ETERNALLY YOURS

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ETERNALLY YOURS

by K_D_SLYTHERIN

Summary

He got the girl.

But will her chains be enough to satisfy his hunger for control or will they pull them down into further ruin?

Some things go too deep to be forgotten and some wounds never close.

Notes

Welcome to Eternally Yours,
this is part two in the DEATHLY SINS series so if you're here, you know the drill!

You must read Limerence first to understand the story, Eternally Yours is a companion fic and not a standalone.

This one won't be as long but it will be ten shades darker and it's vital in wrapping up Draco & Hermione's story, so buckle up and try to enjoy the ride. 😬

- K 🖤

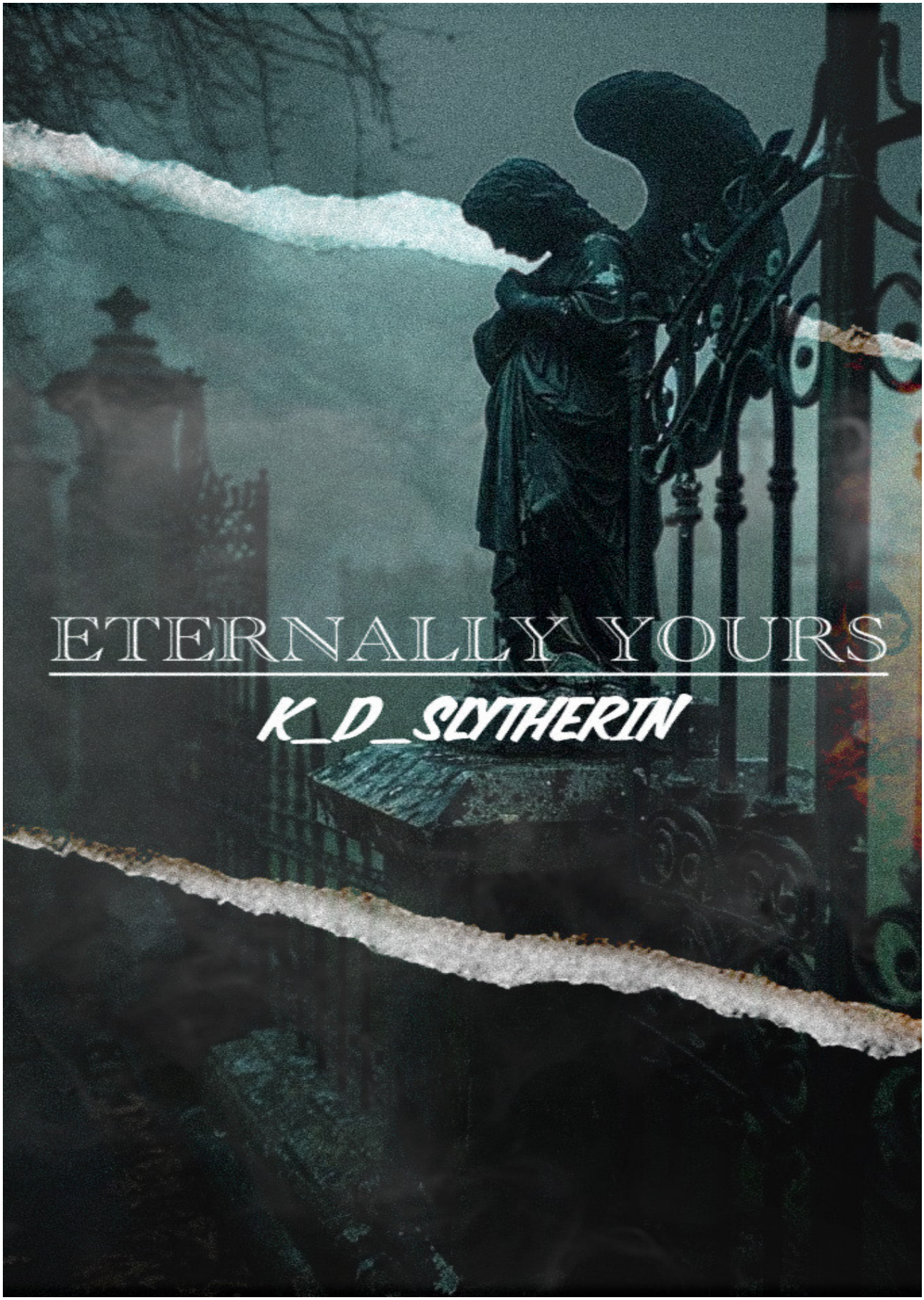
Chapter 1: Hollow Hands

Chapter Summary

The story begins with a girl in white in the garden of flowerette. She swirls and twirls between the flowers. She exists between nature, but her heart longs for escape. She is purely wrapped in the comfort of her memories, her body is safe there but her soul is wild and curious. She was warned about the beyond's she shouldn't experience. But she is an escapist, greedy for freedom. She has always been a goddess, whether in the garden of roses or in the hell of Hades. The garden is a safe place for her, but hell was the place he chose for her.

Chapter Notes

Songs that helped to inspire the chapter -
Eternally Yours:Motion Picture Collection by Motionless In White, Crystal Joilena
Long Way Down by Steelfeather
Still Won't Feel Like Home by Alex Apolline
Cut by Plumb
Idea 22 by Gibran Alcocer
Hollow Hands by Nilu
Buy The Stars by MARINA
Where Souls Linger by Nightcall, Nocturne.
Lost It All by Jill Andrews


ETERNALLY YOURS
K_D_SLYTHERIN

Friday, July 10th 1999

Malfoy Manor, Wiltshire

Roses are so pretty.

They are the epitome of beauty, with their soft crimson petals that feel like silk laced between the delicate skin of your fingers, the way they said "*I love you*" without words, the way they filled a darkened corner with their ruby elegance, getting you drunk on their floral perfume.

Roses are beautiful, passionate—but they are also harmful. You will scar your hands on their thorns and bleed for the foolish temptation to touch them. Their deep happy red draws you closer and you will have been pricked before you even realised. Seemingly out of nowhere you have walked straight into a prickly little trap, too captivated by its beauty to notice the dangers.

Roses are love in their true form, a beauty that we bleed for. Isn't it an interesting thought that we wouldn't think twice about bleeding for something we love when the whole innocent notion of love is that it's something that isn't suppose to hurt.

They who want the rose must respect the thorns.

You love a rose too hard and it will crumble in your palms, crushed petals blown away in the breeze. You love a rose gently and it will still wilt away and die, so in the end the brand of love you receive will never really matter. Love destroys us all in the end.

But love can still be beautiful and life had always been full of beautiful dangers and dangerous beauty. Beauty entices even the strongest of people, luring them closer with promises of safety and

mesmerising lustre until one day it starts to hurt. Beauty is a deceptive power and just because something is irresistibly attractive doesn't make it good for you. But acknowledging the paradox of beauty's ability to capture and cause harm is often clouded when feelings are already involved.

Wounds are created that cannot be seen, they ripple out like a stone dropped into the dark depths of water. Other wounds are visible and fatal, dripping with the scarlet evidence of pain, too deep to ever be stitched back together with kind words and gentle hands that Hermione would never be graced with again. There will be no one there to put her broken pieces back together, so she will fall apart slowly until her pieces grow smaller with age and sink into the earth, just like a dying and forgotten rose.

She walked and walked, her bare feet padding across the stone, pressing her fingertips to each delicate petal she passed in Narcissa's rose garden. It was her favourite place in the Manor, her own little haven of peace, walled off from the rest of the grounds and secured with a large wrought iron gate, an ornate "*N*" in the center. Her little garden of *heaven*. No wonder Narcissa had created it, even *she* needed a place of escape in her own home.

But the difference with Narcissa was that she *got* the luxury of escape, no matter how brutal her departure from the world may have been. Hermione often thought of her as she sat on the stone bench carved by bitter hands in her memory. She felt grief for a woman she hardly knew but she felt her spirit here, her energy. She seemed to follow Hermione around, giving her comfort amidst the suffocating darkness. A gentle caress to the heart that only a mother's hands could give.

It had been two weeks since they graduated from Hogwarts and Hermione was condemned by the man she had regretfully fallen in love with to a life of ownership and solitude. A shiny possession placed carefully on the highest shelf. Narcissa seemed to know what that was like and Hermione felt for once in her life—*understood*.

She had spent so many long hours out here, thinking of nothing but her memories *over and over*, thinking fondly and painfully of the parents that Draco had prevented her from having any contact with. The Manor harboured many different wards, one being a vicious display of isolation—instantly killing any messenger owl that tried to enter the vicinity. He was set on cutting her off from the rest of the world because in his opinion he had already shared her too much at Hogwarts.

He had built himself a snake house on the other side of the rose garden, for as rich and above every else that he was, he didn't mind getting his hands dirty when it benefitted him. It was a giant gothic looking glass dome, essentially a green house for his *precious* snakes. It had high arched windows lined with black metal, twin marble snakes guarding each side of the entryway, charmed to hiss and spit at you as you walked by as if you weren't worthy enough to enter such a sacred place. He had filled it with tropical plants, a giant pool of water in its center.

He had Pythons, large Boas and Coral snakes. But his favourite and most terrifying pet of all was the giant green Anaconda he kept. Hermione never stepped foot inside it, no matter how much Draco begged. He would spend just as many hours with his snakes as she did with her roses. It gave Hermione a break from his constant crippling *affections*.

She could see the high point of it in the sky, just above the walls of the garden, like a jet black needle piercing the clouds above. She shivered. Everything it boasted was everything Draco was—dark, threatening.. *deadly*.

Unfriendly and uninviting.

She took a deep breath, looking around at the many winding paths lined in vibrant flowers. Her favourite feature of all was the stunning sandstone gazebo, built in an octagon shape with a cupola on the top. It stood as the centrepiece of the garden. Twisted vines wrapped themselves around the iron railings, dotted with silky pink and white roses, two elegant concrete angels sat on either side of the entrance in greeting. It was classy and delicate, *soft*. It was a place she could breathe.

Such a contrast to Draco's reptilian *hell house*.

The sweet smell of pollen rolled around in the warmth of the summer breeze, ruffling through Hermione's honeyed curls. In her time here so far she had learnt that not all of her ideas of the Manor were true. It did harbour *some* beauty around its edges and she enjoyed certain aspects of it, like this garden for example. She could find small bursts of light in the abyss if she *really* looked for them.

The Manor had large baths that Hermione made lots of use of, their master bed was wide enough to fit ten people even though it didn't make much of a difference when she had a controlling and clingy husband who couldn't bear even an inch of emptiness if his skin wasn't touching hers. Every bed sheet and curtain was made from the finest silk, rugs buttery and soft under her feet. Every room boasted a large fireplace and every one of Draco's usual spots had a bar cart stocked with copious amounts of Ogden's whisky.

The Manor library was the biggest she had ever seen, four stories high with winding staircases, a sitting area with velvet sofas and a roaring fire. There wasn't a single book she wanted that couldn't be found. She knew that when the winter came to take her away from the roses she could be found there, amongst the books instead. Her old friends. The things that used to bring her comfort above all else.

Draco never needed to worry about leaving his invaluable snakes, it was hot in his dome all year round, warmer than a charm could ever achieve.

Their official wedding had been scheduled for two weeks time on the twenty fourth of July. Hermione had no feelings towards Draco's desire to have another wedding. They were already married and her fears towards the situation had all but vanished, settled into the cracks of everything else she was already feeling. The wedding would take place at the Manor with only a small intimate group of people in attendance.

Hermione still couldn't believe this was her life, the magnitude of her reality still had yet to fully sink in. Draco had become a sick and twisted crutch for her, an unhealthy dependence, making her believe that he was the only one she needed, that only *he* could give her everything she wanted but he didn't understand that money was *cheap*. It was thoughtless and effortless, being passed from one greedy hand to another.

It was so easy to buy someone's love when you had obscene amounts of it, putting the effort into loving someone organically and without influence was *harder* but meant so much more. He could buy her all the stars in the world but it would still never fill the gaping hole to be truly *loved.* Money was nothing but copper, love was the hearts *gold.*

Draco had reluctantly given her slightly more breathing room since arriving here, he had relaxed somewhat with the comfort of knowing she couldn't cross the boundary line even if she wanted to —lest her chains and his wards rip her in half for her *disobedience*.

A dense green forest surrounded most of the grounds and there were no souls around for miles, the Manor was isolated from society just as she was. Sometimes living here felt like she was the only person in the world and the feeling could be both incapacitating and freeing. But nothing stopped the burning ache in her chest from thinking about the people she dearly missed, she felt so distant and disconnected from everyone that wasn't Draco and loneliness was a cold and empty feeling. Her new *normal*.

She wasn't the girl she once was, she was a thin shell of the woman she used to be, floating around aimlessly trying to find the right shape to fit her. Her bones were aching with missing pieces, trying to find somewhere she belonged because this Manor didn't feel like *home*. In the dark and inky spaces that couldn't be considered beautiful, was sorrow. Thick, heavy hard sorrow, saturated into everything, weaving between the bricks of what once held a home. Narcissa's ghost was everywhere and Draco could feel it too, like an elephant with its heavy foot on his chest.

It didn't comfort him like one might think. To have a passed loved one around them in the atmosphere was hope for life after death, but not for him. He never saw the light in things that held such darkness, he didn't have the ability to expel or draw luminosity, he was too weighed down in obsidian to have room for it.

It made him *angry*. Angry at Narcissa and angry at himself, which by extension made him angry with her. But Hermione understood that sometimes all we are is *collateral damage* in someone else's war against themselves. Draco wasn't sound of mind and she was something warm and living that he could grasp onto with both hands. Someone that he could share his *twisted devotion* with and even though her soul held elements of hate and rancour she still had little resistance, falling apart for him like a flimsy house of cards.

The feelings that she continued to live with were a fucked up mixture of solace and anguish, clashing together every second of every day. She had her own war raging inside her weak heart at all times, wearing her even thinner than she already was. Her body couldn't decide how it was supposed to feel and it was both exhausting and damaging. Her nerves were raw and exposed with the unrelenting confliction and the never-ending silence of her existence. The crushing dead ring of *nothing*. No laughter, no conversation, it was torture for her ears that were so used to the sounds of *life.* The Manor held nothing but death, a darkened doorstep that would never again feel the soft kiss of sunshine.

But Draco was always there, he was the only one to fill in the gaps, he held her in his hollow hands and fucked her, breaking skin to force his destructive *love* down her throat but it wasn't enough to fill the void that had taken root inside her. It wasn't enough to soothe the constant cutting desolation.

But I must satisfy the monster, for he has loved me the most.

She dreamt about him, she woke most nights choking on a nightmare beside the man who gave them to her, thick with the visions of his hateful face, looming over her. Past scenes haunted her, her mind reeling through memories she would much rather forget. He terrorised her even in sleep, his name echoing through every empty space in her mind, stealing it away from any thoughts that might comfort her. He lived in her marrow, had burrowed himself into her veins, wrapping the once pure organ in her chest around himself like a bloodied shield, corrupting everything he touched with his paralysing sickness.

She was a lost dove just trying her best to find a home and Draco was a dangerous beauty, consuming her world from the inside out like a disease that had no cure. A cycle that had no end.

Comfort was a far cry and deeper they would go.

It's

A

Long

Way

Down..

Chapter 2: Death of Me

Chapter Summary

But he, that dares not grasp the thorn, should never crave the rose.
-Anne Brontë

Chapter Notes

Songs that helped to inspire the chapter -
Lilith by Saint Avangeline
I Would Beg For You by Mack Lorén
Nails by Call Me Karizma
BABYDOLL by Ari Abdul
Speak In Tongues by Machineheart
Young Beast by World's First Cinema

ETERNALLY YOURS playlist -
https://open.spotify.com/playlist/4M7zE958QW1o47gQkcsNCI?si=T3oG9cujSZe53rInZ-7Fvg&pi=BOeha-GpQGioQ

Wednesday, July 22nd 1999

The scorching July sunbeams danced across her skin as she lay, sprawled out in the lavender field on the Manor grounds. *Another tribute to Narcissa* that Lucius had paid someone else to plant, whether it was out of love or guilt Hermione wasn't sure, but just like Draco—effort was tossed to the side and galleons were transferred in its place. The earth was soaked in her memory and Hermione felt comforted by it like the lavender itself was a personal hug from her.

Hermione felt drawn to her in the same way a child is drawn to the safety of their mother because no matter how old you got that kind of love never went unwanted. She was starved for her parent's comfort, for their warm and loving embrace. Now all she could do was search for it in ghosts.

She didn't know much of Narcissa's life, Draco refused to talk about her in any capacity but she felt in her heart that she was never happy here, just as Hermione wasn't. Narcissa in her own way was sharing in Hermione's feelings even beyond the grave. It was a devastating echo through time of what she had once felt here many years before Hermione did, when she was also a prisoner in her own home. Hermione often felt her trying to shoulder some of the weight, doing something that no one had ever done for her.

Draco didn't need to say it for Hermione to *feel* it.

She was dressed in a silk green bikini, one that Draco had spent far too many galleons on and insisted that she wear as they lay together in the soft grass sipping on summer red wine and soaking up the balmy rays. The sky was a vibrant clear blue, not one cotton ball cloud in sight. She watched as the trees swayed slightly in the humidity, mesmerised by how pretty the sky looked peeking between the ruffling leaves, the sweet sound of bird song echoing around them and giving Hermione the illusion of being somewhere else.

Her skin was sticky with sweat and sunblock as she closed her eyes and blissfully inhaled the scent of its childish nostalgia along with the clusters of flowers that surrounded her. Her curls were splayed out across the ground in rivulets of thick honey, curling around every stem, shiny with streaks of sun bleached chestnut. The white gold metal in her wedding ring was heating up against her finger, a burning reminder that it was there as if she could ever forget, as if she couldn't already feel the weight of it every day of her life.

Draco's chiseled chest was glistening in the light of the sun as he lay stoic, like a solid Greek god beside her, wearing nothing but matching green shorts and the jewellery that blinded her with its strong silvery glint. His fringe was damp with sweat and his cheeks were flushed a rosy pink as he lay on his back with a hand covering his eyes, his other holding her thigh. Today was a particularly hot one and Draco had insisted they spend the day together lounging around, she couldn't deny him when the Manor grounds were this stunning in the height of the Summer.

Every flower was open and bright in both colour and fragrance, lilacs, reds, oranges, milky shades of white and buttery yellows made up a dotted patchwork amongst the green. Butterflies, bees and dragonflies flew around them in dizzying circles looking for something sweet to drink. Frogspawn

was alive and thriving in the pond and the white peacocks that still resided here drifted around happily, plucking out unfortunate worms from the earth.

When her days were spent like this Hermione didn't feel quite as alone, she almost forgot about her rocky past and her daunting future. She almost forgot about the nature of her husband and everything traumatic he had done to her with the illusion of love. She felt more free out in the open air, free from the entrapment of concrete walls, a feeling that she once got from books she had now found in the pretty solitude of the Malfoy gardens.

But one look back at the grey and ancient Manor brought her crashing back down to earth, it was like looking through a mirror to another world. It loomed over her in the light of the day like it was waiting for its chance to snatch her back into the dark. It stood tall and gloomy, like even the golden sunlight couldn't bear to touch it, wasn't enough to make it shiny again. It was a reminder that the happiness she felt in the single moments she found it was nothing more than a facade and would never last long when the rest of her life was destined to be as cold as the building looking down upon her in the form of stone and haunted memories.

"Put some of that on my back, will you sweetheart?" Draco asked, nodding towards the bottle of sunblock as he pulled himself up, the ropes of thick muscle in his forearms flexing with the action.

"You could just use your *easily accessible* magic, you know?"

He lifted a brow at her dig. "But then I wouldn't get to feel the warmth of your *healing hands*, would I?"

She rolled her eyes and lifted herself from her position, squirting a generous amount of the cream into her hands and massaging it across the broad expanse of his back. He winced when she pressed firmer. His muscles were tender from all of the exercise he was doing in the home gym he had designed with the help of Blaise's step-dad. He had put on even more size in the month since they had left school. He was an absolute machine of a man and his intimidation now stretched even further than before.

Hermione smoothed her hands over his steel shoulders and neck, raking her sticky fingers through the short blades of blonde hair and drawing a shiver from his body. His arm stretched back and wrapped around her waist, pulling her over to him so he could press his mouth against hers, his other hand clenching her curls as he moaned into the sweet cherry gloss on her lips.

"I will *never* get enough of you."

He whispered the syrupy words softly against her lips as he broke away, gazing into her soul with all the love his silvery irises was capable of. He watched her closely as his fingers slowly pulled at the silky strings of her bikini, a challenge to be stopped burning in his eyes.

"It's ok love, there's no one here to see us," he reassured when he noticed the look of pure panic bleed across her features.

This wouldn't be the first time he had ambushed her outside. She had been bent over the hard railings of the rose garden gazebo more times than she could count, not wanting to defile his mothers memory by doing it on her bench, which Hermione was glad for because at least it meant that he had *some* kind of moral compass.

But she still never felt one hundred percent comfortable even though she knew that there really was no human life for miles around them and they were securely behind wards that couldn't be entered or crossed without Draco's permission. He was a big fan of having her everywhere and anywhere he wanted across the property and Hermione's anxiety had skyrocketed when he had mentioned once or twice about his desire to fuck her in his snake house. She wasn't stupid enough to believe it would never happen, she just prayed desperately to any generous god that might be listening that it wouldn't and waited in feared anticipation for the day that it inevitably *did.*

Draco had stripped her from her bikini, tossed it aside and pulled her body down to straddle his face as he lay back, his intentions of tanning all but forgotten. Before she had even realised what was happening his wet tongue had plunged between her flesh to roll against her clit, forcing Hermione to fist his hair at the glorious sensation. She threw her head back towards the sky and felt the familiar burn build in her lower abdomen as Draco sucked and licked at her core with insistent hunger. The sounds were wet and lewd as he drank from her with a violent thirst.

"*Fuck*."

Her moans were breathy and light as he enveloped her clit with his hot mouth and made a pulsing sensation with the suction of his lips, hands gripping her ass to force her tighter to his face. Hermione came apart under the heat of the sun and Draco's pleased moan vibrated through her as he dipped his greedy tongue into her entrance, sipping on the liquid desire that he knew belonged only to him.

He held her trembling body tightly and lifted her from the ground to deposit her onto her back in the flattened grass that he had vacated from. Her quivering thighs were pushed wide apart as he wedged himself between them, slipping his pulsing cock from his shorts. A string of saliva met his tip as he caressed his length with smooth strokes, watching her intensely as she watched him back.

He dipped a finger between her wet folds, collecting her arousal and pressing it gently to her lips.

"*Open*."

The salty taste of her own release tingled on her tastebuds as he smoothed it like liquid velvet across her tongue, she held his hand in hers, watching his reaction with sultry eyes as she licked herself from his fingertip and closed her lips around his skin. His teeth pierced his bottom lip, humming deeply at the sensation and closing his eyes as he slowly pulled his digit from her mouth. When he reopened them his pupils had completely taken over the grey with extensive inky blackness.

"*Good girl*," he whispered, his voice husky and on the cusp of his restraint, the dominant sound of it making her toes curl. He positioned himself over her and pushed into the wet heat of her body with one deep thrust. Hermione hissed at the large stretch, the size of him was something she would never quite get used to. It felt like losing her virginity over and over again.

"*Fucking look at you, my sexy little witch*," he groaned as he watched her, glistening and naked before him, her breasts bouncing with every rolling motion. His wide shoulders blocked out the sunny view as he hovered above her with his large hands at her hips, using them for purchase as he dragged his slick cock back and forth between her walls. Hermione's legs shook with her second approaching orgasm and a dangerous smirk cracked across his porcelain face.

"*Beg*, baby."

His straight white teeth glowed at her in the haze of his shadow and she knew exactly what he was commanding her to beg for.

Beg me to make you cum.

This was just another one of his many favourite power plays, he only ever let her bask in the highs of pleasure that wasn't also laced with the edge of pain when *he* deemed it so. She wasn't even allowed the luxury of relieving *herself* anymore because he had made it very clear that her pleasure belonged to him and him *only*. He continued to take his control to new levels.

