

Fallen From Glory

by phoenix

Draco Black has lost everything, including his name. Can he recover from his Fall from Glory and make something of himself?

Chapter 1

Chapter 1 of 4

Draco Black has lost everything, including his name. Can he recover from his Fall from Glory and make something of himself?

A/N: This is the final installment of the Glory trilogy. I apologize for it taking so long. It was partially the fault of the muses being side-tracked by evil plot bunnies, partly the fact that I find Draco hard to write for and partly due to the birth of my daughter. Anyway, at long last, it is here. I do encourage you to go back and read the other installments, but I'll try to give a short refresher for those who did read the other two.

The previous installments are archived here:

[To Regain Glory](#)

[The Price of Glory](#)

Summary to date: Draco and Hermione were happily married, or so she thought. Lucius was soon to be married to a young widow, Phaedra Flint. Little did he know that Phaedra and Draco longed for each other.

Lucius, disappointed by Draco's lack of motivation in business and at producing an heir with Hermione, has decided the Malfoy line must survive by any means possible. He woos Hermione with the intent of getting her pregnant. Little did he realize he would fall in love with her and she with him.

Meanwhile, Draco and Phaedra have decided that any child she bears would be his, not Lucius'. Unfortunately, the two of them are caught. In an attempt to salvage the Malfoy reputation, Lucius invokes an ancient wizarding law that makes Hermione his wife and Phaedra Draco's. Unfortunately, he did not consult Hermione beforehand, nearly losing her. At the same time, he disowns Draco and takes away the Malfoy name, leaving Draco with the tainted Black name.

Finally, Hermione comes to realize that she loves Lucius and wants him in her life and wants to raise a family with him.

Draco was given a run down cottage and one year of support from Lucius. After that, he would be on his own. This story begins as that year runs out.

Chapter 1

Draco stabbed at his breakfast. He was growing increasingly irritated. He wasn't sure if his father had formally blacklisted him, but he was having a difficult time finding employment. And the year was nearly up and with it his stipend. They needed money.

Almost everything Phaedra had from her previous marriage to Marcus Flint had been confiscated by the Ministry for reparations after the war. And her parents had been so utterly embarrassed by her behavior that they had cut off all contact and support. They were on their own.

He had no idea what he would do when the money ran out. Leaving the country had crossed his mind, but he had nothing to start over with. Phaedra had not wanted to leave Britain when this had begun, and now it was really too late.

Thinking was almost impossible with the baby crying. "Will you shut her up!" he shouted at Phaedra.

"Oh? I'm the one that has to do all the work, eh? Why don't you help out? It's not like you are doing anything productive," she snapped back.

"I'm trying to find a job!"

"You're not very good at it. It's been almost a year, and you still haven't found anything."

"If you weren't blowing our money on frivolous shit, it wouldn't be this big a deal," he shouted back before storming out of the house. He wasn't sure where he was going, but anywhere was better than remaining here. As he walked along the edge of the property, he tried to think of whom he could ask for a job. Who might possibly look out for him?

Snape.

Long ago Snape had vowed to Narcissa to look out for Draco. While that spell no longer held sway over his former teacher, perhaps there was still some loyalty. And Snape had managed to hold onto his standing in the wizarding world, even becoming deputy headmaster at Hogwarts.

Since school was not currently in session, he decided to try to find Snape at his home at Spinner's End.

Nervously he knocked on the door.

Snape cracked the door open before opening it more fully. "Malfoy... or should I say Black," he sneered.

"Yeah, whatever," Draco replied. He had gotten used to his new name, but he still did not like it. He could not believe that his father had taken his name away. "Can I come in?" He did not want to conduct his business on the front stoop. When Snape didn't move, he said, "I need a favor."

"Well, then, by all means," Snape replied obsequiously.

Draco was upset that he was not even offered tea.

"What is it that you want?" Snape asked.

"You aren't a very polite host," Draco said sharply.

"You came unannounced. My time is valuable. What is it you want?" he asked curtly.

Draco wasn't sure what he had expected, but this wasn't it. "I was wondering if you could offer me a job at Hogwarts this year."

