

The Great Malfoy

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Chapter 1 of 1

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A/N: Many thanks to my betas, StrongHermione and k_lynne317, and to gloryandfame, who helped me out when I was in a bit of a plot pickle. Any mistakes that remain are my own. This was originally written for the Dramione Remix 2016 held on LJ. I hope everyone enjoys.

Note: This story does not fit into the HP world. You may recognise the characters, but the Harry Potter series timeline does not apply. It takes place in a completely alternate universe.

Remix Characters: Daisy/Gatsby from the Great Gatsby. To briefly summarize the book, Nick moves to a tiny house on Long Island adjoining the sumptuous mansion owned by enigmatic neighbour, the fabulously wealthy Jay Gatsby. After attending one of Gatsby's legendary parties Nick is asked by Gatsby to arrange a meeting with his cousin, Daisy, now married to the brutish and philandering Tom Buchanan, who was Gatsby's true love, prior to war service. As Nick complies he comes to see that Gatsby, once a poor boy, has recreated himself as a fascinating millionaire purely to win Daisy back but the events of a drunken afternoon conspire to bring about an ending which is anything but happy.

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The Great Malfoy

"Harry, hello!" Hermione knocked on the door, standing outside of her cousin's recently purchased cottage. She saw that his car was parked outside and knew that he was home, so she opened the door to let herself in. "Harry!" she shouted, looking around. She could smell freshly baked cookies.

As she turned into the kitchen, Hermione came to a full stop, surprised to see that her cousin had a friend over. "Oh, hello," she greeted the blond-haired man. When he turned to face her, she let out a small gasp.

He grinned at her. "Granger, it's been awhile," he said softly.

Standing before her was Draco Malfoy, a wizard that she had dated in her youth. In fact, the two of them had been engaged to be married before Draco had disappeared on business, never to return. Never having moved past her love for Draco, she had settled and married Ron, a wizard who was a star Quidditch player.

"Oh, you two know each other?" Harry asked, coming into the living room with a plate full of cookies. "How?" When neither of them answered, Harry looked back and forth between the two, surprised to see such familiarity between them.

"Draco," she whispered. "I... How are you?"

"I've been quite well," Draco said, smirking. "I own the large manor next door. Malfoy business has been booming."

"I'm pleased to hear that," Hermione said quietly, taking a seat on the sofa. She fixed herself a cup of tea, her hands shaking. She still couldn't believe that Draco was sitting before her.

"You should come to one of my parties, Hermione," Draco said after a moment's pause. He cleared his throat, smirking. He looked quite sure of himself. "I think you'd enjoy them. Music, drinking, fireworks... Harry's even gone." He clapped his neighbour on the back.

When Hermione looked to him, Harry laughed. "I've only been to one," he held his hands up in surrender. "It was quite the party, though," he admitted.

Hermione considered the invitation. "I'd have to speak with Ronald, but I'm sure we could stop by," Hermione said after a moment. It had been quite some time since she had been able to go out and enjoy herself. Hopefully, Ron would approve of them going.

"Who's Ronald?" Draco asked, regarding her carefully.

"My husband," Hermione replied quietly.

Draco stiffened. "Well, you're both invited." He grabbed a cookie from the plate before nodding to Harry. "I'll see you later, old mate." He glanced at Hermione. "I hope to see you soon, Hermione."

His parting glance caused butterflies to appear in her stomach. She tried to enjoy the rest of tea with Harry, but found it difficult as her thoughts kept straying to the blond-haired, grey-eyed wizard that had reappeared in her life.

Ron frowned. "I don't know why we need to go to this Malfoy fellow's home." He pursed his lips at the sight of the lavish manor before them. *My home is larger*, he thought smugly. Placing his hand on Hermione's lower back, he gently guided her through the crowd. He grinned when he spotted Harry, Hermione's cousin and his friend from their younger school years.

"Harry," Hermione greeted him with a hug. "How are you?" She looked around, smiling at the chaos.

Ron shook Harry's hand firmly. "Good to see you, mate. Have you settled in nicely?"

"Indeed," Harry said. "Malfoy's been a great help, too."

"Where is this Malfoy fellow?" Ron asked, looking around. "I'd like to see the man who could afford to throw parties like this in his home every weekend."

"Well here I am," a voice said from behind him.

