

Hallowed Truths

by Cheile

Enmity becomes understanding. Draco's most painful secret is revealed. But will that revelation cost him everything?

[not end-of-HBP nor DH compliant!]

Return to Hogwarts

Chapter 1 of 2

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Author's note: Deathly Hallows? What's that? Okay, so I did enjoy reading it. But this fic is not end-of-HBP nor DH compliant.

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Rating: NC-17 eventually. Dramione smut and angst ahoy!!

Thanks: to the Dramione community at LiveJournal, and Layne, Maria Elena, Heathen and Poppy for beta-reading. And of course there's the fact that Layne got me into this in the FIRST PLACE! (Yea woman, don't sit there with that "moi?" look on yer face when you know I ain't gonna buy it. =P)

Summary: Enmity becomes understanding. Draco's most painful secret is revealed. But will that revelation cost him everything?

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Chapter 1 ~ Return to Hogwarts

As the Hogwarts Express chugged through the English countryside, Hermione Granger settled into one of the plush seats that lined the Heads' cabin. She was sorry that she couldn't sit with Harry and Ron as she usually did, but she had attained her goal of being chosen as Head Girl. Now, she had to wait for the Head Boy to arrive so they could discuss the monitoring of Houses, Prefect reports and other assorted duties.

After this year, she would likely never take this ride again. It saddened her a little, even though she knew there was so much more out there once this last year of schooling was through. And that was only guaranteed if You-Know-Who was defeated. If the eventual battle came and Harry lost... She shuddered to think of what the world would be like.

Think positive.

She was eager to see Professor McGonagall again; of all the teachers, the Head of Gryffindor was the one she missed the most over summer breaks. And Hagrid, of

course, though she wasn't taking his class anymore. Most of the students either mocked or feared the half-giant gamekeeper, but Hermione adored him. The one gap would be Professor Dumbledore, who had died at the end of last year. Murdered by Rodolphus Lestrage, even though Harry swore up and down that Professor Snape had done it and refused to change his mind, no matter what evidence the Ministry had found to the contrary. Then again, the Potions master had never been well-liked. Not that he seemed to care. The only students Snape had had any care for were his precious Slytherins.

Think positive, damnit.

Next to Hermione, Crookshanks lay curled up in a neat round of ginger fur. She reached a hand down to pet his back, the soft fur under her hands soothing and unwinding the last bit of tension her dark thoughts had given her. She had to distract herself before they started again. And she was tired of staring at the door, waiting for it to open and reveal whoever her companion for the year would be. She shrugged and dug her copy of her new Advanced Potions book out of her bag. Might as well get started on this. The more prepared she was when it came to dealing with Snape, all the better. Though, of course, he never appreciated her diligence. But that was Snape for you.

Half an hour later, Hermione was busy reading the first chapter when she caught snatches of conversation outside in the corridor.

"... wonderful that you made Head Boy ... 'bout time one of our own was in charge."

Recognizing the voice of Meleney McNair--a sixth year Slytherin girl--she groaned silently. So she would be stuck with a Slytherin boy all year. Wonderful. Well, she would make it clear to him that there would be no troops of Slytherins in and out of their shared quarters. She was prepared to return to her reading when the continued conversation distracted her again.

"... Gryffindor is the Head Girl, of course." Another Slytherin girl, making an inelegant gagging noise.

"I'm sure he'll manage just fine, girls." No denying that voice--Blaise Zabini.

"Yes, I will manage. Hell, I'll deal with anyone as long as it's anybody but--" The last few words almost weren't heard as the cabin door was flung open to reveal the little group of Slytherins: Meleney, the unknown Slytherin girl, Blaise, Vincent Crabbe and Gregory Goyle. And in their center, the tall, pale figure of Draco Malfoy.

"Granger." Draco stopped short.

[TBC!]

Butting Heads

Chapter 2 of 2

Enmity becomes understanding. Draco's most painful secret is revealed. But will that revelation cost him everything?

Chapter 2 ~ Butting Heads

Hermione stared in shock for a moment. He couldn't possibly--but there was the Head Boy badge pinned right above the Slytherin patch.

As the shock faded and reality sunk in, she felt horror fill her. She would have to share *quarters* with Malfoy all year! She couldn't think of a worse fate...

"Can't believe your eyes, huh, Granger?" The other Slytherin girl was wearing a snide smile. She oddly reminded Hermione of Pansy Parkinson--same dark hair cut in a bob, same stuck-up attitude.

"I think her fat cat has got her tongue, Mimi." Meleney McNair's snide remark broke Hermione out of her trance. She shook her ash-blonde bangs out of eyes that reminded her of Harry's--they were almost the same shade of green. "What's the matter, Granger--can't your super-smart brain think of an answer to Mimi's *simple* question??"

Crabbe and Goyle sniggered; Zabini merely looked amused. And still standing in their midst, Malfoy was wearing his trademark smirk.

"C'mon, you lot," Zabini said suddenly. "No doubt they've duties to discuss since they're in charge of all our sorry arses this year." He laughed and, shoving the two girls ahead of him, winked at Hermione and shut the cabin door.

Hermione watched Malfoy fling himself onto the couch directly opposite, still wearing that smirking look she loathed. Catching her glare, the smirk became a sneer. "Got a problem, Mudblood?"

"You," Hermione retorted.