Snape arched an eyebrow. "A job?"

"Yes. I spoke English, not Gobbledegook. A job."

"What even makes you think you are qualified to hold a job at Hogwarts?"

"I was tops in my classes," *behind Granger*, he added silently.

"But you never sat your NEWTs. Technically you are not a qualified wizard."

"Then I'll sit them now." He had to have this job. This was his last chance.

"I'm afraid I have nothing to offer for the upcoming term."

"Surely there must be something, anything. I can apprentice, teach History. Surely it's time for Binns to retire."

"I'm sorry. I have no openings."

Draco was getting upset at how calm Snape was. Rising to his feet, he shouted, "Lucius put you up to this, didn't he? Told you not to hire me?"

Snape also rose to his feet, towering over the younger man. "I will not stand for such accusations in my house."

Realizing he had made a monumental mistake, Draco took his seat. "I'm sorry. I'm just *soufrustrated* that I can't find any work. Do you perhaps know of a job you could recommend for me?"

Snape slowly regained his seat. "Unfortunately no. While many of your year did not finish their NEWTs on time, most *did* choose to sit exams after war's end. As you know, without NEWTs most major employment opportunities are simply not there. Have you perhaps looked into applying at the Weasleys'?" he asked with a smirk on his face.

Scowling, Draco replied, "Never! Not that they would hire me anyway. I need to be something more than a stockboy." He knew not only how much property taxes on the cottage would be, but also how much money Phaedra liked to spend. Even after repeated conversations about their shortage of money, she had not significantly altered her spending habits.

"Well, then, you had best continue your search." Snape's tone indicated the conversation was over.

Draco couldn't leave yet. He needed something, and Snape was the closest thing he had to a friend. He pleaded, "Surely you can recommend something. After all, you pledged to my mother to look out for me."

"Those circumstances have been fulfilled. You will recall it applied only to your task to kill Dumbledore. The fact that the war is over and you are still here, not having served a day in Azkaban," Snape said bitterly, "is proof that I *did* fulfill my end of the pledge. The mess you chose to make of your life in recent years is your problem. I would have expected more from a Malfoy, but I presume that is why you are now a Black. Good day." Snape was now standing at the door, holding it open.

Realizing he had overstayed his welcome, Draco grudgingly left, no closer to solving his dilemma. He had at least hoped he could get some advice, but it seemed that Snape was still firmly in his father's pocket.

Unable to think of anywhere else to go, he Apparated to Diagon Alley, hoping to receive some new job inspiration. As he walked along the quiet street, he made mental note of his skills. He was excellent at Potions, Charms, Transfiguration, Arithmancy, Defense Against the Dark Arts, as well as the Dark Arts themselves. Snape was right. If he had sat his NEWTs, he should have been able to find suitable employment of some kind. He was sure that he could have gotten Outstanding in all the classes he had taken, well, with the possible exception of Care of Magical Creatures, which had been a monumental waste of time.

Realizing he was now standing near the entrance to Knockturn Alley, he considered making the turn and seeing what he could find there. After all, he had exhausted all

respectable job opportunities. Perhaps inspiration would strike him there.

Just as he was entering the alley, he caught a flash of long blonde hair out of the corner of his eye. Pausing in the shadow, he saw Lucius, Hermione and their baby. He scowled as he watched them, the perfect happy family.

Deciding the time had come to confront his father, he followed them down Diagon Alley, careful not to be seen. He needed to get Lucius alone.

They stopped in front of Madam Malkin's, Hermione cooing over something in the window.

Draco ducked into the doorway of a nearby shop, not wanting to be seen. Peering around the corner, he watched Lucius kiss Hermione before she and the baby went into the shop. He could feel his stomach turning as he watched their open display of affection. Well, now that Lucius was alone, this was his chance.

Stepping out of the shadows, he quickened his pace to catch up to his father. "Lucius!"

Chapter 2

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Draco Black has lost everything, including his name. Can he recover from his Fall from Glory and make something of himself?

Lucius spun around. "Draco? What are you doing here?"

