

# Beautiful

*by quaffswinegaily*

The beauty of Draco Malfoy

## Beautiful

*Chapter 1 of 1*

The beauty of Draco Malfoy

*"Beautiful."*

Everybody knows we live in a world

Where they give bad names to beautiful things

Everybody knows we live in a world

Where we don't give beautiful things a second glance

....

People laughing behind their hands

As the fragile and the sensitive are given no chance

....

And the leaves turn from red to brown

To be trodden down

To be trodden down

*Beautiful* by Marillion (abridged)

"Aren't you beautiful?" Narcissa smiled and kissed the still damp baby's head.

"Not as beautiful as his mother," murmured Lucius, resting a hand on his wife's shoulder as he took a closer look at the newborn.

"Oh, you charmer, Lucius."

With no-one else in the room, Lucius felt relaxed enough to smile and take the small bundle into his arms. "You've got a lot to live up to, young man. I hope you're going to give your mother some rest now."

"I can't imagine this little boy causing us any trouble, can you?"

Handing the swaddled infant back to his wife, Lucius grunted a non-committal reply. As he opened the nursery door to leave, he turned back briefly. "You will be presentable for the Greengrass's soiree in a fortnight, Narcissa, won't you?"

"Don't think a small thing like childbirth will stop me from being gorgeous, Lucius."

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"Isn't he cute?"

"Who? Draco?"

"Yes. He's such a gentle little boy."

"And pretty."

"Pretty?"

"Absolutely. I mean, look at his fine, blond hair and elfin features. Wouldn't you say he was pretty?"

Narcissa acknowledged the comments from the other mothers at the coffee morning with a small smile as she tilted the porcelain cup to her lips. Gentle she could accept, but pretty?

"Narcissa, darling, you really should have another one. You and Lucius make such beautiful babies."

"Oh, dear, look at Gregory. He's pulled that toy away from Draco. No, Greg, sweetie, we mustn't hit people like that."

"Boys will be boys, won't they? I'm sure you didn't want Draco playing with Millicent's doll anyway, did you, Cissy?"

Narcissa pressed her lips together as she slipped an arm round her son to comfort him.

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It was a long time since they had been away on holiday, with Lucius being so busy at work, and Narcissa was regretting coming already. They had chosen to come to this hotel in the off-season before Draco started at primary school, hoping to find it quieter, only to discover it was booked out for a convention.

Narcissa sniffed and raised her nose a little as one of the conference attendees stepped into the lift. She did try to understand these people, really, but they were all a bit different. Surely they had something wrong in their upbringing or were a little touched in the head. Narcissa gave a delicate shudder.

"Mama."

An insistent tug on her hand drew her attention down to the angelic boy at her side. "Mother!"

"Yes, darling."

"Look, look," Draco continued in that penetrating, high voice, peculiar to children, which draws attention to the speaker.

She followed Draco's gaze as it swept from the green, spangled stilettos of the person standing with their back to them, up the long split in the skin-tight evening gown to the plunging back of the heavily-sequined dress.

"See that man's dress? Do you see? It's... it's..."

Narcissa tightened her grip on her son's hand as she observed the muscles of the man's hairy back tense.

"... beautiful!" Draco sighed.

The transvestite's shoulders relaxed, and he turned to smile at the beguiling child.

"When I grow up," Draco told him, "I want a dress just like that."

A small squeak escaped Narcissa's tightly pursed lips before she let out her breath and fixed a smile on her face.

"You shall have whatever you want, Draco, my sweet."

After the man left mother and son alone in the lift, Narcissa laid a hand on her boy's head, but kept her eyes firmly fixed on the changing numbers of the floors.

"Wouldn't you prefer a nice suit, Draco? Why don't we go and look for some lovely, new tailored robes for you?"

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Draco stood in front of his father's desk, waiting.

Placing his quill carefully beside the rolls of parchment, Lucius looked up at his son. "Well?"

Draco looked his father in the eye briefly before dropping his gaze. "I don't like them. They're mean to me."

Easing out from behind his desk, Lucius came round to stand in front of Draco. He took the boy's chin in his hand and encouraged him to raise his head. Seeing the slight film of tears in the innocent, grey eyes, Lucius modulated his tone.

"Tell me what happened, my boy. And don't mumble."

"They pulled my hair and called me a... a girl."

"Who did?"

"Gregory and Vincent."

"And why did they call you a girl?"

"Because my hair's long like yours. Mama says it's beautiful, but they all make fun of me."

"Shall we get it cut before you go to Hogwarts then, son?"

As Draco nodded, a tear dripped onto his father's hand. Lucius withdrew, looking at the small teardrop before wiping the dampness off on his robes.

"Chin up, boy. We all have to deal with life's difficulties. You'll get used to it."

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Peering out through the dirty windows of the Hogwarts Express, Draco felt anxiety growing in his gut.