Malfoy's sneer changed into a mocking grin. "Well then, that's your problem, isn't it now?" His gray eyes slid to Crookshanks, who was now sitting up and staring at him, tail swishing from side to side. "Put that mangy thing somewhere else--I won't have it staring at me the whole ride."

"Cats stare, Malfoy. But that's *your* problem, isn't it now?" she said sweetly.

"If I ever find it in my room, I may have to toss it in the lake."

"If you lay a finger on him, you'll pay."

"And how is that now?"

"Try it and find out."

He smirked, then changed the subject. "So, regarding our duties this year, I will handle my House. The rest is yours."

Hermione's jaw dropped. She couldn't believe his audacity! Okay, on second thought, she could. "We're evenly dividing the work like it is supposed to be done, Malfoy! I'm not doing it all so you can spend your time entertaining your entourage!"

"You're Miss Perfect Know-it-all, aren't you? So do it yourself and you'll be happier that way. I don't have time to listen to you lecture me about everything having to be done your way." Malfoy crossed one knee over the other, smiling widely at the way her eyes narrowed.

"You're *not* playing these games with me all year, Malfoy. I won't put up with it. So you'd better do your share of the work unless you want me to speak to Professor Snape and Professor McGonagall about your behavior. And you might be one of his favorites, but even he is not going to let you shirk your duties as Head Boy." She felt a bit of triumph as his smug look vanished to be replaced with an annoyed one. "So you can have Hufflepuff..."

"Absolutely not," he snorted. "I *refuse* to be subjected to those whiny, wimpy gits for an entire year. *You* can have Hufflepuff. I'd rather put up with the Ravenclaws. Most have the brains to be respectful to their betters."

"Your arrogance is astounding, Malfoy."

"Thank you."

Oooh! She wanted to strangle him. But she simply glared at him. "We need to have a meeting with the Prefects before the train gets to Hogwarts. In *their* cabin. So get up and let's go."

Malfoy lazily rose to his feet and stretched much like Crookshanks would after a long nap. Since he was nearest the door, he exited first. She was halfway to the door when he gave it a shove to close it, his mocking laughter echoing in the corridor.

"Bastard," Hermione muttered under her breath, slamming the door open, and then shutting it so that Crookshanks couldn't get out and wander the train in her absence, before heading down to the Prefects' cabin.

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The staff table at Hogwarts looked so different to Hermione this year with Dumbledore's empty chair still at its center. McGonagall, who had been named Headmistress, seemed to be refusing to sit in it. She was still in her chair directly to the right of the center chair.

Many of the Gryffindors and some of the others also cast glances at the empty chair throughout the meal. Harry, by her side as usual, was also glancing at the staff table, but she suspected he was glaring at Snape. Ron had cast a sad look at Dumbledore's chair, brightened at the sight of Hagrid and waved to him, then commenced stuffing himself. Ginny had rolled her eyes at her brother's behavior and made a comment about it loud enough for half of the Gryffindors to hear, which caused a ripple of laughter down the table.

Many of the new first-years were staring at Harry in awe, some forgetting to eat. Normally such looks would have made him uncomfortable, but he was still too consumed with sneaking sideways glowers at Snape to notice.

It was impossible not to notice Malfoy holding court at the Slytherin table, as usual. Flanked by Crabbe and Goyle as per usual, with Zabini, Meleney McNair and the other girl from the train--Mimi--across from him. Hermione rolled her eyes in disgust and looked away.

Once everyone had finished eating and the tables were cleared, McGonagall gracefully rose to her feet.

"I have one more announcement to make--to introduce your Head Boy and Girl for the year. Only the staff has authority above them, so I expect you all to show them the respect they are due."

"Our Head Girl--Hermione Granger." McGonagall gestured to her to rise, a pleased smile lighting up her face. Hermione blushed but rose to the cheers of the Gryffindors and clapping from the rest.

"And our Head Boy--Draco Malfoy." The Slytherin table erupted in whooping and cheering as Malfoy rose to his feet, looking smug and completely in his element.

"The rest of you are dismissed to go to your dorms. Prefects, please assist your first-years. Miss Granger, Mr. Malfoy--with me, please."

"See you later, Hermione," Harry said. He gave her hand a quick squeeze as he rose to his feet with the rest of the table.

"See ya," Ron added, eyeing Malfoy warily as he followed Hermione up front to meet the Headmistress.

"The Prefects have been given their instructions, I presume?" was McGonagall's first question.

"Yes, Professor. We took care of that on the train."

"Good. Now follow me." McGonagall led the way out of the Great Hall. Seven flights of stairs later, she paused before a portrait of a wizard with hair almost as red as Ron's. Hermione recognized him as Burdock Muldoon, who had been the chief of the Wizard's Council back in the 1400's.

"Good evening, Headmistress McGonagall," the painted Muldoon said, sweeping off his hat and half bowing.

"Good evening, Muldoon." McGonagall turned to the two students. "Your password is '*Veritas*'. You may have your friends come up to visit you, but the password cannot be used by anyone but you two or staff members. Should you choose to entertain visitors, make sure there are no fights." Her stern gaze fixed first on Hermione, then Draco.

"Yes, Professor," Hermione said immediately. Draco simply nodded.

"Very well. Miss Granger, I will see you tomorrow after lunch in my Advanced Transfiguration class. Good night to both of you."

They both bid her good night, and then Hermione turned to the portrait. "*Veritas*."

TBC!