

A Funny Thing Happened on the Way to Potosi

by Fairfield

Of calisthenics, trout, women, and the Amazon River.

Chapter 1 of 1

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"We can't let ourselves fall apart," said Lucius.

"I thought we were already torn apart," said Draco.

"We can't let our wives, our ex-wives, defeat us."

"That's true," said Draco. "They only took half our wealth, most of our lives, and left us broken shells of men."

"Well, other than that," said Lucius. "Look, since we drank all the sherry and brandy last night, I went out this morning to purchase some more for breakfast when I saw these magazines."

"They're all about physical fitness," said Draco, glancing at them. "There're certainly a lot of them."

"Numerous people are dedicated to our wellbeing," said Lucius.

"Damned decent of them, said Draco.

"Rise and shine, Father."

"Please tell me this isn't a morning when we do calisthenics and jogging."

"But tomorrow, it's riding our brooms through an obstacle course and crushing boulders with our spells. Look, this edition of 'Modern Quidditch' has the latest practice run designed by none other than Viktor Krum," said Draco.

"I'm still bruised from knocking over four of the obstacles from yesterday morning. We've got to tell the elves to make the barriers less resilient."

"Only four," said Draco. "That's a new record."

"Dancing lessons?"

"It's part of the planned program for expanding our horizons, entering into new relationships, and taking control of our lives," said Lucius.

"But it's only been three months since they left us. We agreed that we would be bitter and unapproachable for at least six months, and the only thing that we dare try would be to join an exclusive club where our unhappiness would be validated by listening to a bunch of grumpy old men complain."

"I believe we're progressing faster than that," said Lucius.

"You just want to meet girls," said Draco.

"I found an article that says the combined discipline and improvisation of dancing is good for the entire nervous system," said Lucius. "You don't want yours to atrophy, do you?"

"What brings you here, Luna," asked Draco.

"Initially, false advertising," she said. "I thought learning the foxtrot would help me hunt exotic animals."

"But you stayed," he said.

"There's something addictive about dancing," she said. "Do you plan to stay long?"

"A few more weeks. Then I plan to go trout fishing in Scotland."

"Oh, wow," she said. "Some species that have never been spotted are said to frequent trout streams. We could form a joint expedition."

"I'm not certain," he said.

"Of course, I wouldn't ask you to spend any of your valuable time looking for fauna whose discovery would expand our knowledge of the world around us," she said. She paused. "I'm an experienced camper. If you go by yourself, you will have to cook all your own meals."

"I do need to keep my strength up," he said. "I've heard trout fishing is quite demanding."

"I imagine it's a battle of wits," she said.

"Bar hopping?"

"It's time to put everything to the test. Otherwise, why exercise and take dance lessons? My stamina is more than up to an evening out. Dancing has my social and repartee skills at their highest, and if there's an altercation, my spells can crush stones," said Lucius. "Besides, aren't you running off to Scotland with Miss Lunar for some wild pussy willow?"

"Luna," said Draco. "And she's after wildlife."

"So am I," said Lucius.

"The townspeople are suspicious of you, you know," said Luna.

"Because we're together?" asked Draco.

"No, because you bought a fishing license for trout and then looked dumbfounded when they asked you about your rod and reel."

"What's a rod and reel?" he asked.

Luna looked up from the skillet with four trout in it. "It's how you're supposed to catch these things. One casts a hook on the end of a line into the water with the rod, snags the fish, and reels in the line with the reel, bringing the fish to shore."

"Sounds cruel," said Draco. "Stunning them with a spell is more humane, but I suppose it doesn't make much difference if you're going to be eaten, a terrible fate."

Luna looked dreamy eyed. "Being eaten doesn't sound so bad."

Various thoughts passed through Draco's mind before he said, "I assume you're talking about the great cycle of life and being returned through the elements."

Luna looked exasperated. "Yes, that's what I was thinking fond thoughts about, passing through a digestive tract before being deposited for my great return."

What's wrong with her? wondered Draco.

Lucius was telling himself it was either the strong drink or months of isolation or both. She really couldn't be that intelligent and attractive.

"They're coming up with the wildest things about the later dinosaurs," said Hermione.

"I can accept that they might have been warm-blooded and some of them were developing intelligence and traveling in hunting packs," said Lucius, "but I'm not certain their descendants are chickens just because their lung structure is similar."

"It's fun talking to you," said Hermione.

She scooted closer. He could feel her hip, warm and inviting. He smiled into her shining eyes. She didn't have the cool and distant beauty of someone he didn't want to think about. She had a beauty that improved with proximity.

"This is the best conversation I've had in years," he said.

"Let's order another round," she suggested.

"You're a perfect darling for lugging my camera up this steep hill," said Luna.

"Think nothing of it," said Draco, thinking calisthenics paled in comparison to a hobby of photography.

"It's a beautiful clear sky," said Draco, stretching out on a grassy spot.

"I don't want to look," said Luna. "It reminds me of my empty life."

"Nonsense, you have a full life, and someday, you'll find someone to share it."

She expressed her dread that no one could stand being near her. He contradicted her. She stretched out beside him to demonstrate how unappealing she was. He commented that her being close was nice and her being closer would be nicer. She, determined to prove him wrong, cuddled him. He hinted that if she wanted to practice being affectionate, now was a good opportunity.

She started slow. Her finger tips delicately traced features in a manner that let him know she found them noble. Her lips glided across him in such obvious restraint that the wish to devour him was written bold across the cloudless blue. Her embraces let him know that her spirit would soar with his. Her softness over toned muscles drove him crazy with desire.

He fought down the inappropriate thought. *I hope she's damp.*

She snuggled against him and sighed that he was the perfect wizard.

His inner self raged. *I hope the teasing bitch is soaking wet.*

Throughout it all, he had murmured that this would be a wonderful experience for any wizard.

"If I believed half of what you said, I would feel really good," said Luna.

"It's too bad you have to take me back to my place where a husband is waiting, or snoring is more like it," said Hermione.

"Not waiting up for you?" asked Lucius.

"That ended long ago," she said. "These days, the best I can do for him is feed him a good dinner and tuck him in." She shook her head. "I suppose all I'm good for is to be a mother to him."

"But your intelligence, your brilliant company," said Lucius. "Your fire and passion."

"I'm a bookish witch, and no one finds any fire and passion in me."

"They can't be looking," said Lucius, "and it's their great loss."

Hermione looked at Lucius. "It's the drink. You can't mean what you're saying."

"I would say it drunk or sober, from one end of the kingdom to the other, half way to the moon," he said. "I would say it with my last breath."

"You're very kind," said Hermione, "but I'm home and the evening ends here."

"Well?"

"Well?"

"I blew it," said Draco.

"I, too, treated the lady I was with as a worthy person," said Lucius.

"We let them down," said Draco. "They'll never forgive us or want to see us again."

Two owls flew into the room with messages.

"Well?" asked Lucius.

"Well?" asked Draco.

"Hermione Granger sends me her warmest greetings. She has talked to Luna Lovegood, and she shares her opinion of the Malfoys," said Lucius.

"Luna Lovegood sends her best, says she is thinking about me all the time, and wants to spend more time with me. Actually, they want to spend more time with us, and they think the Museum of Natural History offers exciting opportunities for us to continue a rewarding relationship."

"We're their friends," said Lucius.

"And they want to associate as two pairs," said Draco.

The two stared into a devastated future.

"I hear the source of the Amazon River is marvelous this time of year," said Lucius.

"I keep hearing the same thing," said Draco.

From a prompt by MuseAmusant: Lucius and Draco have been ditched by their wives and are inspired to leave the past behind.