He missed his mother already, though she had promised to send him regular letters and tuck parcels. She had reminded Draco he wouldn't be alone because he was travelling in the company of the two boys he had known for years, but it didn't relieve the sense of isolation creeping over him.

Recalling his father's words, he drew himself up in his seat, pulling his elegant robes around him. If he emulated his father, perhaps the new children he met would taunt him less.

"Chin up, old chap," Draco muttered to himself.

Shifting his scrutiny to Crabbe and Goyle, taking up the whole train bench across from him with their bulk, their clutter and their unremitting ugliness, Draco shuddered. He wondered if this was the best he could do for friends.

Draco's thoughts were disturbed by a rumour, borne by an older Slytherin. Harry Potter, the Boy Who Lived, was on the train. A ripple of excitement ran through Malfoy as he realised this was the type of person he should be associating with. This was someone different, someone worthy of a Malfoy's friendship, and someone with whom he shared no history. The idea of being able to start anew appealed to Draco, and he allowed a small smile to grace his shapely lips.

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In the dim privacy of his curtained bed, Draco stared at his hands, long and delicate in the moonlight. Potter had rejected his offer of friendship in front of everyone. It had been humiliating.

Laying his palms flat on the bedcovers to still the trembling, Draco tried to understand what had happened. He had used his Malfoy charm, offering his hand and giving Potter a very good alternative to slumming with the Weasley rabble.

When the scarred boy in front of him had declined to even touch him, Draco had been completely taken aback. It was unbelievable.

The blond could not fathom how anyone as plain as Potter could refuse to join him and be accepted by one of the glamorous pure-blood families. He inspected his immaculate hands, admiring the beauty of the fine network of veins beneath his pale skin.

Perhaps it was him. The thought pushed itself forwards. Perhaps no-one actually liked him, Draco. He had always felt different from the other boys but had thought it was just because he was smaller. His father had assured him he would grow into a fine man, handsome and proud like a true Malfoy. Now, he wondered if that would ever happen, or if he would favour his mother's side and become more like a Black at best a little strange, at worst a social pariah.

"Beautiful! Just bloody marvellous!" He spat the words out, the thought of becoming an ostracised, mad Black angering him. "And it'll be Potter's fault if I do. He shouldn't have shunned me like that."

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Narcissa smiled and drew her husband's attention to the young man. Lucius watched with expressionless, grey eyes as his son worked his way around the ballroom full of stunning witches and handsome young men. The tiniest twitch at the corner of his mouth and a small nod indicated the senior Malfoy's pride and acknowledgement when Draco's clear-eyed gaze met his.

A braying, upper-class voice beside Lucius broke into his reverie.

"I say, Malfoy, old chap, that youngster of yours has grown into a bit of a looker, hasn't he?"

Lucius smiled thinly.

"He'll make a great catch for one of our fillies."

A Malfoy eyebrow rose slightly.

"Look how they're fawning over him. He has a silver tongue like his sire, along with his height and that beautiful complexion."

"A talented dancer, too. He's so graceful."

"He'll go far, that one. How can he lose?"

Lucius shifted his gaze back to his son, watching him work the room, noting that Draco never stayed long with any one group and favoured no particular witch as a partner.

"Do you think he'd be interested in our Imogen?"

"Or how about uniting our families? Your Draco and our Estella."

"Yes, yes. Either of them could make a perfect match. They both come from excellent stock and would be excellent wives and homemakers."

"Ladies, as... homely as your daughters are, I cannot speak for our son. He is his own man."

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Draco sneered as he strode towards the castle.

Whilst he was at home, he could not wait to leave, and now he was returning to Hogwarts, he wondered what there was for him here. At least at Malfoy Manor he understood the superficial pleasantries with the underlying currents stirred by politics and ancestry.

Here, at Hogwarts, he understood nothing.

Slytherin pure-bloods sniggered behind their hands in the common room, calling him an arty-farty nancy boy for showing no interest in the Slytherin girls, though they stood alongside him against the other houses as if he were their leader. His Head of House listened to his concerns with passive disinterest, telling him to come back if they ever *actually* hurt him. They did hurt him, *in here*, thought Draco, rubbing a fist in the centre of his chest.

Then there was the Gryffindor couple who held his focus and dominated his schooldays. Weasley was easily discounted, but the other two...

Running slender fingers through silken locks, the young man continued his approach to the castle. As he pushed his hair off his face, Draco took the opportunity to look up at the school towers. You never knew when you were being observed. And there, a small movement at a window sent a small, perfect jolt through his aching chest, and his

sneer morphed into a beautiful, dazzling smile.

"Hey! Willy-woofter, what're you smirking about?"

Tamping down his emotions, Draco dropped his cold, grey eyes to his current surroundings.