Turning around, Ron arched a brow when he saw the wizard standing before him. There was an air of arrogance about him, and Ron knew at once that if this wizard had gone to Hogwarts, he would have been a Slytherin. "Mr. Malfoy," he greeted, holding out his hand politely. "I'm Ronald Weasley, Hermione's husband and a schoolmate of Harry's."

"Pleasure to meet you," Malfoy said a little coolly, his gaze raking over Ron. "I hope you both enjoy yourselves."

Ron noticed that way that Malfoy's gaze lingered on Hermione. He'd have to keep an eye on this Malfoy fellow. He didn't like the look of him one bit.

"Will you dance with me?" Draco asked, stepping closer to Hermione once he found her away from her husband.

She looked around nervously. "I don't know if Ron would like that very much," Hermione replied, although she wanted to dance with him. She remembered the way their bodies used to press together when they danced in their youth.

"Your husband is busy talking with Harry; he won't even notice that you're gone." Draco took her hand. "Just a quick foxtrot." His thumb stroked her knuckles.

"Oh, all right," Hermione said, making up her mind. She grinned as Draco quickly lead her to a more secluded area of the dancefloor. Her heart raced as Draco pulled her into his arms, dancing with her. "I still can't believe we've bumped into each other like this," she said after a moment.

Draco nodded. "Fate certainly does have a way of bringing things together." They danced together, a picture of grace as Draco carefully danced a conservative foxtrot with her. "Should we go and talk? Perhaps somewhere private?"

"Yes, please," Hermione replied. "Harry's home is close to here, right? Why don't I ask him to join us?"

"Why?" Draco pressed.

"Just in case... you never know what could happen." Draco looked disappointed but nodded. Hermione ran off, grabbing Harry. "Where's Ron?" she asked.

Harry shrugged. "He's off talking with someone. Didn't quite catch the fellow's name."

Hermione pursed her lips, but didn't say anything. She knew Ron was likely talking with some slag in a corner. She was not oblivious to her husband's cheating ways.

She sat on the steps of Harry's cottage for the next hour, catching up on their past exploits. Draco shared that he now managed a few shoppes that sold rare potion ingredients. She shared that she spent most of her days writing as a published author.

Abruptly, Draco stood. "Hermione, Harry, I've got to be off. I do have other guests to tend to." His eyes lingered on Hermione. He took her hand, kissing the back of it lightly. "Until next time, Hermione."

"Thank you, Draco," Hermione said, flushing. "I appreciate the invitation."

"Harry," Draco said, clapping Harry on the back before heading back towards his own property.

Both Harry and Hermione watched Draco's disappearing figure until he was gone completely. When they were alone, Harry pinned Hermione with a glare. "What are you doing?"

"I don't know what you're talking about," Hermione said coyly.

"Ron would be furious," Harry pointed out.

"Nothing is going on between me and Draco," Hermione defended quickly. Truthfully, nothing had happened, but she wished it would. Seeing Draco rekindled feelings that she had long ago buried.

Moments later, Ron appeared. "Harry, mate, can we use your Floo?"

"Sure," Harry said. He led the two of them into his home.

"So who is this Malfoy fellow? I heard he does business in Knockturn Alley."

"Where did you hear that?" Harry asked incredulously. He was glad that Hermione didn't catch the last half of Ron's statement.

"Some people mentioned it," Ron said with a shrug. He shook his head, stopping next to Harry's fireplace. "I'd like to know who he is and what he does. I'm going to make a point of finding out," Ron insisted.

Hermione rolled her eyes. "Ronald, he owns some potion ingredients' shoppes. He built them up all on his own, that's why he has the money. Good night, Harry," she said, kissing him on the cheek before Flooing home.

Ron bid him good-bye as well, clapping him on the back as he stepped past.

Harry was thankful to finally be alone. However, not even a full minute later, there was a knock on his door. "Malfoy," he grumbled, already knowing who it was. Who else would knock on his door at this time?

He answered the door, inviting Draco in for a nightcap. As he poured them both drinks, Harry frowned. "What is it, Malfoy? You keep pacing."

"She didn't like it. She didn't enjoy herself." Draco looked incredibly disappointed.

Harry shrugged. "I'm sure Hermione enjoyed herself just fine. She's never been one for parties, Draco. She prefers quiet events, as opposed to loud, hectic ones."