She swallowed her pride, feeling it drag sharply against the back of her throat and pressed her hands to his rock hard abs, feeling every ridge and dip of razor muscle, her long dark lashes fluttering up at him.

"*Please*, Draco."

"No, say the words," he demanded, slowing his pace inside her and pressing bruises into her skin with the effort.

"Please, make me cum," she begged.

She pulled her plump lip between her teeth and the seductive action was his undoing. He crushed her lips with his, devouring her whole. She shattered beneath him as he drove himself into her with passioned vigour, her nails carving bloodied lines through the ink of his serpent tattoo as her eyes rolled into the back of her skull with unmatched bliss. He bit down on her abused bottom lip as he pumped until the hot evidence of his climax filled her. His moans were gravelly and choked as he panted hard against the side of her face, hands digging into the earth on either side of her head.

He kissed her cheek tenderly and licked the salt from her neck, looking down at her with an expression that held so much power, so much *possession* that she felt it crawl across her skin like a physical being. Veiling her in all of his thick toxic masculinity.

"*You will be the death of me*," he whispered sincerely, catching his breath and slowly pulling himself from her body, brushing his fingers across every inch of dampened skin and pressing a kiss to the side of her knee as he went.

Chapter 3: Set in Stone

Chapter Summary

The devil will tell you nine truths, so that you'll believe one lie.
-Shannon Mayer

Chapter Notes

Songs that helped to inspire the chapter -
Wedding Plans by Howard Shore
War of Hearts (Violin) by Dramatic Violin
Luminary—slowed down by Joel Sunny
Masterpiece by Sam Short
Turning Page(instrumental) by Sleeping At Last
First Sight by Joel Sunny
I Wanna Be Yours (Violin) by Dramatic Violin
Love Story (Violin) by Dramatic Violin
Bitter Sweet Symphony-Instrumental by Michael Maas, Sylvia Navarro
Nothing Else Matters by Apocalyptica

ETERNALLY YOURS Playlist -
https://open.spotify.com/playlist/4M7zE958QW1o47gQkcsNCI?si=uPF_8-rSQIy2WCTZMWSZxA&pi=iAPOOnUTRW6Lu

Songs were really important for this chapter to capture the essence of Draco and Hermione's wedding in a different light from the rushed one they had at Hogwarts and for you to really feel the atmosphere I wanted it to portray. To get the full visual for the scenes listen to the songs I have designated to specific sections as you read them. Trust me.

See the end of the chapter for more notes

Draco and Hermione

invite you to join them
in the celebration of their marriage

24.07.99 | 11 AM

Malfoy Manor, Wiltshire

Reception to Follow

Friday, July 24th 1999

"I'll take to the grave and all my life starts now."

Wedding Plans by Howard Shore

Today was their official wedding day.

They were already married and soul bound so that part couldn't happen twice but the atmosphere of a ceremony is what Draco wanted to complete whatever spell he had placed on their rings. He wanted her dolled up, to see her picturesque in a white dress. He wanted to marry her in a place that held his mother's memories and Hermione understood. What she didn't understand was this spell and it made her both nervous and foolish when agreeing to marry him without knowing the full extent of it but she had already given up her life, there was nothing left to give.

She could understand his need for a more personal wedding. The first one was rushed with too much desperation and lust. This one would be elegant and drawn out because this one wasn't a sprint to slam her cage door closed, she was already *trapped*. This was just a reminder. This was just a little salt in an old wound dressed in celebration.

She sat at her dressing table in their large master suite with Daphne at her back, smoothing out her wayward curls. She wanted it styled into an elegant up-do but of course Draco disapproved and told Daphne that if she dared to defy him she would be leaving the Manor in a body bag.

Hermione didn't think he actually meant that, or at least she damn well hoped he didn't. The punishment absolutely did not fit the crime.

So her hair stayed down in long and shiny waves that fell softly over her bare shoulders. She had light makeup and diamond teardrop earrings in her ears, a generous pre wedding gift from Draco to match her ring. Her wedding gown that was made from the finest white lace money could buy hung with care from her dressing room door. Draco had it hand made and delivered especially from Italy, white stilettos studded with tiny white gold diamonds to match. He also had her veil made with the same luxury, boasting a long and ostentatious train.

It was all very glamorous and unnecessary but Draco was up to his neck in money and he wanted to splash all the galleons he could on their special day and who was she to deny him? He had hired a piano and violin duet and had house elves in full form running around with silver trays of champagne and working on a three course menu for their wedding reception. The house elves didn't belong to them, it was a gift from the house of Nott to which Draco was grateful for and Hermione despised.

Their largest dining room had been transformed into an elegant ballroom thanks to Daphne, Theo and Blaise, with crystal chandeliers and candles, white roses plucked carefully from the rose garden and arranged into stunning displays, a charmed ceiling full of twinkling stars above them. It was breathtaking.

It looked like every girl's *dream*.

Hermione was pulled from her thoughts by Daphne guiding her out of her chair and over to her dressing room to get changed. The dress Draco had designed hugged her figure beautifully, every curve and dip was thought of and who better to create something so perfect than the man who knew every inch of her like the back of his hand. He had mapped out her body with his eyes and hands countless times, could confidently pick her out in a room of thousands.

The dress had a flattering square neckline with thin straps and a scoop back with a fishtail style skirt, slithers of her tanned skin could be seen peeking through between the pieces of lace. It was stunning and she felt amazing in it. He had also purchased her a full bridal lingerie set with a garter, suspenders and stockings to wear underneath, made from buttery white silk. A lace baby doll was draped over a black velvet chaise in preparation for the wedding night Draco had planned for her. It was soft between her fingers just like everything else.

When Hermione finally stepped back out in her gown and veil, Daphne gasped. “Wow.. you look beautiful, Hermione. Draco is for sure going to lose his shit when he sees you,” she exclaimed, pressing a hand to her mouth in awe. Hermione walked over to the mirror in her dressing table and smiled back at herself, not quite believing in the least that the woman looking back at her was her reflection. She looked ethereal, glowing—*like an angel*.

Taking a deep steadying breath she grabbed her angelic bouquet of tiny white gypsophilas, tied together with white ribbon and turned to face the stunned woman in her bedroom.

“I’m ready.”

_____

War of Hearts (Violin) by Dramatic Violin

The charming sound of violins filled the air as Hermione walked out into the gardens, her heels clicking across the stone beneath her with each step. It was a warm sunny day and the garden had come alive with her presence, the flowers turning towards her as if she was the sun itself and butterflies flew around her in delicate patterns as she made her way down the pathway dressed in white.

As she turned the corner into the entrance of the rose garden Hermione stopped dead in her tracks to take in the scene before her. A blood red carpet had been laid along the walkway between the roses, leading straight to the gazebo where her husband waits for her. The gazebo had been filled with flickering candles and more white roses, creating a truly soft and magical setting.

Draco stood tall and proud, his hands folded together in front of him. He wore a sharp black suit with a white tie and pocket square, silver serpent cufflinks in place. His hair had been swept back with his fingers but pieces still fell across his handsome face as they always did. His shoes were shined and his expression fell into one of complete and utter undoing when his eyes connected with hers. She caught his chest physically jolting with his sharp intake of breath, his mouth parting the more he stared and the sweet leathery scent of him carried over to her in the breeze.

Blaise and Theo stood just on the outside of the gazebo entrance, both looking just as smart in their forest green suits. The smiles they both gave her were blinding, she hadn't seen them since their last day in The Great Hall. Daphne stood beside her wearing a pink satin dress, Astoria wore an identical version in a shade of light blue. Lucius Malfoy stood next to his son only a few inches shorter and wearing a matching suit, the head of a snake attached to a long black cane rested between his hands, his long white hair fluttering around his rigid shoulders.

Everyone seemed to hold a breath as she stopped and Draco's eyes filled with desire as he stretched out a hand for her to continue, watching her walk towards him with all the intensity he could muster.

She walked, a bride gliding through a passageway of deep red roses with a scarlet carpet at her feet. She passed her bouquet over to Daphne when she got to the end of the makeshift aisle and in the single second she reached Draco and placed her hand in his, *everything changed*. The air around them rippled with an irreversible shift and golden threads burst from both of their rings upon immediate contact, entwining together like two little branch-like hands. A strong wind whipped her curls over her shoulders with the power of their strengthened soul bond and Hermione felt it in her bones, felt the grip of their connected souls and the pull to the ancient soil deep beneath their feet.

Like concrete filling a hole, it was *set in stone*.

"Draco, what exactly just happened?" She asked curiously, looking down at the slowly fading glow in the diamond of her ring.

Draco's smile was wolfish as the last of the threads returned and their eternal tie was complete. He wrapped his arms around her and pulled her close, not wasting a single second of their new development.

"I just completed our bond. You are tied to me and I am tied to you, the ring is also a permanent fixture, that's the reason you felt it tightened to your finger the first time, you cannot ever remove it. And now not only is your soul tied to mine but it's also tied to this Manor making it so that you can never leave me, love. Even if I removed the wards, you wouldn't be able to cross the edge of the property without me."

Hermione's immediate reaction was curiosity. "And what would happen if I tried?"

He wagged his dark blonde brows at her. "Try it and find out."

Her amber eyes widened, his words were like haunting music to her ears and she swallowed deeply with panic until her brain tried to comfort her with the twisted knowledge that she was trapped here anyway, so really it didn't make much of a difference to her already stuck situation.

"I love you, *Mrs Malfoy*. Now you will never be free from me or I from you. In sickness and in health, in life and in death—you're stuck with me. I am *eternally yours*."

He crushed his lips to hers before she could reply and gentle claps went off around them as the ceremony came to an end. Hermione finally got to take a needed breath when Draco pulled back, his eyes looking her up and down, assessing his work more closely.

"I think it's safe to say that I have outdone myself, you look fucking stunning."

His eyes were bleeding black as they burned scorching lines across her skin the more he looked, his hands smoothing over every curve, always committing them to memory.

“And good enough to eat,” he whispered lasciviously, winking. He took her hand in his and pulled her back to him, brushing a curl away from her face as his other hand cradled her jaw, wanting to touch as much of her as he possibly could.

“I’m *full* of fucking lust, Hermione. I don’t know how long I’ll last until the need to pull you away burns me,” he expressed seriously, *desperately*, looking straight through her with an intensity she could feel down to her toes. Hermione swallowed deeply at the increasing jet black in his eyes, the moment between them was so heavy that they had forgotten they weren’t alone until Lucius cleared his throat loudly and Draco's head whipped towards him, the muscles in his jaw clenching with annoyance.

“Could I possibly borrow my daughter in law for just a moment?” He asked his son and Draco narrowed his eyes at him for a few tense seconds before giving him a curt nod and releasing her.

Draco stepped down from the gazebo and conversed with the Slytherins but never took his eyes off her while Lucius, to her surprise—took her hand in his, looking closely at his wife’s wedding ring on her hand. He smoothed a thumb over it, so very reminiscent of the way his son always made the same gesture and in that moment Hermione realise just *how* similar they really were.

The apple never falls far from the tree.

“I suppose congratulations are in order,” he offered stiffly as his eyes separated themselves from the ring to met hers. His eyes were the same shade as Draco's too, although not as devastatingly icy, no one could match him on that front, *or any front really*.

Draco was a masterpiece.

“I suppose they are,” she replied, giving him a flat smile. Hermione didn’t know what sort of relationship they would have but he was as standoffish as his son and it left no room for comfort. Hermione’s mind once again drifted back to Narcissa and the kind of life she would have lived here in the shoes that Hermione now filled with her offspring.

“Welcome to the family.”

Hermione scoffed. “No objections?”

He lifted a blonde brow. “Why would I object?”

Hermione rolled her eyes. “I’m not a pureblood,” she stated simply.

“Good god my dear do you really think we still care about all that nonsense? Blood means *nothing*, I was driven out of my prejudice on that front long ago and so was Draco if you hadn’t noticed.”

Hermione had known that the punch she threw at Draco all those years ago had changed something between them, something drastic. She was no longer a “*Mudblood*” and quickly became the only woman he had ever desired.

It’s funny how things can change so quickly.

“Yes, I *had* noticed, otherwise the girl he would be standing with right now would be very different and not at all like me.”

Lucius’s face broke into a sly smirk. “No one is like you, *why do you think he married you*?” He asked with mirth, nodding towards Draco who now stood with his back to them in conversation with Theo and Blaise, Hermione followed his line of sight as he continued.

“Draco has always wanted the best, the most fiery, the one that can challenge him at every turn and that my dear, *is all you*.”

Hermione studied the shape of Draco's back as she listened. In all of her time at Hogwarts she had never seen Draco with anyone serious, only dirty flings around the castle. She was the only woman he had ever looked at differently, whether that was a good or a bad thing Hermione didn’t know.

“I suppose that’s true,” she acknowledged, her voice quiet as she looked back at him.

Lucius opened his mouth to say more but Draco cut him off sharply before he could. “Are you finished cornering my wife?” Draco snapped with a raised brow.

“I was *not* cornering her—“

“I think it’s time for the reception,” Draco said, ignoring his father who he had cut off once again and pulling her down the steps of the gazebo.

She didn’t make it far before two sets of arms found their way around her the second her shoes hit the stone. Her eyes filled with tears at the familiar embrace of her two Slytherin friends hugs. They both looked and smelled incredible and Hermione had missed them immensely. Her heart thundered with love.

“You look fucking beautiful,” Theo exclaimed as they pulled away.

“Who knew you could scrub up so well, Granger?” Blaise asked with a wink.

She smirked at them. “Thank you both for coming.”

Their teeth gleamed at her with their wide prideful smiles, Hermione turned to Daphne next. “And you,” she said as she took her hand. “Thank you *so* much for all of your help. I couldn’t have done it without you.”

Daphne smiled and wrapped her arms around her, squeezing her gently. “The pleasure is all mine, Hermione,” she said warmly.

She could see Astoria hovering around in the background over Daphne’s shoulder, they still had yet to speak but at least the scowling had finally stopped. Her and Theo had fallen into a relationship soon after graduation and so of course she had been invited. Hermione released Daphne and stepped cautiously over to her sister.

“Thank you for coming, I really appreciate it,” she told her civilly. There was never really any bad blood between them, just petty jealousy on Astoria’s part.

“Thank you for inviting me, I wasn’t sure if you would or not and if you hadn’t, it would have been my own fault. I just wanted to say that I’m sorry for giving you a hard time at school. It was childish of me,” she admitted with a small unsure smile.

Hermione waved a dismissive hand. “It’s water under the bridge, I’m just glad you’re happy with Theo now.”

Astoria looked past her, smiling to where Theo stood, handsome in his green suit. “He’s the best thing that has ever happened to me,” she sighed, her eyes bright and dreamy as she watched him.

Masterpiece by Sam Short

Hermione felt cold all of a sudden as the sun was blocked out by a large body and there was only one man she knew that was large enough to create such a shadow.

“Follow me, *wife*” he whispered into her ear and Hermione’s face contorted in confusion as she was pulled away from their guests. He led her out of the rose garden and back into the house, enclosing them into a small parlour on the main floor and locking the doors with a flick of his wrist.

“Draco what—“

She never got to finish her sentence before his hands were in her curls and his tongue was in her mouth. He backed her up against a desk and hastily gathered the heavy material of her wedding dress in his hands, lifting it above her hips and pulling her silk knickers to the side eagerly. Hermione’s petite arms tried with all their force to stop him but he was relentless and as solid as stone in all areas. He lifted her easily onto the wood and fell to his knees, his head forcing itself between her thighs.

“*Ohh*,” Hermione mewled, throwing her head back as his hot tongue licked along the length of her and stopped to swivel across her clit in tight wet circles. He held her thighs firmly between both of his large hands and soft blonde threaded through her fingers as she cried out in pleasure, coating his lips and chin with her release.

He stood quickly, wiping the back of his hand across his mouth and whipping her round to bend her over the desk, her cheek flush to the surface. She was breathing raggedly from the suddenness of it all and had hardly gained her breath back before the large tip of his cock breached her.

Her nails instantly carved themselves into the wood with the burn of him, doing it in this position was always harder for her, it was always deeper and sometimes it was a little *too* deep to be enjoyable. He threw her veil over her shoulder and wrapped her curls around his fist, slamming to the hilt and forcing the desk to screech across the floor with the force. The loud slap of their skin connecting filled the room, pulling a deep and satisfied moan from Draco’s throat.

“Fucking hell, you’re so fucking *tight* Hermione.”

She struggled to breathe as he pounded into her, her hips digging painfully into the edge of the furniture. She held on for dear life as he went at her like he had been deprived for days when in reality it had only been *hours*. He was insatiable and hungry and he made her feel every emotion with his cock. His other hand gripped at her skin, pulling her hips back to meet his thrusts, wetness pooling between her thighs with his smooth drag.

“I’m gonna cum, baby,” he breathed, his voice deep and euphoric.

“Cum for me then,” she whispered back, knowing the words would unravel him.

“*Oh fuckkkkk*.”

His hand tightened in her hair painfully, forcing her head off the desk as he slammed into her twice more before the room shook with his guttural moan. He filled her to the brim with the thick lust she knew all too well. She felt his cock twitch inside her, his hips slowing their pace. She felt his heavy breath against the back of her neck as he tried to control himself. He released her hair and smoothed his hand along the curve of her exposed back, dotting the side of her flushed face with kisses.

“That was fucking incredible.”

“Could you really not have waited a few more hours?”

He scoffed. “Absolutely fucking *not*, the more I looked at you in this dress the more I wanted to fuck you in it and it was either take you away and do it now or have you bouncing on my cock as we ate dinner with our guests.”

Hermione’s nose crinkled in distaste as she turned over her shoulder to shoot him a look. “That would *never* have happened, Draco.”

He smirked to himself as he pulled out. “Who would’ve stopped me, love? *You*?” He said it as if the notion that she would stop him was ridiculous, with all the haughty arrogance only he could possess.

Hermione said nothing as she gathered herself, readjusting her knickers and refluffing her dress. She had been practising wandless magic in the gardens so with a flick of her wrist the wetness between her legs vanished.

Draco turned her around and pulled her towards the door.

“Come on, *we shouldn’t be late to our own party*,” he said wickedly, his lips plastered with a smirk.

_____

Turning Page(instrumental) by Sleeping At Last

Draco's arms were wrapped around her, his hands taking up the entire expanse of her waist as hers settled on his shoulders. The musicians were playing beautiful music as they swayed for their first dance, charmed stars shining softly above them.

Draco pulled her in closer to rest his forehead against hers, his hands splaying across the open scoop in her lace dress, caressing her skin with his thumbs. It was such a delicate moment that Hermione found her eyes beginning to burn with tears. The intensity of the violins paired with the softness of Draco’s touch created a gentle atmosphere filled with the kind of love that Hermione wished she could bottle up and savour forever.

It was in these rare moments that she recognised the man she held in her hands. The *gentle one*, the one who portrayed the kind of love her heart yearned for, *ached for*. He pulled back and caught her tear with his thumb, his eyes sparkling a clear blue. *Happiness*.

“You’re so stunning, my girl.” His voice was warm and his touch tender as he pressed a kiss to her forehead. “You’re my *forever*.”

Hermione’s heart clenched with his words. *Why* couldn’t he be this man always? She grieved him often and it was the most crippling feeling. Her body burned with love for him, no matter what he did to her, no matter how often he switched between the man before her and the devilled reaper of her nightmares.. she *still* loved him. It was a feeling that wasn’t fixable, it couldn’t be pulled out just because you willed it.

He held her close and dipped her as the song came to an end, peppering gentle kisses across her neck as he pulled her back up. Their friends clapped and she felt a dart of pain to her heart in the bittersweet moment.

First Sight by Joel Sunny

They had all sat down before their dance at the long dining table set with fine china and satin tablecloths, dotted with more roses and candles and ate a delicious meal especially curated by the house elves. They sipped champagne toasts from crystal flutes and laughed together.

The atmosphere of their wedding was something she dreamt of, something she would never be able to recreate. There were only three missing pieces to the day and it was the fact that her parents, Harry and Ron weren’t there. She had tried to write to her parents multiple times, knowing how much they were hurt by her abandonment and it cut her up to know she had caused them pain. But every letter she tried to send via magic burst into flames before it even reached the boundary line, letting Hermione know that Draco was also the *only* one allowed to *send* post.

Ron and Harry had been invited but didn’t come for obvious reasons. Draco didn’t want them there either which would have made things awkward anyway but Hermione insisted on sending them invites on the off chance that they might show. It hurt that they didn’t but she understood it. Draco never allowed her to even attempt an invite to her parents in fear that they would come and cause problems after not seeing their daughter for so long, it was a risk Draco refused to take.

She looked around at the beautiful ballroom and all the hard work everyone had put in to make it special. Draco, Blaise and Theo stood just beyond the French doors that led out onto the grounds, smoking and laughing. Lucius sat stiffly at the table, drinking one of his many glasses of whisky and watched on as Daphne and Astoria danced together.

Hermione took a deep breath and closed her eyes. If the rest of her life could be exactly how she felt in this one moment, it would all be worth it. She knew that was too good to be true but she wouldn’t dwell on it and ruin the rare weightless atmosphere she had found herself in.

Draco popped his head in through the doors and crooked his finger at her, beckoning her over to him. He took her hand as she cleared the distance and pulled her out onto the dark grey patio that lined the back of the Manor. The men were sitting around a stunning silver garden table, an ash tray and glasses of whisky scattered across the round surface. He led her over to an empty chair and offered her a cigarette.

“Thought you might want to slip away for a smoke?” He asked with a wink. Hermione smiled up at him and took the offering, letting him light the end for her.

“Thank you.”

“The pleasure is all mine, *my beautiful wife*,” he declared proudly. He sat opposite her, Blaise on her left and Theo on her right.

“How’s your wedding day been on a scale from one to ten?” Theo asked curiously as he smiled a cheesy smile, smoke billowing from between his pearly whites.

Hermione chuckled at his silliness. “*Eleven*.”

“*Wow*,” he gasped. “Draco here really outdid himself, didn’t ya boyo?” He chortled.

“Shut up Nott,” he shot back dryly but with a slight curve to the edges of his lips.

Hermione giggled softly and Draco smiled the widest she had ever seen and it filled her with something she couldn’t explain.

“You really do look incredible,” Blaise praised, admiring her dress with his warm brown eyes.

Draco elbowed him in jest. “Hands off mate.”

Blaise rolled his eyes and nodded back towards the french doors to where Daphne danced beyond. “I’ve got my own, pal.”

Hermione shook her head at them all. “Thank you Blaise, you look handsome yourself. You *all* do.”

Draco winked at her again across the table as he placed his cigarette between his lips and tipped his head back, exhaling clouds of smoke out above him. Hermione smoked her own while soaking in the warm July evening. It was still light outside even at the late hour of the evening, the sky streaked in pretty pinks and baby blues. She admired it fondly as she listened to the violins still playing gently in the background.

The humid summer breeze filled her with scents of freshly cut grass and flowers, making her cheeks ache with a smile. She slipped her sore feet from her feels to press them flat to the cool stone beneath her, relieving the burn.

She took a deep breath, filling her lungs with the sweet sting of clean oxygen and for once in this dark and dingy Manor—with her friends here and the version of her husband that she adored, she felt happy.. and *free*.

Chapter End Notes

Don’t let this chapter or the next few fool you.. I am simply allowing you to see what Hermione sees and giving you the opportunity to understand just how she fell in love with him in the first place.

Chapter 4: Hungry Eyes

Chapter Summary

He swallowed her blood, like a dark vintage from some forgotten cellar. He felt like Hades to Persephone, pomegranate seeds bursting against his teeth, juice rolling on his tongue, and the more he had, the more he hungered.
-Holly Black

Chapter Notes

Songs that helped to inspire the chapter -
Why Don't You by Thorgan
The Machine by Reed Wonder, Aurora Olivas
My Name by Reed Wonder, Aurora Olivas
XXX by Shaker, Velvet Cash
Angel Boy by Ashley Sienna
I Wanna Be Yours by Arctic Monkeys
Art Deco by Lana Del Rey
Naked by Ella Mai

ETERNALLY YOURS playlist -
https://open.spotify.com/playlist/4M7zE958QW1o47gQkcsNCI?si=2hfB_qjeQ-iedWYg57uImA&pi=-yYp-mm-TwSgv

This is your one and only Draco POV in this fic, just to show you how his inner monologue can fluctuate from what you've seen previously and that despite everything, he has an inner battle too.