"Nothing, Crabbe." Adding in a muttered undertone, "Nothing you'd understand, anyway."

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Cowering in the chaos of the final battle, his platinum hair matted with dirt, and his elegant robes tattered and stained, Draco whimpered.

He had been strong enough to survive so far, to withstand even the evil ministrations of the Dark Lord and his Death Eaters in his own home. But this... this was enough to shatter his fragile heart and crush his soul. Draco dared not watch but could not drag his eyes away as a lifeless body was brought forth from the Forbidden Forest.

For years, Draco had yearned for Voldemort's overthrow, but now at the final stages he could see the Golden Trio had failed. The possibilities for a free future were slipping through their fingers.

Shutting his eyes briefly on the horror, Draco tried to steady his ragged breath and calm his racing heart, taking his mind to a happier place.

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*As a Malfoy, he knew this would be unacceptable. His mother would cry silently and his father would shun him. But this was who he was. This was him.*

*Draco lay on his back, gazing up at the expanse of blue sky beyond the shifting colours of autumnal leaves, his pale skin soaking up the last warmth of the sun.*

*Small and gentle hands rested on his shoulder. Perfect hands he had watched for years, working at the potions bench next to him, brandishing a wand at him, hexing him.*

*Without looking, Draco knew the exact shade of the eyes, and the colour of the unruly, less-than-perfect hair.*

*He took a deep breath of air redolent with the scents of ripened fruit and autumn leaves.*

*"Beautiful," he whispered.*

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Returning to the present, the smell of the fight assailed him. The nauseating tang of blood and revolting faecal odour caught at his throat, making him gag and his eyes water. Wiping his eyes with a dirty sleeve and curling his fingers tight around his wand, Draco drew himself back to his feet.

He steeled his nerve for a return to the fray. If Voldemort could not be defeated, at least Draco would live up to his name and fight valiantly for what he so desperately wanted.

And then, in the blink of an eye, with a simple spell, it was over.

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Narcissa keened over her son, holding his limp body to her breast and howling her grief as Lucius stood beside her with one hand on his wife's shoulder.

"Nooo! Not my boy! Not Draco! Not my beautiful boy!"

Lucius appeared stony-faced as he maintained his dignity, but a small film of tears welled up in his grey eyes, and his Adam's apple trembled with restrained emotions. His fingers clutched at the fabric of Narcissa's robes in an attempt to steady his teetering world.

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They sat on either side of him where he lay, each holding one of his slender hands, stroking the cool, pale skin.

"He looks peaceful."

"Positively angelic."

"His hair doesn't look right when it's so perfectly coiffed, though. Here, a quick ruffle will soon sort that out."

"That's better."

"I'm surprised his Mum and Dad let us take a turn on watch."

"I thought they'd have a complete spaz."

"Yeah, maybe they thought giving us the graveyard shift would put us off."

"Hmm."

"I'm not so sure about the clothes they've chosen. Do you really think green sequins suit him?"

"Something to do with what he always wanted, they said. A little magic and it'll be much more elegant."

"Yep, that's definitely better. More *him*."

"He's still a bit of a pretty-boy, isn't he?"

"It's the length of his eye-lashes that makes him look effeminate."

"No, I reckon it's the fine bone structure."

"What, the narrow shoulders and skinny hips?"

"Nah, the high cheekbones and the pointy chin."

"You're probably right."

"Course I'm right, you silly harpy."

"Hark at you, tosser."

"Isn't it strange being here with him without him constantly butting in with his sniping?"

"Very peaceful, he's always been such an opinionated, arrogant wanker."

"Don't speak like that. You're supposed to say comforting, nice things."

"Piss off! Like he'd say nice things about us."

"True. He'd be his normal self, wouldn't he?"

"Yeah, a git."

"Did you hear what she just called you, Malfoy?"

"Look, did you see that? He smiled."

"He's trying to talk, Hermione. What's that he's saying?"

"If we lean in closer, Harry, we might be able to hear him."

The voice was whisper thin. "Knew you'd come."

"It was impossible for us to stay away. We must have had our fugly magnets switched on."

"I thought you were a babe magnet, Harry."

"Yeah, right, Hermione. Look at what I've ended up with."

"But you two said I was beautiful," Draco murmured.

"No, we didn't. We said you were disgustingly..."

"...pulchritudinous!"

"I knew you both loved me."

"Dry up, Draco."

"Kiss him, Hermione. That'll shut him up."

"No, I think it's your turn, Potter."

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"It's not what I had envisioned for him, Narcissa."

"No, Lucius, it isn't. But he's happy, and he's still our beautiful little boy."

Lucius gave his wife's shoulder a gentle squeeze in agreement.

A/N: Thanks, sunny33, for all your support.

This piece is dedicated to a boy I know, who will probably never read it. It's not about him, exactly, but he's in there, and we love him just as he is.