"It's not enough that you've kept me from finding work, now you're trying to forbid me from even being in Diagon Alley?"

"I've done no such thing. I'm merely wondering why you are speaking with me. I have nothing to say to you."

"Well, I have plenty to say to you. Why have you prevented me from getting a job? Wasn't it bad enough that you took my name and my inheritance?"

Lucius sneered at him. "You think that I am responsible for you not being able to get a job?" He laughed. "As much as I would love to take credit for your continued misery, I have had nothing to do with it. Your isolation from society is entirely of your own making."

"My making? Are you telling me you had nothing to do with that article in the *Daily Prophet*?"

Lucius loomed over Draco, forcing the younger man to step back toward the wall, as he said through gritted teeth, "That article was only published to preserve the family name. Hermione had to be protected, the Malfoy name preserved. Since you were unable to control yourself, that was what had to happen. That society chose to completely ostracize you is not my problem. Had you seen to it that you were better thought of by society, you would not have found yourself so harmed by a mere bit of newsprint."

Draco hated himself for what he was about to do. "Couldn't you talk to someone, convince them to hire me? I don't want an executive job, just something I can live off of."

With a smirk, Lucius replied, "I saw a 'help wanted' sign at Weasleys' Wizarding Wheezes. They have low standards and would surely hire you. Now, I have more pressing matters to attend to." He shoved past Draco.

Frustrated, Draco wanted to hit or kick something, but he refrained, knowing that hitting a wall would serve no purpose other than to cause him pain. Instead, he decided to take that detour down Knockturn Alley. At the very least he could find a place to have a drink in peace.

As he walked down to the pub, he glanced at shop after shop, realizing he would not find any job opportunities here. He began to walk more quickly, just wanting something to drink, something to numb the pain, even if only for a little while.

After a couple of drinks, he decided to leave. Unfortunately, he did not have the money to get well and truly pissed. He needed a new plan. Any hope that Lucius would provide him even the tiniest bit of help had been utterly crushed.

If Lucius wouldn't help him, perhaps Hermione would. They had gotten along all right during their marriage, and he would even say that they had once loved each other. Surely she still felt something for him and could be convinced to help. After all, all he wanted was a job.

It took Draco the better part of a week to find Hermione alone away from the manor. She and Lucius seemed to go everywhere together. And the amount of affection they showed one another sickened him.

He was able to catch her one day after lunch. She and the baby had joined Lucius at one of the cafes, and she left alone. Catching up to her, he asked, "Hermione, do you have a few minutes?"

"I don't have anything to say to you, Draco," she replied coldly.

"Look, I know what I did was stupid and hurtful. I also know that we once felt something for each other. All I need is a few minutes. I don't want to hurt either of you, I just want to talk."

She stopped and spun on him. "What do you want?"

"First off, I know I brought this upon myself. I know I made my life difficult. But I'd like you to talk to Lucius, convince him to help me find work." It pained him to admit that, but he hoped that showing remorse would make her sympathetic towards him.

"And why should I do that?" she asked bluntly.

"Please, I'm begging you. One parent to another. I have a child to support, and I haven't been able to find a job."

"Haven't been able to find one or find one that you like? You aren't the son of privilege anymore. You aren't going to find a job that pays you a high salary."

"Don't you think I know that?" he asked in complete frustration. "I haven't just been looking for high level jobs. I have been looking for anything that pays a decent wage. I can't support a family off of a stockboy's salary. Please, Hermione." He felt horribly demeaned by begging, but he didn't see that he had much choice.

"I'm sorry, Draco, I can't help you." She started walking away.

He placed his hand on her arm. "Hermione, please. I'm desperate. I have nothing. Haven't I been punished enough? I just want something small. Please, just speak with him, and ask if he can recommend me for something. It doesn't have to be glamorous."

"After all that you did to me, the embarrassment you caused, you still have the nerve to beg for help?" She pulled free of his arm and pushed her pram down the alley.

"I'm the father of your child. Doesn't that count for anything?"

"As far as the wizarding world is concerned, Lucius is his father," she said coldly.

