

Through Death, They Join

by *Southern_Witch_69*

Draco leaves a few final requests for his Hermione and also for his father. Will they honor them?

Last Requests

Chapter 1 of 1

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Disclaimer: I've swiped a few of J.K.R.'s characters for a bit of fun. I'll clean them off and send them back later.

I'd like to thank my lovely and brilliant beta, Charmed Nay, for looking this over for me last year when I first wrote it. Another set of thanks goes to CocoaChristy for helping me dust it off to upload now.

SW69 says: I wrote this story last year before JKR put a stop to the rumors that Harry was the heir of Gryffindor, so that's in this story. Hehe. This story takes place in an AU environment, post Hogwarts. Draco and his father have joined the Order in attempt to make amends for past deeds and so on and Snape is friendly...keep dreaming, eh? If you don't mind that, then read on. If not, cheers go to you, and I have no hard feelings. It's a very fast read and only a one shot for those wanting a smile...after a few frowns. Nothing more.

The war was finally over. Draco had been killed. So many had died. She couldn't believe that Draco had been taken from her. They had only recently realized that they were meant to be together. Why? Why couldn't they have had a few more years together? They had never been able to make love! He had said that they should wait until everything was over. Voldemort had found out that he and his father had become spies along with Severus Snape. Draco was killed while Snape escaped. Lucius had escaped previously, but his wife had been murdered before he could protect her. Only one Malfoy remained, and it wasn't *her* Malfoy. It was Snape who had broken the news to her about Draco's death. He'd led her to the large room in the castle where they had brought some of the dead inside to prepare them for their families' arrivals or burials.

His shoulder-length blond hair was as silky as ever. His face was relaxed. He appeared to be merely sleeping. She kissed his cold, pale, eerily firm lips one last time and cried over his body. "Why?" she wailed. Severus moved and held her close.

"I can't answer that, Hermione. I would have taken his place if I could have," he murmured. "I know that you were supposed to be married. He told me last night after he came back from attending to his mother's service. He gave me a letter to give to you in case something happened, and he gave me one for his father. I'd left instructions for them to be distributed in the event of my demise, but that is not necessary now. We knew it was a risk to return to our duty...especially after Lucius had been outed and Narcissa had been murdered." He sighed sadly. "I will send it to you this evening."

She nodded numbly as her ex-professor-turned-friend left her side. The past year had allowed her to become close to him and to Draco. She hoped that Snape would finally find the peace that he'd been craving. She looked back to the man she loved. As gently as she could, she smoothed back Draco's hair. "I wish I could see your eyes one more time," she said softly.

"So," a voice drawled from behind, "you are the woman he was in love with then, Miss Granger?" She knew it was Lucius. There was no mistaking that refined, silky drawl.

Hermione looked up and gasped. "Your eyes... pale, blue-grey... Draco's eyes," she murmured. She stood before him and searched his face. His eyes were haunted, full of grief... yet... something flickered there. She caressed the arrogant man's face softly...her insides numb and exhausted...and ran her thumb across his lower lip. "Your skin... your lips... Draco," she breathed. Lucius' long, platinum locks hung down in an even sheet across his chest. She touched his hair. "Silky," she murmured. Then the world turned black.

SIX MONTHS LATER

Lucius was lonely. He had turned against Voldemort to spare his family, to finally do something right for once in his life, and for what? His wife had been murdered. His son had died in battle. He was alone. No wife. No heir. No family. Many times he'd thought of ending it all to join them. Narcissa and he had been over for a long time sexually, but they were still companions making the most of life. They'd each done their own thing, but it had always been a comfort that she was so near. Such a stable part of his life...gone.

He and Draco each received an Order of Merlin, First Class. They were the scant payments received for their services rendered, though Draco never saw his or experienced the rightful pride of receiving such an honor. Lucius placed them in a glass case in his study next to the final, unopened letter his son had written to him the evening his mother was killed and the night before he'd died. Severus had sent it to him before he'd left on sabbatical. Draco had been happy before he died. The woman he'd loved had finally agreed to marry him, according to what he'd said that night. Draco had never admitted whom she was, having agreed with her to wait until the war was over. He supposed it was truly because of her bloodline, likely not wanting to upset his father at such a time.

He wished that he could have told his son that after he'd gotten to know her, her blood didn't matter. She was a fierce fighter, an intelligent woman, and a clever witch. Lucius would have been proud to have her as a daughter-in-law. The best part about Miss Granger was that she truly loved his son...not for the money or the name. Those things meant nothing to her. Only Draco had mattered. Draco had been there to help her after Weasley left her to return to a previous lover's bed, and she'd never looked back. Lucius hated that Draco had felt more comfortable in confiding the truth to Severus when *he* should have been the one that his son talked to about such important matters.

