking to go to the bathroom. For not the first time, he wondered if he would be able to continue his liaisons with Phaedra after they were living under the same roof.

When he arrived at the small cottage, he was quickly embraced and she demanded, "Where have you been?"

"Fucking Mudblood took forever to fall asleep." He pushed off Phaedra's robe and noticed that she was already naked. "But enough about her. Are you ready?"

"I'm all yours," she replied as she pulled him to the bed. "Tonight we secure your line as the Malfoy future."

Draco was more than happy to indulge her since he didn't know when he would get the opportunity to be with her again.

Shortly after they returned from their honeymoon, Phaedra walked into Lucius' office at the Ministry with a huge smile on her face.

"What an unexpected surprise?" he said cheerfully as he rose to kiss her.

"A good one, I hope."

"Seeing you is always pleasant. What brings you here?"

"I thought you should be the second to know. I'm pregnant."

"How wonderful. Congratulations." He had not expected it to happen so soon, but he would not complain. He laughed softly. "I wonder how many people can say that their

child and grandchild were raised together. I do hope they will get along well."

"I'm sure they will. While I don't mind telling Draco and Hermione, I would like to keep it quiet from the others for a while longer."

"Of course, darling."

"We already have a garden party planned for late summer. Don't you think that would be the perfect time to make the announcement?"

"I do believe you are right. Did you want to go to lunch and celebrate?"

She thought for a moment. "That sounds like a wonderful idea."

Lucius had partially hoped that she would turn him down. But he led her out of his office and to his club for lunch. The maitre d' fawned over Mrs. Malfoy until Lucius gave him a glare that drove him off.

As they ate, he maintained a polite façade, pretending to take interest in her inane babblings. She easily switched topics from how to decorate the nursery, saying that she didn't have the same tastes as Hermione and would have to have a separate nursery for their child, to hoping she wouldn't have stretch marks, varicose veins, or gain too much weight. He smiled slightly and nodded as he let his mind wander to Hermione, and how he longed to caress her, to feel the child growing within her, to experience the aroma of her shampoo. The swell of her stomach was incredibly erotic. He would have to make some time alone with her. He enjoyed the power he had over her.

Finally, she returned to the more mundane topic of maternity fashion and how she had stopped by Madam Malkin's and had been unimpressed by the selection, but that she knew the most charming seamstress in Paris, and could he please arrange for the woman to come stay at the manor to design a new wardrobe? After all, Mrs. Malfoy had to always look elegant. He nodded in agreement as she continued on about which fabrics draped best.

Realizing her conversation would be no weightier than fashion, his mind once again drifted to Hermione and planning how he could get her in bed again. Perhaps with Phaedra's new obsession, he could find more time to spend with Hermione?

He realized that Phaedra had stopped talking. "I'm sorry, dear. I was working on a very difficult letter when you arrived and my mind must have drifted."

Draco had concealed himself in an alcove. He didn't like the way Phaedra was behaving and he frowned in displeasure. She claimed that she didn't care for his father, but watching her, he found it hard to believe. Now that she was pregnant, she didn't have any reason to dote on Lucius like that. She should have been finding a way to spend her time with him.

As it was, he had a hard time fending off Hermione, even with the separate bedroom. He couldn't lock his door without drawing the wrong sort of attention, and she had this habit of crawling into his bed. He had hoped that she would not be one of those women who experienced an increased libido when pregnant, but he had not been so lucky. The way his life was going, Phaedra would be the one so affected instead. He had only been with her once in the month since her return. This was not definitely going according to plan.

He watched from the shadows as she planted a passionate kiss on his father's lips. Turning away in disgust, he waited until she walked past and pulled her into the alcove.

"What do you think you are doing?" she asked.

"I could ask you the same thing. Was that really necessary?" He had her pinned against the wall.

"Of course it was," she replied smugly. "I need to make him think that I am faithful to him, that I wouldn't dare stray. That way, he won't suspect there's anything between us," she purred.

Hungrily, he devoured her mouth in a kiss and released her arms. She wrapped them around him and pulled him close.

A/N: Thanks again to all those that have taken the time to review. I hope you enjoyed this installment of the little Malfoy soap opera. This one was a lot of fun to write and a nice little diversion.

Keep reading to see how long Draco can continue to fool his father.

Chapter 3

Chapter 3 of 3

Lucius Malfoy, patriarch of a dysfunctional family, tries to regain what he had before the war. Unfortunately, Draco's goals do not match his, and he does everything in his power to mould his son into the ideal pure-blood. Is it too little, too late?