See the end of the chapter for more notes

DRACO

Friday, July 24th 1999

His cheeks were burning from smiling so wide as he carried his bride up the grand staircase to their master suite, her veil trailing them as it hung over his arm in streams of white silk. Her sweet

vanilla scent filled him with nostalgia as she nuzzled into the warmth of his neck.

When he reached their bedroom he immediately released her and slammed her against the closed door, taking her breath away in one of the most passionate kisses they had ever shared. Draco felt different in that moment. Not overcome with possession and lust but *love*. He fucking loved his wife. How long this softer feeling and the loosening of the tight insistent coil inside him would last he wasn't sure but he would try his best to be gentle with her tonight.

She deserved at least that much.

"You taste like smoke and champagne," she mumbled between kisses.

He pulled back to cradle her small face in his hands. "And you taste like *mine*," he smirked.

"I am yours."

She whispered the words so sincerely that Draco could hardly wait before he slipped the dress from her body and tore her lingerie eagerly down the middle. She gasped as the shreds of expensive lace drifted down to meet the floorboards, scattered and forgotten because only the woman that had worn them mattered.

"Those were worth *a lot* of galleons," she complained, crinkling her little nose in displeasure.

"Those were cheap in comparison to what I *can* afford," he boasted smugly.

She rolled her eyes so hard he heard them scrape against her skull. His lips curled up into a smirk, grabbing the backs of her thighs he lifted her from the floor in one smooth motion, her legs wrapping around his hips instantly. He dipped his head to take her puckered nipple into his mouth, shivering when she carded her fingers through his hair. He hummed against her skin from the goosebumps she elicited with each brush of her nimble fingers.

He sucked and licked gently, enjoying the little gasps and sweet sighs she rewarded him with. Releasing her with a wet *pop* he removed a hand from her thigh to unzip himself, letting his pulsing cock spring free from its confines. He watched with utter fascination as a string of her saliva dripped from her rosy lips and landed across his head, his grip losing all of its control at the deliciously erotic sight. He groaned in approval, leaning forward and nipping her supple bottle lip between his teeth, lining himself up with her entrance and edging into her heat painfully slow.

He teased her with a few shallow thrusts, seducing his sweet girl until she couldn't take it anymore, her nails dragging impatiently against his scalp as she begged.

"Please, Draco. *Fuck me*."

It took every inch of restraint he could scrape together to stop himself from fucking her through the door. He clenched his jaw and pulled back, his eyes overcome with a hunger he couldn't fully articulate, no matter how much he tried. Her eyes were flamed, filled with so much desire that he wanted to capture it and keep it forever. He could get lost in her, does get lost in her, *often*.

He pushed himself to the hilt and the breathy gasp that slipped free got lost in his mouth as he kissed her and fucked her as gently as he could, as gently as his hips would allow him which was proving to be fucking *difficult* when his wife was the most delicious woman he had ever met. He

rolled into her precariously, resting his forehead against hers, their mouths open and their panted breaths synchronised.

"*Fuck*, Hermione," he growled deeply as her pussy fluttered wildly around him and one of her small hands left his hair to drop down to her clit. His wide obsidian eyes followed every movement she made with keen anticipation as she began to rub herself in small circles. Draco almost collapsed with unadulterated pleasure, their chests undulating in matched rhythm. His hands slid upwards to grasp both of her plump asscheeks in a firm grip, kneading them in his palms as he thrust deeper, her throaty little moans breathing life into the silence around them.

The one hand she kept in his hair tightened and his jagged movements rattled the door in its frame as Hermione cried out in rapture, his knees almost buckling with the sound of her desperate whimper. His mouth was on hers again as he pumped into her depths a few more times, deep moans vibrating against her lips as he filled her. His hips jerked and his cock twitched with sensitivity when the slick walls of her pussy gripped him tightly, begging him to keep her full. He palmed her ass gently just to feel the way it sat in his hands as the last of his orgasm burned away. Draco carried her to their bed, keeping himself inside her as she lay against his chest, catching her breath.

Draco fucked his wife all night that night.

The sheets were soaked with their fluids and perspiration. Moans echoed out through the double doors leading to their balcony and across the dark grounds as the warm breeze blew open the white linen curtains. Sweat dripped from the ends of Hermione's curls as she sat on his cock and rolled her hips. His forehead damp as he bent her over and grabbed her hips, slamming her back into him over and over, feeling her perfect ass bounce against his pelvis. His muscles burned and flexed as he pressed her knees to her chest and pounded into her with an uncontrollable fervour, his thumb circling her swollen clit. Their lips never disconnecting.

It was *4:00am* on the Saturday and they were as happy as ever as they smoked cigarettes together in content silence listening to the chirp of crickets and bird songs, his body enveloping hers from behind as she leant against the iron railing, out into the early morning heat. He toyed with her caramel curls, wrapping the perfect ringlets around his fingers as she blew smoke into the dusky sky. A blue butterfly fluttered down from the ivory that surrounded their balcony, landing gracefully on the back of her hand. She lifted it close to take a better look at the small creature and Draco watched her. He was in awe of her elegance, the way she didn't just look at things but she *saw* them. She saw things deeper than just their face value and it was something he had always admired.

It jolted him with a memory, back to a sensitive moment in time when Hermione had expressed wanting the same thing from him—

"*I want to be fucking seen*!"

And in that instance Draco thought he understood—but selfishly, he knew that the moments where he felt at peace with himself enough to be gentle with her were few and far between. He knew she wanted the man that existed right now but he would never be able to keep it up and *he loved her*. He loved her enough to never let her leave even when things got bad because he was too self-serving to be without her.

The term "*if you love something you should let it go*," was fucking absurd to him. He didn't and could never understand the logic. If you truly loved something why would you set it free without the promise of ever seeing it again?

He would rather her be miserable with him than happy somewhere else, *with* someone else. That was a tainted dream that would never be her reality. She would swallow the poison he fed her until she choked enough to take more and then the cycle would repeat.. because for as long as he was alive, she would never be free. She would only ever be *his*. That was who he was, that was the Malfoy way and you couldn't teach an old dog new tricks.

The butterfly flew off into the hazy distance, the warmth of the air pushing it higher until it disappeared and became one with the colour of the horizon. He took Hermione's hand in his and led her back to bed, laying her down gently and whispering words sweet enough to rot her teeth into her curls as she drifted off into slumber, cocooned in him.

Saturday, July 25th 1999

Hermione's body felt like smooth velvet beneath his fingers as he caressed her in sleep. He had awoken first and wanted to take the time to admire her peaceful state.

She truly was a fucking stunner. Her curls fanned out across her pillow in rivulets of golden brown, her lips were pouty and pink in a relaxed pucker. Her freckles had deepened with the sun and she was a tanned bronze from the summer. She had the most delicate hands, the most petite and kissable neck. Her stomach was flat and tight, her thighs were smooth and buttery. Her ass was round and peachy, her breasts perky and fit fucking perfectly in his large hands like they were made to fit together. Her pussy was the prettiest and best he had *ever* had. The only one he had ever craved enough to kill for.

And those eyes.. those captivating eyes burned him with their beauty everyday, with their raw amber flames. They were alluring like a sirens, they were the first things about her that drew him in. The fire she held in them was a temptation he could never resist. He was fucking obsessed with her and that obsession had never dimmed, not one bit. If anything, their ceremony had only strengthened it. He kissed her warm lips as she began to stir and those same eyes found him as soon as they opened, her mouth turning up into a sleepy smile, forcing him to bite down on his lip in his awe of her.

"Morning, my love," he whispered softly, brushing a curl from her forehead.

"Good morning."

"It's time for brunch," he declared and her eyes blew wide as she looked towards the clock on her nightstand. *12:27pm*.

"Draco, why didn't you wake me?!" She gasped, panicked.

"Because I only woke up ten minutes before you, baby," he smiled.

She threw the covers away from her naked body and slipped on her nightgown as she opened the French doors and stepped out into the afternoon sun, not wanting to miss any more of the glorious weather. Her little whine of surprise reached his ears when she noticed the table set for them on their balcony. He had arranged the intimate set up with Notts elves for their wedding breakfast.

The table was dressed with care in the same satin tablecloth from their wedding, a vase of crimson roses in the center surrounded by candles. Two crystal flutes sat next to china plates that were filled

with eggs, bacon, sausages and toast, kept warm with a stasis charm. A bowl of fresh strawberries and a bucket of ice sat on the railing housing a frosty bottle of *Dom Perignon*, the finest French bubbles he could get his hands on.

Nothing was ever too expensive for her.

She turned to face him, her eyes round and doe like. “Did you do this?”

“It was my idea, *yes* but the elves executed it. Rather spot on with what I’d asked of them too,” he said as he stood from the bed, sliding some crisp white boxers over his hips.

She glided towards him, light as a feather and as elegant as a swan. She lifted up onto her tiptoes to place a gentle kiss on his lips that Draco chased for more, grabbing her small body and pressing her firmly against him as he savoured the sweet flavour of her kiss a little longer.

“Draco it’s perfect,” she breathed gratefully, her wide smile dripping with honey as it beamed at him.

They sat and ate, Draco popped the cork from the champagne and filled their glasses, clinking them together in blissful celebration. He watched her and drank in how preciously happy she looked. Making her happy like this all the time *should* be easy but for him it wasn’t, so in the moments she looked like this he would soak it in.

She looked out into the gardens as they buzzed with the life that summer had washed it with. Sipping her champagne and closing her eyes as the rays of the day settled onto her face. She looked ethereal in her white robe, with her long curls flowing over her shoulders. Her cherry red fingernails holding the stem of her glass so delicately.

She was golden.

“I have a surprise for you.”

Her eyes shot open and locked with his. “*Oh*?” She inquired between joyous sips from her flute.

He smirked at the way her eyes lit up with curiosity, just like they always had in school. He almost wanted to make her wait to know where they were going until they arrived, but he decided not to be cruel for once.

“The Malfoy’s own many properties around the world, one of my favourites in particular is the one we have in *Saint-Tropez* and that’s where we’re going for our honeymoon. We can stay as long as you would like.”

Hermione’s beautiful eyes were as round as saucers, her mouth dropping open as she absorbed his words. She blinked a few times, closing her mouth and swallowing hard before she was able to reply.

“Draco.. I—“ she stuttered, struck speechless by his plans. “I don’t know what to say.”

He reached across the table and took her hand, rubbing his thumb across their metal tie—her wedding ring. “Don’t say anything, all you have to do is pack.”

Hermione’s face flushed with a gorgeous glow as she squeezed his hand tight in return.

“I love you Draco, thank you!” She gushed.

“*I love you too, Hermione*. I always will.”

Chapter End Notes

I really hope you enjoy the smut because this fic has alot of it 🤭

Chapter 5: Voracious

Chapter Summary

Is the silence peaceful or is it just the echo of a storm?

Chapter Notes

Songs that helped to inspire the chapter -
Caribbean Blue by Enya
Orinoco Flow by The O'Neill Brothers Group
All Night by Beyoncé
Pray by JRY, RuthAnne
Lose Control by Teddy Swims
Maneater by Mack Lorén
FEIN by Toby Mai
Dangerous by Thomas LaRosa
How could u love somebody like me? by Artemas
WILDFLOWER by Billie Eilish
Another Love by Tom Odell
Heartbeats by Hanniou
Him & I by G-Easy, Halsey

ETERNALLY YOURS playlist -
https://open.spotify.com/playlist/4M7zE958QW1o47gQkcsNCI?si=xolOiTRoRSygm1COlwlctQ&pi=_v42x_IAQlag6

Monday, July 27th 1999

Saint-Tropez, France

The sun burned bright above them as it cast its rays over the beautiful town of Saint-Tropez. The trees were a lush green and the water was the most crystal azure blue she had ever seen. The many sailing boats bobbed along the docks as the palm trees swayed freely in the warm breeze. She could taste the salt from the ocean and smell the sweet creamy notes of pistachio ice cream as they walked up the white washed cobblestone driveway towards the steps of Draco's family villa.

The villa itself was a huge white house standing tall and blinding against the sun with a terracotta tiled roof. It was situated on a cliff overlooking the sandy private beach below with French doors and a spacious balcony attached to every bedroom.

An impressive sandstone water fountain sat as the main feature in the center of the driveway decorated with concrete cherubs. The paved entrance led down a slight hill to two imposing gilded gates, a large ornate "*M*" in its midsection just like the one at the Manor. Lemon trees and flowers of every colour and species had been dotted strategically around the property's border, shimmering with something that suggested they did more than just exist as mere decorative plants.

The holiday home boasted an oversized kitchen with a square island, a living room almost the same obnoxious size with a cream velvet corner sofa, a glass coffee table with a matching bar cart and fluffy rugs, accents of green and silver everywhere, *of course*. Its crystal cut chandelier hung low and sparkled in the beams of sun that shot through the double doors leading out into the most beautiful garden Hermione had ever seen. There was a long pool that sat at the edge of the cliff surrounded by sun chairs and white parasols, a sunken patio with a fire pit and plush built-in seats.

It was a dream.

Hermione was pulled from the garden and led up the grand marble staircase to their master suite at the back of the house. Their room was equally as luxurious with a four poster bed made from light wood with white linen curtains, a green chaise at the foot. This room in particular was a tropical *gold* and green and Hermione raised an eyebrow at Draco for the choice in colour scheme earning herself a smirk thick with amusement in return.

There was a private bathroom attached to the left with a large jacuzzi bath, a rainfall shower and double sinks, every piece of mental hardware was a shiny shade of gold.

The sage green drapes floated around against the wind as Hermione stepped out onto the balcony, they had the most amazing view of the coast and the grounds below from up there. Draco waved his hand and left their luggage to unpack itself as he came up behind her, putting his hands flat to her stomach and resting his chin on her shoulder. She felt him bury his nose into her curls and inhale, she smiled—the tiny wings of forgotten butterflies fluttered around in her stomach erratically, reminding her of what it meant to be *happy*.

This was the longest she had been witness to his softer persona and she was completely and *irrevocably* in love with him. This was the man she had been grieving, *craving* and she was going to hold onto him with every fibre she had for as long as she could.

His warm hands slipped from her stomach to the edge of the red cotton sun dress she wore, edging further towards a place she knew he could never stay away from, smirking smugly to herself

Hermione allowed him to slip his fingers beyond the lace band of her knickers. Her head fell back against his chest of its own accord when she felt the smooth featherlight press of his thumb against her clit, teasing her with seductive circles until she shuddered, panting out in gentle pleasure. Draco bit the curve of her neck, his hard cock twitching against her lower back.

It didn't take long before he pulled her knickers to the side and arched her over the railings, sliding himself deep within her waiting walls. Hermione's eyes rolled as he fucked her gently and it was everything she had ever wanted. Draco's size paired with his strength and abrasiveness could and *had* caused her damage in the past but when he glided with the intent to pleasure and not harm, it was *heaven*. The best thing she had ever felt.

She gripped the rails with white knuckles, her breathing hot and ragged, pushing her ass flush against him in the silent and needy ask for more. Draco's deep laugh buzzed against her skin as he slid himself in and out at the perfect rhythm, taking her sensitive breasts into his hands and whispering his candied desires into her ear.

"You like that, baby?" His voice was thick with an abundance of pleasure, deep and gravelly.

"Yes, Draco. You feel so good like this," she sighed, her own voice lost to the throes of euphoria.

He hummed happily into her ear at the appraisal, gripping her hips and testing the waters with a deeper thrust, Hermione hissed with her second dizzying orgasm. She was so wrapped up in the sudden moment with him that she didn't even care that they were having sex outside, the comfort of private property had relaxed her like it never could at the Manor. This place was lighter, not weighed down by death and that fact carried through into their current balanced dynamic.

They rolled together, their skin becoming one as his movements grew choppy, he pulled her curls over her shoulder and sucked sharply at the skin of her neck, groaning together in shared gratification. He held her tight, their bodies pulsating through the last of it as his sticky forehead pressed to the back of her neck.

"*Jesus fucking Christ Hermione*, you get better and better everytime I'm inside you."

———

Hermione choked on her laughter as Draco held her above the ground against his chest, threatening playfully to throw her into the oncoming waves. She couldn't remember a time when she had ever laughed so joyfully with him, so *freely*. It was like they were the only two in the world and the other smiling couples around them didn't exist.

The sun was setting low on the horizon, clouds of red and orange reflecting onto the surface of the calm Mediterranean Sea like a bloodied painting. The ocean gust was fresh and briny, the sand warm between her toes. They had decided to leave their villa for a swim at the public beach but Draco could never stay too far away from her, picking her light weight from the ground and throwing her over his shoulder to make her laugh.

He held her and kissed her, threading his hands through her curls and brushing over every one of her edges with gentle fingertips. She felt the curve of his smile against her lips as their tongues rolled together, the echo of a moan slipping out between them.

“You’re *completely* voracious,” she giggled.

“Only for *you*,” he purred, a crooked grin marring his face.

Hermione sighed with content as Draco took her hand, lacing their fingers together and pulled her over to an expensive looking beachfront restaurant for dinner. She slipped back into her summer dress as they walked and Draco flicked his wrist, transforming his swimming shorts back into black slacks, a fitted white shirt appearing on his top half. Hermione rolled her eyes at his attire, it was boiling hot and he still insisted on wearing a damn suit. Looking crisp and cut as always while she looked flushed and windswept, her golden skin dusted with sea salt.

They both had the Ratatouille on Draco’s recommendation, fresh bread with butter and expensive glasses of Sauvignon Blanc which of course was nothing short of pocket change to Draco. They sat at a table on high stools by the edge of the water and watched as the last of the glossy sun dipped below the sea line. Hermione turned back to face him and noticed that he was already watching her, a hand poised on the thin stem of his wine glass as he lifted it to his mouth, holding her eye contact. She squirmed slightly under his penetrative attention.

“What?” She asked curiously.

He smirked against the glass rim. “Nothing, this just looks good on you.”

Hermione frowned. “What does?”

“*Happiness*.”

Hermione’s lips parted in shock at the fact that he recognised it. She *was* happy and she sincerely hoped that it would last forever but she knew it was jubilant wishful thinking and all hope for that had died a long time ago.

She gave him a shy smile and leant forward to touch the tip of his dark mark that could be seen poking out from the sleeve of his shirt. Draco followed her eyes down to it with a raised brow as she brushed the tip of her finger along the intricate scales of the snake.

“I didn’t think you would ever want to touch that.”

She swallowed deeply, studying it with narrowed eyes. “It doesn’t bother me anymore.”

“*Good*,” he said firmly, a look of almost relief passing across his features before it vanished. “Because I want to touch *all* of you and I want you to touch *all* of me.”

A few minuets of pushing tomatoes around her plate filled the silence until she spoke. “Are you ever going to tell me about your mother?”

It was a question that had lived at the front and center of her mind since they moved into the Manor but she had always avoided it in fear that it would anger him. By the dark look that had rippled out across his face she immediately regretted her choice of words but it was too late to take them back now.

The strong muscles in his jaw cinched and flexed beneath the surface as he seemingly bit his tongue to stop himself from snapping at her in public. He ran his tongue languidly along the sharp points of his teeth before he spoke.

“What do you want to know?” The question was tight and forced.

Hermione was shocked that he was playing along and didn’t want to waste it for a second.

“Tell me something about her, *anything*.”

Draco looked out into the crashing waves as he thought, his eyes threatening to shed his happy blue for the all too familiar dark grey.

“She used to take me to this same beach when I was a kid,” he said after a while. “I always wanted to use the private one by the villa but she told me that it was better for my social skills to be around other children. It never worked out too well though because as you know, I have a long standing history of *not* playing well with others.”

Hermione scoffed. “*Shocker*.”

He smirked, still watching the swell of the water as it was pulled and pushed at scattered seashells along the shoreline. His eyes were distant and lost in thought.

“She was my everything, she was all I ever had. Lucius was always too busy with business and when he wasn’t he—“ Draco cut himself off, a pained exhale leaving his lips, his silver rings catching the light as he raked a stiff hand through his hair before he could continue. He shook his head as if to banish away whatever memory had gripped him. “He never had much time to spend with his wife and son and so it was always just the two of us. Until I did irreparable damage to the family and she *left* me.”

The way he had spoken the last half of his explanation was bitter, veiled in years worth of resentment for both his mother *and* his father. Hermione slid a consoling hand across the table to meet his, he gripped it tightly, trying to bleed all of his pain through their shared connection, his thumb caressing her diamond. Hermione gasped with the heavy weight that had fallen onto her shoulders.

“I’m so sorry,” she sniffled.

“*Me too*.”

They had both consumed two bottles of white wine by the time they were ready to leave, stumbling through the town drunk and in love, clinging to each other and not being able to keep their hands to themselves. Draco had slammed her against every hard surface he could find on the way back, devouring her lips and palming her breasts every few steps, her hair was a tangled mess from the many times he had wrapped her curls tightly around his fingers.

They fell through the front door into a heap over the threshold but Draco wasn’t deterred as he continued peppering burning kisses across her neck, pulling the neckline of her dress down and bikini to the side to reach her aching nipples, sucking them back and forth into his burning mouth. Hermione threw her head back against the marble in pleasure as the wet slip of his tongue sent a tight throb straight to her clit.

“I love you,” he mumbled against her chest, his eyes were a clear and open topaz as he looked up at her with a devotion thick enough to choke on. He kissed both of her wet nipples tenderly and pulled her to her feet, shoving her in the direction of the stairs and slamming the front door closed.

“I can’t wait anymore, I need to be inside you *now*.”

They staggered and tripped clumsily up each step in their drunken haste, Draco laughed and took the liberty of squeezing her ass from behind in an effort to speed her up. When they reached their suite his movements were rushed and eager as he pulled her on top of him on the bed, forcing her head down to his lips and filling her mouth with his wanting tongue. Hermione whimpered into him and rolled her hips against his rock hard length, Draco groaned back and held her curls in a tight grip, angling her head to deepen their kiss.

“Can we try something different?” She asked as she pulled back for a breath.

He raised a questioning brow and rested his large hands on her parted thighs in her position above him. “*How* different?”

“I want to restrain *you* and take control for a change,” she announced confidently, her chin held high.

The smirk that cracked across his face was deep and dangerous, his hands tightening their hold. “Go for it baby, but *don’t* tease me.”

Hermione tried hard not to betray her plans as she smiled and nodded her head with a white lie. She sat up straighter and unbuckled his belt as he lay beneath and watched her. She unzipped him and pulled his solid cock from his slacks, he immediately raised his hips so she could dispose of them on the floor. She enjoyed being more clothed than him for once but that thought didn’t last long before he all but tore the dress from her body, untying her bikini strings and exposing her completely as a gust of balmy air blew in through the open French doors.

She pulled open his shirt with equal impatience, leaning forward to lick a tantalising path up the side of his neck. His deep moan of delight shot through her core and his hands couldn’t help themselves as they found the bare skin of her ass. He squeezed her and hissed when she nipped at his bottom lip.

“Hermione, you’re gonna have to speed this up. I *need* to be inside you.”

He was sweating, delirious with want and practically vibrating with the need to slam his hips up into her. Her smile was wicked as she pulled her wand from the nightstand and flicked it, wide ropes attaching themselves to each of his limbs, tying him tightly to the bedposts.

He let out a huff of frustration as his head fell back against the pillow. “*You’ve got to be fucking joking*.”

Hermione laughed with pride, enjoying the sound of his torment. “Nope, I said that I wanted to be in control for once so that means you have to keep your damn hands to yourself, *husband*.”

“When you said *restrained* I didn’t think you meant my whole fucking body.”

“You didn’t ask for the specifics,” she shot back, swiping her tongue across her teeth playfully.

Hermione watched with satisfaction as his hands clenched above his head until his knuckles became a bone white. He was breathing at a rapid speed already and she had barely even touched him. She was dripping with excitement as she slid herself along his length, spreading her slick across his shaft. Draco’s chest heaved under her hands as she pressed her palms to it for leverage,

grinding against his cock. She rolled her hips over him until they were both saturated and burning with the need to cum.

“Hermione *please*, I’m fucking *begging* you.. slide that pussy onto me *now*.”

He was breathless and trying hard to swallow around his uncontrolled desire, his throat jutting with the knowledge that he could do nothing but watch her torture him with a desperate, almost pained expression.

