

Draco and the Muggle Hospital

by beaweasley2

My response for the Potter_Place Summer 2007 Challenge: Prompt # 25 – Draco is without his wand when his wife is injured. He is forced to let go of his Muggle prejudices in order to seek medical help for her...

Or will the shock of the accident force him to see that there is more to Muggles than meets the eye?

Draco and the Muggle Hospital

Chapter 1 of 2

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~***~

Draco cradled his wife in his arms as the sirens began to sound. Frantically he searched for his wand, or her wand, between the feet and knees of the Muggles around them...

It happened so fast. His wife had been standing in front of him just before the sounds assaulted his ears: horns, screeching of the vehicle sliding, a loud bang, continued screeching of tires abrading on the street, crunching, glass shattering, the sound of metal sliding on the pavement, screams... Draco, several paces behind her, threw himself back, jumping back between two parked cars as soon as he heard the horn and screeching tires. He lost his footing and fell, his ankle twisting painfully, and he banged his hip hard on one of the bumpers. Pain dazed, he had sat there for a few seconds, the sounds echoing in his head. Only when the noises changed did he try to rise. When he struggled to his feet, he heard the commotion in the street, apparently about the accident, people shouting... a woman screaming....

Apparating to this ridiculous establishment, what a great idea! It was a Muggle restaurant that called itself a jazz club and one that she had taken him to several times while they had courted. She had pleaded with him to bring her here tonight. *As if I could deny her. She loves this place so much simply because she likes the music that the small bands play while we eat.* She had been teasing him as she crossed the street looking over her shoulder *She should simply have Apparated across the street and gotten away from this mess. None of these idiotic Muggles would have even noticed! She will be waiting for me across the street.*

Draco let out a sigh of relief when he didn't see his wife on the street and scanned across the other side, looking for her. She wasn't standing over there waiting for him... *She isn't...* but then he saw her, lying on the walkway... Muggles swarming to her... suddenly surrounding the crumpled form of his true love, Brianna Malfoy.

She hadn't seen the black cab as it swerved to miss her, colliding into another vehicle, making the black cab spin wildly and the white car to lose control. Both cars then careened into each other a second time, and the smaller white one rolled and bumped up onto the curb... The black one halted in the middle of the street.

He pushed his way to her side, calling her name, unaware that the Muggles were moving to let him through. His ankle twisted again as he crossed the street, passing the crumpled cars, and pain shot up his leg. He nearly fell again. *Brianna.* The pain in his hip was both sharp and throbbing, but he ignored it as he fell to his knees by her side.

"Brianna? Love, can you hear me? Open your eyes," he asked, gently touching her. "Please, Brianna..."

"Don't move her, man," a male voice had the audacity to tell him.

"Of course I'm going to move her, you idiot. I have to get her to the hospital." He hadn't even realized that he had spoken. *I can't shouldn't Apparate with her.* His mind warred with his desires to simply take her in his arms and leave. His head hurt; the pain was distracting. *She cannot Side-Along Apparate like this obviously. Can I get her to St Mungo's from here myself? It's halfway across England! If I can't wake her, and if I just take her, we could splinch I could splinch her...*

She was unconscious, bleeding from her nose, and her legs lay in awkward angles. *I have to get her to St Mungo's* His mind raced as a Muggle told him to, "Hold on there, mister." *Hold on to what?*

"I've called nine-nine-nine, sir; they're coming," a man said. "It'll be all right," he said, sounding as if he was trying to reassure him. *They're daft, I need a Healer, and I need to get her out of here!*

"I hear them now," a woman said. *Great now what? Hear who? What is that repetitive wailing sound? I should send up the Distress Spell alert someone I need help I need help... My wand, where is my wand?*

The sirens were much louder now, and a car with yellow and red stripes on the back and blue and yellow checks on the side stopped near the crunched up cars in the street. Two bright yellow, two-wheeled vehicles decorated with blue squares drove in between the crumpled cars, both men removing their helmets. One of the men in heavy leather trousers and yellow coat walked over to Draco and Brianna. The man in dark blue began to direct people away from him and Brianna. A similarly decorated, large, boxy vehicle with the word 'Ambulance' emblazoned on it appeared; the noise of the sirens, the flashing lights made it difficult for Draco to think.

My wand I need my wand... Concentrating hard, he focused his panicked will on one desire, one intent. *I want my wand... "Accio wand,"* he said. After several tries, a splintered shaft of hawthorn finally flew into his hand, one-third of its length missing useless. *Brianna's, where is Brianna's? I can use hers..*

The man in dark trousers and some kind of reflective jacket that read 'Ambulance' in gold across his back knelt down next to Brianna's other side. His outfit was covered with pockets and had patches of symbols that meant nothing to Draco except for the name, Pelton, embroidered over one pocket. "It looks like she has fractures, both legs possibly head trauma... Was she hit by the car?" He looked up at Draco. "What's her name?"

"Brianna Malfoy," Draco said, stunned, searching the pavement for his wife's golden ash wand. "I didn't see the car hit her... I was dragons! I fell over across the street."

Pelton nodded. "Brianna, can you respond? Brianna, if you can hear me, I need you to squeeze my hand." But nothing happened. "We have a female victim here, early twenties, Caucasian, RTA... possible concussion, fractures bilateral tib fib with rotated angulation, left wrist considered. Vitals signs: pulse tachy at one-twenty... BP is fifty-eight over palp; respirations shallow and rapid, twenty-three; pupils right dilated and sluggish, left is fixed and dilated, non-responsive... possibly blown; temp ninety-seven point eight," Pelton rattled off into a black square hooked onto the epaulette on his shoulder. "Patient is non-responsive, but with painful stimuli; transport code three, patient rolled at eighteen, twenty-one."