Hermione was looking through the library for a new book to read. She was doing an awful lot of reading lately since working on her research projects was no longer comfortable. Feeling the baby moving in her stomach, she reached down to caress and hopefully calm the baby. "Easy. No need to get excited." The kicks weren't strong enough for anyone else to feel, but it made her happy to feel the baby. She jumped when she felt an arm wrap around her.

"Feeling our baby kick?" he asked, gently caressing her swollen stomach.

"I've felt it, but it's not strong enough for anyone else to feel," she replied. She could feel his hand drifting lower on her abdomen, and he pulled her against him so she could feel his erection.

"You will tell me when that happens, won't you?" he asked in a silky smooth voice as he let his hand drift between her legs.

She could feel her body betraying her. For several weeks she had longed for Draco to touch her like this; she couldn't remember ever wanting sex this badly, but he had spurned her advances. After the conversation where Lucius had offered to help her, she had found herself daydreaming about being with him again, but it was wrong and she was determined to do the right thing. She still felt guilty that Draco was not the father of her child. "Lucius, please, stop," Hermione groaned. If he didn't stop touching

her, she would lose control.

"Don't you like the way that feels?" he purred.

"Very much. But it's not right." She could feel her resolve melting as his other hand gently cupped her breast, and she let out a low moan.

"I want you, Hermione. I dream about you. Every time I see you, I want to feel you again, to taste you," he whispered as he nibbled at her neck.

She could feel him teasing her through her clothes and the wetness pooling between her legs. "You're just saying that," she protested weakly. He had to go away, right now. She couldn't hold out much longer.

"I find you irresistibly sexy." He turned her to face him and gave her a passionate kiss. "Come with me," he said.

All she knew was that a man found her sexy and was offering her relief that no masturbation could. She didn't give a damn if it was her father-in-law.

Once upstairs, she shoved him into the first bedroom and locked the door.

"Why, Hermione," he started.

She interrupted, "Less talking, more undressing." She began feverishly undoing his buttons, wanting him out of his clothes. Once he was naked, she pushed him onto the bed and slipped out of her dress before straddling him. She let him guide her onto him and closed her eyes, savouring the sensation.

It didn't take long for her to climax quite vocally. When she tried to get up, she found that Lucius had tight hold of her hips. She opened her eyes. "Oh, Lucius! I'm so sorry. I've just needed that..."

"Shh. Quite all right. Let me make you come again." He gave her a wolfish grin.

"Again? But I've never..."

"Less talking, more sex," he drawled. He let her up and propped her on the edge of the bed with pillows. Kneeling down before her, he began to explore her soft folds with his tongue, relishing the taste. It wasn't long before he could feel her quivering.

In order to draw out her climax, he re-positioned himself to thrust into her, gently at first, not wanting to make her uncomfortable. As she urged him on, he began thrusting deeper until he reached climax and could again hear her crying out his name.

Once he was spent, he crawled onto the bed with her and wrapped his arm around her. As he slowly rubbed her stomach, he whispered, "If only I had been the one to marry you."

"You were too old for me," she replied.

He was taken aback by her honesty. "Indeed," he said silkily, "you seem to have no difficulty overcoming that barrier in bed."

"I do have much more in common with you than I do with Draco." She ran her hand lazily down his chest to his hipbone. "Perhaps we can find time to do this again?"

He couldn't stop the grin from spreading across his face. A slow, laconic smile spread across his face. Leaning forward to kiss her on the lips, he replied, "Of course we can. Now, as much as I would like to stay here all afternoon, I think we'd best get cleaned up for dinner."

Lucius was looking forward to getting home. He normally didn't go on extended business trips, but Italy was too far to travel on a daily basis. Initially, he thought this would be a two-day trip. Now, it was the start of day five, and there was no end in sight. He had already owed Phaedra and apologized for his absence as her pregnancy was making her quite ill. All he could do was hope that Hermione and Draco were looking out for her.

Hermione. He was looking forward to seeing her, most of all. Their secret trysts were something he treasured, and she had become quite the nymphomaniac now that she realized she could come to him for relief. He wondered what new positions they could try this time.

When he arrived in the conference room, Alonzo Bertolli, owner of the company, was already sitting at the table. "Signor Malfoy, a pleasure to meet you."

Lucius smiled. "Signor Bertolli, it is a great pleasure to finally meet you." He shook hands with the elderly wizard.

Bertolli continued, "I have had a chance to view your proposal." He slid a piece of parchment across the table. "I have made a few minor modifications, but find it acceptable. I have no interest in prolonging negotiations. If you find that contract satisfactory, I believe we can conclude our business."