He found that stung. Even though he didn't know the child, he did feel a connection. The fact that she would not even acknowledge that was painful. He noticed that she was walking away. "So that's it? You're just going to walk away?"

She spun on him. "Yes. I don't feel the need ever to talk to you again. What you did was beyond embarrassing. I'm just glad that Lucius was able to find a way to salvage my life and that of my son. You got what you deserve."

He hadn't really expected her to help, but he had not expected her to be so cold to him either. He would have to talk to Phaedra again. She had been rather vague about how much money she had left over from her marriage to Flint. The time for her to get away with that was over now. They would have to use whatever she had to start a new life, preferably in another country. After all, they had nothing tying themselves to Britain anymore. If not, then at the very least, perhaps he could use the money to start his own business in Knockturn Alley. The people who patronized that area would not care that he had been disgraced.

Returning home, he sought out Phaedra. "We need to talk."

"I hope it's about a job you've found."

He snorted. "Hardly. We need to talk about your financial situation."

"Don't you think that yours is more important?"

He did nothing to hide his aggravation. "Look, I know that the Ministry didn't take everything from your marriage to Marcus. In case you haven't noticed, we aren't exactly the most respectable people in the wizarding world. I have been trying to find a job, but no one will hire me. At least not at a job that will come close to keeping up your standard of living. You have blown through the stipend every month, a stipend that I could have been saving and investing, perhaps even to start my own business, since that seems to be the only chance I have at making any significant money.

"Now, since you have spent all of *my* money, I need to know how much money you have." He wanted nothing more than to grab her and shake her to drive home his point, but he refrained.

"It's my money," she replied coldly.

This only served to make him angrier. "Look, if you don't share that money, when the taxes come due we are going to be out on the streets. No one will give me a job that will cover the taxes after we pay for our food and other necessities, and it definitely won't cover it after your frivolous spending on new clothes. I do not intend to live on the street. And I don't know where you would go. Your parents have disowned you."

"You would leave me?" she sounded shocked.

"Not completely, but I somehow doubt you would enjoy the living conditions I could afford. Think Weasley, only worse."

She crossed her arms and considered him. "And *what* would you do with my money?"

"We need to leave the country and start over somewhere else."

"Leave? You must be joking. We don't know anyone outside of Britain."

"That's the point. I can't get a job here because we know people. More to the point, everyone here knows us. I can't get anyone I know to give me the time of day let alone a job. They've all taken Lucius' side."

"You mentioned starting a business. What about that?"

"I need an idea first, I haven't been able to come up with anything yet. And it would have to be in Knockturn Alley. Not exactly the most respectable place for a business, but I don't see any other choice. Now how much money do you have?" When she didn't answer, he grabbed her arm and squeezed it. "How much money do you have?" he asked more insistently.

"Ten thousand Galleons," she replied meekly.

"Ten thousand? And you never said anything? Do you realize what I could have done with that much money?" He pulled back his arm as though to strike her, but stopped when he realized what he was about to do. Letting go of the rage, he began pacing and running his hands through his hair. "We could have started over, could have amounted to something. It would have made a good starting investment on a business."

"Just use it now."

He laughed weakly. "You really have no idea how a business works, do you? I could have used the stipend to pay for expenses until it started turning a profit. Now, I need to factor that into the equation and that leaves me less money for rent and initial stocking fees..."

"Perhaps we should start over somewhere else. Somewhere my reputation won't hurt us."

"I am *not* leaving the country. And if you want access to my money, neither are you."

Draco thought long and hard about her words. He wasn't even sure that he loved her anymore. They had been fighting for so long that he was beginning to wonder if what he had felt a year ago it seemed like forever now had only been lust. But he did love his daughter, and he would not leave her. As much as he didn't want to, he would stay in Britain. Now the problem was to figure out how best to use their remaining funds.

He would have to examine the shops of Knockturn Alley more closely. Perhaps he could find one to become a partner in or buy outright rather than start something from scratch. "Fine. I'll start looking tomorrow. But *do not* touch that money. I'm not sure how much of it I'm going to need." She started to open her mouth to protest. "I mean it! I need you to listen to me. Because I listened to you, we are in this mess. And realize that we aren't going to be instantly wealthy, but we'll hopefully earn enough to keep a roof over our heads and food on the table." He rose from his seat.