A man dressed in dark green one piece that read 'Paramedic' in gold across his back and the name, Wilkins, embroidered over one pocket knelt down next to Draco, looking at both Brianna and Pelton with concern. "We can assume she has fractures, both legs, Denton, get the hare splints... and the back board..." Pelton said to a third man in the same type of dark green outfit with a bright yellow waistcoat. Denton nodded and walked back to the Ambulance. Pelton then turned and looked up at Draco. "Has she opened her eyes or responded in any way?" Draco numbly shook his head. The man in the yellow waistcoat, Denton, returned with Wilkins, carrying small trunks and cases by the handles, a board with straps and another device Draco couldn't identify. The faces around him were serious and assured.

"I have to get her to the hospital," Draco said, sliding a strand of Brianna's hair from her cheek. The board was laid down by his wife's side, and Denton seemed to be assembling the metal and strap device. Wilkins was fixing a collar around Brianna's neck.

"That's what we intend to do, sir," Pelton said, looking at him, concern in his pale blue eyes.

"She needs a Healer," Draco persisted. Denton placed the contraption under Brianna's legs, securing both feet in straps, then secured straps around her thighs, and pulled Brianna's legs straight. Brianna moaned in pain. Draco cringed hearing his wife's pain, inwardly glad to hear any response from her at all.

"That's a good sign... On three, guys," Pelton said, and together with Wilkins and Denton, Brianna was lifted gently and placed on the board.

Wilkins smiled, patiently. "We'll get her to the hospital right away. She'll be fine," he said. A thin bed on wheels was brought over as one strong hand gently pulled Draco to move to the side and give them room. The three men lifted Brianna onto the bed and rolled her away. Draco tried to follow, but was delayed. "I need to know her name," Wilkins said, pulling out papers from a metal box.

"Brianna, Brianna Malfoy."

"Are you family?"

The men were rolling Brianna to the back of the vehicle and lifting her inside. "Husband," Draco said in disbelief. "I'm her husband."

"Are you all right, Mr. Malfoy?"

Draco snapped his attention back to the man talking to him. "All right? Of course I'm not all right. My wife has been hurt she's been nearly killed!" Wilkins looked Draco appraisingly.

Draco wasn't sure exactly what the man was looking at. Even though Draco knew that the Muggle clothing he had on had cost a bundle, he still felt self-conscious without his robes. "Yes, I am fine!" Draco snapped. The man nodded.

"What is your address?" Draco tried to rise off the pavement and inhaled with pain. His hip hurt, his wrist ached, his ankle had swollen, and his head was throbbing. "Mr. Malfoy, are you all right? Did you get hurt?"

"Malfoy Manor, Wiltshire," Draco responded. "No, I just fell. I'm fine. Brianna?" He stumbled slightly as his ankle gave painfully, and he had to grip Wilkins's hand to steady himself.

"You had best let me see to your ankle, Mr. Malfoy." Wilkins led Draco to the front of the other car as the large boxy vehicle they put Brianna in drove away, lights flashing and sirens blaring.

"Where are they taking her?" he nearly yelled, wanting to run after the vehicle. The vehicle's flashing lights and annoying siren were only increasing the tension he felt the worry. "I want my wife back, Muggle!"

"They're taking her to the hospital, Mr. Malfoy. Don't worry, she's in good hands."

Wilkins lifted Draco's foot, flexing and rotating the ankle slightly, and Draco let out an angry hiss. "Hey, that hurts! Stop that," he snapped.

Wilkins simply gave him a sly, sympathetic smile and gently lowered the foot. "I can stabilize that ankle for you until we get to the hospital. You'll need to wear a support on it for a few days I suspect. Do you hurt anywhere else?"

"Where are they taking Brianna?" Draco demanded as Wilkins removed his boot.

"Kent and Canterbury," Wilkins replied. "I'll be taking you there as well." He placed two strips of something from a silver package on his ankle and carefully wrapped the ankle with some kind of stretchy bandage. Whatever it was, it immediately felt warm and seemed to harden into a well-molded support for his ankle. "Now why don't you hop in, and I'll take you there."

The ride was excruciatingly slow. *I could have Apparated and been there by now* he thought with a scowl. Only he had no idea where 'there' was. *Brianna, I should have just taken us*, he thought, annoyed. His head hurt and his concentration was weak, confused. Wilkins stopped at every light, waited until they turned green and proceeded through the traffic.

Finally, after many turns, many junctions and crossroads, and with Draco drumming his fingers impatiently on his sleeve, they arrived at St Andrew's Memorial Medical Center. "Wait here, Mr. Malfoy, I'll bring a chair around," Wilkins suggested.

Draco didn't wait. He opened up the door and slid down to the pavement. Immediately the pain shot through his ankle and up his leg simultaneously as the pain in his hip jolted through the lower half of his body, and he nearly fell except Wilkins appeared just in time to catch him. "Oh, I've got you. Easy now." With one swift movement Draco was sitting in a chair on wheels and being pushed into the building.

A woman in a dark blue dress and matching stockings gave Draco a board with forms attached to it by a metal clip. "If you would please, I need you have a seat and fill these forms out."

"I want to know where my wife is and what is being done to her," Draco snapped.

"Of course." She handed Draco a board and a... a blue stick with writing on the side. "I need you to fill out these forms. Someone will be with you shortly."