"I just feel so far away from her," Draco said softly. "She doesn't seem to understand it all. She used to. We would sit and talk for hours and it never felt forced..."

Harry was astounded by the look of longing on his friend's face. "Draco, you can't repeat the past," Harry warned. Couldn't both of them see that an affair would only lead to disaster?

Draco stopped pacing, lifting his tumbler of liquor. "Why of course you can!" He knocked back the liquor, mumbling to himself, "Everything will be the way it was before... she'll see."

Harry felt sick to his stomach... a storm was approaching.

Hermione knocked on the door to the large, looming manor ahead of her. She was relieved when Draco opened the door. "Hi," she greeted with a smile, stepping inside. If either Ron or Harry knew that she was here right now, she was sure there would be hell to pay. However, she couldn't get Draco from her mind. She needed to see him.

"Hermione, I was pleased to get your call," Draco said, taking her hand and placing it on his arm. He graciously escorted her deeper into the manor.

"It looks so different without all the people and dancing," Hermione commented. "Nice, though."

Draco grinned, looking pleased. "The house truly is magnificent." He grinned. "I think you'll especially enjoy the library."

"Is that where we're headed now?" Hermione asked excitedly. When Draco nodded, her smile deepened. "I can't wait to see it."

"You love books just as much now as you did then," Draco said, smirking. "Not much has changed."

Hermione frowned slightly, slowing her steps. "A lot has changed since then, Draco."

"I don't think so," Draco insisted. "You'll see sooner or later, Hermione. I'm much the same man."

"We were children then," Hermione said softly, her heart racing. She was torn between pressing herself against him and running far away. He drove her wild with want, and despite knowing how inappropriate it was, she wanted him.

"Here we are, the library," Draco announced, opening a set of doors. He watched as Hermione eagerly took in the sights.

"Draco, this is incredible," Hermione said in complete awe. She sniffed the air, loving the scent of so many books. He even had a swirling, metal staircase in the corner that led to a second floor of books. "Where do I even begin?"

"That's up to you," Draco said, enjoying her excitement. "I have both Muggle and wizard literature, so you can have your pick."

Hermione quickly found a book to read and settled herself on the sofa, Draco sitting next to her.

As time passed, she became increasingly aware of Draco's presence. She tried to focus on the book in front of her, but she kept thinking of Draco. Glancing up nervously, their eyes met. "Draco," she whispered, unable to take the sexual tension any longer. She needed him... desperately.

She wasn't sure who made the first move, but the next second, she was straddling his lap, grinding her hips against his hardening cock. Their lips were pressed against each other, kissing each other passionately. She moaned into the kiss, making quick work of his buttons. Within minutes, they were one.

The two of them spent the afternoon completely wrapped up in one another. Neither of them had a care for the matters that lay outside of Malfoy manor.

Ron stepped out of the Floo into his private flat where he often met the witch he was having an affair with. He hoped that she would be here.

"Ronald!" There was a flurry of activity and a bubbly, blonde witch tossed herself into his arms. "I've missed you, darling."

Ron hugged Lavender tightly. "I've missed you, too. Look, I've got you a new set of pearls." He reached into his pocket and pulled out the case.

Lavender let out a squeal of excitement as she opened the case and looked at her new necklace. "You're so good to me, Ron." She picked up the delicate pearls. "Here, put them on me, love."

"I want to see you in nothing but the pearls," Ron said huskily after closing the clasp around her neck. He made quick work of removing her clothing, and they spent their afternoon in sexual bliss.

"Harry, can I speak with you?" After three weeks of barely speaking, Draco's head was now floating in his Floo.

"Sure," Harry said, moving towards his fireplace. "Draco, what can I do for you?"

"I was wondering if you would accompany me to the Weasleys tomorrow."

Harry felt his throat go dry. "The Weasleys? Why in Merlin's name do you need to go there?" Harry had his suspicions, but he hoped they weren't true.

"Hermione's invited me. Please come, I'm sure she'd be happy to see you," Draco pressed.

"Fine, I'll go," Harry said after a moment. *They likely need a third party so Ron won't murder them both if that's what's going on here.*

Nearly an hour later, Harry received a Floo call from Hermione. She sounded relieved when he said that he'd be there for lunch the next day. Harry glanced up at the sky, it was dark and stormy. Yes, the storm was nearly here.