Lucius picked up the contract and noted the changes were very minor and would still lead to very profitable returns. "The changes are quite acceptable." He pulled a quill from his case. "I must say, I look forward to doing business with your company."

"As do I. Would you care to join me for lunch to celebrate our partnership?"

"Normally, I would relish the opportunity, but my wife is with child and has not been feeling well. As this trip has lasted quite a bit longer than I initially anticipated, I would like to get home to her. I hope that you will understand."

"Ah, yes, the joy of a bambino. Please, go home to your wife. When I come to England, we will share that lunch, no?"

Lucius shook Bertolli's hand. "You are most understanding. I look forward to showing you our facilities."

Once Lucius returned to his hotel, he ordered the house-elf to pack his belongings and take the trunk home. He would have to stop in Paris for a few hours before he could go home due to the length of the journey, but he might arrive in time for lunch. For a brief moment, he considered owing Phaedra to let her know he would be home soon, but he realized he would travel faster than the owl.

He spent his time in Paris at a café, reading the latest issue of the *Daily Prophet*. There was nothing illuminating in the paper. More meaningless drivel about the Minister of Magic, an idiotic article on the new regulations for cauldron thickness, and on the gossip page, an article announcing the great Harry Potter and his wife, Ginny, were expecting their third child. He sighed, knowing that Hermione would want to throw a party, as she had the other two times. Of course, those had both been at her house. Now that she was living in the Manor, he thought he and Draco would probably be obliged to make a token appearance.

A part of him wondered if Potter would even agree to it. Even though the Ministry had exonerated him, Potter was still very suspicious and had been quite vocal about Hermione not marrying Draco. Other than the wedding, Potter had not attended any of the celebratory functions at the Manor.

Deciding he had waited long enough, he put down the paper and Apparated home. As always, the first thing he decided to do was check the post. Opening the door to the study, he froze in shock at the sight of Draco standing at the end of the desk, trousers pooled around his ankles, vigorously slamming himself between Phaedra's raised legs. She started moaning and encouraging Draco to move faster as her fingers dug into his back.

After a shocked moment, he regained his voice and shouted, "What the bloody hell is going on?"

Draco pulled back and quickly did up his trousers. Phaedra slipped off the desk and smoothed her skirts. "Father?" Draco replied in surprise.

Lucius was trembling with fury. He couldn't believe the two of them. "How long has this been going on?" he asked through clenched teeth. While he didn't love Phaedra, he was incredibly possessive and angered at the stupidity of their indiscretion.

"Father, please..."

"How long?" Lucius growled. He noticed that both of them were looking at their feet. "Look at me!" he thundered.

Draco reluctantly raised his eyes to meet his father's glare. "A little over three years."

"Three years?" At least Lucius now knew why Phaedra had not yet married; she had been having an affair with Draco. The reason for Draco seeking an annulment now became clear. He turned his attention to Phaedra. "Go clean yourself up." She nearly ran from the room. Lucius stepped closer to Draco and was pleased when Draco tried to back away. While they were of a height, Draco had not yet grown into his frame and was quite lanky. "How many others know?"

"What do you mean?"

Lucius grabbed Draco by the neck. "How many others know that she is your mistress? I won't be made a fool, especially by my wife and son."

"No one. I've told no one," Draco gasped.

"Are you sure? I know how much you like to brag. Or do they think you broke it off with her?"

"Father, I swear to you, no one knows." Draco tried to pry his father's hand away from his neck.

"Do you have any idea how embarrassing this could be? Do you ever think of anything other than your loins?" He pushed Draco back against the desk.

"Father, I'm sorry. I didn't think you would ever know. We thought you would be gone..."

"Fool! What if Hermione had come in? Don't you think she would have run and told her friends what her unfaithful husband was doing?" A part of him wanted to send Draco away, but that would mean sending Hermione away, and he wasn't ready to do that yet. "I have worked too hard for this family to have you just throw it away." As he considered what had just happened, and his options, he began to wonder if Draco was the father of Phaedra's child.

"What are you going to do to me?"

Lucius thought that Draco did not sound nearly scared enough and spun back on his son. When he tried to delve into Draco's mind to see if he could determine the child's paternity, he found Draco pushing back. "So it is your child, isn't it?" he hissed.

"I don't know what you're talking about," Draco replied glibly.

"Quit being a fool. You can't keep that from me. Get out of my sight while I determine what to do with you." Once Draco was gone, Lucius paced, considering this new and very explosive situation. Keeping Draco and Phaedra under the same roof was not an option, but he didn't want to banish Hermione. Even eliminating the fact that she was carrying his child, he enjoyed her company, and wanted more of her.