"Where are you going?" she demanded.

"Out."

"Out where? We do have a baby to take care of."

"That's your job. I need to figure out how to support our family." With a pop he Disapparated.

A/N: A great big thank you to those who have reviewed. Every little comment is very important to me. Also, a great big thank you to nota, my wonderful beta, whom I forgot to thank last chapter, and I am horribly embarrassed by that oversight. One more chapter to go, folks.

Chapter 3

Chapter 3 of 4

Draco Black has lost everything, including his name. Can he recover from his Fall from Glory and make something of himself?

Chapter 3

Arriving in Knockturn Alley, Draco sought out a pub, hoping he might hear some gossip that would give him a clue as to who might be desperate to find a partner or perhaps a buyout altogether. This was an enormous gamble. If he could not find a business, and one that he could succeed at, they would be forced to start in another country with nothing.

Jingling the meager amount of Sickles and Knuts in his pocket, he was glad that Knockturn Alley was cheaper than the better establishments of Diagon Alley. Rather than sitting at a table or booth, he chose to sit at the bar of the Green Dragon. He hoped it would afford him a better opportunity to overhear what others were talking about.

He doubted this evening would turn up any real leads, but he knew that if he spent the next several nights here, he was sure to learn something of value. Hopefully with some research during the day, he would find a suitable enterprise. Now he would just have to recall the lessons that his father had tried to instill in him. He should have paid better attention, but it had not seemed important at the time.

After an hour, he had nursed two drinks, but still had not heard anything of any use. At least here no one was staring at him or whispering behind his back about how he was the disgraced Malfoy heir. The rest of the night progressed much the same. The only ones who approached him were the prostitutes, but he knew better than to sample their wares.

The next two nights were spent much the same way. Phaedra complained each night at how she was being abandoned, but he felt very little sympathy toward her after she had hidden all her money from him. During the day, he slinked through the alley, trying to determine which businesses might be best suited for him. The idea of actually working in Knockturn Alley disgusted him, but he knew there was no longer a choice. Nothing in Diagon Alley would pay enough for him to support his family and it would cost far too much to open a business there. Not to mention the fact it was unlikely he would generate enough traffic to make the business profitable. Of course, there was no guarantee any partnership he entered into here would provide that kind of support either. He hated not being in control. He had been raised as a Malfoy after all. He had been raised a son of privilege and had thrown it all away.

As he sat at a table in the pub, he pondered his fate. He already knew that he wanted nothing to do with one of the drinking or eating establishments. Too much overhead. Besides, every night he had been here, at least three fights had broken out, causing damage or loss of stock. Yes, most of the damage could be magically repaired, but he had no desire to waste his time cleaning up after others.

He had momentarily thought about buying a stake in Borgin & Burkes, but he wasn't sure he wanted to be that involved in their type of merchandise. There was too much opportunity to run afoul of the Ministry, especially with his father against him. Damn that bastard for figuring out a way get back into the Ministry's good graces. Once again he realized he was wallowing in self-pity and that had accomplished nothing over the last year.

Returning his thoughts to his future, he made another mental list of his limited options. There was one small vacant shop, but he had no idea what he would do with it. He needed something that didn't have too high an overhead, which is why he would have preferred either buying into a business or taking one over outright.

Staring into his nearly empty glass, he saw a bug crawling across the bar. He was about to slam his glass down on it when he noticed it was a Billywig, definitely not native to this area, but very valuable in potions making. He threw down the rest of his whisky and trapped the Billywig under his glass. The creature might turn out to be very valuable.

Potions. It suddenly occurred to him that there was no apothecary shop in Knockturn Alley.

Of course, an apothecary shop would require a higher overhead than he had hoped he would need, especially for some of the more rare and illegal ingredients, but it was something that suited him. After all, he had excelled in Potions. The only thing that had prevented him from working in that same field in Diagon Alley had been his lack of a NEWT.