"It's so hot," Hermione complained, lying on the couch. She smiled at Harry and Draco, both of whom had just arrived. "Cooling Charms can only do so much, you know?" she said, sitting upright. Her thin, white dress was clinging to her, damp with sweat. "Disgusting."

The other door opened with a bang and Ron strode in. "Mr. Malfoy, it's a pleasure to see you again." Ron reached out, shaking Draco's hand. "Harry," he greeted. "How are you finding this Scottish heat?"

"It's atrocious," Harry said, trying to dissipate some of the tension in the room.

"Ron, would you mind getting the elven-wine from the cellar? I feel like a drink," Hermione said, pleading with her husband. As soon as Ron left the room, she bolted from her spot on the sofa and into Draco's arms. She knew it was risky, but she needed to kiss him. She needed to assure him that her heart was his. "I love you, you know," she whispered, uncaring that Harry was watching. She suspected that he already knew. She kissed him firmly on the mouth.

Draco held her in his arms briefly before letting her go. He watched as she resumed her place on the sofa. Waving his wand, he cast a Cooling Charm on all three of them.

"Thanks," she murmured in appreciation as Ron re-entered the room. "Pour me a glass, darling?"

Ron rolled his eyes. "No, I just got the bottle for no reason, of course I'll pour you a glass." He glanced at Harry and Draco. "Glass for you each?"

"Yeah, I'll take a glass," Draco said curtly, briefly meeting Ron's gaze before glancing about the room once more. He couldn't bear to look at the man that had stolen Hermione from him.

"Yes, please," Harry answered a little more politely than Draco.

Hermione had barely taken two sips before she coughed, unable to take any more of the tension in the room. Glancing at Draco and Harry, she turned to Ron. "Darling, why don't we go to Hogsmeade? Perhaps the rooms at the Three Broomsticks are cooler than it is here? They do have those fancy charms built into the place."

Ron pursed his lips. "Right, yes, why don't we all go? Can you Apparate, *Malfoy*, or do you need someone to Side-Along you?" Ron asked with a sneer.

"I'll be just fine, Mr. Weasley," Draco answered. Glancing at Harry, he Disapparated to their new location.

"I'll Side-Along Harry since he's never been," Hermione quickly said. Standing up, she crossed the room to Harry. "Hold on then," she said with a smile, wrapping him in her arms before Disapparating. When they landed outside of the Three Broomsticks, Hermione smiled. "We're here," she announced.

"Hermione, what are you playing at?" Harry hissed, grabbing her hand. "You're playing with fire."

"I know," Hermione hissed. "I... I know what I'm doing!"

"No, you don't," Harry told her quietly. "You've always been a clever witch, Hermione, but you're not yourself right now. The you I know would never have an affair with Draco, and then invite him to lunch with you and your husband."

Hermione looked at Harry, feeling tears well in her eyes. She felt so confused. She loved Draco, she did. She wanted to be with him. She wanted a future with Ron. "Maybe you don't know me as well as you thought I did," Hermione whispered. "My mother stopped me from being with Draco years ago, and I won't let my family stop me once more."

Harry squeezed her hand. "I won't stop you, Hermione, I just want you to be careful. Ron has a temper."

"I know he does," she whispered. "But he would never hit me. Despite his faults, Ron does love me."

"Then why do this to him?" Harry countered. When he saw both Draco and Ron approaching, he lowered his voice. "Consider what you're actions will do to those you love, Hermione."

She pursed her lips angrily. She knew what she was doing! She didn't need Harry's advice. "Shall we go in?"

"Lead the way," Ron said. He followed his wife through the Three Broomsticks, nodding to Rosmerta as they headed up the stairs to one of the private rooms. "Now that we're all settled," Ron began as Hermione took a seat on the sofa and starting pouring herself a drink, "I've got a question for Malfoy."

"Go on," Draco said, moving to stand slightly near Hermione. He glanced at Harry, who looked as if he were going to be sick.

"I want to know what sort of row you're trying to cause in my house?" Ron asked, his blue eyes cold and hard.

"He isn't causing any sort of row!" Hermione said, looking between them both. "Honestly, Ron, have a little self-control."

Ron snorted. "Self-control? Oh, so I'm supposed to just sit back and let some bloke make love to my wife?"

Hermione looked as if she might cry. Her thoughts were racing a million meters a minute, and she didn't know quite what to think. She could feel a migraine coming on and wanted nothing more than to take a nice long nap and forget everything that was happening right now.

