

Worth Fighting For

by *Southern_Witch_69*

Draco's thoughts and happenings after the Astronomy Tower event in HBP are here.
What happens to the Malfoys? How does Draco feel about things?

Draco's Decision

Chapter 1 of 1

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How does Draco feel about things?

Disclaimer: Borrowing J.K.R.'s characters for a quick little tale. No Galleons for me.

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Draco looked at the potion before him, wondering if it tasted anything like it smelled. The room was filled with a nasty, acrid smell as faint black smoke wafted from the cauldron. He let it simmer some more and sat back to think things over.

It had been four weeks since he'd faced Dumbledore on the Astronomy Tower... since Snape had waltzed up and killed the man without so much as an ounce of remorse. *He murdered him like he was simply zapping a fly. Murdered the man that had housed him for over sixteen years and defended him. Murdered Dumbledore, who had already forgiven me for my attempts against his life... who would have helped my mother and father.*

He frowned. "And now my mother is dead," he whispered sullenly. Once the Dark Lord had learned that Snape was forced to kill Dumbledore since Draco had failed his task, Narcissa's days had been numbered. She was brought before him and hexed with the Cruciatus Curse until she barely knew who she was. Draco had been forced to watch. Bellatrix had been punished as well—for never telling the Dark Lord about her stint as the Bonder. Unfortunately, she hadn't suffered as much as his mother, who was also forced to watch Draco's torture in turn. Only Snape had been left unpunished. Only Snape had been granted praise and rewards. Only Snape had previously confided to the Dark Lord about what had gone on that fateful summer night when the Unbreakable Vow had been forged between them.

Though the Dark Lord lost his spy at Hogwarts, it had left Potter without supervision and unprotected. They all knew it would only be a matter of time before the boy was caught and brought to his end. It also proved beyond measure where Snape's loyalties truly were. For this, Snape was granted two slaves—one for his home and one for his bed—and both were Malfoys.

Bitterly, Draco threw his stirring rod across the room. Life had never been so horrible. He'd only thought that he'd had problems at Hogwarts—competing with Granger and the others for grades, competing with Potter in Quidditch, and competing with Zabini for popularity. The real world was much worse. He hated sharing a room with that disgusting Wormtail and had woken up twice to find the man leering at him while playing with his own prick to find release. Of course Draco had threatened the sniveling man, but he wondered if he still did it and hated catching his watery, beady eyes upon him at any time of day.

Narcissa had shared Snape's rooms with him, and Draco nosed about some, wanting to know if she was being mistreated. Instead, he heard her moaning like some whore, begging for more, and promising to do anything for him if he'd continue his ministrations. That had hurt him more than anything—to know what she'd become. His mother should have fought against him, should have been true to his father, should have... "I can't blame her," he said as he realized the stupidity of his thinking. She was only trying to survive and not be killed or beaten in the process. After all she'd given up to see him safe, the least he could do was to respect her still and honor her

memory. At least Snape was good to her for those couple of weeks.

Or had been anyway. Mysteriously, she'd simply died. Snape had seemed distressed for a few moments, but then, he'd taken her body and left with it, returning hours later. He kept to his room or laboratory after that, only coming out to make snide remarks to Wormtail or to make certain Draco was keeping himself occupied.

Taking a page from the rat's book, Draco listened to a private conversation that Snape had had with Uncle Rodolphus. He was explaining how he'd had to kill Narcissa on the Dark Lord's orders and how he certainly missed the free arse he was getting each day. He'd warned Rodolphus to keep Bellatrix inline, or she'd be next. They'd even discussed the likeliness that Lucius wouldn't live much longer either. They'd found someone that could help them to break those worthy out of Azkaban, but Lucius would be meeting an escape of a different kind.

That had done Draco in. He'd always respected Snape and had favored him above all others at Hogwarts. His father had always thought highly of Snape. When he'd seen Snape's hate-filled expression as he'd killed Dumbledore and saw the unremorseful celebrating after, it had started unraveling those long-held feelings. Wouldn't a longtime friend of his father's not truly want to bed his wife? He could have only pretended to have bedded her and not taken advantage of what the Dark Lord was offering.

The last straw had been finding out that his mother was killed by the one man she'd sought out for help, the one man she'd believed in, the one man she'd trusted with their lives. He'd never truly known Snape after all. None of them had.

Seeing that the potion's color had turned a smoky grey, he dipped out enough to fill a goblet, wrinkling his nose at the stench. He waited a few moments, staring blankly at the thick liquid. Draco snorted. At the end of all things, only one person came to mind: Potter. He hated Potter, and yet, he wished that they'd maybe come to a truce at some point, that Potter had simply taken his hand that first day. The past few weeks had felt odd without Potter popping up everywhere. What did Potter think of him now that he knew what he'd been about to do?

Draco wasn't stupid. There were two broomsticks atop that tower that night. Dumbledore had just been using his wand as he'd disarmed him. When Dumbledore flew over the battlement after Snape's Killing Curse had hit him, Draco had heard a light thud and caught the tips of a pair of trainers hitting the stones to his right—the rest of the shoes and body were hidden under an Invisibility Cloak. Before he could say or do anything about it, Snape had ushered everyone out. Potter had been there. It was likely that the old man had had him bound so that he couldn't move or speak. There was no way Potter would have allowed Dumbledore to go down alone—especially not the way he'd gone after them when they were trying to leave the school's grounds. *No, Potter isn't like me. Potter wouldn't have failed Dumbledore as I failed him, as I failed my family.* Grudgingly, he respected Potter for never backing down.

Draco raised his goblet in silent salute. "I hope you kill that bastard, Potter. Both of them." With that, he tipped back the goblet and swallowed it as quickly as he could. It burned the entire way down, and he could feel it scalding in his stomach. *I'll be nobody's assistant, and I won't live another minute in this world when there is nothing worth fighting for—not now that all is lost.*

The room blurred, and he felt unnaturally hot. Darkness settled in around him, and he saw flashes from his life: his mother's loving smile, his father's sneer that belied the affection in his eyes, Snape's nod of approval in class, Potter's narrowed eyes, Pansy's lips...

Dumbledore's words were the last conscious thing he heard in his mind, and he agreed with them completely *He cannot kill you if you are already dead.*

Indeed.

Southern's Notes: After I read book six, I felt sorry for Draco, and I thought that he wouldn't be proud of what he did in canon. This is just a little "sad" way out for him. I had wanted to add a twist at the end, but I think this works better this way.

Wartcap and I were discussing the Snape and Harry confrontation one day, and I started thinking about Draco and how he must have felt after Disapparating away. So I decided to write up a little something.