

Summary: None listed

Categories: [Harry Potter](#) Characters: Albus Dumbledore, Bill Weasley, Bill/Lucius, Ensemble, Lucius Malfoy, Original Character(s)

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Story Notes:

Non-consensual sex between men, consensual sex between men and of course, male pregnancy \*\_\*\*\_\*\*\_\*\*\_\*\*\_\*\*\_\*

1. [Chapter 1](#) by isis3469

2. [Chapter 2](#) by isis3469

Chapter 1 by isis3469

Author's Notes:

I don't own the characters. I really shouldn't even be playing with them like this, but I'm weak-willed and it's just so much fun.

Prologue

The limestone passageways were small. If a man were standing still he'd feel as if they were closing in on him, but Lucius Malfoy wasn't standing still. He was running, running for his life.

He could hear his pursuers behind him. If he were to waste time looking behind him, he might even have been able to make out the light of their torches, but he had no time to waste. His one advantage was that he knew these tunnels, but it was proving to be a slim advantage as whoever was leading the chase seemed to know the maze as well as he did.

"Bill! Where are you?"

"Bill, which way did you go?!"

Bill Weasley didn't have any breath to waste answering the rest of the team. He was just a few yards behind Malfoy.

It was the last round-up. Back in England Harry Potter had destroyed Lord Voldemort and the wizarding world had learned why the Order of the Phoenix was so named when Dumbledore was 'reborn'. All the Death- Eaters had been rounded up or killed, all save one, Lucius Malfoy, but that was about to change.

There was no way out of this tomb. It had been cleaned out by Gringott's years ago and Bill had been on the team that did it. It had been quickly apparent to him that Malfoy was headed for the heart of the tomb, to the great burial chamber, but the reason why was not so easily divined.

Lucius had to work fast. Using his wand he scribed the outline of a door on the far wall of the burial chamber. From a pocket he withdrew an ornately carved scarab, as he started to utter an incantation the glyphs on the scarab began to glow an unearthly gold. Lucius placed the scarab in a small hollow that appeared in the wall within the outline he had drawn. The outline began to glow with the same eerie color of the glyphs. The glow became dazzling as the part of the wall began to give way.

"Stop, Malfoy!" Bill shouted as he burst into the room.

Limestone splintered by Bill's head as Lucius' wand spit out a bolt of energy. Obviously Malfoy was not going to be stopping.

"Stupefy!" Bill retaliated.

"Too late, Weasley," Lucius smirked, easily countering the spell as he stepped over the threshold of the doorway he'd created.

"No!"

Bill dashed forward. The magical opening had begun to close as soon as Lucius crossed over. Focused only on not losing his quarry Bill leapt into the glow as the rest of the Order caught up with him. They watched as Bill was swallowed up and disappeared as the wall became solid stone again.

[Back to index](#)

Chapter 2 by isis3469

Bill stripped off his loin cloth and tossed it into a reed basket on the stone floor. He undid the leather cord that held his long red hair in a simple braid and stepped up into the shallow stone basin.

From above a stream of warm water was poured over him soaking him thoroughly. He pulled the stopper from an alabaster container and poured a dollop of shampoo into his hand. The natron or ash based cleansers that the Egyptians used would have been ruinous to his skin and hair. He was fortunate to have better options available to him.

After the shampoo was rinsed out he soaped up his body and yet another jar of warm water was poured over him for a final wash.

He stepped out and reached for a coarse linen towel hanging from a peg on the opposite wall. As he rubbed himself briskly to dry, the slave that had poured the water over him left the room. Bill re-hung the towel and took his comb from a shelf over the pegs. It had been enchanted to detangle and dry as it combed, a major convenience considering the lack of electricity. His hair had grown even longer in the little over six months since he'd chased Lucius Malfoy through an empty tomb and it would have taken hours to air dry.

Finished, he picked up the small lamp that had lit the shower room and walked through another small chamber back into the master bedroom. Wooden doors leading into a private garden were closed against the chill of the desert evening.

Bill placed the lamp on the small bedside table. Another lamp blazed on another table on the far side of the bed. The magical flames from the otherwise ordinary oil lamps illuminated the room more brightly than ordinary oil could have. Through the sheer linen curtains hung along the sides of the simple wooden bed frame with its over-stuffed mattress Bill could see Lucius Malfoy impatiently waiting for him.

Bill was totally without magic. The shock of passing unprepared through a temporal phase door had knocked him unconscious. When he awoke he found himself in 13th Dynasty ancient Egypt and the prisoner of Lucius Malfoy.

Lucius had destroyed Bill's wand while he was unconscious and the thin gold wire that Bill now wore around his neck was actually a charm that suppressed his innate magical talent. Not that he would have been capable of much magic without his wand to channel it. Even stealing Lucius' wand to use would have been problematic. Wands were attuned to their owners. The odds of spell failure or misfires increased exponentially when using another wizard's wand.