"I've got something to tell you," Draco hissed, his face turning red.

"Please don't!" Hermione cried, suddenly second-guessing herself. She loved Draco, but was she prepared to do this? Was she prepared to give up her life for him? Earlier, she had been positive, but now that the moment had arrived, she wasn't so sure. Doubts were beginning to enter her mind. "Let's just go home," Hermione said, pulling out her wand.

"I agree with Hermione," Harry said. "Come on, Ron, no one wants a drink or to have lunch here. In fact, Hermione looks like she could use a lie-down."

Ron wouldn't listen to either of them. He only had eyes for the blond wizard in front of him. "Oh, no, I very much want to hear what Malfoy has to say." He looked smug, as if he knew something they all didn't.

"Your wife doesn't love you," Draco said, smirking as his moment finally came. "She never loved you. She loves me."

Ron let out a low laugh. "You must be barking."

Draco had an excited, wild look on his face. "She never loved you, do you hear? She only married you because her mother forced her. If she could have, she would have waited for me. She regrets marrying you because she knows in her heart that she wants me."

"Hermione, what's going on?" The tone of Ron's voice made it clear that he didn't want any lies.

"I told you what's been going on!" Draco interjected before Hermione could speak. "We've loved each other all this time."

"You're barmy!" Ron said, shaking his head. "I don't know what sort of past you and Hermione have together, but she loved me when she married me, and I know that Hermione loves me now."

"No, she doesn't," Draco insisted.

Hermione went to speak but was cut off by Ron. She looked to Harry, whose eyes were filled with pity.

"She does, though," Ron insisted. "And what's more is that I love Hermione, too. I know I go off on little sprees and make a fool of myself, but I always come back to her. I love Hermione with all of my heart." He looked at Hermione, his eyes pleading with her.

"You're revolting," Hermione said angrily. "Mistress after mistress, yet you love me so desperately?" She scoffed.

Draco moved towards her, taking her hand. He gave it a squeeze, reassuring her. "Hermione, that part of your life is behind you now."

Hermione looked into his grey eyes and saw the comfort and love in there. He looked excited as well, and she couldn't help but feel even more in love with him as she stared at him.

"Just tell him the truth that you never loved him and we'll leave this place, just the two of us," Draco promised. He squeezed her hand once more.

She looked at him, her breath catching in her throat. "How could I love him?" she whispered.

"You never loved him," Draco whispered. "Say it."

Hermione's eyes widened as she realised what she had gotten herself into. Harry had been right... she hadn't thought this through as clearly as she should have. "I never loved him," she whispered, clearly defeated.

"Not in Wales?" Ron demanded angrily.

"No."

"Not the day I carried you through Diagon Alley so you wouldn't get your new shoes wet? Not when I brewed you coffee at odd hours of the night as you wrote your first book? Not when we became little Victoire's godparents?" His voice dropped lower as he said her name huskily, "Hermione."

"Please, don't," she said firmly. She didn't want to argue with Ron. She looked at Draco. "There, Draco." She tried to pour another glass of Firewhisky, but her hand trembled so much that the glass slipped from her hand, shattering on the carpet. "Draco!" she cried, standing up as tears streamed down her face. "You want too much! I love you now, isn't that enough? I can't help what's passed." A strangled sob escaped her lips. "I did love him once, but I loved you too!"

Draco looked stunned at her words. "You loved me *too*?" The idea looked as if it were inconceivable to him.

"Even that's a lie," Ron said angrily, knowing that he had won. "She didn't even know you were alive. There are years between the two of us that you don't know about, things that we've been through that neither of us will ever forget."

"I want to speak with Hermione alone," Draco said suddenly, ignoring Ron's comments though they clearly bothered him.

"Even alone, I can't say that I've never loved Ron," Hermione admitted. She knew that it was true... Despite loving Draco once more, a part of her loved Ron, and an even smaller part of her still did.

"Of course she loves me," Ron said gleefully.

"As if it matters to you!" Hermione snapped angrily at her husband.

"Of course it matters to me," Ron retorted. "I'm going to take better care of you now."

Draco let out a low growl. "That won't be your job anymore. I'll be the one caring for Hermione."