Hermione slowly lifted her hips, lowering herself down onto him, she felt his body tense below her as his tip pushed through her tight entrance. He hissed, his hands clenching in the ropes when she finally slid all the way down, housing the entirety of his length inside her. She lost her breath with the deep fullness, with the way he took up every inch of her passage completely. She cautiously began to ride him in a gentle pattern, watching as Draco’s eyes rolled into the back of his head.

“I’m so deep. Don’t stop, *don’t you dare fucking stop*,” he begged, desperation laced into each word.

Hermione’s breasts bounced slightly and Draco watched them in his restrained state, his tongue darting out in search of her nipples, she leant closer and teased them inches from his waiting mouth, making him whimper deliciously with frustration.

He put all of his strength into pushing forward and closing the inches between them, his lips instantly attaching themselves to her as she rocked her hips over him, feeling the sticky proof of arousal building between them. Their combined moans and heavy exhales ghosted against each other as they both got closer to reaching their climax.

“*I want to fucking hold you*,” Draco growled, getting fed up in his binds. Hermione was overheating and her thighs were *burning* with exhaustion so she decided *maybe a little reluctantly* to uncage the beast. The millisecond the binds left his skin he had her flipped onto her back, his hands in her hair always as he pounded into her with light hearted punishment for her mischief. Hermione squeaked and mewled, struggling to breath through his powerful slams, the crinkled sheets damp against her back.

“Oh my god, *fuck*,” she gasped as her orgasm ripped through her like a fiery whip. Draco choked on his satisfaction as her walls pulsed and squeezed, forcing him to cum right after she had. He crushed her mouth with his and she could taste his sweet groans of passion in her throat.

Draco stopped moving and held himself inside her as he quivered, breathing intemperately against her lips. Before she even had a chance to recover from their intense activities the air in the room quickly changed like a punch to the gut, heavily layered with anticipation, his handsome face betraying that he had come to a sudden decision about something. His jaw hung open slightly revealing straight white teeth as his eyes passed back and forth between hers, smoothing a thumb across her chin.

“I want you to stop using the potion. *Let me get you pregnant, Hermione*.”

Tuesday, July 28th 1999

Draco sat on the marble kitchen island as he watched her make dinner. He had insisted that he summon Theo's elves to do it but Hermione wouldn't have it, she didn't like being waited on, she preferred doing the mundane jobs herself. She needed some kind of normalcy in his flashy and galleon encrusted world.

She was sipping on a glass of expensive red wine as she prepared their pasta, humming a silly little tune to herself and trying to get the words he had spoken to her last night out of her head. *Pregnant*. He was out of his damn mind if he thought they were anywhere near ready for children. Draco was too selfish to share her with *anyone* let alone someone as needy as a child. She knew it would only be another added tie to the *hundreds* of chains he already had connected to her and that was more than likely his diabolical reasoning for his out of the blue announcement.

"What are you thinking about, baby?" He asked, raising a glass to his lips and taking a generous sip of the dark red liquid inside.

"How good this pasta looks," she lied.

He smiled and slid off the counter to kiss her, stealing away her breath as his wine tasting tongue rolled against her gasp.

"You taste like wine," she said as she pulled away.

"And you taste *fucking delicious*."

They ate their pasta and drank their wine. It was a peaceful affair and Draco had decided to make it last by suggesting that it was time for them to make use of the overly large jacuzzi bath.

The green tiled bathroom filled with steamy vanilla and soft rose petals, the jacuzzi bubbling next to a bucket of iced champagne on the stone edge. Draco was already inside waiting for her. He almost choked on his drink when she emerged from the bedroom completely naked, her long curls flowing over one shoulder and her cheeks flushed a dusky pink.

His crystal flute was soon discarded as he moved quickly to reach the edge of the tub and held out his hand to her. She watched the slow drag of his tongue as it swiped over his bottom lip, his eyes burning a path of want across her already hot skin.

"How am I ever suppose to not want to fuck you when you look like *that*?"

Hermione rolled her eyes and shook her head at him, taking his hand she let him guide her into the boiling water. She sighed sweetly as her body submerged into her favourite silky feeling, laying her head back on the lip of the tub, she closed her eyes. The bubbles rolled gently around her as Draco watched her intently, tracing his eyes over the shape of her serene face.

He took the skin of his lip between his teeth letting it spring free when he leant forward to brush a wet curl from her forehead, stroking the apple of her cheek and pressing his wet lips to hers. His soft moan tickled her tongue, buzzing across her, his hands getting lost in golden curls as he edged himself closer. Their kisses were hot and slippery, the thick steam from the bath dampened everything around them. She felt a hand leave her hair to slip down beneath the surface of the water and pull her thighs apart, she sucked in a sharp inhale when his thumb pressed to the sensitive hood of her clit.

He backed away slightly so he could watch her with parted lips, rolling his thumb in light circles. He didn't devour her with his mouth as he pushed her over the edge for once, he just sat and *watched*. The moment was heated and intimate as he observed her face changing through the motions with liquid eyes. The air grew thicker once more as he searched her eyes for an answer, his thumb pressing harder.

"Have my babies, Hermione," his demand was firm but spoken melodically.

Her orgasm crashed into her at the same moment he had let slip those cursed words. Her hands gripped onto the arm that had brought her pleasure under the water as she trembled through the waves. He took her silence as an invitation and his tongue was inside her mouth before she could take a breath. He finally devoured her like she knew he would and it was one of the most soul crushing kisses he had ever given her. It was both sweet and sour, a gentle moment that would be forever overshadowed by the bitterness of his words.

He held her against his chest as she sat between his legs sipping on their now warm champagne. His fingers lay flat against her stomach as he drank his own, like the pressure of his hand on her empty womb was a reminder of the words he was trying to manipulate into reality. Hermione didn't answer him, just sat and watched the pretty rose petals floating around on the top of the water as it bubbled in mesmerising patterns, her mind getting lost in all of the turbulence.

No matter how many or how few moments of bliss she got with him, *love would still always be a knife he forced her to hold by the blade.*

Wednesday, July 29th 1999

The sky was a deep shade of midnight blue, dotted with thousands of silver twinkling stars over the ocean as they sat around the roaring fire pit. She was wrapped in a buttery grey cashmere blanket as Draco sat beside her with an arm across the back of the patio chair behind her, both drinking their way through more wine bottles. The fire Draco had made was intense like him and reflected red in the churning silver of his eyes.

He had not let his words from yesterday slip by forgotten. He had hounded her for answers every second of the day until Hermione had finally had enough and retreated into the garden for escape but of course it didn't take long for him to feel the sting of her absence and follow her, sitting beside her in silence and forcing her skin to crawl with expectation. The sound of the ocean lapping against the sand was a sweet lull, the rich wine wasn't helping her heavy eyes and neither was the silky smooth blanket wrapped around her, luring her into sleep.

Draco's voice broke through her peace and she flinched from the deep and unexpected tone of it.

"We need to talk about this."

Her eyes fluttered closed in defeat. The backs of her eyelids were a warm orange from the fire and she wished that she could stay there but the cold night sky called to her as it always did and her eyes were forced to open once more.

"What is there to say?"

He scoffed loudly in her ear. “Hmm, I dunno. Maybe, *yes Draco I will have your fucking babies*,” he jabbed with equal measures of snark and sarcasm.

“I don’t *want* children yet, I’ve told you this. But I already know you’ll find a way to force me into it anyway.”

“I wouldn’t have to force you if you just fucking listened to me for once.”

“That’s the same damn thing Draco. Me listening to you would still be me being forced into making a decision and doing whatever it is you want even if I don’t,” she explained, exasperated.

Her heart pounded but she continued to sip her wine and tried to keep her eyes focused on the horizon ahead instead of looking towards the silver flames she could feel burning into the side of her face.

“We’re fucking married Hermione, the next logical step would be to have children—carry on the Malfoy line.”

Hermione’s skin boiled as she whipped her head in his direction. “I don’t want to have children just to carry on a legacy that isn’t even mine. I want to have children *when I’m ready to be a mother* and not for some fucking egotistical notion that if we don’t you’ll be looked down upon without an heir.”

“I don’t give a *fuck* about being looked down upon. Do you really not think I’ve already dealt with that? After what the whole fucking wizarding world saw me do? I live for *me*, Hermione. Not them.”

“*So why can't I live for me*?”

He inhaled a deep breath and sighed it out heavily, taking a stiff sip from his glass, Hermione watched as the deep red stained his angelic lips.

“Because *I* live for the both of us. I dirty my hands so that yours can stay clean. All I want is a wife that fucks me and bears my children. *I will take care of the rest*.”

“So you want a robot who will say yes to your every demand? Regardless of what they want?” She questioned harshly.

“That’s not what I said.”

“That’s what you’re implying.”

“*Look*,” he snapped sharply and Hermione sat up straighter, on high alert for him to switch back to his old ways in his mounting frustration. “You are my *wife*, we share a life together now and I *will* get you pregnant.”

Hermione’s top flip curled up in anger. “You only want me pregnant because then it’s another damn chain that you can add to the many you already have around my *fucking* ankles,” she shrieked, letting her own frustration slip through her tone.

Draco moved so quickly that Hermione didn’t even hear his wine glass shatter across the patio as he launched forward. He wrapped her hair around a cruel fist, bending her neck backwards and hovering over her, his lips inches from hers as he spat his words in her face.

“You belong to *me* with or without kids, with or without these *fucking* metaphorical chains you speak of. I’ve made you happy on this honeymoon but I can just as easily take it away.”

Draco’s beautiful angel-like face turned up into the demonic expression she had seen him wear so many times before, his ice cold edges blurring under the weight of the tears that flooded her waterline. His fingers tightened, sending hot needles across her scalp, he looked into each of her watery eyes, following the path down to her quivering lips. His head dropped to fill the inches of distance between them and Hermione could do nothing as he breathed the words—“*You’re mine*,” into her mouth and slammed his lips against hers in a punishing kiss, bruising her once again for denying him.

Hermione’s wine glass slipped from her defeated fingers as tears rolled down either side of her broken face.

Chapter 6: Wires of Fate

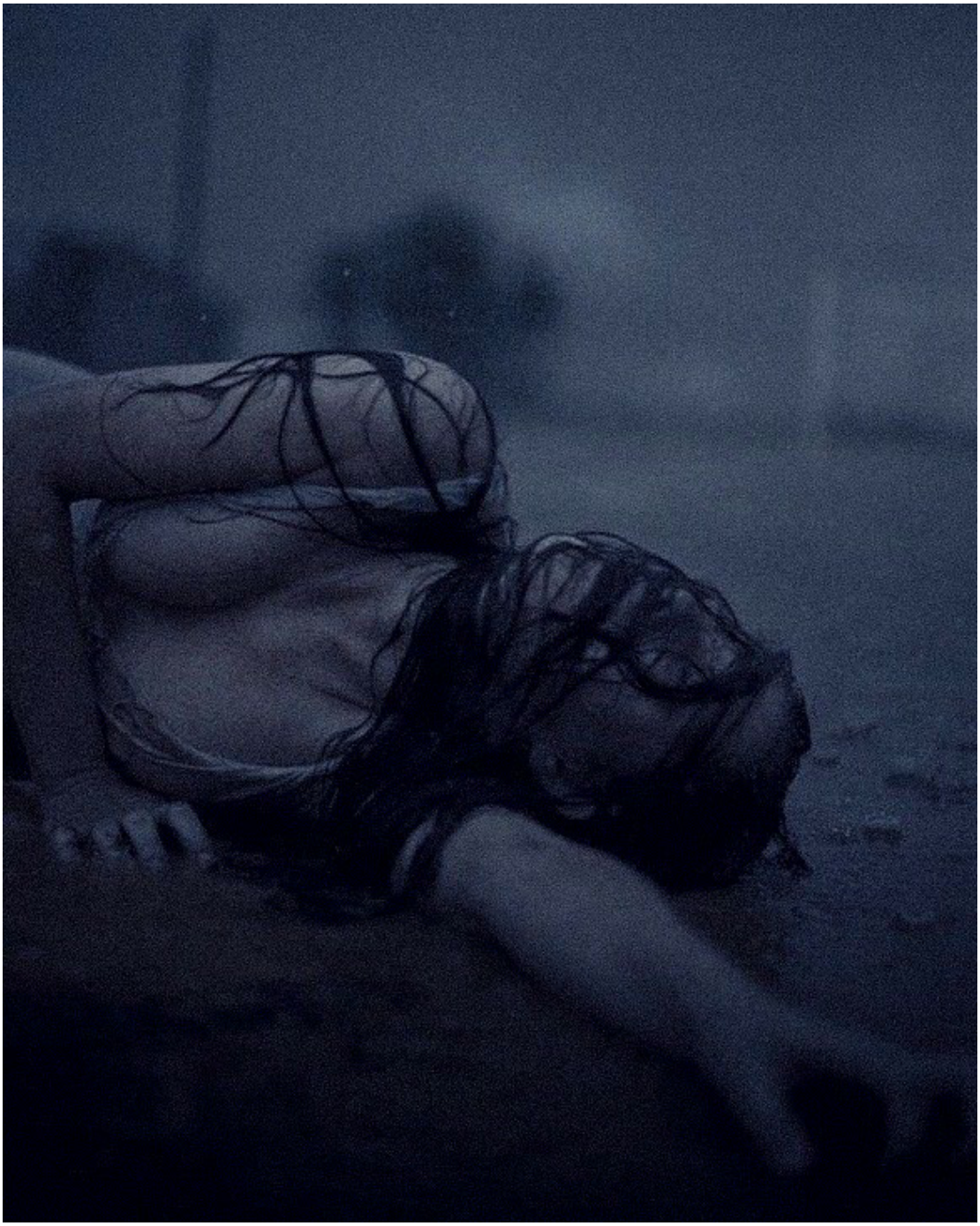
Chapter Summary

He was the demon of her dreams and the most handsome of all the angels.

Chapter Notes

Songs that helped to inspire the chapter -
Lament by Tommee Profitt, Sam Tinnesz, Shaya Zamora
House of Lies by Lillian Hepler
How a Storm Breaks by Astyria
Breaks My Back by MEG MYERS
Rain by Sleep Token
Turns You Into Stone by Tommee Profitt, Fleurie
Deep End by Ruelle
Light in the Dark by Violin Sky
The Skies Cried For You by Aaryan Shah

ETERNALLY YOURS playlist -
https://open.spotify.com/playlist/4M7zE958QW1o47gQkcsNCI?si=74apy9a6Rji0xoHmOL7GCw&pi=pj6rqsfBRgy8w



Thursday, July 30th 1999

Malfoy Manor, Wiltshire

The last night of their honeymoon had passed in a tense blur after Draco forcefully declared his feelings towards children. Hermione had tried her best to keep her true feelings hidden on the topic

but with his insistence that they talk about it, she snapped and after their first heated argument around the fire pit since before their wedding, Hermione told Draco she wanted to leave and so here they were back at the damn Manor.

That one thought about children had changed everything. Draco had reverted back to the same violent man he had been at Hogwarts, the man she had fallen in love with all over again at her wedding and in the beautiful town of Saint Tropez was no more. His darkness had returned, blasting at her through the orange blaze of a romantic fire, in a place that should hold nothing but beautiful memories but was now tainted in the dark reminder of who he really was, bleeding his true colours all over the woman he was supposed to love.

Her heart splintered at the thought.

He had disappeared into his snake house the second their feet touched down onto the long gravel drive way. There was a summer storm brewing, the clouds pelting down onto the earth with warm rain as Hermione watched it slide down the windowpane from her seat in the only parlour she would use.

She was devastated but she always knew this day would come again and that his soft underbelly would regrow its cold iron armour. She was aware that she had only managed to polish a tiny section of his dark soul and that it would only be a matter of time before it tarnished over once more. She also knew that they would always walk this same thin line and she would fall every single time. What she didn't know was how long it would take before she couldn't get back up again.

She sat and she cried, the book she had dazedly picked out from the library falling with a thud from her fingertips as her chest rattled with a pained sob. This was the most mentally destroying part, having to return to a life she *didn't* want and missing the man she *couldn't* keep.

When her eyes began to burn from the dead stare she was giving the empty hearth she decided to get up and go for a soak in their large clawfoot bath tub, hoping that the warmth might breathe some new life into her aching bones.

She walked through the many bare and desolate hallways of the Manor, the darkness at the end of each one so dense that it was what she imagined walking into a hellish tunnel would feel like. Whispers of wind could be heard blowing through the holes in the old attic as she climbed higher. The walls always felt like they were closing in on her the further she walked into this creepy house. She *hated* it here. There was nothing but death and coldness, there was never any comfort, only *ghosts*.

As Hermione turned off into a corridor in the direction of their suite she caught the hollow face of a woman to her left and screamed. Floating a few inches from the ground before her was the willowy ghost of Narcissa Malfoy. Her cheekbones were protruding like her skin was a thin sheet of paper barely covering her skeleton. Her eyes were sunken and clouded over with the same torment she must have felt at the end of her life. Her black and blonde hair dull and lifeless with the unfortunate shades of death. She gave Hermione what looked like a sad sympathetic smile and Hermione's heart thundered as she took in the empty shell of the woman who had become her only ounce of consolation in this lonely and isolating place.

Narcissa didn't speak, only beckoned Hermione to follow and so she did without a second thought. Hermione checked every doorway for any other lurking relatives as they went, feeling the frosty touch of fingers at her back as she walked through the darkness with a woeful spirit as her only

light. They weaved back through the Manor and out into the gardens. The rain was still falling heavily as they travelled past the rose garden that she caught Narcissa looking over at longingly, it sent a sharp pang of sadness to Hermione's already fragile heart.

They walked far across the grounds over to a place Hermione had not yet dared to venture—the Malfoy family cemetery.

She swallowed nervously as Narcissa continued on and Hermione reluctantly followed after her, through the iron gate with the Malfoy emblem and down the pathway between historic grave stones until they reached the center. Everywhere Hermione looked there were white life-size stone statues of men and women, devils and angels all with a different haunting expression etched into their faces, their edges still pointy and sharp having survived the test of time.

Narcissa came to an abrupt stop and Hermione lifted her head, her curls weighed down by the rain. As she did she caught sight of the massive concrete angel that sat proudly on top of the slab that housed Narcissa's body. Hermione gasped and threw a hand to her mouth in awe at the magnitude of its physical and emotional presence.

It was the most beautiful and melancholic thing she had ever seen. The angel stood tall with her giant wings spread wide, touching the clouds with a peaceful look on her stone face like she knew that she was the sole protector of her remains. Narcissa stood to the side and watched as Hermione stepped forward and placed her wet shaky fingers to the white headstone below.

Narcissa Anastasia Malfoy

1955 - 1996

Her hand brushed lightly across the smooth icy surface, her fingers tracing over each tragic letter carved into the marble. Hermione was flooded with a deep sadness at the reality that Narcissa had put *herself* here way before her time because of her son's choices, because she felt she had no other way out of the sorrow that gripped her. Because she couldn't cope with the devastation Draco had brought upon his family and Hermione's heart clenched painfully when she realised that she *understood*.

They shared a mutual understanding because they shared a mutual connection.. *Draco*.

And in the end he had destroyed them *both*.

She caught sight of Narcissa flicking her ghostly head towards the back end of the cemetery and Hermione's brows furrowed as she stood and followed her once again, trusting her enough to let herself be led into the unknown. As they came to the iron railings that enclosed the cemetery, Hermione noticed the dotted mounds of dirt that were *human* sized, bordering the back edge of the graveyard, past all the family headstones and way back—forgotten in the shadows of an old oak tree.

Hermione's heavy eyes flit back and forth over them, trying to make sense of what she was seeing, every single heap of packed earth looked old.. except for one. She looked back over to where Narcissa hovered and she could clearly see the confusion colouring Hermione's face a cold shade of white because she decided the words she spoke next would be the last ones to leave her mouth..

"*Pansy*."

Hermione's flesh turned to ice with the sound of her ghostly whisper and horrified tears combined with the rain on her cheeks as the dark truth slammed into her with all the brutality of a bulldozer. Narcissa's sallow face was one of anguish as she turned and disappeared down the leaf strewn pathway between crumbling stones and off into the atmosphere, leaving Hermione alone with rotting corpses.

Water rolled down between her shoulder blades as she sank to her knees, looking over at the dozen mounds of dirt in front of her that encased victims, all murdered at the hands of Draco. *Her husband*. The man that had just admitted to wanting a baby with her. The man that had made her fall for his pretty painted pictures of heaven only for them to drip with poisonous forgery. The man that had raped her and laid his hands on her with both soft admiration and rough cruelty but she fucking *loved* him regardless because his twisted love had put doubt into every thought she had and her insides—both the intimate and mental ones had been irreversibly moulded to his shape forever.

She could taste the damp soil between her teeth as tears continued to fall, fresh waves of pain shooting through her veins, her heart wrenching so tightly in her chest that she could feel the numb chill of a faint as her vision began to blacken at the edges, rainfall pooling over her eyelashes as she closed her eyes. Her weight gave from under her and she fell onto her side, her weak and trembling body swallowed by the crying sky above her as she lay in the dirt only feet away from the dead, drenched in both Mother Nature and her own burning heartbreak.

———

Hermione's eyes squeezed together as her brain gradually caught up with her body, her eyelashes were stuck together with residual rain and her back was cushioned with something soft. She slowly peeled her lids open and immediately knew by the painted pattern on the ceiling that she was in their bedroom. After a few more weary blinks she lifted her head and almost jumped out of her skin at the sight of Draco standing at the foot of their bed, shirtless, the ends of his white blonde hair dripping water onto his bare shoulders.

Hermione immediately scrambled away until her back connected with the headboard. Draco smirked at her blatant fear and it disgusted her how he could casually be so *heinous*.

"What's the matter, Hermione?" He asked in a flat tone, watching her with scrutiny.

"*Stay away from me*," she demanded, her voice shaky and hollow.

He exhaled a cocky laugh. "*No can do princess*, I still need to fill you with my child."

"*Not* gonna fucking happen," she spat, trying to push herself further into the wood.

"You said the very same thing about your virginity, now look at where we are," he boasted smugly.

Hermione's hands shook as she wrapped them around herself, her body frozen stiff with fear. Draco stepped around the end of the bed towards her and Hermione flinched, kicking out her legs.

"*Go away!"*

“Hermione, stop being *fucking* ridiculous. I'm guessing it’s the forgotten bodies in the graveyard that has you in such a state. I found you lying beside them in the fucking dirt, getting rained on.”

“***Why?***” She bellowed.

His brows furrowed in question. “Why what?”

“Why did you kill all of those people? Why did you kill *Pansy*?”

His face settled into a cold indifference. “You *know* why I killed Pansy, I told you so myself, it’s no secret between us. As for the rest, they were enemies of the death eaters, nothing more nothing less. I didn’t even see their faces, didn’t even know their names, *just heard their screams*.”

He dragged the last few words out slowly, making sure she heard every letter clearly with an almost proud and sinister smirk.

“You’re *sick.”*

He smiled with teeth as if she had given him a fucking compliment. “I know. I’m sick for *you*, baby. Come here,” he said, reaching out his hands towards her.

Hermione shook her head. “No.”

“*Come here*,” he demanded, his tone taking on a sharper, more impatient edge.

“*No*!” She cried, trying to make a mad dash for the door when Draco caught her and pinned her back to the bed beneath him. Hermione screamed and writhed, swinging her arms and legs out as best she could under the solid weight on top of her, barely breathing against his muscled chest.

“*Shh*, sweetheart. You need to calm down,” he cooed mockingly, running a finger down the side of her angry face. He dipped down further to smother her lips in a possessive kiss, slipping his tongue into her mouth. He wedged his hips between her thighs, grinding himself forcefully against her core. His grunts echoed down her throat, body rolling as he fucked her mouth with his tongue, both hands gripping her curls by the roots.

Hermione twisted and turned but all it did was rub her tighter against him and his satisfied groan only proved her theory. He removed his tongue before she had the chance to bite it off and pulled back to look at her, pressing their damp foreheads together. Her body was weak and immobile beneath him and she could physically feel the sharp pierce of his perilous metals as they drilled her deeper into the mattress.