That day that he'd found her weeping over his son's body had caused something to change in him. The world took on new meaning. Yes, he still thought Muggles were inferior, which they were due to their inability to use magic, but if a witch or wizard came from a Muggle union, they should be treated as all other wizards. At that point in his life, he'd realized how ridiculous it had been to put such stock in bloodlines. One only had to look at Voldemort. He'd been a half-blood. One only had to look at Potter. He was a half-blood as well. Each of them, though, were heirs to one of the House founders at Hogwarts, and that was how it had ended: the heir of Slytherin against the heir of Gryffindor. In the end, Gryffindor won.

One only had to look at Hermione Granger. Muggle-born. Cleverest Witch of the Age. Life had been hard for her. Her parents were murdered at the hands of his old associates, yet she didn't hold that against Draco. She'd loved him completely, and then he had been taken from her as well. Severus had told him that she had ended up in St. Mungo's after they'd talked that night. He'd gone there a number of times to see her, but his visits were for naught.

Seeing Lucius so soon after accepting Draco's death had been a shock to her. From the way she'd sounded, it was like seeing Draco all over again... only as a different, older version. He had caught her when she'd begun to fall, and he'd carried her to a mediwitch. He was unsure what to say after that. He'd tried to see her, but Potter thought it was best that he didn't. At least until the shock wore off, or so he'd said. Of course everyone jumped at anything Potter said, so Lucius had not been allowed to see her.

He wanted to know this woman. It felt as if she was the last link to his son aside from himself. For the past three months, he'd found out, she was staying with the Weasley clan, what was left of them anyway. Every single day that had passed had him wanting to pay her a visit, but he couldn't. He was forbidden from there as well...Potter's orders. Lucius didn't want to shock her enough to send her back to St. Mungo's anyway. He supposed that when she was ready, she would come to him. If she was interested in knowing more about Draco's home and family, that is. How could she not be? Perhaps they would meet by chance.

He walked to the glass case and pulled out the letter, finally deciding to read it. Draco's tiny scrawl was still visible on the unblemished envelope. He had never read it, being afraid of what it might say. Today was the day that he would read his son's words. Whatever they may be, he would read them and cherish them. Gently, he sliced the top of the envelope open and removed the parchment.

Father,

I have just left our manor, and I must tell you that I am in great despair. I wish that nothing would have happened to Mother, but I guess there are sacrifices that we all must make. You escaped and hid, and that is something we all would have done. You had no idea of knowing that they knew how to get to Mother. Please don't feel so guilty, Father. I know that you and mother weren't exactly close, but it pained me nonetheless to see you looking so lost.

That's why I'm writing. I feel lost as well, Dad. I am in love with Hermione Granger. Yes, she's the woman that I told you about tonight. She says she'll marry me. She is truly extraordinary. I think you will like her. Once this war business is over with, I would like to have your blessing to marry her even though she is a Muggle-born witch. If I survive, that is. I must admit that I have this strange feeling that I will not live much longer. Maybe it's just because of Mother's death looming over me, or maybe it's the fear of losing the one thing that I want the most.

Father, if I die, as a last request, please take care of Hermione for me. She is not one to accept charity, having money in her own right from her family, but I would like it if she had some of what should have been my inheritance. Make her see that it is from me. Father, if I die and you are both alone, maybe you could see the woman that I saw, and maybe you two could find peace together. After all, you will need an heir to carry on our good family name, which is very important to me...always has been, and I know not one witch alive more deserving of the name of Malfoy. I love you, Father, and I am proud of you for all that you have done to help us, even with the losses we have suffered.

Remember that. Remember me.

Your Faithful Son,

Draco

Tears that Lucius had thought to be completely shed long before slid down his cheeks. His son's words meant more to him than the air he breathed. He would fulfill his son's wishes if it was the last thing that he ever did.

Hermione sat on a bench in the garden behind the Burrow watching the gnomes frolic about when she felt a hand on her shoulder. She looked up to meet Harry's sad eyes. "Mione, when are you going to stop this? I am not trying to be mean, but I think it is time that you moved on."

She smiled. Harry had been so protective of her since the battle. Most of their friends had died. Ron had been one of them. She had spent three months repairing all that was left of her broken life in St. Mungo's hospital. Some days wishing she were dead, too, while others would find her glad to be alive. When they finally saw fit to release her, she'd gone to the Weasleys. Their home was the only other place that felt like home to her besides Hogwarts. Harry had married Ginny, who was now expecting a child. Molly and Arthur were glad to have her. Ron, Percy, and Charlie had been lost to them in the war.

"I guess it is time, Harry," Hermione murmured. "I am still haunted by his eyes. Every time I close my eyes, they are there. Piercing my soul, begging me to do something, and I don't know what it is that he wants."