"I need a quill," Draco said impatiently, handing back the blue stick.

The woman made a check on the corner of the form with the stick. "This pen should work just fine," she said and left.

Draco stared at the form, then began filling in the spaces he understood. Name *Draco Abraxas Malfoy*; age, *twenty-three*; address, *Malfoy Manor, Wiltshire*; date of birth, *fifth of June, nineteen-eighty*; occupation... the form went on forever. He filled in what he felt like giving them and signed the bottom. There was another form under the first and a third. He simply signed both.

After what seemed like ages, a woman dressed in soft blue top and matching draw-string trousers approached him, ushering him into a room lined with beds on wheels and indicating that Draco sit on the first bed. *At least they're wider than the one they put Brianna on* He looked around wildly. "Brianna, where's my wife?" *There isn't anyone else here... Where is my wife? Did that idiot Muggle bring me to the wrong place?* "He said I'd see Brianna when we got here. I was going to be brought to her."

The woman pulled a curtain, effectively cutting off any hope of seeing Brianna anywhere. "Is that your wife? The ambulance brought in a young woman a while ago. She is in the Resuscitation Room, Mr. Malfoy, being attended to."

"And where exactly is that? I was told I would be taken to the same place as Brianna." Draco was now getting angry. "Where's my wife and what is happening to her?"

The woman looked at Draco, confused, regarding him with concern and compassion in her eyes. "Your wife's here, sir. She is here at the A and E Causality Unit, in our Rhesus Room where we treat those who have been critically injured. The doctors are trying to stabilize her, sir. They will run some tests, get X-rays and CT scan, possibly a MRI scan. I can let them know that you are here. I know you must feel anxious about her," the woman said, smiling. "Doctor Sina will be with you shortly."

"Cee-tea scan? What are you talking about? I want my wife. I want to see her."

"I will let them know, sir. I'm sure someone will come and see you shortly," she said with a smile and left.

Again waiting what seemed ages until a tall Indian man appeared, who introduced himself as Doctor Sina, examined Draco's leg and ordered X-rays, but Doctor Sina told Draco that he didn't need a CT scan when he asked if he was to have one done. When he asked why, the explanation didn't make any sense. Another man came to take Draco to a room with a strange machine and cold table. Whatever the machine did it was at least painless. As Draco waited back on the bed with wheels, another man in a long white coat appeared.

"Mr. Malfoy, I presume?" the man asked.

"Yes," Draco responded sourly.

"I'm Doctor Kensington," he said, undaunted. "I understand that you are the husband of a Brianna Malfoy?" Draco nodded, glaring at the man. "Your wife was seriously injured, Mr. Malfoy. She suffered a severe blow to her head, fractures to both of her legs, one wrist and her two lower ribs, and a hard impact to one kidney. We have stabilized her fractures, but we need to run tests on her kidney and her head. She is having a CT scan as we speak."

Draco's head was spinning at the list of injuries to his wife. "She needs a Healer."

"We are doing everything we can for her, I assure you, Mr. Malfoy," he replied in a soft even tone, a tone that Draco thought he was simply trying to pacify him.

"I want my wife!" Draco sneered.

"She is in radiology at the moment. I will keep you apprised of her situation and let you know if anything develops or if there are any changes."

Just as Doctor Kensington left, Doctor Sina reappeared. Draco sat with his arms crossed, barely listening to the man. "You are most fortunate, Mr. Malfoy. There are no fractures to your hip or your wrist although I would like to give you a wrist support for you to wear for a few weeks. Your ankle has a bad sprain, but it will heal nicely. I am going to give you some pain medications and a walking boot for your ankle. I suggest that you wear it all the time: walking, standing and sleeping. You can remove it to take a bath, but I suggest that if you desire to shower, you must sit down on a stool or chair..." Draco's anger blocked out anything else the man said.

After what seemed hours, and two Muggles harassing him to complete the forms and to book Brianna in at a desk that was referred to as reception, Draco was allowed to wait in a room full of moaning, crying, pacing Muggles. Every time he asked the Muggle at the window leading to the other half of the hospital area where Brianna was, she simply told him she didn't know anything, to sit down, and that someone would come and tell him. If Draco had his wand, she would be covered in boils, warts, tentacles, have spikes growing *into* her scalp, screeching and squealing like an angry banshee, given skin and hands like a Kappa, and the breath of a Nundu... She was driving him as insane as a Fwooper's trill!

Finally Draco collapsed into a chair in the corner and propped his throbbing foot up on the armrest of the chair next to him and crossed his arms, scowling at anyone who even looked at him. He didn't want any Muggles sitting in that chair anyway. Every time some Muggle in the waiting room asked if the seat was occupied, he snapped, "Yes, by my foot," and glared at the little twit that ran around the room rearranging the magazines.

The boot they had given him to wear, a camwalker, was big and awkward, but at least his ankle had stopped hurting as much. The cumbersome device also gave him the support he needed to walk. The black wrist support was far more comfortable and less bothersome. He decided to wear them for now. *Or at least until I can see a proper Healer, preferably sometime in my near future*, he fumed.

One Muggle had her five kids with her and wasn't paying any of them the slightest mind except to say, "Hush now, come sit down," every so often.*Not that it does any good. Those brats remind me of the Weasley twins impossible, misbehaved miscreants, boisterous and annoying.*

People passed in and out of self-opening doors: ones in dark blue dresses with matching stockings, women dressed in blouses and trousers, or blue drawstring pajamas and short sleeve tops, and others wearing long white coats over the green pajamas. Occasionally men or women passed through the doors he had been in and either left or walked down the hall deeper into the hospital. No one stopped or looked for him.