He knew that he would not be able to fully stock his store at first, but perhaps he could make enough brewing some of the more common potions that he would be able to expand his inventory as time went on. After all, the denizens of Knockturn Alley were not known for their intelligence, and the sort of potions they would likely be interested in were the sort the Slytherins had brewed in the common room in their spare time.

Of course, he would need a supplier for some of the more exotic ingredients. Carefully looking around the room, he tried to determine who might have brought the Billywig into the pub. Seated at a booth in the corner, he saw a witch who seemed quite travel-worn, her dress not quite British fashion, not that most of the patrons could be said to be fashionable. She seemed to be the best candidate.

With a quick flick of his wand, he sealed the Billywig in the glass and tucked it into his pocket. After placing an order for a couple of drinks, he made his way over to her table.

"Mind if I join you?"

She eyed him suspiciously. "I prefer to drink alone."

He set the two drinks on the table and slid into the booth across from her. Reaching into his pocket, he placed the Billywig's glass on the table. "I have a business

proposition for you."

Looking at the glass, a brief flash of surprise crossed her face. "What sort of business?"

"I plan to open an apothecary. While some ingredients are easy to come by, others are of course likely to prove more difficult. I think you just may be the sort of person who might be able to help me... procure some of those ingredients."

"And if I can?" she asked nonchalantly.

"I'd be willing to compensate you quite handsomely."

She arched an eyebrow. "Really? You don't look like it. My services don't come cheap."

"Trust me. You would be well paid."

"Why don't you start by telling me who you are?"

She did not seem at all impressed to learn who he was. They spent the next hour discussing details of a business arrangement. He tried to make it as favorable as possible, but he knew that his options were limited and that she had the upper hand in the negotiations.

In the end, he felt that he had a reasonable deal. It was possible that he could eventually work out something more beneficial to him with someone else, but right now time was of the essence. "I'll draw up some paperwork and we'll finalize this tomorrow."

"Sounds good." She said before downing the rest of her drink and rising to her feet. "Same time tomorrow."

As he watched her leave, his pulse was racing. He *had* to make this work and quickly. With her fees and the inventory he would need to purchase, he would be left with precious little once the lease for the first few months was paid. Phaedra wouldn't be happy, but he was sure there would be demand for his potions and that he could bring in some money for them to live off of.

He noticed his hand was shaking as he raised his drink to his mouth. This was it. He was committed now. If he failed, they would have nothing, not even enough to move and start in a new country. And he was sure that Lucius would show him no pity.

By the time he returned home, it was incredibly late. Even as late as it was, Phaedra was waiting up for him, a disapproving scowl on her face. "Where have you been?" she demanded.

"Working," he answered tersely, not in the mood to get into an argument.

She took one whiff of him and scolded, "You've been drinking. Is that your plan? Throw our last remaining Galleons into booze?"

"Let it go, Phaedra. I'm not in the mood to get into it right now." What he really wanted was to get to sleep and hope the pounding headache he could feel developing would be gone by morning. But the longer she pestered him, the less likely that would happen. And tomorrow would be a busy day. He had to arrange a lease which he didn't expect to be too difficult since most building owners in Knockturn Alley weren't too particular and get a contract drawn up. Once all the paperwork was finalized, he would feel somewhat better, but it was still an enormous risk to start a business from scratch, especially one where he was dealing in controlled substances. He would have to be careful that the Ministry did not discover that aspect of his business. After all, he had no intention of getting the permits, mostly because without being a licensed Potions master he was not eligible to deal with controlled substances.

"Draco, I *will not* be ignored. I demand to know what you have been doing."

"Making business arrangements, okay? I've contracted with a supplier, and I'll be looking into a lease tomorrow." And he would have to look into finding someone to supply him with the more common supplies.

"So what sort of business have you invested *my* money in?"

It wasn't worth arguing her that the money was as much his as it was hers; it would only prolong the discussion. "An apothecary."

"An apothecary? Are you insane? There are already two in Diagon Alley, and you would never get approval from the Ministry..."

He cut her off. "It's in Knockturn Alley, okay? I know what I'm doing. It's the best chance we have since you don't want to leave the country."