The dark wizard was known locally as Lord Horemkef, Grand Vizier of the Pharaoh Neferhotep II and Bill had been forced to become not just one of his many slaves, but his bed slave. Bill had

physically fought against his first rapes, but Malfoy was surprisingly strong and when he'd had enough, he simply used magic to restrain Bill.

As soon as Bill realized that Malfoy enjoyed having to physically subdue him, he changed tactics and simply lay like a corpse. His satisfaction at Malfoy's obvious dissatisfaction was short-lived. Lucius was capable of changing tactics, too.

Using every erotic skill he'd developed through years of long practice, Lucius soon had Bill writhing in pleasure. As if his response wasn't humiliating enough, Bill once found himself begging for Lucius to take him only to have Lucius turn his back and go to sleep.

Bill's initial instinct had been to run away. Lucius was taking no special precautions against it. Bill wasn't chained or confined in anyway. He could just walk out the villa's gate and ... and ... what? Lucius would be able to find him almost instantly even without magic. He was probably the sole red-head in Egypt in this time period. With no magic and no assistance, it would be a waste of time and then Lucius would be on his guard against future attempts. Bill knew he needed a better plan and somehow gain the assistance of another wizard.

For the time being the pragmatic Bill accepted the fact that Malfoy was going to bed him. He knew that if he was going to eventually escape his situation, he couldn't let the abuse break him physically or mentally. Now, as he knelt between Lucius' legs and lowered his head to take him into his mouth, Bill reminded himself of that resolution.

"Yesss..." Lucius bucked his hips, forcing his cock further down Bill's throat. "Take it all..." He groaned in pleasure as Bill's swallowing motions massaged the sensitive tip of his engorged penis. "What would your father say ..." he gasped. "Servicing his most hated enemy in such an intimate fashion?" The fingers Lucius had entwined in Bill's long hair now tightened. Lucius jerked Bill's head up, his steely gray eyes boring deep into Bill's hazel ones. "But it's only right that I should have one of his many sons in place of my only son."

"Dad didn't kill Draco!" Bill denied hotly.

"No, the spiteful bitch I was bound to did that!" Lucius spat. "I spent a year arranging this escape, obtaining a position of power... everything so that Draco would be safe! All for nothing!"

"Wh-What happened?" Bill knew that both Draco and Narcissa were dead, but no one knew any of the details.

"She knew," there was such venom in Lucius' voice, that Bill could scarcely believe he was talking about his wife.

"She knew that I planned to take Draco away with me -- away from her. I guess the stupid cow wasn't as stupid as I had thought. She overheard me telling Draco what to do."

"What did she do?" Bill couldn't stop himself from asking, although he suspected he knew the answer.

"She killed him before killing herself." Lucius said bitterly. "I wasn't there to save my son because I was busy fending off an attack from the Order of the Phoenix -- an attack led by your father!"

Lucius could still remember it all vividly. They had been at the LeStrange estate, when the Order attacked. The LeStranges were a couple still fanatically devoted to the Voldemort cult even though it had been apparent to any sane wizard for a long time that their cause was lost. Thinking that Narcissa was with Bellatrix, reinforcing the wards, Lucius determined that now was as good a time as any to put his escape plan into action. He took Draco aside and told him what he had decided. He had carefully avoided telling his son that Narcissa would be left behind, Draco loved his mother and would have balked at that, but an eavesdropping Narcissa knew the truth.

Sending Draco to a fireplace to make his getaway, Lucius went to join LeStrange. So engrossed was he in his work that he didn't notice Narcissa's absence, not until he heard Draco call out for him, then heard him cry out, "Why, mother?" and as he dashed into the room there was only Draco's corpse lying in front of the fireplace with Narcissa standing over it.

"Did you think I would let you take him away from me?" she said as Lucius stared, too horrified to act. "He's finally mine! All mine because you don't love him enough to follow him into death," she said, a gleam of madness in her eyes. "But I do." And with that she cast the death curse on herself.

Bill didn't know what to say and Lucius could see that the younger man couldn't comprehend a love so obsessively selfish. He doubted any Weasley could.

"Go to sleep," Lucius growled finally. He didn't feel like having sex anymore and he didn't like seeing the pitying look in Weasley's eyes.

With a wave of his hand Lucius extinguished the lights and flopped back down on the mattress. After a moment he heard Bill stretching out alongside him. Cursing himself for his weakness, Lucius turned on his side and pulled the younger man close against him. It didn't make the hurt any smaller, but it made him feel a little less alone.

The entire household had been up since dawn making ready for the Grand Vizier's dinner party. Lucius had only entertained on a small scale, one or two important people at a time to discuss political business before now, but this was going to be a full scale bash in honor of General Wenefer, recently returned from a successful battle on the northeastern frontier. As a general drudge, Bill always got jobs that ranged from disgusting to merely strenuous. For this party the amount of work was staggering to a young wizard accustomed to magic shouldering most of the menial burdens of life.