"I don't need anyone caring for me!" Hermione protested angrily. "I'm more than capable of caring for myself." Both men ignored her. She looked to Harry, who was inching his way towards the door. 'Help' she mouthed to him. He frowned.

"Oh? The hell you won't," Ron said angrily. His cheeks were purple now.

"Hermione's leaving you."

"Nonsense," Ron said quickly. "I won't agree to a separation."

"I am leaving you," Hermione protested, but she could feel the fight leaving her.

"You're not leaving me!" Ron protested. "I won't let that happen. I love you too damn much, Hermione! You won't be running off with this scum!"

"He's not scum!" Hermione said angrily. "Don't sully Draco when you don't even know him." By now, everyone's wands were in their hands. Honestly, Hermione was quite surprised the curses hadn't already started to fly. "Draco, let's get out of here." She needed to leave with the man she loved before she lost her nerve. With each passing second, she was starting to grow more and more confused with her feelings. "Draco," she whispered, crying once more.

"He's a Death Eater."

Harry opened his mouth in shock. "Ron, that's a serious accusation."

"Well, it's true! I hired an Auror to find out all about his little shoppes. He sells to Death Eaters, and I know from a valid source that he's taken the vow. He's one of them. He's a part of that little gang."

"That can't be true," Hermione whispered, horrified by what she was hearing. Death Eaters hated Muggleborns like her. "Draco loves me. He knows that both of my parents are non-magical." The only magic in her bloodline was Harry's father, who was her second or third uncle through marriage. Harry was her third or fourth cousin, or some sort... neither of them was quite sure. They grew up as siblings tough, and that's all that mattered.

When Draco didn't immediately counter Ron's accusation, she felt as if her world was crumbling apart. "Draco?" she whispered in disbelief.

"I don't have the Mark," Draco said, clearing his throat after a moment. "Hermione's seen me naked plenty of times the past few weeks. No Mark on my perfect skin." He smirked when Ron seethed.

"But you don't deny the claim? You sell ingredients to those bastards!"

The silence confirmed it all. Hermione looked at Draco, as if she were just seeing him for the first time. It didn't make sense. Draco loved her. Why would he sell ingredients to people who would kill others? Did he support the cause? Had Draco killed people?

The doubts swirled in her mind and she felt as if she were going to be sick. "I... Harry," she whispered. She needed to get away... She needed time to think.

Draco pulled Hermione into his arms. He hugged her tightly, whispering in her ear. "It's not true. I'm not a Death Eater, I would never sell to such unsavoury people. Ron's just trying to turn you against me."

The slight tremor in his voice gave him away. "I know you well enough, Draco, that I can tell when you're lying," she whispered, feeling her heart break. "Why?" she whispered, looking into his eyes through her tears. "Draco, Draco," she sobbed.

With a cry, Hermione pulled from Draco's embrace and bolted down the stairs. Draco let out a shout, chasing after her.

Ron and Harry paused a moment before following suit.

"Lavender, can't we head home now?" Goyle asked, frowning as he followed behind his wife. "We've gotten everything on the list."

"In a moment," Lavender said airily. Truth was, she hated going home. She hated being in the tiny, cold manor she shared with her husband. "I wish I could live with Ron," she whispered under her breath.

"What was that, Lav?" Goyle asked.

"Nothing, love," Lavender replied. From the corner of her eye, she saw a flash of red hair go by. Was it Ron? Without thinking, she slipped down the alley and ran towards the man she had seen. She was disappointed to see that Ron was nowhere in sight. She saw only a couple that was angrily arguing a few feet away from her.

Goyle cursed as there was what sounded like a loud explosion and a scream. He took off running, hoping that Lavender was all right. As he turned the corner, he saw a flash of blond hair disappear down an alleyway. His eyes gazed at the mess before him. Someone had caused half a building to explode, and in the rubble... "NO!" he shouted.

Running forward, he began to move the rubble, trying to unbury his unmoving wife. "Lavender!" he cried. There was so much blood. "Lavender," he sobbed.

When Ron and Harry heard the explosion, they took off running. The scene before them was horrifying. "Lavender," he whispered, tears on his face. "What happened here?" Ron asked angrily. "Who did this?"

"I saw a blond man turn the corner!" Goyle, the man who Ron knew was Lavender's husband, sobbed. "She's dead!"

"Malfoy," Ron gritted angrily. "Bloody git killed her."

