The Mark

by Keppiehed

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for her wounded enemy. Should she listen to her head--or her heart?

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Chapter 1 of 1

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Disclaimer: This all belongs to J.K. Rowling.

Prompt: Draco, Hermione, "my mistake to make."

A/N: This was written for Sortinghatdrabs.

Pity had been gnawing at Hermione since that afternoon. No one else seemed bothered by it, save maybe Harry, but she couldn't get the images out of her head—all she could see before her were fountains of red soaking his white shirt before they spilled over and swirled down the drain. It had sickened her, shocked her—and perhaps most surprisingly, worried her.

Hermione waited until night, when Hogwarts was settled, and she got up her nerve to sneak out. She had done it often enough with Harry and Ron before. How hard could it be on her own?

It wasn't too difficult to break into the hospital ward. Most patients were trying to get *out*, after all. No one wanted in.

His was the only occupied bed. For that she was glad. She didn't plan on staying long. Just enough time to assuage her conscience, to make sure he was really okay. He had looked so gravely wounded—

Hermione approached his cot, where he lay sleeping. He looked so innocent in repose. She couldn't tear her eyes away from his face, the way his brows winged just so. Why had she never noticed the beauty of his features before? Was it always hidden by cruelty? Or had she been so blind that she couldn't see what had always been there?

He stirred, and at that moment his hand reached up to bat away a nightmare. Her gaze fell to the unmistakable ink marring his forearm.

"Oh, Draco," Hermione whispered. For some reason, a faith she never knew she had in him was destroyed. It might be his mistake to make, but why did she feel so shattered?

Blond lashes fluttered open. Draco looked around the room. He thought he'd heard a voice wake him, but he was alone.