“I don’t know why you’re so surprised, I showed you my darkness a long time ago and yet you still look at me like I hold the fucking sun because you’re a *fool*.”

His execution was harsh and bitter, stippling her skin with acid.

“You and I are wires entwined in our fucked up fate and now we’re so deeply twisted that there’s no straightening us out, *ever*. We’re bent into this shape eternally, Hermione. Together, like it was always meant to be. You were fucking *made* for me and you’ll always be the love of my life.”

Hermione’s tears were nothing more than pathetic droplets of revulsion as she stared up into his hateful face. A face so beautiful that it destroyed lives. A man so powerful that he had the ability to kill without a second thought, injecting fear into everyone around him with a single look.

But it was these words that crippled her the most, not the spiteful ones that he pelted at her like bullets but the ones he spoke that she longed to hear. But she couldn't have everything, she wasn't lucky enough to hear them and have him mean them too.

She just wanted a love that didn't *hurt*.

Chapter 7: Blood, Sex and Cigarettes

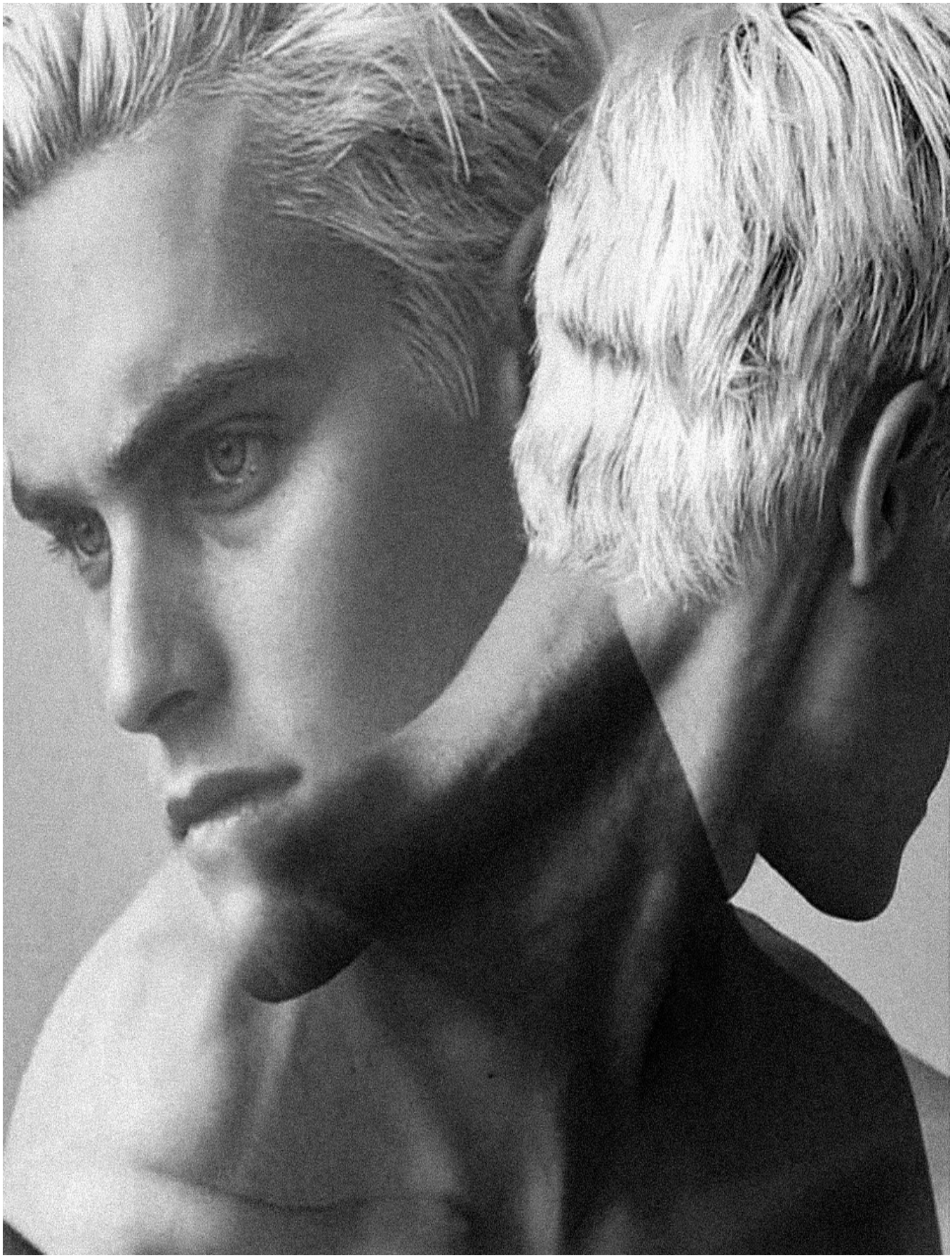
Chapter Summary

> Loving you was loving war.
> When bloodshed ended, we couldn't even recognise each other, our bodies were maps of destruction and pain, our faces the aftermath of an entire world in ashes. We were Pandora's box personified, it just took opening it up to realise how deeply poisonous we truly were together.
> -Nikita Gill

Chapter Notes

> Songs that helped to inspire the chapter -
> The Unforgiven by Bobina
> Where Do You Go by Jessie Murph
> History of Violence by Theory of a Deadman
> Worship Me by Max Madly
> Make Me Wanna Die by The Pretty Reckless
> Made To Break by Allegra Jordyn
> Where's My Love - Alternate Version by SYML
> God Is A Weapon by Falling In Reverse, Marilyn Manson
> I Would've by Jessie Murph
> I Found by Amber Run
> You Belong to Me by Cat Pierce
>
> ETERNALLY YOURS playlist -
> https://open.spotify.com/playlist/4M7zE958QW1o47gQkcsNCI?si=-U5fdZiMSVO2LZaJOh3FHg&pi=hLfmRA2RQb-Jo
>
> You knew it was coming but TW for non-con.

See the end of the chapter for more notes



In the weeks after their honeymoon Hermione and Draco played the game of cat and mouse when it came to sex like it was a sport. Hermione would run from him anytime he got that hot insatiable glint in his eye and Draco would chase her through the Manor relentlessly with his endless stamina. On the rare occasions that he couldn't catch her he would take the low road and use *imperio* and she would finally break out of the spell hours later—sore, used and abused. Draco had taken her forcefully many times a day in his insistent mission to get her pregnant.

"Hermione, *come here*!" He bellowed, his sharp tone bouncing off the marble walls around them as she found herself at the end of the hall that led to his home gym. Hermione scrambled through the double doors, coming to a screeching halt at the dozens of her own reflection she saw in the wall of mirrors at the end of the room. Her stall had given Draco enough time to reach her, screaming when his iron arms wrapped around her stomach from behind in a grip that was the epitome of entrapment.

"Get *off*!" She shrieked, scratching at his skin to let her go. He only held on tighter and dragged her unwilling body closer to the mirrors. He stopped inches in front of them and took her jaw in his hand, forcing her face up to look at herself. His other hand slithered down her body, into the band of her skirt, slipping his fingers into her knickers and rolling them slowly over her sensitive clit. Hermione's breath caught in her throat, trying with no avail to jerk away from him.

"I want you to *watch* yourself as I make you cum."

"*No*."

He laughed deeply into the side of her face, the grip on her jaw bruising. "Why must you make everything so difficult for yourself?"

His tone was patronising, smugness rolling off of him in tumultuous waves, knowing he had her cornered. Hermione's lip curled into a snarl as she spat across his pristine mirrors with the dangerous intention to piss him off. He only laughed more and ripped his hand from her skirt, whipping her around violently and slamming her against the glass so harshly that she heard it crack under her weight.

He wrapped his large hand around her throat and stepped closer. "We've got a taste for one another and a few good years to kill, love. You will have my fucking children even if I have to force them there." Each vile word he spoke brushed against her lips like poison, a threat and a dirty *promise*.

"Why? *Why* the fuck do you want children when you act like this?" She spat, dragging red lines through the alabaster skin on his arms.

"For no other reason than to create an heir with the woman of my desires."

"So you can treat them like controlled trophies too?"

A muscle flashed in his jaw as he dragged his tongue slowly across his teeth with blatant irritation. "You're not a trophy, you're my fucking *wife*," he hissed sharply, her body jerking with the shock

of her flinch.

“Spare me the bullshit Draco.”

She choked on the squeeze of her windpipe and the crushing of her head into the broken mirror.

“*Watch* your tongue.”

“Why don’t you watch it for me?” She asked with snark as she childishly flicked her tongue at him. His hand left her throat to grab her face, squishing her open lips together until she yelped.

“Look at you my little *witch,* antagonising the man that gives you nightmares.” He tutted in her face. “For someone so smart, that is *awfully* stupid.”

Hermione could feel the swell of bruises around her neck as she swallowed, her lips stinging from the hard grip he had against them. Hermione’s hands never stopped digging into him but his face never changed, his body never betraying him of any pain she was undoubtedly causing him.

“Get off,” she mumbled weakly.

Draco finally released her and took a step back and she wasn’t about to waste her opportunity to keep him at arm's length.

“*Incasterous*,” she whispered, having now mastered the wandless spell Draco flew backwards onto a weight bench, large ropes wrapping themselves tightly around his hands and feet. Hermione cast a sticking charm for good measure, securing him down to where he sat.

His face split into a wide grin at her bold challenge. “You think this will stop me sweetheart?”

Before she should even relish in any sort of satisfaction for detaining him, black wispy tendrils crept along the floor and wrapped themselves around her ankles. Hermione sucked in a hard breath when she felt his silky smoke twist and slither their way between her thighs, licking against the skin that Draco had left throbbing.

His dark chuckle echoed around the gym as he watched her struggle against his magic. Her skin crawled as the strange sensation of fingers she couldn’t see entered her, pumping in and out at brutal speed and drawing involuntary whimpers from her lips. Hermione heard the sharp click of Draco’s fingers, sending cold air ghosting across her exposed body, her clothing melting away from her skin with ease at his command. He licked his lips slowly, watching her naked and actively being devoured by his dark magic, curls of smoke wrapping themselves around her breasts and caressing her hardened nipples, sliding against her inner thighs and pulling soft, unwilling moans from her throat.

“D-Draco stop,” she breathed, panting heavily as he pulled her forward with his compulsion. Her legs were shaking with the effort to dig her bare feet into the wooden floor. She was dragged closer to where Draco sat waiting by the strong pull of his magic and Hermione wanted to scream in frustration as another forced moan was ripped from mouth, her clit pulsing with an orgasm. The vapour he had surrounded her with vacated her insides and slid across her body, kissing her skin with its all too familiar *sin*.

She was tugged the remaining inches towards her husband and Draco’s ropes split with his flexing muscles, releasing him with no exertion on his part; he didn’t even break a sweat as the tough ropes

were ripped away. His cock was quickly pulled free, he grabbed her and forced her down onto his length, not giving her even a single second to escape him again. She should have known better, he *always* got his way in the end. Her fight was entirely pointless but she didn't want to admit to herself that deep down under her seemingly tough surface, she had already given up.

What am i even fighting for anyway?

Tears burned at the corners of her eyes as he impaled her, using his arms around her body like a cage as he rammed himself deep inside. She gasped with pain against his chest as he fucked her with all of his impatience. Her hands fisted as they hung trapped at her sides, reduced to a helpless rag doll in his arms, her body jerking ungracefully with the force of his many spiteful blows.

He pulled back to take her throat between his hands once again, edging her head up towards him so he could take her lower lip between his teeth, watching the disdain burn for him in her eyes, sparkling with hate as his sharp teeth tore through her skin.

“I never understood the force of my desire until I felt your pulse fluttering wildly under my hands, like it was *flirting* with me.”

He purred the words with her blood on his lips.

Hermione grit her teeth but said nothing as he continued to drive into her with unnecessary power, her stomach rolling with the hot evidence of another climax that threatened to rock through her.

“I can feel your little pussy strangling my cock baby. You’re not fooling anyone and least of all me so you might as well cum,” he taunted, cruel hands ripping their way through her curls.

Hermione wailed with another onslaught of forced orgasms as Draco’s cock persisted like a spear through her walls, squeezing her already sore throat painfully tight as his own pleasure floored him. His forehead met hers, he breathed heavily across her face, his fingernails piercing the skin of her ass as she split the skin on his shoulders with her own. Every touch was a war, against her flesh, against her heart, against her soul. He took it all, inch by inch like a grand tree that had tried to stand strong through a battle, he was chipping away at her, threatening to cut her down.

His voice dipped lower as he whispered those three sickening and contradictory words into her ear.

“*I love you*.”

Saturday, October 3rd 1999 - 9 weeks after their Honeymoon

Blaise, Daphne, Theo and Astoria arrived at the Manor for a well needed catch up, they had not seen each other since the wedding and Hermione missed them like a missing limb.

“*Theo*!” Hermione squealed, running towards him as he spread his comforting arms wide and wrapped her protectively into a big hug.

Hermione could feel Draco's eyes burning into her back as she stayed in the warmth of Theo’s arms for perhaps a little too much time. She ruffled his tawny curls as she pulled away.

“This is getting long, why don’t you let me cut it?” She teased.

“I’d actually like to keep some hair on my head, thanks,” he shot back with a playful snort.

Draco gave everyone a curt nod as Hermione went around the rest of their friends, giving them all her best hugs. Blaise squeezed her tightly and told her he missed her, making her heart ache with so much love and gratitude for true friendship. She never in a million years would have guessed that she would have become better friends with the Slytherins than she was with Harry and Ron. But time changes change and so do people.

They were guided downstairs into the bowels of the Manor that held their games room. The men got into a few competitive games of cards as the women caught up on all things gossip. The room became hazy with smoke as Draco drank shot after shot of his strongest most vintage whisky.

“*Want one*, Hermione?” He asked slyly, winking at her. Draco very well knew that she couldn’t drink, he had made it his mission to ensure that she couldn’t after all. His little dig was a prompt for her to share their news.

Their friends frowned as Hermione refused drinks and cigarettes all night until Theo finally had enough of not being involved in the secret her and Draco had yet to tell.

“*Okay*,” he said, slamming his glass down on the table. “What’s going on? Why are you being so weird Hermione?”

“Yeah, what is it you two keep eyeing each other about?” Blaise chimed in, looking suspiciously between them.

Hermione took a deep breath as she stood, looking over at Draco who gave her a sharp nod of confirmation and a wide grin of victory. The room fell silent as she cleared her throat.

“I’m pregnant.”

“*Oh my god*!” Daphne exclaimed.

“*Wow*,” Astoria gasped.

Theo immediately jumped up from his seat, coming at her with a hug, Blaise walked over to Draco and clapped him on the shoulder for a job well done.

“Congratulations, *daddy*.”

Draco snorted. “Cheers mate.”

“Oh my god Hermione *please* tell me you’re planning on asking me to be the god father?”

Hermione looked at Theo, trying to find any hint of humour on his face until she realised that he was completely serious and erupted into laughter at the desperate look on his face.

“*Fuck* no—“

“We will see Theo,” Hermione laughed, cutting off Draco’s blunt reply with a much more positive one.

He smiled and hugged her again. Hermione looked over Theo’s shoulder as Draco's fists flexed at his sides, his sharp eyes locked onto hers with mounting jealousy. She swallowed deeply at the dark

look on his face and stepped away from Theo, giving him a smile in return.

Draco knocked shoulders with him as he stepped forward, taking Hermione into a possessive hug and kissing the top of her head, whispering—"*Stop fucking hugging Nott*," into her hair before he released her.

A threat veiled with the illusion of affection, always.

"Got any names yet?" Astoria asked with bewilderment.

Hermione shook her head as she smoothed a hand over her flat stomach. "Not yet, I'm only around seven weeks."

"If it's a boy you should *obviously* call him Theo the second."

"Get fucked Nott," Draco rebuked dryly, shooting more whisky down his neck in between puffs of his cigarette.

The rest of the evening went by with glares across the table from Draco and baby talk until it was time for everyone to leave. Draco ushered them out much too quickly but not before Theo grabbed her in one last warm embrace. The heavy double doors at the front of the Manor slammed closed as Hermione reached the top of the basement stairs.

"What the *fuck* was that?" He snarled, whipping around in her direction.

She frowned and crossed her arms. "What was what?"

"*You and Nott*," he clarified.

"I don't understand what you're implying."

He cornered her in the hallway, pressing his hands on the wall on either side of her head as he leant in to speak against her lips. "The hugs, the fucking *looks* across the table. You were fucking flirting with him right in front of my face after just announcing our pregnancy. How *stupid* do I look to you Hermione?"

"Right now? Pretty fucking stupid considering I was *not* flirting. Me and Theo are just friends, Draco. You know this."

"***Bullshit***!" He roared, rattling the empty portraits as he slammed his hands against the wall behind her. "I fucking *saw* you."

Her chin quivered as she shook her head. "No, you only saw what your drunk brain *wanted* you to see. You just want another excuse to be mad at me."

"I don't need an excuse sweetheart, you piss me off daily."

She scoffed. "I know the feeling."

Draco smiled with absolutely no warmth, the wide stretch of his lips were cold and humourless.

"This antagonistic fucking attitude you've acquired lately is really quite *dangerous*," he purred as he pressed his body flush to hers and kissed her hard, dragging his teeth along her skin.

It wasn't a kiss of passion or love, it was a raw and bloodied punishment. Hermione yanked herself away and slid out from under him quickly, sprinting through the Manor and locking herself into one of their many dining rooms. She threw her hands over her ears as the doors were blown off their hinges, splintered wood scattering across the floor.

"Come here you little *bitch*."

"*Fuck you*! Why do you always have to ruin *everything*? I fucking hate you," she cried.

Her ears split with the deafening sound of shattered glass. Every lamp, glass on the bar cart, china plate, crystal droplet hanging from the chandelier and sconce on the wall erupted in his violent display of magic. Hermione's body was paralysed with fear as she hit the floor, cuts littering the surface of her skin as she shielded her head from the rainfall of glass. The corrupt and suffocating scent of his magic flooded the room, burning her lungs.

She crawled across the floor, her knees weeping red as she reached another door. Draco was in the midst of tearing apart the room as she made her exit. Her legs were unsteady beneath her weight as she stumbled from the destruction and out onto the grounds. The dress she was wearing got stuck to her bloodied injuries and her heels were getting lodged into the mud as she tried to create as much distance as possible, her breath heaving out into the frigid air as her ring flashed white hot on her finger.

She ran into the only place she thought that maybe he wouldn't find her as easily—the hedge maze. She passed an old and empty whisky bottle as she turned a corner, her hands shaking vigorously as she brushed through the leaves, trying to find a pocket of safety amongst the green.

"***HERMIONE!***"

She sucked in a sharp breath and came to an abrupt stop when she heard his scream echo across the empty gardens, he sounded so internally haunted that it covered every inch of her skin in goosebumps. Her eyes filled with pathetic tears but she decided to keep running. The burning hot metal on her finger let her know with every step that she had traveled too far from him.

"*Hermione*!" He cried again and this time she halted her movements completely.

His voice was closer now and the distressed tone of him broke her, he was *panicking*. She slowly turned around, blood dripping onto the grass under her feet as she looked down the long and fog filled pathway between hedges to the tall man at the end of it with red and watery eyes. The air between them filled with a heavy sorrow as she fell to her knees.

Draco ran to her, catching her as she collapsed to the ground.

The silence was thick as he held her, studying the grief etched onto each other's faces for what felt like an eternity. Draco's tears were like gold as they slipped down his cheeks. Hermione had never once seen him cry and his liquid emotion was mesmerising to witness. She touched a gentle finger to his face, running it through the wetness that had gathered there just to make sure that her unstable mind wasn't imagining what it wanted to see. When she tried to pull away Draco held her hand flat to his face with his own, leaning tightly into her palm. His bottom lip quivered and Hermione felt *him* break in *her* arms for once.

"I'm *tired*, Draco. I'm tired of being tired, I'm tired of touching you, I'm tired of you touching me. I'm tired of wasting kisses and pouring the kind of love into you that I will never get back," she

whispered softly, brokenly.

His body shook under the strain of sobs he had never allowed himself to feel and Hermione cried with him, holding him against her as he clung to her clothes, white knuckles fisting her dress, soaking the fibres with more blood from his split knuckles.

It's a funny thing, watching the tough guy bleed.

"Why Draco? *Why* do you keep doing this?"

His blond head lifted from her hair, looking into her soul with bloodshot eyes. "I'm sorry Hermione but *I can't stop*."

His hands met the sides of her cold face as she held his stare, flitting back and forth between her eyes and her mouth until he closed the distance between them, pulling her body close against his desperate lips. Their skin was wet and salty from combined tears, his thumbs stroking her cheeks as he angled her head for a deeper kiss. She could taste the whisky on his tongue as it entered her mouth and he got greedy as he always did, pushing her backward into the grass.

She felt him remove her knickers and flatten his hands across the width of her stomach to hold her down as his mouth burned a wet path up her thigh. His tongue covered her clit and she watched as the crows flew free and high above her across the grey sky. Her neck bent back with her pleasure as he sucked it from her body once again. He was always hungry and never full.

He was *gluttonous* and she was a *fool*.

Chapter End Notes

I HAD to add that Sleep Token lyric in there somewhere because it's too perfect. If you know you know!

Chapter 8: The Reckoning

Chapter Summary

Feel the pain until it hurts no more.
-William Shakespeare

Chapter Notes

Songs that helped to inspire the chapter -
Novocaine by Too Close To Touch, Bad Omens
The Reckoning by Jay Denton, Hannah Partott
Rough Hands by Alexisonfire
Eternally by Allegra Jordyn
Broken by Isak Danielson
We Hug Now by Sydney Rose
Bigger Than The Whole Sky by Taylor Swift
Falling Apart by Michael Schulte
Angel By The Wings by Sia
Carry You by Ruelle, Fleurie
The Other Side by Ruelle
Angel by Sarah McLachlan

ETERNALLY YOURS playlist -
https://open.spotify.com/playlist/4M7zE958QW1o47gQkcsNCI?si=kFjVWt3iRH-IICvcMNeWCQ&pi=VIG1RzSpT8erf

TWs are in the end notes.

See the end of the chapter for more notes

Sunday, October 4th 1999

“Draco stop!” She screamed as he carried her through the gardens across his shoulder. She had found him amongst the wreckage of what *was* his mother’s bedroom. He was drunk and angry,

bitter with a grief that Hermione never knew was so potent until she moved into the house it had started in.

Hogwarts was clearly somewhere that Draco didn't have to think about his mothers death because she wasn't tied to it, the castle held a separation from his reality that the Manor never could, it was the worst place for him to be and yet they were both stuck here.

She screamed and clawed at him, struggling against him with a strength she had never had before, batting her fists against his back as he walked her in the direction of his hell house.

"Please Draco! Please no, *PLEASE*."

Her throat was sore from screaming, she begged and begged and he said nothing as he walked, he had thrown her over his shoulder like a sack of potatoes when he caught her watching his second breakdown in two days. He was a mess and he didn't know how to process his emotions, they were a weakness to him and he hated that she had witnessed another one. She knew her curiosity would only end in punishment.

Hermione tried to grab onto anything she could reach but everything she grasped slipped through her fingers like the gardens themselves were betraying her in her moment of dire need. Her hands caught onto the stone serpents outside the snake house but he yanked her away violently and pulled her deeper into the humidity of the chamber, locking the door with a flick of his wrist behind them.

The sharp hiss of reptiles met her ears, the thick wet heat sticking her curls to her neck instantly. She watched from her dangling position as the snakes slithered out from their holes to twist between Draco's feet as he marched, loyally greeting their owner. His shoulder muscles were grinding painfully into her abdomen and she prayed that Draco would snap out of it soon enough to remember that she was pregnant.

He laid her down in the hot soil, surrounded by pretty exotic plants but this would *not* be a pretty memory.

Her clothes were ripped forcefully from her skin as Hermione kicked out her legs in desperation. This was all too familiar and had happened too many times before. She was sick of having to fight for her life. Draco tore through her with ease, slamming himself inside her unwilling body as she cried and screamed at him. The sounds of her torment bounced around in the glass enclosure, trapped inside just as she was.

He had made every single one of her nightmares come true.