The waiting irked Draco, and he stared fixedly at the woman behind the window.*Idiotic, half-witted, brainless, thick-headed, pathetic, inane, insipid, arrogant, mindless, driving...* he chanted until his ire rose so high the window that separated her from the waiting room cracked, making him smile as she jumped back into the cabinet behind her. A man in the same dark green outfit Wilkins wore pushed the broken glass widow open carefully and tried to calm down the startled woman. *Serves you right, Muggle wench.*

He closed his eyes, fuming to himself, trying to control the rage he felt inside. "Mr. Malfoy," a silky voice called out clearly from across the room.

Draco opened his eyes and turned his head. "Yes."*Finally, it's about time.*

A woman in the blue top and drawstring pajamas a few of the medical people wore, covered by a long, white coat stepped into the waiting area. Draco's breath caught in his throat as he saw her. "Mr. Malfoy?" she asked, her silky, resonate voice clear and calm. Draco stood, acknowledging his identity, and the woman walked over to him. He could feel her energy, the magical signature about her as she approached him... *or it was simply a wishful hope.* Either way the woman standing in the room exuded self-assurance.

She was tall, lean, with a thin face, silky black hair pulled back in a clip, and black eyes. One strand of hair hung loose, framing her face, giving her a familiar look. Draco regarded her warily. "What about my wife? When can I take her? What is going on?" His tone and expression were angry and frustrated. She looked up, regarding him a moment, then smiled at him with slight curl to her lip that tugged at his memory, that was all to familiar to Draco. "I know you," he said softly.

Her face was serene and composed, her black eyes intelligent and confident as she faced him. "Mr. Malfoy, I am Doctor Rowena Snape."

It was her eyes, *his* eyes, looking at him in that same silent 'regarding' expression he'd seen so often, and her lips pressed together the way his did.*He doesn't have a sister? Or does he and I never knew it?* Either way the woman standing in the room exuded self-assurance not too dissimilar to his fellow Death Eater and Head of House, Professor Snape. The resemblance was truly uncanny.

"Mr. Malfoy, I am a surgeon here, and I have been assigned to your wife's care."

"My wife," Draco said automatically, staring at the woman.

"Your wife has been seriously wounded. Her fractures have been stabilized. We gave her an MRI scan, and she is scheduled for surgery. She received a serious head injury that caused a skull fracture and an intracranial hemorrhage, a bleeding within the brain that occurs frequently with her type of injury. This is a serious rupture that has developed, a hematoma is accumulating between the dura mater and the cranium. Although death is a potential complication, the prognosis is good when this injury is recognized and treated this early. You will be required to sign a consent form."

Draco's mind swirled as she handed him another clipboard and pen. "My wife needs a Healer. I need to take her to our hospital," he stated, taking the offered forms.

"If you remove her now, Mr. Malfoy, I assure you she will not make the trip to your hospital alive. I am fully confident that I can save your wife's life," she said reassuringly but firmly.

Draco stared into the sincere black eyes, seeing the same confidence his godfather exuded. "How bad is it?"

"Once you sign the consent, we are taking her right up to surgery. The hematoma is in the right occipital region of her brain and possibly one in the left frontal as well. Once we get the MRI results, we will know for sure." A woman in blue tunic and matching trousers appeared. "Nurse Grantham here will take care of the forms you need to sign. *WE* must have your consent, Mr. Malfoy, if we are to try and save your wife's life." She tapped the form and Draco signed his name. "I must also tell you that there are complications involved: paralysis, memory loss, loss of sight or reduced vision..."

Draco's head spun in worry, her voice fading slightly. *They are going to do surgery on my wife, Brianna! Oh, Circe, Brianna. I should have Apparated you to St. Mungo's... but I couldn't oh, forgive me, I couldn't.*

"Also, in the event of surgical complications, do you wish us to revive her?"

"Yes, you're to revive her! I want my wife alive," Draco snapped.

"Very well, Mr. Malfoy. As soon as the procedure is complete, I will be back to inform you." And with that she walked away through the doors that automatically swung open for her and was gone.

Author's Note:

I owe a huge debt of gratitude to my beta, Phoenix, for shifting through this fic as I had to do a major rewrite right after her first check through of this chapter, after realizing that I had no clue about emergency medicine in the UK! Thanks ever so much for her infinite patience with me. She made my story readable.

And to several women: Heidi, Emma, Julia, Nikki and Tudorpot, who answered a plea for both Brit-picking and information on paramedics, nursing, uniforms and emergency medical response in general. Thanks to all of you this story is slightly believable!

Please know that any errors are strictly my own, and I take full responsibility. I hope you enjoy the story and that it is not too gory or graphic for you...

The ICU Ward

Chapter 2 of 2

Draco still faces a delima regarding his wife, Brianna.

My response to the Potter Place Summer 2007 Challenge: Prompt # 25 – Draco is without his wand when his wife is injured. He is forced to let go of his Muggle prejudices in order to seek medical help for her...
Or will the shock of the accident force him to see that there is more to Muggles than meets the eye?