"Knockturn Alley?" She was outraged. "You can't sink any lower than that."

"No, you can't," he snapped. "But it's all we have left to us. The Black name is worthless, less than worthless. I have asked everyone I know, but no one is willing to give me a job. It seems that none of them want to risk Lucius' wrath. I can't even get Snape, who vowed to my mother to protect me, to help. This is it. Our last chance. I told you that before. Now, I'm going to bed since I have a lot to do tomorrow and it's already late." Ignoring her protests, he headed up to bed and locked the door. He didn't want to deal with her tonight. Hopefully in the morning she would realize this was the best they were going to be able to do.

Draco Malfoy was reduced from privileged son and heir to one of the greatest fortunes in the wizarding world to proprietor of a dubious shop in Knockturn Alley. It was a very humbling experience.

Epilogue

Chapter 4 of 4

Draco Black has lost everything, including his name. Can he recover from his Fall from Glory and make something of himself?

Draco's shop had been open less than a week. Business was by no means brisk, but he had already had a handful of customers. He hoped that word of mouth would improve business. After all, his customers had asked for potions that were generally used less than ethically. If word got out that those types of potions were for sale, it should improve traffic to his shop.

Unfortunately, Phaedra had not ignored him as he had hoped. She had instead insisted on overseeing the opening of the shop. It had been all he could do to keep it from rivaling Madam Puddifoot's in femininity. He wanted a shop that looked more like Snape's dungeon; that was the proper look for an apothecary.

In the end he had reached a bit of a compromise with her. It still wasn't what he had wanted, but it was close enough. And as she turned her attention elsewhere, he could make the subtle changes necessary.

He knew that he had very little time to turn a profit, but he had finally gotten Phaedra to agree to cut costs. Things would be tight, but he had faith that he would succeed.

The bell on the door rang to let him know he had a customer, and he looked up from the books to see the unfortunate sight of Lucius Malfoy. The color drained from his face.

Lucius looked around, disapproval on his face. "How... quaint," he said condescendingly. "I see you *actually* decided to work. It must be a first."

Draco knew that he had been less than attentive as a Malfoy, but his outlook had changed. "So, did you come to ruin my business?"

Lucius clucked in disapproval and replied, "Manners, Draco. I know I taught you better than that. It's not becoming of a business owner to be rude to a customer."

He didn't believe that for a minute since he knew that Lucius had Severus brew all his potions. "You? My customer? I doubt it. What do you want?"

"I merely came to see what you were making of your life. I must say it is more than I expected, though you have chosen a very difficult line of work." He opened one of the jars and sniffed at the contents. "One with many potential pitfalls." He smirked as he turned to face Draco.

Once again, Draco was filled with a sense of dread. He knew there were dangers when dealing with some of the controlled ingredients, which is why none of them were displayed. While it was rare for Ministry officials to visit Knockturn Alley, it did happen from time to time. And if Lucius prompted them to conduct a surprise inspection, Draco had no doubt they would. "Is there something I can assist you with?" he asked in what he hoped was a polite tone. He was tired of Lucius and his lectures.

"I don't think I'm in the market for anything... today. But I will keep your shop in mind when I am." He grinned slyly, indicating he would be keeping an eye on Draco.

Draco couldn't take it anymore. "You destroyed me once. Does it hurt your pride that much to see me trying to make something of my life?"

"Not particularly," he said drolly. Without saying another word, he left the shop.

Draco involuntarily shivered. He could only hope that Lucius really wasn't concerned. Besides, there was nothing he could do. The majority of their money was invested in the shop. He would just have to wait and see, and be very careful about any of the more questionable activities he was going to engage in. If there was one thing he had learned from Lucius, it was that failure was not an option.

Draco Black was determined to succeed.

~The End~

A/N: Thank you for much for reading and especially thank you to those who left reviews. I will be going through my reviews soon to reply to them. I really appreciate them.

I hope that all of you enjoyed this final installment of the Glory Trilogy, and thank you for being patient in waiting more than a year for me to post this episode. It was a great challenge to write a story in three parts from three different points of view.