Ignoring this, Harry said, "Well, I have all of your things at our house. Why don't you come back with me? Stay with us for a while. Hell, stay forever. Go through your things." Harry sighed. "Draco's last letter to you is still there, Mione. I think you owe it to him to read it."

She nodded. "Let's get what I have here and go." After a tearful farewell with the Weasleys, she and Harry Apparated back to Harry's rebuilt family home in Godric's Hollow. It was a modest, yet large house...four bedrooms, two baths...and it looked so much like Harry. She was happy for him.

They had all of her belongings put in a room that they had made just for her. She immediately lost herself in memories and pain for three days before she came out again. She went through every photo album, every letter, old school notes, clippings from the papers... everything... before she finally had only one thing left to read: Draco's last letter.

Beautiful Hermione,

I have just left my family's home, and I feel a great sense of loss. My mother was dear to me even though she and father stopped loving one another years ago. He is beside himself as well. The Malfoy family is breaking away...I can feel it. One good thing remains. You will become the next Mrs. Malfoy. We will rebuild the foundation of my family by starting one of our own. I guarantee it. I love you. I will always love you. However, it is loving you right now that is hurting me the most.

For some reason, I feel as though my days are numbered. I don't know if it because of the death all around me or not, but I just feel like my time is short. I have written a letter to my father. I have asked him to please be sure that you receive a portion of my inheritance. Please don't turn it away. It is what I want, Hermione, as my last gift to you, part of me. At least I feel a little mollified that I know I can take care of you still from beyond if need be. If the worst does come to pass, and I do die, I want you to do something for me. Or, try to.

I would like for you to get close to my father. He could use a strong, sensible, loving woman who could give him everything that my mother couldn't. He has changed his views, Hermione. If you would marry him and give him an heir, a sibling in my memory, I would be smiling down upon you both. The only two people besides Severus that I really love would be happy and carry on my family name. I know this sounds morbid, but he is much like me, and I know you could be happy. I guess I just want you to be part of my family...my heritage...so badly that I'll ask anything to see you there.

I love you, and I will always respect you no matter what you decide. I'm certain that even friendship would be good for you both. Thank you for saving me, my love. I was heading down the wrong path before you opened my eyes. Inadvertently, this also saved my father. I'll always appreciate that.

Always and forever,

Yours,

Draco

Hermione cried. Her sweet Draco. It was just like him to be worried about her. *Well, he would certainly be upset if he saw me now* she thought bitterly, knowing she'd been wallowing in self-pity for months. Draco's father must not have agreed with his request, for he'd never come to her. She had not seen him since that night he'd found her with Draco after he'd died. Harry had told her that he'd carried her to a mediwitch, but she hadn't seen or heard from him since. Maybe she should go to see him, for Draco. She wondered whose eyes had been pleading to her and haunting her dreams? She'd thought them to belong to Draco, but now, she was uncertain.

Later that night, when Hermione finally came out of her room to bathe and join them for dinner, she questioned Harry. "What is Lucius doing now?"

Harry squirmed uneasily. "Why do you ask?"

She smiled softly. "Because he is Draco's father. He is the only thing left of Draco that lives. Has he remarried? Is he all right?"

Ginny smiled and nodded to Harry.

"He has not remarried, no. Never see him in public all that much either except when he is asking after you." He looked guilty. "Mione, he went to St. Mungo's each week to try to see you while you were there. I gave orders not to let him in. I didn't think it would do you any good seeing as what happened when you saw him that night, what with you passing out because he looked so much like Draco and all. Arthur asked him to let you heal and not pop by the Burrow while you were there as well." He took her hand in his. "I know it wasn't my decision to make, but I thought it was for the best. I hope you can understand that. It's why I turned him away today. I thought you didn't need anymore heartache."

"He has been trying to contact me? Honestly?" she asked quickly.

"Yes. All the time. Snape says he inquires on your health often," Ginny added.

Hermione stood up. "I have somewhere to be. Don't wait up for me."

"Where are you going?" Harry asked, near panic.

"To Lucius," she said simply and made her way upstairs to change into her deep green dress robes that Draco had bought for her. The top part was held together by two silver snakes, and she'd teased him about it until he admitted that they were robes that his family wore, clasps included. She was sure that Lucius would approve. She brushed through her hair and pulled it up to form a crown of curls and waves atop her head, releasing a few long strands to hang about her face. She accented her look with simple silver hoop earrings and stuffed Draco's letter in her pocket. Taking her wand in her hand for the first time in months, she placed it in her pocket.

Harry and Ginny were near the front door, waiting for her. "What are you going to do?" Harry asked worriedly.

"I am going to go to him. He needs me. I need him. Don't expect me back tonight," Hermione said, daring them to object.

"Mione, what brought this about?" Ginny asked suddenly.