It had been hours. Well, it seemed like hours to Draco. *The Muggle clock on the wall has to be slow or it isn't working. An hourglass would be far more accurate at keeping the time... or even candle marks.*

A Doctor Chen from The Accident and Emergency Department came and told him that Brianna had bilateral lower leg fractures that had been splinted and her ribs had been fractured laterally. Draco wasn't sure, but he figured that lateral meant across and that a fracture wasn't as bad as a broken bone, so that was a relief. Doctor Chen also said that the CT scan showed a skull fracture and an indirect visual of an intercranial hematoma and that the MRI confirmed this. He said that Brianna might be permanently blinded in her right eye. *Stupid Muggle doctor what does he know? A simple regeneration potion and a healing charm, and her eye would be fine unless they'd removed it or her eye had popped? Eyesight is easily restored.*

A short Muggle in blue draw-string pajamas and a short sleeve top covered in a paper wrap and paper coverings on his shoes came over and told him that they used a neurological echogram for direct visual direction during the procedure on Brianna. He explained that it was some kind of noninvasive ultrasound device that allowed better visualization of the hematoma. He also told Draco that an ICP monitor was applied to Brianna's frontal lobe to monitor her intercranial pressure inside her head, and that a bore, or small hole, had been performed to release the pressure in the occipital area of her brain. When Draco protested, he explained that this procedure was quite commonly done and was very necessary. Draco's head swam with confusion, but he concentrated on every word spoken.

Little made any sense. He thought that the doctor said Brianna was going to be placed in a chemically induced coma and gradually brought back. But Draco wasn't told where she would be brought back from. He was also told that his wife would be taken to the ICU as soon as she was released from neuro-surge recovery and that nephrology, neurology and orthopaedics would follow his wife by a consult. Obviously not by his consult because the doctor didn't ask him for it, just informed him it would be done. But where neurosurgery was or why, if she was going to recover, would she need to be taken to ICU eluded him.

A nurse came and told him that Brianna was recovering nicely, which should have made Draco happy, but it filled him with dread because that meant that his wife would be taken to ICU, and no one mentioned just how far ICU was or how he was to get there to see his wife.

He had yet to actually see his wife. For all he knew these Muggles were sending her all over the place without really knowing what they were doing; although, everyone who did speak to him seemed to be fully confident about what they *did* say.

Nurse Grantham returned and walked over to Draco as he paced like a caged quintaped in a zoo. "Mr. Malfoy, you really should eat something. The cafeteria is just down the hall..."

"I don't have any Muggle money. Brianna had it all," he snapped.

"Oh, I see," she said, regarding him. "I could get you a meal voucher if you like."

He regarded her, his frustration and anger evident in his stare. "What I want are answers."

She paled and laid her hand on his arm. "I can try, but you really should speak to a doctor..."

Draco resisted the urge to jerk his arm away. "Where is my wife right now?"

Nurse Grantham smiled and her eyes softened. "She is in the neurosurgery recovery room now. She will be transported to the intensive care unit on the third floor in a while."

"I thought that she was going to be placed in a coma and then brought back?" he asked, deciding to tolerate this woman if she was going to actually tell him something useful. "Where will that be?"

She looked at Draco with concern in her eyes, studying him with open sincerity. "Yes, the anesthesiologist will induce the coma postoperatively and ensure that she is stable in neuro-surge recovery. Then she will be closely monitored in ICU."

"So Brianna will still be here, just on a different floor?" he asked, feeling relieved *At least I'll be able to find her maybe*

"Yes, sir." She regarded him thoughtfully. "Let me get you a meal voucher. I'll be right back." Draco simply nodded. He was hungry, but he didn't want to leave this facility without his wife. Nurse Grantham returned, handing Draco several slips of flimsy light blue paper. "Here you go," she said. "I'm headed to the cafeteria to get some coffee. Why don't I show you the way?"

The cafeteria was all white with fake plants and flowers to try and make it cheerful. *They failed*, Draco thought to himself. Nurse Grantham handed him an odd-looking pink tray and ushered him to the counter where food was displayed in large metal pans. *At least the food looks edible* He mindlessly selected items as the woman behind the counter asked him which he preferred. Nurse Grantham showed him where he could help himself to drinks and that he could simply request another cup if he wanted another drink. *How else would I get another drink, Muggle?* he thought, but refrained from saying it out loud, lest she refuse to give him any more answers. He sat down at a table farthest from anyone else and ate slowly.

Back in the waiting room, he paced apprehensively before sitting in the chairs he'd occupied before. Feeling tired, he tried to move the attached row of chairs closer to the corner of the room so that he could rest his head on the wall. They didn't budge. Looking over his shoulder to check that the Muggles were not paying attention to him, he concentrated his anger and frustration on shifting them and finally relocated them magically. It took a lot of effort, but the act did make him feel better. He sat down sideways, his legs lying over the armrest and his feet on the next chair, leaning his back on the wall. *If the Ministry gets mad because I used magic here so be it. I'm not leaving without Brianna, and I'm at least going to be as comfortable as I can until I can get to her.*

It must have been hours later because he was awoken by the sound of his name. A girl in a blue and white checked dress with the name 'Tammorah' on a badge gently shook his shoulder. "Are you Mr. Malfoy?"

"Yes," he said, looking at her warily.

"I was asked to inform you that your wife has been taken up to ICU and you may come and see her if you like," she said, taken back by his sharp reply.

Draco jumped up, startling the girl. "Yes, *I like*," he sneered. "Where is she? I want to see her."

The girl simply said, "Follow me, sir," and led the way through the automatic swinging doors, down a corridor and up a lift. At the ward, she touched a panel with her identification badge, and the doors opened for her. "She is in bed twelve. Her nurse and Doctor Snape are with her now. They are expecting you."