He grunted and groaned above her, spitting hateful words of love down at her as she cried. His slippery friends slithered across her body, making her shudder with revulsion, they twisted around her wrists and ankles with their slimy scales, keeping her open—anchored and at the mercy of their master. His black magic danced along her rib cage and twisted around her spine, raking spiteful fingers across every knot of bone. Her hands fisted the dirt as Draco's thrusts became painfully rough. She shrieked with sharp discomfort when he pressed a heavy hand to her abdomen.

Midnight black veins threaded across the whites of his eyes and cut through the charcoal as he continued his abuse. Any and all traces of her husband were gone, his face had darkened and become something else, something *demonic*. He was an unknown entity to her. He smiled and even his teeth were tipped. She screamed loud enough that Draco silenced her, choking her with his

smoke. He licked and bit into her skin as she wailed silently. Powerless in every single aspect and everything he could take away from her, he *did*.

More of his snakes slipped around his shoulders, hanging across his chest as he fucked her into the ground, Hermione turned her face sideways in fear when they spat at her, their fangs glinting with threat. She felt the hot lick of Draco's tongue as he swiped it across his scarred name, chuckling deeply to himself as he went.

She *hated* him. Hated him and loved him. But in the end both love and hate felt the same.

He fisted a handful of dirty curls and pulled her face up aggressively to meet his.

"I *fucking* love you," he hissed, slamming his vicious lips against hers in a painful kiss. *Nothing* about his actions told her that those words were true.

Hermione couldn't even convey any of her pain, her voice was gone, *stolen*. He came inside her seconds later, drilling his long fingers into her sensitive core to keep his release inside. Hermione wanted to scream that he didn't need to do that anymore because he had already gotten what he wanted, she was already pregnant. But Draco was too far gone, there was none of his soft side left, no rationality, no *humanity*, it had all been rotting away into cold, dark *stone*.

Thursday, October 9th 1999 - 5 days later

Every window in the grand Manor threatened to shatter under the weight of Hermione's gut wrenching scream. Every muscle, tendon and vein in her body erupted with the cruel pain of loss. Dark red ichor soaked through the mattress beneath her as she bled in heartbreakingly thick rivulets. Her body convulsed with emotion as the clench of contractions arriving too soon broke through her in brutal waves. Hermione's own voice repeated that this wasn't happening, over and over, around and around behind her bloodshot eyes.

The cold moonlight shining through the arched window cut a path across the room, spotlighting Draco's empty pillow, reminding her that she was alone. She tried desperately to drag her heavy body into an upright position but her arms could do nothing but shake with the strain. Golden curls sealed themselves to the sweat coating her neck and her skin was a deathly shade of grey as she continued to bleed.

A new shriek of terror ripped its way up her throat as more contractions came and went in quick succession. All Hermione could process in that moment was her *fear*. How utterly terrified she was with what was happening to her. She was preparing to become a new and partly forced mother, she didn't know what was going on but she knew this pregnancy was coming to a traumatic end. She lifted a quivering hand down between her legs, feeling the sticky heat on her fingertips.

It was completely debilitating to be going through something as horrendous as a miscarriage and having not an ounce of power in the world to change its direction. Sharp bolts of pain shot up her spine as she rolled around in continued agony. She tried to call out for Draco but her voice was too hollow and wracked with horror for the cracked sound to reach. She knew he was drunk in the parlour and wouldn't hear her anyway but in her desperation she screamed a broken scream, shaking the walls with her howls.

She didn't want to be alone and it was although that thought had summoned the one person that understood—*Narcissa*.

Her pale face appeared at the end of the large bed and Hermione could see even from a distance the sorrow that was painted across her ghostly pallor. She instinctively reached out a weak hand to the only source of comfort in the room and was painfully reminded that the room held nothing more than *ghosts,* dead memories. Tears fell thick and fast across her flushed cheeks as she tried her best to breathe through the hell that had crippled her.

She watched through the haze as Narcissa drifted closer to her, opening her lips in silent solace. Her eyebrows were drawn tightly together, watching helplessly as Hermione's hands clenched the sheets with white knuckles, her back curving upwards towards the ceiling in a plea for it to stop. Her fingers were numb from the pressure of trying hopelessly to find an anchor, something that she could bear all of her weight into, something to make her feel lighter if only for a moment.

Her teeth were clenched together achingly tight, squeaking under the pressure, her body wound firmly as she writhed around in the dark, no one but her passed mother in law knowing the torment that had laid claim to her body in the dead of the night. The room around her blurred, her eyes swimming in anguish, her head breaking with the unrelenting sound of her own begging voice.

The blood that had collected in the dip of the mattress was sticky and hot as it settled into the lines of her skin. Her eyes slammed shut, squeezing as a rush of warm dizziness veiled her. She felt something soft and slippery—jelly like slip from her opening. Her head whipped up as the remains of her child soaked into the cotton. The connecting of her and Draco as evidence in the tiny, blood soaked cluster of cells that made up a foetus, *her baby*. A baby that she had kept warm but not safe from its own father.

Hermione was overcome with so many emotions at once that she could feel the beginnings of a faint as she pulled her body forward and scooped the grape sized lump into her hands, cradling it gently against her palm. Salt filled her mouth as her tears breached her lips, dripping from her chin in streams as her heart collapsed inside her rib cage.

Heaving sobs wracked her body as she looked to Narcissa for support. Her face downturned in sadness as she stood looking just as crushed as Hermione felt. She looked back down to the small life she couldn't save and for a split second the sadness receded and all that remained was cold rage. Rage at herself for not fighting harder in that burning snake house, rage at Draco for being so careless. Her heart ached for a million different reasons but most of all it ached for the child that would never be.

The child she would never see, never know what they would grow to look like, never feel their tiny kicks or hold their tiny hand. She had made a space in her heart for a child that would never arrive and she will wonder for the rest of her life about what could have been. She now knows what being pregnant feels like but she would never get to experience the feel of true motherhood.

Grief is now all she has left.

I'm sorry I couldn't save you.

Hermione felt her body tipping backwards, still clutching onto the part of her that had died in that dark bedroom, where the dark had never felt so dark before. Narcissa was still there, trying to hold onto her as her eyes slipped shut and she plummeted into the numb void between heaven and hell,

still clinging onto the tissue of a dead life that grew colder with each passing moment.

Her body felt torn apart and brittle as she walked barefoot across the grounds, soaked in the deep metallic remains of her child, her silk nightgown sticking to her thighs with every step. The sun twinkled orange on the horizon, signifying the dawn of a new day and Hermione wished for it to still be dark, to envelope her in the emptiness she felt settling into her bones, to shroud her in the heavy black of mourning. Of grief. To hide her reality from the handsome face she didn't want to see. From the man who was oblivious to her misery. From the man that had betrayed her. She could still feel the cold sinister hands twisting at her insides.

The grass was rough and damp under her feet but Hermione could hardly cared. Thick lines of dried blood marred her legs like a road map, getting trapped in the small gaps between her toes. Her curls hung sweaty and limp down her back, pale skin looking as ghostly as she felt.

End it Hermione, the voice demanded her.

End your suffering, end your abuse, get OUT.

The little red devil on her shoulder was back but this time it had a new face, a face with glossy amber eyes and a heartbroken smile. Whispering worlds of freedom and pain relief into her ear like a sweet lullaby. Salted tears fell unbidden, rolling against her frozen face the closer she got towards the edge of the pond.

Do it Hermione.

Leave this place, you know you want to, the voice continued to goad.

She turned her head robotically, looking up at the Manor and caressing her empty womb with a shaky hand, wondering where Draco was and if he was even awake yet or if he was still in a clueless drunken slumber. She wondered if he slept with his hands clasped together, threaded with everything he had destroyed, everything he had touched, poisoning and sickening it all with sadness.

Every window was empty, barren, *dark* and it only made the voice in her head louder and more persistent. Begging her to turn away from her past and enter the frosty edge of her future. Pulling her body closer to oblivion.

Hermione's skin screamed with the cold shock of water as she stepped down into her final resting place. Drenching herself deeper and deeper, her veins caved in on themselves with the pressure as it sucked her in further, a glacial welcome. Her body thrashed under the surface but on the outside she was as calm and still as the pond itself, stuck in her own flesh covered cage of debilitation.

She dipped her head below the water and felt her ears rush with liquid, the silence loud and deafening in the depths. Hermione desperately wished to be somewhere else, somewhere with stars but as she opened her eyes and looked up through the watery ceiling above her all she could see was blue, the same shade of blue that was so rarely in Draco's eyes. Even in imminent death the world forced her to remember him.

The cold was soothing on her tortured soul as small bubbles floated up into freedom from her lips, her lungs filling with the icy burn. She thought of her mother as she floated there, suspended between the world and the end, under an orange painted sky that was much too pretty for this sad view. She thought about what her mother would say if she knew her only daughter was drowning herself in lonely waters with only the swirls of red around her from her bloodied body for company. The only pieces left to remind her that all hope was lost, surrender coloured in crimson.

The gentle sway of water flooded her with a memory, one Draco had told her that never left—

"*If you wanna die it will be by my hand. I would happily slit your throat just for the pleasure of knowing it was me who ended you. No one else gets that fucking privilege, not even you*."

He had taken away every choice she ever had, every decision that should have been made for herself was ripped from under her. She wasn't going to let him decide the fate of *this* one too.

Hermione was almost too lost in her own thoughts to recognise the face looking back at her through the murky cyan. The glowing silhouette of Narcissa hung in front of her, cradling a tiny blonde baby in her slender arms, a small smile etched across her lips as she whispered softly to her through the deep.

"*I will carry you, just as I carry your child, Hermione*."

Hermione's face cracked into something born from pure devastation, her eyes burning with tears she could cry underwater. Her lips shivered with the harsh cold, her heart shattering as she allowed her body to sink further into death, to a place where words no longer hurt and fire no longer burns. The voice in her head that she could distantly recognise as her own soothing her into a watery sleep.

Using her own pain as a weapon to tear herself down so she had nothing left for him to break.

Narcissa faded, taking her grandchild with her as the cruel and beautiful world around Hermione bled into black, giving herself over to the soft sound of nothing. Before she slipped down the few inches left in her pursuit she jerked with the sharp disturbance of still water as something broke through the surface. Iron arms wrapped themselves around her and tugged her upwards roughly, away from the peace she was desperately seeking and back into her bleak existence.

She was laid across the bank of the large pond, her skin quivering with wet exposure, curls soaked and wrapped around her throttled neck, bruised with the lack of oxygen. She threw her weighted body forward, slimy water gushing from the back of her throat, coughing and spluttering until her energy was depleted further and a firm hand slammed her back down into the grass.

Draco hovered over her panting heavily on all fours, dripping water into her face and looking absolutely *murderous*.

"**What the *fuck* are you doing**?" He bellowed, his voice deadly enough to wilt the petals from every unsuspecting flower in the rose garden as he shook her, angry veins bulging to the surface of his forehead. "You wanna *fucking* leave me too huh? You wanna fucking leave me just like *she* did?"

His eyes were frenzied, fury and something more hidden behind the steel grey. His face was one of pure grief, haunted by his past before it flickered back into the cold marble of indifference.

“You..killed..our..*child*,” she wheezed, her chest heaving, the bitter taste of suffocation slowly leaving her tongue.

Draco's eyebrows knitted together, his frown lines deepening as he continued to stare down at her. “What?”

Hermione’s eyes fluttered closed, she didn’t want to have to live through her worst trauma once more, Draco should have been there but he wasn’t and now the punishment had been flipped around on her in the form of a painful retelling.

“I had a miscarriage because you don’t know how to be fucking *gentle*,” she spat, feeling the fiery telltale sighs of fury heating up her nerves. “I lost our child in the middle of the night with no one to comfort me but the dead vision of your mother who I will forever be indebted to for the kindness I never received from you.”

Draco flitted his mercury eyes back and forth between hers, a look of shock and confusion colouring his features until the frown was back and his face darkened several shades. “If you lost the baby then it was something *you* did love. It’s your body that should have protected it like it was made to do.”

Hermione’s jaw dropped with the weight of the dagger he had plunged into her heart, she ripped his hands from her body and tried to stand but not before he had tackled her back down to the floor with tough hands tearing through her still dripping and blood stained nightgown, ripping away the tired silk to reveal her vulnerability, trembling under the leftover blood and agony, slick and wet with a choice she couldn’t take back but never got to go through with anyway because just as she always knew he would, he took it away from her.

“So this is what you thought you would do?” He asked, gripping her jaw harshly between firm fingertips, squeezing her pale lips together. “You thought you’d take an eternal dip into the fucking pond and leave me?!”

Looking at him more closely, Hermione could see the dark circles under his fevered eyes, could see the wreck of blonde hair he had clearly driven his fingers through over and over, the smell of whisky rolling off of him in thick waves. Looming over his wife who was equally as worse for wear as he was.

His anger disappeared and a dangerous smirk dropped into its place.

“I’ve told you before love,” he whispered, trailing his icy fingers around her nipples and across her aching abdomen, down to the warmth of her inner thighs. “The only way you’ll ever get away from me is if I remove this ring and put you in the fucking ground *myself*.”

Chapter End Notes

TWs for miscarriage and attempted suicide.

Chapter 9: Burnt Bridges

Chapter Summary

Sometimes not even love can save someone from the burning path of their own self destruction.

Chapter Notes

Songs that helped to inspire the chapter -
Gilded Lily by Cults
DECLINED by Britton
Care About Me by JESSIA
Crawl by Lynsea
Indigo by Sam Barber, Avery Anna
You Don't Even Know Me - Stripped by Faouzia
Breath Of Life by Florence + The Machine
Sad Beautiful Tragic (Taylor's Version) by Taylor Swift
Gethsemane by Sleep Token
BURNED by Britton
Crystal Shackles by BDSWOSW

ETERNALLY YOURS playlist -
https://open.spotify.com/playlist/4M7zE958QW1o47gQkcsNCI?si=Tgg0jOA_RwusikSwfzufnA&pi=Fl44F60dRq20_

Sunday, October 4th 1999

Shivers crept and crawled along her sodden skin, hanging limply from Draco's arms as she had many times before, *too* many times before.

She shook against his chest, frozen through with pond water, chilled to the bone with her desire for him to just *let her die*. But he was way too selfish to ever let that happen, to ever let her have any amount of peace. *Silent, still, blackening fucking peace*.

Had she not given him enough? Had she not broken herself apart for him? Had she not allowed him to peel away all the layers that made up who she was and *still* gone back for more? He didn't even know her anymore, he only knew what he had made *of* her, the pieces he had cut anew to fit his own self-seeking wants.

She wanted so many things that she could never have. She wanted him to crawl into her body, find the parts he had damaged the most and love her there, breathe life back into the lungs he had almost drowned.

But *love* was just a word used to excuse mistakes.

Hermione knew she wasn't innocent in this, she held equal parts of the blame in how her life turned out. He was the deadly cigarette—killing her and yet she still breathed him in like her chest was starved for his annihilation. She had no choice but to find her own comfort in the chaos and that was why she stayed when she should have escaped him before he bound them together forever.

Being alive had never felt so exhausting, colours were no longer bright, the sky no longer held the same beautiful appeal that it used to. Nothing held warmth. The arms that held her felt like stone against her skin and Hermione wanted nothing more than to free herself from their touch but her body was too weakened, too vulnerable with choices she wasn't allowed to make.

Her limbs were like rock, dense and heavy but in the hold of Draco, she was weightless—a simple feather that he could balance on the tip of his finger.

He carried her through the Manor, his dragonskin shoes slapping against the marble as he marched her towards their master suite. Her eyes were barely open as the ceiling above her rushed past in the same dull blur. Draco was silent as he walked, the divot between his brows deep and angry. Her stomach twisted up inside when his hard eyes latched onto hers, his hands fisting her bare skin, nails digging in with a vengeance as if he hadn't already cost her everything. As if her attempted suicide wasn't something that *he* himself was responsible for pushing her towards.

It was Narcissa all over again.

History repeating itself with the same gut wrenching feelings passed onto another woman from another Malfoy, those feelings had never left, like an echo in the dark that always came back, the Manor was *soaked* in it. Narcissa had made the same irreversible choice in the face of a much older version of the man currently carrying her. This Manor, these men, this ground was cursed and now there would be no more Malfoy's to carry on the sick tradition.

Hermione was both relieved and traumatised by that thought. Tortured with the memory of her baby's brutal ending. Another moment in time that she would never be able to erase, no matter how hard she tried. Her past was dotted in dark recollections, like stains that refused to be cleaned.

"What are you thinking about?" His deep voice asked suddenly.

If Hermione had it in her to startle at his cutting tone she would have done so but instead her body had resigned itself to surrender—the same could not be said for her tongue though.

"*Fuck you*."

Her back hummed with a deep vibration as he laughed with cold amusement.

They reached their shared bathroom after what felt like forever and he set her down on the cold marble counter next to the gilded sink, keeping her stuck to the surface with a wordless sticking charm as he ran the tub. The aloof way in which he was so against her being able to move freely was one of the most suffocating things about him. Never giving her an opportunity to leave his side, never using words, only force. It was always a reminder that her choices were no longer her own. Her voice meant nothing, her rights as a human being were nonexistent. She had gone from being the brightest witch of her age, a best friend and a daughter with so much *fire* to being nothing more than a battered wife and a lonely prisoner with dead, empty eyes.

Warm vanilla flooded the room as he poured generous amounts of her soap into the water, using his hand to swirl it around, creating fluffy white bubbles which would have brought her joy should she be anywhere else, *with* anyone else. He turned and held out a hand to her, unsealing her body from his spell. Her face twitched with a deep frown as she placed her unstable hand inside his and allowed him to pull her into the bath.

It would have felt amazing had the circumstances been completely different. She loved baths, they were always her choice of relaxation but this one was bitter, the water felt foreign against her skin. It wasn't soothing like the pond, it was smothering, hot and much too close to the parts of herself she never wanted to be touched again.

"Are you gonna tell me what the fuck happened?" He snapped when all she did was sit, as still and as lifeless as the concrete angels in the Malfoy cemetery.

"I've already told you," she replied flatly, no emotion in her voice left to give. She laid her head back against the edge and watched the dying orange leaves as they fell from the branches outside the arched window above the tub. Winter would be fast approaching and the Manor would be stuck under a perpetual dark cloud of doom. It didn't take long for rain to start hammering away against the pane, crashing hard against the glass like it too wanted to be somewhere else.

She closed her eyes tight when she felt him bend down beside her, knuckles brushing along the damp curve of her neck, pushing wet curls away from her face with the false touch of a man who didn't hurt and rape her on an almost daily basis.

"I'm sorry if I was a little too rough with you in the den," he offered, referring to his snake house.

"*You're sorry*?!" She shrieked, water sloshing over the side of the tub as she sat forward bluntly. "Sorry means nothing when everything is already *gone*, Draco."

The tendons in her neck stretched tight with the effort not to slip down under the bubbles and drown herself here instead.

He seemed to feel her stiffening muscles under his fingers and tightened his grip on her neck, pulling her face closer to his. His icy eyes ran over the entire length of her pale face, tracing over every tortured line and grief stricken vein. His face was sharp and unreadable as he continued to look at her, looking for something that Hermione had no effort left to try and understand. Her

curiosity and need for answers to the world's problems had vanished long ago, along with what was left of her dignity and pride.

Her eyes solidified as she stared back at him, speaking her next words through gritted teeth.

“Every bridge you’ve ever built you’ve burnt, every relationship, friendship or otherwise you’ve destroyed in one way or another. Yes, your friends still come around from time to time when you *allow* it. But do they really come for you anymore? Or do their loyalties now lie with *me*?”

She watched the sharp point of his throat bob, his jaw ticking with chagrin and it brought her so much spiteful satisfaction to watch actual emotion cut across his face that she decided to continue her tirade.

“Your hateful behaviour has cost us our child, almost cost me my *life*. I’ve seen your mother and I know she’s fucking *disgusted*.”

She spat the harsh words into his face, blowing out a deep needed breath before her head snapped back against the porcelain, blood coating her lips as it gushed from her nose with the burn from his backhanded slap. Hermione’s breath was ragged as she slowly turned her head back in his direction, baring her bloodied teeth. The worst part was the gentle almost sorry look on his face as he delivered his brutal blow.

“You’ve just proved my *exact* fucking point.”

It was the first time in their miserable marriage that Hermione truly, completely *resented* him. He stood slowly, red dripping from his knuckles and splashing against the tiles. The bathroom crackled with the potency of their emotionally charged moment as they watched each other in a silent stare off, throwing sharpened daggers back and forth like ammo, the only sound in the large space being the ominous drip from a leaky tap. Draco stumbled back until his tall frame reached the counter top, resting against it casually and wiping the blood from his hand onto his already waterlogged and ruined slacks. He studied her with scrutiny as she tore her eyes from his, ignoring him while she washed the new and old blood from her skin and rinsed her tangled curls. The water turned a muddy brown the more she scrubbed and she thought about what a shame it was that she couldn’t wash away memories too.

He said nothing, just waited—for what Hermione wasn’t sure and she didn’t at all care anymore. She had tried, she had done everything just to please him even though it was *killing* her. She had rolled over and surrendered like a fool and this was the payment she received—a newly empty womb and a broken nose.

Her face twisted with utter loathing as she stood from the bath. Draco’s eyes darkened as he watched the water roll from her naked body, following the shape of every curve, his lusty tongue flicking out across his bottom lip. She stepped out and cleared the distance between them, stopping inches in front of him and slapping away his greedy hands when they had the audacity to try and rest at her hips. His eyes darkened further, cinching in the center with her denial and her lip curled with the absolution of her next words, her chin jutting out defensively.

“I shouldn’t have to tell you how to love me. It hurts me to hate you, but loving you is so much *worse*.”

“*Hermione*,” he warned, his voice dropping into something darker, something hateful. Drunk on violence as he tightened his white fists to the edge of the counter.

She kept her head held high and her lips stiff as she tried to build her confidence, blood dripping from her chin and flowing down between her breasts like a red river.

“I can’t keep giving until I break Draco. You are destructive and you are harmful. Your hunger is a *poison*. You’re killing me.. *but you’re killing yourself just the same*.”

Chapter 10: Whisky Wet

Chapter Summary

I may think of you softly from time to time but I will cut off my hand before I ever reach for you again.
-Arthur Miller

Chapter Notes

Songs that helped to inspire the chapter -
I'm With You by Avril Lavigne
Six Feet Under by Billie Eilish
In Flames by Digital Daggers
Heavy by Fame on Fire, Rain Paris
Blood Sport by Sleep Token
Bones of You by Britton
Taste of Danger by Allegra Jordyn
Temptation by Ashley Sienna
Dancing After Death by Matt Maeson
Cruel by Britton
The Prophecy by Taylor Swift

ETERNALLY YOURS playlist -
https://open.spotify.com/playlist/4M7zE958QW1o47gQkcsNCI?si=L6_Y8GoJSN2rBWVD_a261g&pi=3JeBfF46Q96l4

September, 2003

The more the years passed and the more Draco was subjected to the weighted darkness of their repressive world in the Manor, the more his addiction to alcohol worsened.

When someone takes their own life between the same walls you spend your whole life behind, it changes it. That memory gets caught between the cracks, seeps into the floorboards and forces its way through divots in even the toughest stone. It bleeds into everything that once held something more, changing its meaning. Taints everything in hollow shades of black with bone deep attachments of pain, with earthy rot that you can taste between your teeth.

It lives in every fibre of material and every flashback is an agonising one.

Hermione knew that Draco had loved his mother, she was possibly the only person he had ever loved *purely*. But her ghost did nothing to comfort him, it only unraveled him further. He drank at every opportunity, large crates of Ogden's were delivered too often for Hermione to count. Every bar cart and kitchen cabinet was stocked to capacity and he would drink them until his body physically expelled it. Until his muscles flexed and heaved with rejection.

Hermione had attempted to peel his heavy and inebriated body from the floor many times but he was a six foot four man, bricked up with dense muscle and she was a petite five foot two.

She did her best to comfort him but she couldn't work miracles and she couldn't fix a broken man. She couldn't fix the mirror, the pieces would always be chipped and unmanageable. When the reflection of a mirror broke there was no putting it back together again no matter how much time you spent trying to slot every splintered shard back into place. She couldn't take away his traumas, his cracks, she could only try to be there for him on his worst days. But while she held out her hands to him in consolation, his hands lashed out in frustrated anger and she was the only unfortunate soul in his firing line.