"Draco's letter," she said, patting her pocket. With a stomach rumbling with edginess, she stepped out onto the street and Apparated to Malfoy Manor's front gate. It was nearly 8 o'clock at night, and she hoped that he wouldn't be in bed or that she wouldn't be disturbing anything. Mustering every bit of Gryffindor bravery she had, she stepped up to the front door and rang the bell. A house-elf answered the door.

"Can Tizzy help yous, Miss?"

"I need to see Lucius Malfoy... please," she said. She noted how the elf's eyes widened when she'd said 'please.'

Tizzy opened the door and ushered her in.

"Who is it, Tizzy?" a drawling voice called from a room to her left.

"You is having company, Master," she replied. "Go in," she urged Hermione.

Not knowing what to expect, Hermione walked in slowly and took in the sight of Lucius Malfoy. He was sitting gracefully in an elegant chair with his legs crossed. One hand held a tumbler while the other held a book firmly against his lap. His long, blond hair was down, fanning out about his shoulders and chest. She saw a moment of confusion

on his face as he took in her robes and face. Hermione knew that she looked different. Even when she looked in the mirror, she saw a different woman staring back at her. She was thinner than she used to be, and her face looked older.

Then he sat forward, placing his drink on the table next to him. "You're here," he said in an instant of recognition, his melodious voice washing over her.

"I am," she said softly and moved forward until she was near him. He stood, placed the book on his chair, and took the remaining steps to meet her. She reached up a hand to cup his face with her hand. His blue-grey eyes penetrated hers it seemed. They were Draco's eyes, yet different. These mature eyes looked on her with admiration, respect, and possibly desire. Desire for what? Companionship? Lust? Something more? Her other hand reached up to push back the hair that had fallen over part of his face. Once the hair was moved, she left her hand on his shoulder. "Am I welcome?"

"You are most welcome here," he drawled softly. "Have you read Draco's letter?"

"Just a couple of hours ago," she admitted.

"I've just read my own from him a few days ago," he said quietly.

"Only a few days ago?" she asked, puzzled. "But Harry said you have been trying to see me since..."

"I have," he said, nearly a whisper. He looked at her for a moment and said, "You have changed, Miss Granger."

"Yes."

"Will you be staying?" he asked, his proud voice revealing a slight hint of hope.

"Are you going to marry me?" she asked bluntly.

"I will," he said without blinking.

She pulled his mouth to hers for a soft kiss. The kiss was tender and full of longing. They pulled away and looked at each other appreciatively. This was not Draco, but it was what Draco wanted in the event that something should happen to him. Something about it felt completely right.

"Welcome home, Mrs. Malfoy," he drawled.

"Sorry it took me so long to get here," she replied.

He took her hand and kissed it. Without another word, he picked up her slight form and carried her upstairs to his bedchamber. He made love to her more gently than he'd ever made love to any woman, and to his delight, he found that she was unspoiled. She had saved herself... for him, though unintentionally. No one had ever done that for him before. She would always belong to him, and he knew that a part of himself was lost to her as well.

"If anyone would have told me a couple of years ago that I would be asking Harry Potter to be a godfather to my son, I would have thought they were crazy," Lucius said ironically, as he held his son for the second time. "He looks just as Draco did."

"What would you like to name him, Lucius?" Hermione asked, her voice still tired, exhaustion littering her face.

"Would you mind if we named him Dray?" He raised an eyebrow in question.

"I would love it. Dray Lucius Malfoy has a ring, does it not?"

"Indeed it does, my dear. Indeed." Lucius kissed his son and vowed that he would do everything in his power to ensure that ~~his~~ his son would reach adulthood and have all that he desired. He would do things right this time. He owed it to Draco. To Hermione. To Narcissa. To himself.

"Lucius, I *do* love you. You know that, right?" she asked softly.

He smiled at his young, beautiful wife of just over two years. "I do, and I love you. You have been a light for me in dark times. I have never felt this way about a woman. I think I waited my whole life for you."

"And I, you," she whispered. "Draco saw to it to bring us together. For that, I am grateful." They'd never hid the fact that they came together only through Draco's death or that Hermione had loved him first. Together, they worked to grieve and move on, cherishing his memory and the short time that he'd been in their lives.

Lucius smiled easily as he kissed his wife soundly.

Southern's Notes: Short, fast, and kind of sweet, I guess. I don't mind Lucius and Hermione at times, but I always feel as if I'm cheating on SS/HG. Isn't that ridiculous? Hahaha! Anyway, I wrote this while I was still on my Draco and Hermione kick way back last year. I didn't discover Snape and Hermione until after... or I promise it would be him helping her move on.

But, hey, Lucy needs some loving, too, eh?

I would try to honor any last requests that my loved ones might make, and that is mainly what this story is about.