Small black plaques with white numbers indicated the bed numbers. There were six beds on each side of the room, divided by a desk area. Various machines and gadgets

surrounded each bed in the room, with tubes and cords attaching each patient on the beds to the machines. Each bed had drapes that were drawn back, and the occupants' beds faced him, so Draco could see each patient as he passed. The light in the room was soft, and little beeps and bleeps from each machine mixed with the soft conversations in the room between the staff. Doctor Snape was standing next to a nurse holding a cream-colored folder of some kind, marking notes on the pages. Beside them, Brianna lay on a beige bed with handrails and white linen sheets.

A pole stood by the bed with four bags of clear fluids, possibly water, with long tubes, which ran through a strange device with four screens. The thin tubes then were connected together into one tube that was connected at something attached to Brianna's arm. Another cord attached a clip with a red light on her middle finger to a connection on a machine on the wall. A large, blue machine with two screens, lots of buttons, dials and tubes, stood at the head of her bed. The screens showed moving wavy lines, flashing numbers, and circles in different shades of red. Another device hung on the wall over the opposite side of her bed with a screen displaying more wavy lines, numbers and a flashing heart.

Brianna herself looked like she was sleeping, lying in the bed under nothing but a thick sheet and light blanket; yet she was pale. There was a blue and white tube that ran from where it was taped to her head to a connection on one of the machines long, thin, clear tubes from each forearm. Round patches on her skin had colored clamps attached to them with long cords that attached to a device that had the screen with the flashing heart and wavy lines. There was a hard, white shell on her left wrist.

Doctor Snape handed the cream-colored folder held onto a grey board with a large clip she called a 'chart' to the nurse, giving her directions that Draco couldn't understand. "Mr. Malfoy," she said in a rich smooth voice, pulling Draco's attention away from the horror he was looking at to her. "The procedure was a success; I'm pleased to inform you. The frontal pressure seems to be responding nicely to the ICP, so we are keeping a close monitor on that."

Draco nodded, although her encouraging words didn't quite match what he saw in Brianna's condition lying on the bed. "How long will she be like this?" he asked softly.

"She is responding well, and if she continues to improve as expected, we expect that she will be here three, maybe five days at the most before we move her to the Dawson Ward, our High Dependency Ward in the Dixon Annex," Doctor Snape replied confidently. "Pardon me a moment," she said as a man walked up, asking her a question quietly. When she turned back to him, her smile was warm and encouraging. "I have every reason to expect a good outcome, Mr. Malfoy. The orthopaedic's team came to see your wife in order to replace her splints and indicated that your wife had clean breaks. Her legs will heal nicely. Doctor Hale has been here to do her work-up, and he will follow Brianna's treatment. So far your wife's prognosis is favorable."

Draco turned his head to look at his wife lying amongst all the tubes, cords and machines, wishing he could believe her. "Can she hear me if I talk to her? Does she know what is happening?" he asked, deeply concerned.

"You may visit with her for a while, Mr. Malfoy, but visitation is limited to fifteen minutes. She is still sedated for now, so she isn't likely to be very responsive," Doctor Snape answered.

"But you just said that she is responding well and that she's doing all right?" he asked confused.

Doctor Snape looked at Draco contemplatively. "Your wife is responding to treatment, her vital signs are good and her ICP, ECG and EKG are within normal ranges. We are monitoring Mrs. Malfoy closely, and her vitals signs show that she is stable and her prognosis *is* good, Mr. Malfoy. However, she is basically asleep, due to her medications, so she will not necessarily respond to you." A sound like a musical scale sounded from Doctor Snape's pocket. She pulled out a small black rectangle object, scrutinizing it briefly. "Please, understand that we are taking very good care of your wife, Mr. Malfoy. I'm sorry, but I have to take this." She walked away to the counter full of various charts, bags of clear liquid, papers, and picked up the handset of a Muggle telephone.

Draco stood by Brianna's bed, simply holding her hand, watching her sleep, trying to ignore the various 'monitors' that continued to show the indications of his wife's condition in a manner he could not decipher. After several long minutes, a nurse tried to ask him to go, first kindly, then rather firmly. A dark-skinned woman named Marcella finally came to lead Draco to the waiting room just outside the ward.

Draco literally felt torn away from Brianna, helpless to do anything but trust these Muggles and hope for the best. Several times he walked over to the door, but without a badge or a wand, it would not open for him. On the occasions when he followed someone into the ward, Marcella ushered him out. His third time she allowed him another fifteen minute visit so he could hold Brianna's hand before escorting him back to the waiting room.

Later as the clock on the wall said thirty minutes past three, Draco followed a man and woman in the typical dark blue nursing outfits back into the ward, standing once again at Brianna's bedside. "Leah, he must really love her," a woman said to his wife's nurse, standing at the counter with several other people.

"He hasn't left the hospital since they brought her in," a red-haired woman stated.

"I wish I had someone that cared for me like that," Marcella said wistfully. Draco tried to shut out their voices, gently caressing Brianna's hand with his.

For three days Draco practically lived in the waiting room on the third floor. He managed to gain access to Brianna on many occasions, several times being allowed in by a nurse or a healthcare assistant to stand by her bedside and hold Brianna's hand for brief visits. He only owned two Muggle outfits, the expensive tailored suit he wore the day of the accident or a pair of trousers and jumper. The evening of the second day, after checking on Brianna twice, Draco decided to Apparate home to change his clothes, deciding that the jumper and trousers would be more comfortable.

He ordered the house-elf to clean his suit and sent an owl to Brianna's family, trying to explain the situation, then sent an owl to Pansy asking her to please acquire him a second Muggle jumper. He then Apparated to Diagon Alley, going first to the reopened Ollivander's to purchase a new wand and then to Gringotts to get some Muggle money, although he had no idea if five hundred pounds would be enough to last him until he could get Brianna to St Mungo's. He returned to the Muggle hospital, Disapparating into the large stall of the men's loo near the waiting room.