Harry was in complete shock. Was Draco really capable of such a thing? Where was Hermione?

"Malfoy you say?" Goyle asked, turning towards Ron with a murderous glare. "Malfoy..." He turned himself back towards his dead wife, pulling her into his arms. He rocked slightly, the sight enough to make any witch or wizard cry.

Ron turned on the spot, Apparating home.

Harry frowned before Disapparating to his own home as well.

"Hermione, shhh, no one will know," Draco soothed, hugging her tightly. "I'll take the blame, all right? I know you didn't mean it."

"I was just so upset," Hermione sobbed. She turned to Draco. "What have I done?"

"It'll be all right," Draco assured her. "I love you, Hermione, but you needn't worry. The matter will sort itself out."

She looked at him, her mind still reeling from the explosion she accidentally caused. "I... I need to sleep, Draco." She stepped away from him, her heart breaking once more.

"Floo me tomorrow, at four," Draco whispered, brushing his lips over hers. She was unresponsive, but he chalked it up to her being in shock. "Floo me then, and I'll come collect you. We can leave this place."

"You mean hide?" she asked, her voice scratchy from the crying.

"It'll be okay," Draco assured her once more. "I love you, Hermione." He kissed her once more before Disapparating.

Hermione headed for her home, her heart aching painfully. She had a choice to make.

"Hermione? Are you in there?" Ron knocked on their bedroom door. He could feel his wife's sobs.

"Yes," she whimpered as she opened the door. Without further ado, she threw herself into Ron's arms, hugging him tightly as she cried. "I'm so confused."

"We'll sort through it," Ron promised, holding her tightly. Having just lost his mistress, Ron would be damned if he let his wife slip through his fingers as well. "I love you."

Hermione only cried harder, her mind made up.

"Did you do it?" Harry asked, unsurprised to see Draco sitting on his front steps.

"No," Draco said, shaking his head. "Hermione was shouting at me and there was a burst of uncontrollable magic from her. The building next to us exploding... I shielded Hermione and myself, but I didn't even realise there was a third person until it was too late." He ran his hands through his blond locks. "Is she dead?"

"Crushed," Harry answered. "They think you did it."

"Good," Draco answered. "I won't let Hermione be punished for it... it was an accident."

"What are you going to do?" Harry asked.

"Hermione and I are leaving tomorrow. She's going to Floo me around four."

Harry felt a little skeptical. He knew his cousin well, and a part of him doubted Draco's words. "Do you need anything, Draco?"

"No," the blond said, shaking his head. "I'm going to go pack. Have a good night, mate. We'll stop by to say our good-byes before we go."

Harry shook his head at Draco's retreating figure. Draco was a smart wizard. He didn't understand how Draco could be so blind to everything that was going on around him.

Glancing up at the clouds as the rain began to fall, Harry frowned. "The storm has arrived," he muttered.

Goyle crept along the Malfoy lines stealthily, surprised that he was able to slip past the wards with such ease. Wasn't this Malfoy fellow supposed to be strong?

Breaking into the house was as simple as casting an *Alohomora*. Creeping along, he found the blond wizard in the kitchen. The bloke was sitting in front of his fireplace with a set of suitcases next to him.

"This is for Lavender," Goyle said angrily, narrowing his eyes in hatred at the man in front of him.

"What?" Malfoy startled, turning around and drawing his wand, but he was too late.

"*Avada Kedavra!*"

There was a flash of green and Malfoy fell to the floor in a dead heap.

Goyle's heart ached as he thought of his lost love. "We'll be together soon, Lavender," he whispered before turning his wand on himself. *Avada Kedavra.*

Hermione cried when she heard the news from Harry. Draco was dead, murdered by the husband of the woman she accidentally killed. Glancing at the suitcases she had packed, she cried even harder. After all of that... After she had realised that any possible affiliations wouldn't matter...

After Hermione had finally realised that Draco was the one she would choose, he was snatched away from her so quickly. He was gone from her life once more, permanently this time.

"I love you, Draco," she whispered in the empty room. "I choose you."

After some careful decision-making, Hermione decided that she was still going to leave Ron. It had hurt her terribly to do it because she knew that she still loved him, but she couldn't do it anymore. No longer would she be anyone's second choice.

Together, she and Harry moved to France to start a new life. It was there that she felt inspired to write her next story *The Great Malfoy*.