His grief would ebb and flow as grief does but even on the slightly lighter days his body was still too dependent on the alcohol for him to stop. For him to allow himself a day of rest. Draco didn't feel emotion like the standard person, he didn't know what to do with it, how to process it—he had never learnt. He was taught nothing more than backwards lessons such as "*emotions are a weakness*." He didn't talk about things, he pushed them down with rough sex, cigarettes and alcohol. Swapping one coping mechanism for the other on vicious rotation.

Not only was Draco a mess but it had rubbed off on her too. The anxiety, the pain, the sleepless nights that she still couldn't rectify because of every bad thing Draco had ever done to her and the way it lived inside her brittle mind. He continued to tear her down, pounding her into the ground and shattering her battered shell into unrecognisable fractures. No one ever warns you how the wrong relationship can leave you burning, *screaming*. How a rotten kind of love can bruise you from the inside out and eat away at you slowly.

She was a neglected flower, wilting with the absence of warmth. Draco would and always had been a rocky ocean, the darkening eye of a storm and she *desperately* missed the sun.

She was a weak and ruined illusion of who she once was. Sitting pretty like a trophy with dried blood on her tongue from broken ribs that never healed. Scars on her body that went deeper than just her skin and never faded. A heart that was actively destroying itself with grief and cuts on her soul that never stopped bleeding. She was torn.

Largely and irreparably *damaged goods*.

Wednesday, January 9th 2004

Draco trailed his ethanol coated tongue along the inside of her thigh as she lay across a mahogany desk in the library. He had forced four orgasms from her in quick intervals and Hermione was panting to catch her breath, her legs quaking with sensitivity. He moved back up towards her center and groaned in disapproval when her legs clenched shut around his head.

“No more,” she begged in a breathy whisper.

He made a loud undignified growl as he pushed himself up roughly, standing to his full height and towering over her. He wasted no time walking stark naked over to his golden bar cart and pouring whisky straight from the bottle into his mouth. Hermione watched as the amber liquid rolled down his chin, sliding down the line of his throat. He noticed her watching him from where she still sat on the dark wood and smirked.

He poured another helping of alcohol into his mouth but this time held it. He took slow but determined and predatory steps towards her and Hermione watched him walk with a frown, unsure of what he was up to. He wrapped his hand around the back of her neck when he reached her, lifting her head up inches from his face. His silver eyes flashed molten in the dimly lit room, only a small orange glow in the hearth to keep the space warm from the arctic temperatures beyond the windows and out across the frozen grounds.

Hermione’s breath hitched, earning an exhaled chuckle from Draco as he pressed his whisky wet lips to hers and slowly released the icy liquid into her mouth, filling her with the rich honeyed flavour and sucking some gently from the tip of her liquor slick tongue as he pulled away.

He smoothed a thumb across the apple of her cheek, his lips barely grazing the shell of her ear.

“Swallow for me like a *good girl*.”

Hermione obeyed him immediately, weak for the silky tone of his voice. He pressed a gentle kiss to the column of her throat as she swallowed, grazing his teeth against the sensitive curve as his lips followed a path over it, ghosting his breath against the side of her face and drawing out a shiver as he returned to her mouth. Taking her curls into his hands he crushed her lips with a deep kiss.

With how utterly drunk Draco was—he did it with surprising finesse. Gentle and passionate. He stepped away, back to his precious whisky and Hermione studied the angles of his naked body as it moved with all the natural grace of a feline. Sometimes it was hard to know just *how* much Draco had to drink when he moved so fluidly, like he wasn’t affected by it at all.

She stood from the desk, grabbing a blanket from the back of a chair and wrapping it around herself as she sat on the velvet sofa. She looked through the large windows at the icy snowflakes fluttering

against the glass. Winter was in full swing and the grounds were barren and dead, covered in a thick layer of fluffy snowfall. Draco was glued to the floor beside his bar, finishing off the freshly opened bottle he had in his hands.

He always finished every one of them off in record time.

“Why do you drink like that?”

She asked the question that had sat on the tip of her tongue for years but was always too shadowed in doubt to ever see the light of day, until now. His head shot up and he swallowed his last mouthful sharply, regarding her with narrowed eyes.

“Because I hate this fucking Manor, Hermione,” he said simply. Straight to the point.

“Let’s move then? Don’t you have a million other properties?”

His husky laugh was cut off by the loud familiar pop of yet *another* whisky cork. “*We* do but we can’t,” he replied quietly, his eyes flickering briefly to the twinkling diamond on her finger. Hermione’s stomach twisted when she realised the truth behind his vague reply.

Her ring was tied to the specific brand of Malfoy magic that was rooted into the earth beneath the structure, without his fail safe Hermione could go anywhere and it was something Draco clearly didn’t want to make a possibility.

“Why do you never talk to me about your mother?”

Clearly I’m feeling brave today, it must have been that one lust driven taste of whisky.

“Why the fuck would I?” He snapped, slipping the but of a cigarette between his lips and sparking it with one finger.

Hermione rolled her eyes at his dramatics. Tightening the blanket around her shoulders she spoke again. “Because maybe it would help.”

She flinched when he slammed his bottle onto the glass surface of the coffee table between them as he came over to sit on the sofa opposite.

“Talking may help *you* Hermione but do you really think a little fucking therapy session is going to cure *years* of fucking darkness? Do you think a little chat around the fire is going to erase the fact that my mother fucking killed herself.. in this house..*because of me*?!” He grit out roughly.

Hermione sat as still as a statue, enamoured by his honest outburst. He scoffed when she didn’t reply, too enraptured by the fact that despite himself, he *was* talking.

“*Talking* doesn’t do shit Hermione. We could sit around and talk all day but what good would it do when it can’t change a fucking thing? My mothers life was a living hell. I watched her face darken with bruises every fucking day of my childhood, I heard her screams and felt her fucking pain through the walls and all I could do was grit my teeth and bare it. So *no*, I don’t think it would help at all.”

She swallowed stiffly as she asked her next sensitive question, she could tell the moment was becoming fragile—on the dangerous edge of provoking him, she could see it in the hard tense of his shoulders and wanted to get her questions out while she had him in this wildly rare moment.

“If you know how it feels then why would you want to treat me the same way?”

His half empty Ogden’s bottle smashed across the floorboards as he threw it in his rage, fragments of glass ricocheting off the bookshelves, whisky soaking into the rug. Hermione almost lept out of her skin when he cleared the coffee table and grabbed her jaw harshly in his hand, growling at her through his tightly wound jaw.

“After everything I’ve just told you and you *still* can’t fucking work it out?”

He looked back and forth between her glassy eyes, narrowing his own when she tried to speak. He added extra pressure to her cheeks, obstructing her words.

“Don’t touch the glass, I’ll deal with it later.”

Those were the last words he spoke as he released her and stalked through the doors of the library, naked and steaming with vexation.

Sunday, January 13th 2004

Hermione had just gotten into bed when she heard the deep voices of men talking in a drawing room down the hall. She frowned, Draco never had people over, especially at a late hour of the night, he was usually black out drunk on one of the many sofas around the Manor.

She threw back the heavy covers and padded over to their bedroom door, wrapping a silk gown around her shoulders and curiously following the deep timbre. She watched through the crack in the drawing room doors and was shocked to find Draco sitting with Blaise.

The two looked serious, Draco was clenching a crystal class between his threaded fingers and Blaise’s dark eyebrows were deeply furrowed.

“Mate, you really haven’t seen her? Astoria still wont stop going on about it and it’s driving Theo mad.”

Draco rolled his eyes, taking a sip of liquor. “You know I haven’t, it’s been *five* years Blaise, she’s probably off fucking the next rich bloke she can find.”

Blaise thought this over for a minute. “But she disappeared during school,” he observed.

Draco scoffed. “Yeah, and? Don’t pretend to think that Pansy would have ever chosen *school* over cock and galleons.”

Hermione’s stomach rolled with nausea, her throat burning with rising bile at the mention of the dead woman on their grounds, buried in a shallow and unmarked grave, shadowed away from prying eyes under a tree older than Draco. The whole situation made her heart ache, especially because Hermione couldn’t help but carry some of the blame for her death.

“Yeah I guess you’re right,” she heard Blaise mumble.

Draco went to the bar to refill his glass. “I’m *always* right,” he boasted.

Blaise exhaled a disbelieving laugh. “Keep talking like that and you’ll never be able to fit your head through the doorways.”

“I’ll build bigger doorways.”

Blaise shook his head as he stood from the sofa. “Do you always have an answer for *everything*?”

Draco smirked over his shoulder. “Pretty much.”

Hermione swallowed deeply at the way Draco so effortlessly turned the tides of their conversation. It angered her but there was nothing she could do. Blaise was getting ready to leave, sliding his arms into a long black trench coat. Hermione scuttled back down the corridor to their bedroom before she could be spotted.

She slipped back under the sheets, closing her eyes and dreaming of nothing but Pansy’s cold *dead* face on rotation.

Chapter 11: Golden Girl

Chapter Summary

No lover leaves a rose garden without blood on their hands.

Chapter Notes

Songs that helped to inspire the chapter -
Dernière danse by Indila
Toxic by 2WEI
It's a Mad World by Astyria
Woman's World by Steelfeather
Dynasty by MIIA
Smother by Daughter

ETERNALLY YOURS playlist -
https://open.spotify.com/playlist/4M7zE958QW1o47gQkcsNCI?si=gPg42A8PSqCu9A7vo6DQXw&pi=ckgW8R9uTpuXH

Friday, December 30th 2008 - 4 years later

“What’s this?” Hermione asked in confusion, looking at the beautiful champagne gold dress styled on a tailor's dummy next to her dressing table.

Draco stood against the door frame, his arms folded across his chest, his stance wide and proud as he regarded his wife.

“I had it made for you baby.”

Hermione lifted her fingertips, brushing them across the beaded fabric. It had a boned corset with off the shoulder straps and a floor length skirt that opened up at the back into a small train with a high slit up one thigh. The base was a sheer nude, thousands of softly twinkling gold diamonds were sewn onto every inch of the dress, giving it the illusion of being wet. Draco watched as she admired his vision for her.

“It was made in Paris, the city of love,” he told her, stepping away from the door and standing beside her.

“But what’s it for?” She asked, looking up at him with a small frown on her face. She didn’t understand why he had this stunning dress made when he never took her anywhere.

He smiled, turning her around with a hand on her upper arm and placed his large palms on either side of her face. “Tomorrow is New Year’s Eve and we’re going to Italy. Blaise and Daphne are throwing a party to see in the new year.”

Hermione’s eyes lit up with the news, she hadn’t seen her friends in nine months. Draco’s moods were forever up and down and it often cost her a lot of isolation until he pulled himself out of it—until he put the bottle down and put his wife *first*.

He peppered soft kisses across her cheek and left her to ruminate over her priceless dress a little longer.

Saturday, December 31st 2008

Hermione stood in front of the floor length mirror in her breathtaking French dress. She had to admit that Draco really knew what he was doing when it came to putting his ideas to parchment and giving them to a professional and extortionately expensive designer.

He had draped dainty sparkling Malfoy heirlooms across her body in the form of necklaces, teardrop earrings and pearls for her hair. He had quite literally dressed her in perfectly cut crystal, glazed and dripping in golden diamonds like his own perfect little doll. Her curls hung long and heavy down her back, getting caught in the ribbons cinching her into the corset. She had on tall white heels that still didn’t reach Draco's towering height.

“You look fucking stunning in that colour. My beautiful little *golden girl*,” Draco purred, his voice thick with awe as he came up behind her, resting his chin on her head and studying the way their body’s slot together like a crooked jigsaw piece in their reflection. She looked down at her feet until Draco’s fingers lifted her chin.

“You look like a *Queen*.”

He trailed light fingers along her arms, sending goosebumps across her spine. Hermione watched as Draco’s once hard grey eyes melted into gentle pools of liquid blue. She felt her heart ache with his strong projection of feelings as they bounced off the glass and straight through her. Hermione closed her eyes as they burned with a feeling she couldn’t put a name too, a soft thumb there to brush the tears from her cheek. She couldn’t help but feel a bone-deep sadness, like this day in particular out of any of the others over the last ten lonely and profound years was somehow the beginning of the end.

He opened his palm to a shiny silver coin sitting in the center of his palm—their *portkey*.

She swallowed past the tightness in her throat and gave him a watery smile which he returned with a watery one of his own, crystal pools of real emotion shining brightly in his waterline, twisting the old blade already buried in her heart a little deeper.

———

Zabini Estate, Sicily, Italy

New Years Eve

The Zabini estate was magnificent, like a whole other world stuck in time, it looked more like an enchanted castle than a Manor. The house itself sat on a hill overlooking acres of lush green land and an expansive vineyard. It was made from light sandstone, all white pillars and high arched windows. Charmed lights floated around them like fireflies, guiding them along the path between the gardens up to the grand entrance.

The stars were burning brightly above them, twinkling amongst the winter blue and Hermione’s stomach crippled with nostalgia. How tragic it would be to watch a star lose its shine in the same way that she had.

I don’t want to be just another fucking tragedy.

Draco pulled her along with a firm arm around her waist, walking her across the marble in the foyer and into a room that could only be described as pure *heaven*. Beyond two golden doors was a large ballroom with two luxe staircases at each end leading up to French doors that overlooked the grounds and the hazy skyline of Sicily.

The domed ceiling was painted with ethereal cherubs holding harps, Cupid with his arrow and fluffy white clouds. Silver smoke caught and curled between the beams of light shining down from the oversized chandelier, glistening like a disco ball as it held attention, hanging low in the center of the room.

A gilded bar was set up under the balcony housing every kind of spirit and cocktail you could ever want, sconces with flickering amber flames lined the walls and velvet sofas were filled with sophisticated looking men Hermione didn't know, smoking thick brown cigars with women on their arms in ball gowns of varying colours and fabrics.

It was the most extravagant party Hermione had ever attended. Draco held onto her almost *too* tightly as he guided her through the crowd.

"Ahh there's my second favourite girl."

She turned around to the beaming grin belonging to one Blaise Zabini. He was decked out in a silver and green paisley three piece suit, it was over the top and so completely him that she couldn't help but laugh.

His eyes caught onto the many sparkling jewels covering her body, raising his brow as he turned to Draco. "Wow mate, how much did *this* one cost?"

Draco smirked and shrugged his shoulders like spending thousands of galleons on a dress for one evening was nothing.

"It's irrelevant, nothing is too expensive for Mrs Malfoy."

Blaise scoffed, his dark brown eyes returning to hers. "You look beautiful, *golden girl*," he lilted with a wink.

She rolled her eyes, pulling at the lapel of his suit jacket. "So do you, *Mr Slytherin*," she teased back, smirking.

"You're looking sharp as always too, mate," Blaise complimented, flicking his head over Hermione's shoulder.

She turned, admiring Draco's outfit as Blaise did the same. He was wearing a midnight purple suit that almost looked black in certain lighting, making his white hair seem even brighter against it. His shoes were shined and his signature rings and earrings were in place. His hair had been racked back with his fingers in a style he had never changed even after all these years. His jaw was still chiseled, sculpted from marble and his eyes were a deep blue. His lips were plump and that little freckle under her eye that she had always loved sat pretty, his scar glinting silver in the light. Draco was and always had been *devastatingly* handsome and it was evident in the way that every woman in the large ballroom turned their heads as he walked through the doors, tall, broad and proud.

She heard commotion at her back and before she could even turn her head, a chest collided with hers—the comforting scent of cedar filling her nose as she was pulled into Theo's arms. He squeezed her tight and for some reason Hermione couldn't explain, she clung to him, her heart thundering with a sadness that shouldn't belong. Theo felt it and pulled back, looking at her with furrowed brows.

"Hey, what's wrong?"

She took a deep breath and pulled her lips into a smile. "Nothing, I'm all good, I promise," she lied.

Theo nodded, he didn't believe her—he never did. His warm eyes drifted upwards to the man standing beside her, silent and brooding.

“You both look incredible.”

Draco nodded curtly, Hermione squeezed Theo’s bicep. “Thank you, so do you!” She exclaimed, looking his crisp attire up and down.

Theo was wearing a dark purple suit with silver accents.

“Where are the girls?” She wondered.

“*We’re here*!” They both said in unison as Astoria and Daphne pushed past the men to hug her.

“Hermione, could you ever just look mediocre for *once*?” Daphne teased, brushing a hand through her curls.

“This dress is amazing,” Astoria gushed, looking over at Theo with a frown. “Why do you never dress me with diamonds?” She winged.

The girls were both dressed in silk, Astoria in sunset orange and Daphne in cobalt blue.

“Because I don’t have money growing trees like this tosser does, Story.”

Draco snorted. “Alright that’s enough of all the fucking fashion admiring. I need a drink.”

He pulled on her arm but she stayed put, rooted to the ground in her heels. His eyes flashed for a split second with a threat until he reeled it back in.

“I’ll stay here,” she said firmly.

She watched the thick muscles in his jaw roll under the surface of his pale skin as he digested her words.

“*Stay here*,” he warned.

Hermione grit her teeth with the same feeling of lost dependency that she had dealt with for years.

“I’m not a child, Draco. I’m quite capable of being without you.”

He raised a sharp brow. “Yeah, I *bet* you fucking are.”

Rolling her eyes she shoved at his shoulder. “Just go.”

Draco’s face was a tight mixture of amusement and restraint as he slammed his lips onto hers before very reluctantly letting go and heading to the bar. It didn’t take long before he was back by her side, pushing a flute of fizzy champagne into her hand, a tumbler filled with ice and firewhisky in his own. They stood in their little circle of Slytherin friends and drank, Draco held her, his hands never leaving her body for even a second, they only tightened with the lingering eyes around the room.

His body was a coiled spring begging to be let loose and the more he drank the more she could feel the heat of hostility burning out from his body and into hers, putting her on edge. She felt him dip his head low against her cheek, his hot breath ghosting across her lips.

“Let’s dance,” he slurred, it was a testament to how drunk he was for *him* to be suggesting they dance instead of her.

He yanked her onto the dance floor, giving her only a second to drop her glass on a nearby table before it smashed across the floor.

He wrapped his arms around her waist, his forehead resting against hers. It had always been his preferred way of connecting to her without sex. It would have been comforting had it not been for his silver eyes drilling into hers with their unnecessary intensity. He spun her and dipped her with impressive grace across the dance floor, weaving in between other dancing couples. She could see Blaise and Theo with their girls doing the same and it brought a smile to her face to see them all so genuinely *happy*.

He drenched her neck with gentle kisses while droplets of gold bounced across the marble from her dress as he got handsy. “I’m going to wreck you tonight,” he whispered, slipping his velvet tongue between her lips.

Hermione stiffened with his words. You would think after ten years of being subjected to his twisted ways she would have built up a tolerance but she never did. He always used silky threats wrapped in kisses, it was nothing new but it was something that never got easier either.

Theo appeared at her side, smiley and innocent as he asked for a dance.

“You can *absolutely* get fucked,” Draco snapped.

Theo’s face screwed up in irritation. “Don’t be like that mate, I just want to steal her for one dance, I’ll bring her straight back,” he winked, trying to lighten Draco's sudden dark mood.

Draco pulled her behind him as he stepped forward, inches from Theo, their chests almost touching as he gritted out his refusal to let her dance with anyone that wasn’t him into his face.

“Get.. *fucked*.”

“Draco, stop it!” Hermione hissed, trying to pull his concrete body back a few steps.

Hermione only caught a glimpse of Theo’s sad expression as Draco pulled her like a doll up the stairs and out onto the balcony, shoving a lit cigarette into her hand and lighting his own.

Hermione wasted no time in stubbornly flicking the unsmoked cigarette over the edge of the railings to die out on the cold grounds below. Draco huffed an amused laugh, thick smoke billowing out from his nostrils across her face.

“Well that was *stupid*,” he observed flatly.

“What the fuck is wrong with you? Why do you have such a thing against Theo? I thought he was your friend?” She asked, crossing her arms over her bejewelled chest.

He raised a brow, holding his cigarette between his thumb and pointer finger and slipped it between his lips slowly, Hermione watched the orange tip glow brighter before he spoke.

“Nott *is* my friend when he’s not actively trying to steal my wife from me.”

She threw her hands up in disbelief. “You’ve got to be joking! Draco, he has a *girlfriend*. No one is trying to steal me, that’s your own insecurities talking.”

She took quick steps backwards as he walked towards her, a mad glint in his irises. Her lower back hit the silver railings, digging into her skin the more she was forced to arch her back over them. He was glued to the front of her body, his face a breath away from hers, looking frantically between her eyes with an expression that could freeze fire. Possession fuelling every action he made against her and anyone else.

“Girlfriend or not, he wants you. I’ve seen the way he looks at you, the way they *all* fucking look at you and I can’t stand it. You’re mine Hermione, I’ve said it once and I will say it again—that is all you will *ever* be.”

Her chin quivered with the harsh finality of his little speech, her mouth opened to reply and was very quickly silenced with his, he never wanted to listen to what she had to say because why would it matter?

Hermione couldn’t understand how a heart could continue to be so *cold*. Surely Draco’s had frozen over and died in his chest by now.

He pulled her up from falling over the edge and they stood in silence as he finished his cigarette. Hermione could do nothing but watch the thick fog roll in across the grounds, the stars winking at her from above. It can be surprising how even the most incredible view can become distorted and dull in the face of misery, the young moon a blur of white through her glassy eyes.

The rest of the evening was cast in the bitter light of Draco’s control. She couldn’t even enjoy a night that had been *his* idea. A new year was meant for new beginnings, a fresh start—leaving the year behind and stepping into a new one but no matter how many years passed in Hermione’s sad little life they never changed, never became anything more than what they were, like the last ten years had been muddled into one very long harrowing one.

Not only did Draco get more drunk—the drinks never leaving his fist but he became aggressive towards her and anyone who looked in their direction. He was full of rude comments and dirty glares, creating a tense atmosphere that wasn’t fun for anyone.

“Maybe you should take him home,” Blaise managed to whisper in her ear. “He’s behaving like a complete nut job and scaring the guests.”

Hermione screwed her eyes shut with embarrassment, defeat sitting firmly on her shoulders. Draco was hot, heavy and so completely drunk as he leaned against her, playing with the diamond on her finger and smothering her with his constant touch.

“How do you suppose I do that? Look at him Blaise.”

Blaise tore his apprehensive eyes away from hers to his friend who couldn’t even stand straight, his eyes glassy and unfocused as he curled around her body like a dragon protecting a gem. Blaise swallowed hard, his brows pointing downwards with a lost hope that Draco would ever be anything other than who he was—a broken drunk.

“I'm sorry to do this to you Hermione but you’re gonna need to bribe him with something. He’s *got* to go.”

Hermione nodded, her curls bouncing against her shoulders. Her stomach filled with rocks as she placed her hands on Draco's flushed cheeks, looking deep into his eyes and trying her best to get him to understand what she was saying.

“Draco, we need to leave. You’re very drunk and if you drink anymore you won’t be awake to see the surprise I have for you at home,” she smiled, her voice trained to talk to him gently like a child when he was in this unpredictable state.

His head straightened, his eyes blowing wide like that of a playful cat. “*What* surprise?”

“Well if I told you it wouldn’t be a surprise now would it?”

He pulled her flush to his body, kissing her cheek and taking her hand. “Let’s go then.”

Hermione inhaled a deep breath, grateful for once that Draco couldn’t resist the pull of temptation. She discreetly nodded over to Blaise who still stood waiting in anticipation. She wanted so desperately to see Theo and apologise but she knew this was her one and only window to stop Draco from ruining the rest of the party for everyone else.

She pulled the silvery portkey from his blazer pocket and tried very poorly to drag Draco back through the hot crowd and out into the night. They walked back down the cobbled path between two manicured laws, her heels echoing against the stone, yellow firefly like lanterns guiding their way just as they had when they entered. As they reached the end of the property pops and whizzes filled the air, loud enough to damage an eardrum.

Burst of red, blue, green and gold filled the sky as the world lit up around them with bright sparkling fireworks, signaling the midnight hour of a new year. Hermione watched them as they exploded across the dark backdrop, leaving nothing but a fast moving cloud of smoke in their wake. She could hear the cheerful hoots and laughter of the party goers and their friends from inside the large estate, burning her eyes with tears that she couldn’t join them, that she couldn’t enjoy the beginning of a fresh year like a normal person.