Until the Muggles at the hospital removed the cords and tubes from her, he was uncertain if he *could* Apparate with her. His gut told him that he shouldn't, not without causing Brianna harm or possibly killing her. Every time he asked if he could take her to St. Mungo's, Leah looked at him confused and said Brianna shouldn't be moved just yet with deep concern in her voice.

The fourth day, Draco decided to ask how much longer the tubes were going to be in his wife. "Mr. Malfoy, the doctors will discharge the monitors when your wife no longer needs them," the man, whose name badge read, Hooman Karimi S.R.N., stated as he adjusted the drip on his wife's ivy.

Draco was trying his best to suppress his anger and frustration, so that Nurse Karimi would not ask him to leave again. "So how much longer will she ~~need~~ need them?"

"I'm unable to determine that, Mr. Malfoy. You would have to ask the doctor on call," Mr. Karimi answered, facing Draco briefly before turning back to the chart and writing something in the pages.

Mr. Karimi wasn't Draco's favorite of Brianna's nurses. He liked Leah, Brianna's day nurse, or Marcella, the healthcare assistant, or Michaela, a nurse that came on at night, much better. "So how would I find Doctor Snape to ask her?"

"Doctor Hale and Doctor Myers were here early this morning. I don't expect her back until tomorrow. However, your wife is scheduled to be transferred to Dawson Ward tomorrow," Mr. Karimi said with a forced patience.

Draco slowly exhaled counting to ten. "So what does that mean? Her tubes will come out then?" he asked, frustrated.

Mr. Karimi looked quickly at the clock on the wall, although Draco knew that he would be allowed his full fifteen minutes before he was told to leave. "Her doctor hasn't written a discharge order or indicated when the ICP will be removed. Please excuse me, Mr. Malfoy. I need to change the IV, and adjust the EKG lead."

Draco looked away from the man so that he would not see the seething annoyance on his face. *Brianna, I should have just risked Apparation. If I had known had I known*

I... But I couldn't I just couldn't. Please forgive me... Please wake up... My beautiful Brianna, I need you to wake up.

The morning of the fifth day was chaos. Brianna wasn't in her room. Apparently she had opened her eyes and was cognizant. Draco was furious that Brianna had been taken away until Leah explained that Brianna had been taken to the theater to have her ICP removed. Draco was once again confused, and she had to explain what a theater was.

He wanted to hug the woman. The monitors were all blank with thin straight lines, and nothing was flashing. Leah directed Draco to the waiting area to wait until Brianna would be transferred to her new room on the Dawson Ward in the Dixon Annex.

He couldn't sit. Draco paced the waiting room like a quintaped stalking humans trapped in a store-shed. After what seemed like hours, Draco saw Leah, the male healthcare assistant, and a man in the lighter blue short-sleeved top and matching pajamas rolling Brianna's bed down the hall. Leah paused long enough to signal Draco to follow.

Brianna was barely awake with only the thin, clear ivy tube in her arm and the round patches attached by the cords with the colored clips. She looked pale, tired and weak. In the elevator Draco held her hand, gently caressing the back of it with his thumb. Brianna looked at him once before closing her eyes again, but Draco could have sworn that he felt the tiniest squeeze of his hand. Draco stroked his wife's face lovingly.

Once in the ward on the second floor, Leah moved around Brianna's bed, talking to the woman in a long blue tunic top and navy trousers. Draco waited patiently. The screens on the machines sprung to life, and once again wavy lines, numbers and a flashing heart indicated Brianna's condition. *If they can move her, can I take her to St. Mungo's now*, Draco wondered.

Draco waited three days before he decided to take action. He stood quietly whispering to Brianna about the newest reportings in the *Daily Prophet* and read her horoscope in *Witches Weekly*. Brianna looked up at him, but she was so tired she could only smile at him. That didn't matter to Draco; he was just so happy to see her with her eyes open and smiling. "Brianna, I'm going to try and get you out of here today. I have a new wand and I think it's safe now," he whispered to her. Brianna simply closed her eyes and made a soft moan. *This has got to work. She needs a Healer this is our only chance* "Brianna, I love you," he said softly to her.

Okay, here goes nothing Draco closed the curtain blocking him from the area where the nurses sat and cast a Silencing Charm. "Just hold on, my love... I'll get us there..." Quickly he severed the tubes and cords with a Slicing Spell and lifted Brianna in his arms. Immediately the alarms and loud beeps went off. Brianna groaned as if in pain, and his heart thumped heavily in his chest. Just as the alarms went off, he heard people scurrying, exclaiming excitedly, and knew that they were running to see what he had done. Without waiting, Draco Apparated Brianna to the reception of St. Mungo's and fired off the Distress Spell.

Immediately, a witch in long, lime green robes and a wizard in grey robes ran over to Draco's side. "Oh, my goodness!" the Healer exclaimed. "What happened to her?" She turned quickly to the receptionist before Draco could answer. "Send for Healer Timothy Hatley, and alert Magical Catastrophes in Artifact Accidents." The wizard conjured a stretcher and levitated Brianna onto it before gliding her to the lifts. "What is her name, and what happened?" the witch asked.

"Brianna Malfoy, my wife," Draco said quickly. "She was hit by a Muggle automobile, and Muggles took her to a Muggle Hospital... They did surgery on her, and I couldn't get her out until now..."