After two days, Lucius thought he had reached a solution. It would be implemented under his terms, and his solicitor had already drawn up the appropriate documents and the press release that would ensure he was portrayed as the victim. He wasn't about to lose all the painstaking time and effort he had put into making the Malfoy family respectable. This would cost him his son, but it was a small price to pay. He sat at his desk, awaiting Draco's arrival. When he saw the young man crack the door, he snapped, "Come in."

Draco moved quickly across the room and stood before his father's desk. Lucius surveyed his son with cold contempt.

"Sit," Lucius commanded. The simpering mannerisms Draco was displaying only reaffirmed that he had made the correct decision. "It took quite a bit of research, but I have found a...beneficial solution." His eyes held no emotion as he slid a piece of parchment across the desk.

Draco picked up the parchment and the colour drained from his face as he read the document. "You can't be serious! Swap wives?"

"Quite serious. It is all perfectly legal. You will notice that Fenton has endorsed it. It seems that once Uxoria Cauponari fell out of favour, no one ever removed it from the books."

Draco laughed. "And you expect society to accept this? You don't think you will be shunned for turning out your pregnant wife?"

"Well, I wouldn't be turning her out. I would be turning her over to you. And, I think you will recall that there has been no formal announcement of her pregnancy yet. Trust me, I will not be shunned. Now, there are a few other things to be discussed." He slid a second piece of parchment across the desk.

"What's this?" Draco asked, wondering if it could get worse.

Lucius grinned. "That is your settlement. You will receive a monthly stipend for one year. I will also deed you the Yorkshire property, but you will be responsible for taxes after the first year."

"The Yorkshire property? It's infested!"

Lucius arched an eyebrow. "Is it? Well, then, you'll have to work on your pest control spells, won't you?"

Draco's eyes flew across the contract. "You're taking my name away?"

"No Malfoy would have been careless enough to get caught and risk ruining the family reputation as you did. As such, you are no longer worthy of the name. You may have your mother's name."

Draco threw the parchment back on the desk. "I won't sign this. I deserve better."

Lucius leaned forward and met Draco's eyes. "You deserve nothing," he hissed. "You have embarrassed the family and risked our social standing. You either sign this, or I will file divorce papers and terminate your position effective immediately. I will also see that your possessions are moved out of this house tonight."

"You won't throw Hermione out," Draco replied smugly.

"No, I won't throw her out. But once she knows what you have done, do you really think she will want you? I will be magnanimous, allow her to remain in my home, and care for her and my grandchild. I have no doubt that I will be lauded for my sympathy. You, on the other hand, will be vilified for your indiscretion." He leaned back in his chair and steeped his fingers. "The choice is yours."

After a few seconds, Draco picked up the quill and signed both pieces of parchment before sliding them back across the desk.

Lucius added his signature to the pages, binding the contract. He waited until Draco was standing, and then said, "One more thing." He was pleased at the look of horror on Draco's face. "You will tell Hermione about this arrangement and why it had to be made." Rising to his feet, he added, "She is waiting in the conservatory."

As Lucius followed Draco, he considered what maintaining the family's reputation had cost. He knew there would be some gossip over his invoking an arcane law, but he had taken all the precautions he could to ensure that Draco would bear the brunt. As long as no one learned that he was really the father of Hermione's child, his reputation would be safe. A small smile of anticipation flitted across his face as he thought of living in the Manor alone with Hermione. No longer would he have to hold his 'tastes' in check. And hopefully, he mused, his new heir would have more of the Malfoy character traits than his last.

A/N: Uxoria cauponari loosely translates to "trade wives". I thought it would be a fun little law, especially one used in older times when most marriages were arranged. In the law, as I have envisioned it, two men within the same family can trade their wives if it is discovered that living with the current wife is completely intolerable. Since women were seen as commodities in the Middle Ages, I thought it at least moderately plausible. And let's look at how many truly stupid laws are still on the books because no one ever thought to repeal them.

And this concludes my little soap opera on the Malfoy family. For those of you in the US, they are a Jerry Springer type of family, aren't they?

My evil plot bunnies have been prodding me with ideas for turning this into a trilogy, with the other two parts telling the continuing story predominantly from first Hermione's and then Draco's points of view. We'll see how successful their prodding is.

Additionally, if you have not checked out the myth surrounding the name Phaedra, you should. Seems the mythological Phaedra also had issues with her step-son, though slightly different ones. I actually chose her name before refreshing my memory on the myth, remembering a girl I knew in school with that name. I knew it had mythological ties, but couldn't remember how.

Thanks for reading and reviewing. Feeding the muses is always appreciated.