Draco stood behind her, his hands at her hips as he watched, the multitude of colourful sparks reflecting in his eyes.

“Let’s go,” she forced herself to say.

Their fingers connected to the metal and Hermione grit her teeth as her stomach twisted and turned behind her navel with the pull of magical transportation. They landed heavily in a heap across the parlour floor, Draco's limp body covering hers. He crawled up onto all fours, looming over her.

“Where’s my surprise then?” He slurred.

Hermione’s heart thudded beneath her skin as she scrambled to come up with something believable but she wasn’t good at being put on the spot when it came to him.

“Erm..” she stumbled. “The surprise is, erm.. me.”

Draco's head jerked back in suspicion. “Baby, that’s not a surprise, that’s *inevitable*.”

He studied her closely, dragging his thumb across her bottom lip, his brows knit together. “What’s the real fucking reason you wanted to leave?” He accused.

Hermione closed her eyes to center herself, taking a deep breath. “You were behaving like an animal, Draco. You’re too drunk.” She didn’t want to mention that it wasn’t her idea and was in fact Blaise who asked for him to be removed.

He scoffed, dragging himself to his feet and pulling Hermione with him. “That’s the whole fucking idea of a party is it not? To get fucking balddered.”

“Not in the way you do it.”

He raised a brow. “And *how* do I do it?”

She crossed her arms over her chest, the beads of her dress weighing her down. “Undignified and quite frankly, embarrassing.”

She sucked in a sharp breath as he grabbed her upper arms, the cold moonlight shining in through the window and melting across his hard features, making him look more pointed than he already was.

“Embarrassing am I?” His lips tilted up into an amused smirk. “It’s just as well that I am because I *need* to fuck my wife. Take this dress off,” he demanded, sliding his hands around her ribs and pulling at the ribbons holding her corset together.

She pushed at his chest, knowing exactly where his actions would lead if she let them. Sex with Draco when he was drunk was never fun, it was always rough, hard and frenzied.

“Draco can I at least get some water first, my mouth is dry.”

He breathed a long sigh, letting the ribbons drop. “*Hurry up*.”

Hermione didn’t let it show but her lungs sucked in a large relieved breath as she slipped from the parlour and into the Manor kitchens, sliding her feet from her heels as she went. The marble was cooling against her heels as she walked to the sink. She didn’t need water, she needed *time*. She needed a valid enough excuse to hopefully hold him off but she knew she had gotten herself into a mess. Something as simple as asking someone to leave a party because they were too drunk and intimidating was too much of an ask for Draco. She had to spin a lie and now the lie would come back to bite her.

She could see the large wall enclosing the rose garden from the window of the kitchen and wanted so badly to get lost amongst the flowers, even in this cold weather it wouldn’t have been as frosty as the chill of fear in her veins at that moment. She turned, her back against the sink as she looked around the empty space. It was so quiet in here, every sound echoed like she was in a tunnel, there was nothing for the sound to soak into, it was barren just like the rest of the house.

There wasn’t even a fruit bowl on the counter, the only thing that remained was a block with six sterling knives that Hermione had asked Draco to order for her since she wanted to cook the muggle way and cut everything by hand just for something slightly stimulating to do. Those knives were the only sign that the kitchen was even used. Everything here was self cleaning—courtesy of Malfoy Magic and everything was ordered from Diagon Alley to the Manor so shopping and cleaning were out. The only thing *human* she had left was to cook.

She circled the island trying to wrack her brain on what to say to Draco, feeling the thick anticipation build the longer she spent away from him. She had just reached the other side of the

kitchen where the knives were kept when he entered, filling the entire doorway with his broad shoulders as he swayed, fuming.

“Draco..I—“

She never got the chance to finish her sentence, he grabbed a fistful of her hair and spun her around, bending her harshly over the counter, the edge digging into her abdomen. Her cheek met the cold surface as did her hands as he ripped through the expensive fabric of her dress, the scatter of diamonds could be heard as they rolled across the floor in all directions. She felt the stale Manor air lick against her naked skin as the rest of her clothing was torn away.

“Draco please,” she cried, trying to push herself backwards, the movement only spurred him on.

She heard his zip and felt the hot tip of his cock breach her entrance, plunging into her with so much force that the marble cut into her hip bones, forcing a shriek of discomfort from her throat.

He pulled her head backwards, bending her neck with his grip in her curls. “I told you I was going to wreck you and I intend to keep to my word, sweetheart,” he growled coldly.

Hermione’s whole body erupted with fire, both from pain and anger. She curled her firsts, gritting her teeth. She didn’t know what possessed her to take it as far as she did that day but Hermione had enough. She had enough of being treated like his sex doll, his tiny little wife he could throw around whenever he pleased. She was tired of being a fucking *prisoner*.

Everything happened fast and in slow motion all at once as she ripped a knife from the block and threw her arm back, plunging the blade into his abdomen. Hermione heard his gasp of shock and then his pained wail as he pulled out of her and stumbled backwards against the kitchen island. The knife in her hand clattered to the ground, spinning in a pool of blood as it dripped from the silver. Draco slapped a hand to his bleeding wound as a plethora of emotions flashed across his face.

Shock, pain, anger, disbelief.. hurt.

Chapter 12: Restitution in Ashes

Chapter Summary

I will return to you.
I will lay down my weapons on this hill of memories and wait for you. If it takes so long that I dissolve into dust then stand over where my body laid, search for pieces of me in the sky and feel the earth shake as I rise.
For no grave can hold me from coming back to you.

Chapter Notes

Songs that helped to inspire the chapter -
Even In Arcadia by Sleep Token
Cornflower blue by Flower Face
Dark Paradise by Lana Del Rey
My Immortal by Evanescence
Exile by Taylor Swift, Bon Iver
Who's Afraid of Little Old Me? By Taylor Swift
Burning House by Cam
Ashes by Brook Lynn
Work song by Hozier
Bang Bang (Remember My Name) by BELLSAINT

ETERNALLY YOURS playlist -
https://open.spotify.com/playlist/4M7zE958QW1o47gQkcsNCI?si=sbLF4-xlRIGTxpzEeLBHhA&pi=WZZiD7U8SLGJZ

See the end of the chapter for more notes

She watched as his face paled and the white of his suit soaked with crimson. It flowed between his fingers, running from the edge of the cotton and spattering against his perfectly shined shoes. She watched his throat bob hard with a pained swallow as he slid down the island and collapsed onto the floor. Hermione was frozen to where she stood above him, her mouth agape in pure disturbance at what she had just done.

She pieced her ripped dress back together and kneeled beside him. Her hands were shaking with the hollow sound of his struggled breaths. Her mouth continued to hang open as she looked around her, she felt dizzy, like she wasn't in control of her own body and this wasn't happening. Her heart was pounding so hard that she could feel it behind her eyes. In her panic she almost attempted to cast *vulnera sanentur* but Draco's voice cut through the haze.

"*Hermione*," he breathed, his hand searching for hers, his wedding band winked at her in the pale moonlight, painting his skin a cold shade of blue. She took it nervously, feeling the hot wet of his blood sticking their palms together and suddenly the monster inside him fell silent with her warmth.

His touch pulled her out of the shocked state she had fallen into, heaving sobs breaking from her chest like waves as her eyes flooded with tears.

"*I'm sorry*," she whimpered, barely able to get the words past her trembling throat. She felt like she couldn't breathe. "I wish things were different."

He looked at her, his eyes were bloodshot and veiled in pain but they held a softness, like he knew he was dying and it tore Hermione's heart to shreds.

"I don't," he choked, dark red blood sputtering through the lines in his pale lips, his words caught in a wheeze of agony. "I had ten years with the only woman I ever loved."

Her heart cinched sharply. "You never loved me, Draco."

His hand tried to tighten around hers like it always did in the height of an emotion but he was growing too weak. His blood pooled around him, soaking into her from where she sat beside him.

His face twisted with sadness. "I did Hermione, I *do*. Just never in the way you deserved."

She closed her eyes, streams of tears coating her cheeks as she tried to cling onto what life he had left. "I wish we got to have a happily ever after," she whispered brokenly.

He coughed, more blood spraying out across his handsome face, sweat dotting his forehead, dampening his blonde fringe.

"I never.. cared about a happy.. ending, Hermione. I just.. wanted *you*."

He was struggling to speak now, his chest rising and falling rapidly between rattling gasps.

"I'll wait.. for you."

Those fearful eyes beneath his hooded lids slit her soul up like a razor and the sound of his dying voice would echo within her forever. Hermione said nothing more as she placed her cheek against his ribs and lay with him in his growing pool of ichor until she heard the last thump of her husband's heart, his hand falling limp from hers. Her tears soaked through his shirt, mixing with his blood as she cried against him, fisting the white fabric like it would somehow bring him back to her.

She was now completely and utterly alone, the quiet darkness had never felt so terrifying. Draco would never be there to comfort her again. She would never get to witness the glow of his blue eyes or his white smile, would she forget about the freckle under his eye and the way it moved with his laughter?

When everything is bad, only the good comes back to haunt you.

His last words spoken were so pure that a part of her deeply regretted her choices. She trembled violently, her tears dripping down his cheeks as she leant over and placed one last soft kiss against his cold growing lips. She could still taste the whisky and smell the sweet leather of him that she had always loved. Her heart squeezed with the ghost of an iron fist as she dragged herself away from his dead body, washed in all that she had left of him.

Hermione's legs carried her zombie-like through the desolate hallways but her heart still remained with him there.. on that cold kitchen floor.

She was full of conflicting emotions as she always was. She pulled her unused and dusty wand from a draw as she went, stepping out onto the grounds and collapsing onto the stone, her knees splitting open as grief ripped through every inch of her. Her eyes burning and her cheeks stinging with punishment, with her own self inflicted pain.

Hermione looked up at the dark looming Manor above her and spat at it. This house, these bricks, these damn memories had destroyed everything. She never would have thought when she was at Hogwarts that ten years later she would be sitting in front of Malfoy Manor with her murdered husband inside, she never would have thought that after ten painful years she would have absolutely *nothing* to show for it but scars.

Her lips curled in fury as she stood, bloodied and broken. She raised her wand and set the cursed house alight with all the *fiendfyre* she could muster. High angry, orange flames danced in her red rimmed eyes as it ripped through the Manor and swallowed the body belonging to the love of her life. Memories, both good and bad burning alongside him as the dark sky lit up with the flickering shades of amber, casting eerie shadows across the ground.

The barely beating organ in her chest threatened to rip itself in half with the heavy weight of her sorrow. Sorrow that the beautiful man she had looked at everyday for the last ten years couldn't have been the one. Couldn't have loved her right, in the way she wanted and so desperately *needed*. All she ever wanted was to be loved. But instead he had mangled her so badly that the only way to escape her hell was to set it on fire.

She had lived in hell for so long that she had mistaken it for a home and called it *love.*

The part of her heart that ached longed to burn with him, to sit amongst the flames and ignite with his empty shell but her head would not allow her to be so foolish. She had risked everything to get here and she would *not* burn.

She clenched her teeth at the smell of burning flesh that reached her through the smoke, forcing her to breathe in the reality of her actions. The edges of her dress were singed, her skin coated in a layer of dark ash and the heat from the fire licked against her body, her curls blowing back from her face with the ferocity. There was no denying how maniacal she looked, bare foot in a golden gown and surrounded by the blazing remains of the infamous Malfoy Manor, the place she was imprisoned and forced to live.

The old building seemed to hiss as it caved in against the smothering fires. Every tear soaked, blood stained piece of fabric disintegrating down into the earth with its Lord.

She hated him just as much as she loved him for all that he had taken from her and for all that she would never get back. It had always been the case and the two feelings had never been separate, there was never any fine line between them. They were one and the same.

But revenge is survival and revenge is getting *out*.

Revenge is finally breaking the fucking cycle because you cannot kill what is already *dead*.

Hermione watched across the distance as the wards around the Manor cracked like a thin sheet of ice and fell. She saw her freedom paved into the stone road at the end of the driveway and ran for it. Her breath stuttered in her chest the closer she got to breaking free from her chains, stepping eagerly over the boundary line.. but nothing was ever as good as it seemed and that was too good to be true.

Every inch of Hermione's skin opened in deep lacerations, blood spilling from her far too quickly and leaving her standing in a growing puddle of it, she gasped with the fiery pain of knives she couldn't see until her feet stumbled back over onto Malfoy soil and the wounds knit themselves back together immediately.

Whatever fucked up spell Draco had used really did tie her to the Manor *forever*.

It was stay.. or leave and *die*.

"***You fucking bastard***!"

The sound of her distressed scream echoed around the charred bits of Draco's home and far out across the acres of land into nothing, reaching *no one* but large black ravens that flew from the trees and down the road infront of her as if taunting her with the freedom she could taste but would never get.

"I fucking *hate* you," she cried, her knees buckling and once again taking a blow on the sharp gravel but Hermione couldn't feel it, she couldn't feel anything as the world closed in on her.

_____

Hermione slept under the gazebo in the rose garden that night in nothing more than her tattered, smoke scented dress. She cast a warming charm, thankful she still had her wand even though she could do wandless magic but having her vinewood was like being draped in a small comfort blanket.

The world was so incredibly, *painfully* quiet. She could see her freedom through the iron bars of the gates but she would never reach it. The fire had died and all that was left were ashes that whipped around in the breeze. She couldn't stop thinking about Draco, about his face, about the sound of his voice, those were just a few things about him that would only ever exist now in her memory.

Hermione couldn't wrap her head around the act of death, how someone could be there one moment and gone the next and no matter how many shadows of the earth and corners of the sky you searched, you would never find them again. All that was left was the debilitating hurt from the absence of someone who was once there, the grief of wanting to go to the only home you had ever known in a person but not being able to because he was *gone.*

Hermione couldn't help but admit that when she plunged that knife into Draco's skin, a part of her had died along with him. She loved him until his last breath and beyond.

Grief is what we get for loving too deeply.

Daylight came and went and she walked the frozen grounds aimlessly, stuck in her own pained loop and haunted by memories. Not only was she physically isolated but she had made a choice—an irrational and irreversible one that she wasn't even sure was the right one anymore. But the most crippling thing about that was the fact that there was nothing she could do, she had made the decision to end his life to save her own but he had already condemned her. Hermione foolishly thought that with his death would bring her freedom and the spell would break.. but no.

She had not seen Narcissa like she expected, she briefly wondered if she was angry with her for killing her son or angry with her for sending him over to her.

The more time that passed after his death the louder the voice in her head got until she recognised it as his, whispering to her beyond the veil.

"*Remember my vows, love*?" His hollow words broke through her soul, devastating her further as he continued. "*You're stuck with me in life and death, Hermione. You cannot kill what was never alive*."

Her body was wracked with shivers, she threw her hands over her ears in hopes that it would drown him out and it did. But she could still feel him around her, she caught whiffs of his leathery scent on the wind, she saw his face staring back at her through the reflection of the pond she had tried and failed to drown in.

She had been dead but not allowed to die, alive but as good as dead.

Even in his death he couldn't leave her alone and he had warned her of this from the very beginning. No matter if he was alive or dead he would make sure that she would always be *his*. She would never leave, she would never live, she would never love again.

She wandered around the property for two days with only the spell *aguamenti* to keep her body alive, until Lucius showed up on his old and burnt to the ground doorstep. He found her on his wife's bench, sitting with her arms around her knees, her dress falling apart around her. Hermione didn't even look at him as he sat beside her, she kept her dead eyes fixed ahead on a decaying rose head.

"Where is Draco?"

Hermione's bottom lip quivered as she croaked out the words. "*Dead*."

She heard him slowly suck in a lung full of air before he released it, not giving away any shock or sharp inhales, only cool, calm and collected breaths but she didn't miss the shiny glint of a tear that he quickly wiped from his cheek.

"Can you get me out of here, Lucius?" She asked, her voice weak with dying desperation, watching as wisps of heat escaped her lips, out into the icy air.

He shook his blonde head slowly, his long hair brushing against her arm. "I cannot. I'm afraid no other magic in the world can break a soul that has been tied to the Malfoy grounds. It's magic is too ancient and too powerful, it is that way for a reason."

Hermione whipped her head in his direction, hugging her knees to her chest harder. "So you can keep all your women imprisoned?" She snapped, her lip curling up in disgust.

She saw his hand tighten across the snake head of his cane before he spoke. "What will you do?"

She looked away, tearing her eyes from his in hopes that it would sting. "I don't know. What can I do, he's forbidden me from fucking leaving even though there *is* no Manor and no Draco anymore."

Saying the words out loud hurt far more than she expected it to. She had thought over and over about the situation but she had yet to speak the words out into the world and now she had, she had even less hope than before. Two days was the longest she had ever been without seeing Draco in nine years, she was always accustomed to his presence and even though she wanted to, she couldn't be comfortable in her own company. Being with someone for any length of time will form an attachment, but ten years with someone as smothering as Draco built a dependency that she couldn't break.

It was cruel, the way her mind tortured her with thoughts of him. She tried to tell herself that he was evil, reminding herself that he was a rapist, a murderer but she *still* fucking loved him. She just wanted it to go away, she just wanted her bleeding, love sick, weak heart to stop aching for him. She had hoped that the anger would be enough and it was in moments but it never lasted beyond that.

And now she was a childless grieving widow with no where to go but *back* to him.

Everyone had left her because of him—Ron, Harry, her *parents*. It all hurt, it all brought her down to her knees with pain. Thinking of Theo and Blaise was a torment that wouldn't go away either.. she had no way of getting in contact with them. She had tried every spell she knew to get past Draco's magic but nothing worked and she was too dead inside to try and send them a *patronus*. Every which way she turned there was an obstacle, she was still just as trapped but now she was trapped, lonely and homeless.

Lucius left at some point—when he decided to leave, she had no clue. She was unfocused and uncaring. He couldn't do anything to help her anyway. She wondered if her brain imagined him ever even being there.

Hermione had fallen into a perpetual state of numbness with only Draco's sporadic whispers for company. She could feel him edging her towards something. The pull back to the Manor where his

remains lie was strong, she could still feel the faint burn from her ring if she walked too far away from it.

On the morning of the third day Hermione heaved with sickness but she had nothing in her stomach to expel. She was starving, tired, cold, lifeless and no one knew how long she had been living with a scream inside her—*her* scream, that no one else could hear no matter how loud and earth shattering it got.

Draco appeared to her in many different ways—whispers, the ghost of a soft fingertip tracing the length of her spine, a light tug of her hair. Hermione sat next to the pond and stared blankly at the ruins she had created. Her mind had been scooped out of any other thought and filled with only images of *him*.

"*Join me, my love*."

She was so deeply tortured, every waking moment was like being ripped apart until she decided that today would be the day, the decision had been an easy one, one that was always destined for her. She couldn't take it anymore, Draco would get his wish and with that thought came a sick kind of relief, the weight lifted from her shoulders as she stood and walked towards the leftover brick that once made a grand Manor.

Hermione lifted her wand, relighting the fire. She watched the dancing flames as they engulfed what was left and she swore she could see Draco's silhouette through the silver smoke on the other side, waiting for her beyond the veil just as he said he would. She watched through watery eyes as the shadow raised his hand and she couldn't hesitate any longer. Hermione stopped breathing as she stepped into the blaze, feeling the edges of her dress catch fire and burn around her. Her skin beaded with perspiration, the heat swarming her and drawing her closer to Draco's ghost.

If Hermione had any feeling left she would have felt the painful melt of her skin slipping from her bones, her scalp searing with cinders as the golden curls Draco loved so much went up in flames but when Hermione succumbed herself, mind, body and soul to the magnetic force she had always felt with him.. the whole world went dark. She had taken his hand and walked with him into death just as he had always intended, just as he had always made sure would happen so that at no point would they ever be separated.

She was never lucky enough to have a peaceful life and she wouldn't find peace in death either. But death was not the greatest loss, the greatest loss was what died inside herself when she was alive.

There was never any escape for her, their fate had always been written in the stars she just never saw it until now.

"Til death do us part" was never an option because Draco had made it so. Not even death could divide them, their souls were bound to be together eternally. He had lost one love in his life already and he refused to let it happen a second time, he refused to be left *alone* again.

And so she went, she gave herself over to him willingly just as she had done in life and walked with him across heaven and hell so that their bones could rot together for all eternity.

Draco Lucius Malfoy died in the early hours of the 1st of January 2009.

Hermione Jean Granger died just three days later in the afternoon of 4th of January 2009.

Theo

2 weeks later

The grounds were eerily quiet, the pond too still. The sky above him was dark with rolling thunderclouds and the musky scent of death was heavy in the air. The concrete angels at the entrance were weeping and this place would never see the rays of sunlight again.

He sat in the dirt, amongst the blackened shards of what once was a place he visited often as a child. But those memories weren't always good ones.

He knew how tortured Draco was, how bad his home life was, he never spoke about it but Theo always *knew.* He had seen the bruises that Draco tried to hide, the emotions across his face that he tried to hold back, even as a kid. And then Draco fell even further into the deep dark pit of despair with his mother's suicide and untimely death.

When he got into a relationship with Hermione it was a cycle that Theo could immediately see repeating, he treated her in the same learned fashion that Lucius had treated Narcissa. Draco had watched it all for years and was shaped by the wrong hands but it was never any fault of his own. When you've grown up accustomed to the certain way of things it's only natural to carry them with you through life no matter how sinister they may be and if you didn't know the pain that came with that, you were the lucky ones.

Theo did what he could to stop it but Hermione had begged him not to get involved, her sweet soul didn't want him getting hurt and he had always been scared of Draco and his temper.

He and his precious Hermione had shared a special friendship, it was a friendship he had never had with another woman before and it was a friendship he would never find again.

They were both gone now with not even a body to bury, no grave to visit, no roses to lay. Their ashes would be forever lost between the rubble of what once was.

Tears dripped from the edge of his chin, soaking into the foundation as he layed his palm flat against the ground, trying to feel what was left of them through the stone.

"You have no idea how much I'll miss you both. I hope you get the rest you need now, you both deserve peace. Your hearts may have become ashes but your souls will burn *forever."*

Theo left through the iron gates, letting them slam shut behind him, the sharp creak shattering his heart as he walked down the road and never looked back.

"*The god of the underworld loved the goddess of spring so much that he condemned her to darkness. He was the night and she was his light, you could not have one without the other. Without death spring would never come and without spring there would be no death."*

THE END.

Chapter End Notes

I’m sorry :(

Chapter 13: Death Himself Would Weep

Chapter Summary

I polished my anger and it became the knife that killed me.

Chapter Notes

Songs that helped to inspire the chapter -
Do Or Die - Acoustic by Natalie Jane
HAUNTED by Chris Grey
Youth by Daughter

ETERNALLY YOURS playlist -
https://open.spotify.com/playlist/4M7zE958QW1o47gQkcsNCI?si=DQ0fXDCQSYi9qs58VuAGEg&pi=XgJgvWnYQOqe5

See the end of the chapter for more notes

Granger,

I hope the sight of more bloodshed on these pages makes you fucking sick. I can't wait to choke you with my desire and pump you so full of me that you will NEVER be empty again.

The second I'm free from this fucking shit hole I'm coming for you.

I long for our souls to be so deeply entwined that even death himself would fucking weep at the thought of separating us.

You WILL be mine, even if it kills me.

- DLM

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-DLM

Chapter End Notes

Now you know the ending go back and read chapter 25 of Limerence, Draco's POV might look very different. The signs have always been there.

We have finally reached the end of the series and wow, thank you so much to those of you who have followed me on this journey from the very beginning, my heart is yours. 🤍

I won't lie, I struggled to let Draco die. I know you're probably thinking I'm mad because yes—he's cruel. But if you really look into the heart of this story, Draco's actions were never born out of pure evil, he was crafted and moulded into this person by his father, by his aunt, by the death eaters and most importantly, by his mothers suicide. His life has been filled with more trauma than is easy to see on the surface when you dislike a character. Yes, I wrote with the intention of him being "hated" but he's also human and humans are easily pulled into becoming what you saw of Draco when all they've lived with is pain. Hermione didn't deserve what happened to her but he didn't either.

This story may be over but I'm far from done, I'm just getting started.

-K 🖤

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