"What happened, Mr. Malfoy?" the man asked.

"I just told you!" Draco exclaimed, worried as another Healer approached them. Within minutes the round patches were removed, the long needle, now draining blood, was removed from Brianna's arm, and the first witch was giving Brianna some Blood-Replenishing Potion.

"Mr. Malfoy, I am Elizabeth McAllister, Healer in this ward. I realize that you said that Muggle doctors attended to your wife. Did they explain what they did to her?"

"Yes, but I can't remember it all! There were fractures, eye-cee-pee's, em-ar-eye's and they did surgery," Draco admitted, holding his temper in check, although he wanted to scream. "She had ivy and cords and tubes..."

"Mr. Malfoy, if you would let me, I am a fair Legilimens, and this would be much faster if I could see and hear what you remembered," Healer Elizabeth McAllister suggested calmly.

"Yes, yes, whatever will save Brianna!" Draco consented. "They made a bore in her, and an eye-cee-pee and cee-tea..."

"Relax, Mr. Malfoy, and let me in. Think about the times anyone spoke to you and let me find what I need," she said. Draco allowed her in, finding the memories came easily to him, even though he didn't understand everything. He recalled each medical person: from Preston, to doctors Chen and Kingston in the emergency ward, listing off Brianna's injuries and treatments, the CT and MRI, ICP and finally Doctor Snape telling him about the surgery, then later the memory from the ICU ward and all the machines and monitors. "Fine, Mr. Malfoy," Healer McAllister said, breaking off contact. "Although I may need these memories in a Pensieve later, if you wouldn't mind."

Draco felt like he had just relived the last nine days all over again. "Fine anything... whatever it takes to heal Brianna. I'll give you anything you need."

Healer Elizabeth McAllister smiled encouragingly at Draco. "Mr. Malfoy, I will have Mrs. Malfoy's broken bones mended in a jiffy, don't you worry. And I'll be out to let you know about her head injuries as soon as I assess her. But do rest assured; none of her injuries are beyond my ability. I'll leave you now but I'll be back."

Draco sat in the waiting room, his head in his hands when Healer Elizabeth McAllister came looking for him. "I have excellent news, Mr. Malfoy. Your wife is going to be fine. That Muggle surgery, although primitive, probably saved your wife's life. We have mended her ribs, legs and wrist and removed the cast and splints. Her skull is mended, and the small hole the Muggles made is no problem and will close on its own. There was a slight kidney injury, which we corrected and will heal nicely with potions. Mrs. Malfoy has been given her potions and is resting now. I would like to keep her a few days for observation, but she can go home within the week."

Draco breathed a sigh of relief. "So Brianna is going to be okay?"

Healer Elizabeth McAllister smiled warmly and handed Draco a restorative potion. "Your wife is just fine. Now if you don't mind, I saw a few images of your injuries, Mr. Malfoy. If you would please, I'd like to check on you now."

Draco followed the Healer into the ward and sat on one of the beds. He removed the wrist support and camwalker, letting them fall on the floor and immediately his wrist and ankle began to throb in pain. Healer Elizabeth McAllister swept her wand over Draco's wrist, ankle and hip, uttering the Bone-Mending and Tendon-Ligament-Mending Charms, instantly repairing his sprains and relieving his aches. She was quite amused by the wrist support and camwalker cast, requesting if she could keep them. Draco gladly consented, happy to be rid of them. She handed him two potions and suggested he stay the night in Brianna's room. Suddenly exhausted, he accepted, changing into a hospital gown and slipping into the bed next to Brianna's. It was the closest he'd felt to her in what seemed ages.

"Good night, Brianna," he whispered to his wife as he closed his eyes, the sleeping additive to his potions taking effect. "I did what I could... really I did. I had no choice... I hope you forgive me... I love you, Brianna."

"I know, Draco... I know," she uttered back softly. "I love you, too. Of course I forgive you but there's nothing to forgive, my love. Good night, and sleep well, sweetheart."

~FIN~

~oOo~

Author's notes:

Poor Draco, he's having problem with Muggle medical terminology.

Fracture is a medical term for any break in a bone. Lateral means on the outside or away from the (anatomical) mid line of the body. (i.e. A lateral cut on your left ankle would be on the left side of the ankle.) Intercranial is in the cranium or inside the head or brain tissue.

EKG and ECG record the electronic impulses of the heart and brain, respectively. Draco mistook 'ivy' for an I.V. intravenous fluids drip.

A CT scan (cee-tea scan) is a quick non-invasive form of radiological scan. An MRI (em-ar-eye) is Magnetic Resonance Imaging. With head trauma a CT scan is generally preformed to verify the extent of skull injuries, and an MRI is used to view if any soft tissue damage has occurred.

Neurological echogram is very similar to an Echocardiogram (similar equipment), but the hand held 'wand' is designed to scan the head for intercranial use during surgical procedures. (The images on the screen looks very similar to the sonogram done for expectant mothers to see their fetus.)

An ICP (eye-cee-pee) monitor measures the intercranial pressure in the brain.

Dawson Ward, the High Dependency Ward in the Dixon Annex of the Kent and Canterbury hospital = these names for the wards are imaginary since I was unable to confirm the actual names of these wards. If any does know, I would appreciate being told so I could fix this...

I want to thank Marcella Johnson P.A., Leah Williams Neuro-surge R.N. and Hooman Karimi R.N., for their time, patience and knowledge and for putting up with my many insufferable questions. I decided to use their names, but Hooman is really a much nicer guy than I wrote him.

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