Bill was among the slaves selected to wait upon the tables. The snowy white kilt he'd been given to wear felt strange after months of wearing nothing more than a too small loincloth. A small group of musicians warmed up as guests started to arrive and were ushered into large central room of the villa, already lit up with torches and lamps. The guest of honor made sure to be among the last to arrive in order to affect a better entrance.

Wenefer was a bull-like man, short and broad shouldered. His dark leathery skin was indicative of a life spent outdoors leading troops. He dressed plainly, a snow-white kilt of the finest linen and no adornment save a wide jeweled collar that was a gift from Pharaoh. The less astute would think that Wenefer was staying true to his roots of a simple soldier, risen from the ranks, but Lucius knew that it was done just as much to show off a well-muscled physique.

As soon as he appeared, Lucius greeted and personally escorted Wenefer to his seat. The most important guests would dine sitting on low chairs at a table on the dais. The other guests would be seated on floor cushions around other tables set up in the room.

Wenefer stared at Bill as the young man poured wine into his goblet. Accustomed to the startled stares that his unusual coloring caused, Bill merely gave a polite smile and moved on to fill Lucius' cup.

Trays of bread began to arrive and Bill hurried to the kitchen, a building set towards the back of the villa's compound. A young bull had been roasted for the dinner and now large platters of carved beef were waiting to be carried in to the diners.

Bill waited on the guests, bringing in food, pouring more wine as needed and bringing bowls of perfumed water for them to rinse their hands. As he bent forward with a towel a large hand clamped onto his rear, General Wenefer's hand.

"That's not on the menu, sir!" Bill objected quietly, moving out of the way.

"You've got quite a mouth for a slave," the general smirked. "I can think of a better use for it."

"General," Lucius interrupted. "Lord Userhet, would like your opinion on the conditions at the frontier."

With the general distracted, Lucius frowned at Bill and with a jerk of his head ordered him away, while he beckoned for another of the slaves to take over serving the high table. With a sigh of relief Bill moved off to assist at another table.

Midway through the banquet, Bill stole off to the well where he drew some water to blot a large stain of wine that had been spilled on his kilt. The well area was in its own little wall-protected section of the compound. Bill hoisted a bucket of water and poured it into a small trough near the edge of the hole.

With only moonlight to see by, the task consumed Bill's attention so that he didn't hear anyone approach until he was seized from behind by a pair of powerful arms.

"Why don't you take it off to wash?" a voice he recognized as Wenefer's said. "I can help..."

"Piss off!" Bill exclaimed as his arms were twisted up painfully behind his back.

"Fire without, fire within," Wenefer laughed at Bill's futile struggles. He easily secured Bill's slim wrists in a crushing grip with one beefy hand. "I knew it as soon as I saw your hair." With his other hand he started to pull the kilt from Bill's waist.

"Immobilus!"

Wenefer froze, unable to move and Lucius Malfoy jerked Bill free.

"Stupid slut!" Malfoy snapped as his hand whipped across Bill's face in a brutal slap. "I'll deal with you later. Until then, go work in the kitchen."

The spiteful insult stung, but Bill refastened his clothing and headed to the kitchen without a word. He was shaken by his close call, knowing that he'd only been saved from being raped by Wenefer because of Malfoy's possessive nature.

He spent the rest of the banquet hidden away in the busy kitchen scrubbing pots. Egyptians could party for hours, but finally he could tell the party was breaking up as the household steward, Heny, started to send some of the slaves to bed in the slave quarters adjoining the kitchen.

"Bi-ru!"

Bill looked up to see the steward looking at him with his usual pinched expression. The Egyptians were unable to pronounce his name, but he'd become accustomed to responding to their approximation. None of them talked to him unless they had to. His red hair marked him as a minion of the Egyptian god, Set, and they believed him to be some demon enslaved by their master to serve as his familiar.

"The master says he is ready for you."

Bill was a little apprehensive as he went back into the house and made his way through the rooms to the master suite. He was uncertain as to the state of the older wizard's temper. Lucius took one look at his disheveled appearance and ordered him to go wash up.

The water in the jars in the shower room was kept hot by a spell Lucius cast on the jars. Since there was no one to pour the water over him tonight, Bill just filled an earthenware bowl and washed quickly. He knew that Lucius was in no mood to wait long.

"Put some salve on those bruises," Lucius indicated a small alabaster jar sitting atop a bedside table.

Although his bruised wrists ached from continued hard use that evening, Bill made a point of starting with the bruise Lucius gave him on his cheek. The salve was a healing one and Bill could feel the pain melting away as he spread the cream over his minor injuries. He barely had time to set the pot aside before Lucius pulled him onto the bed.

"You are mine!" Lucius declared as he shoved Bill on his back and moved his body atop the younger man. "I won't tolerate your attempts to seduce every man who comes to my home."

"I wasn't trying to seduce him or anyone!" Bill protested pushing uselessly at the Lucius' chest. "I'd rather not have to sleep with anyone, thank you very much."

"Of course not," Lucius scoffed. "Sleep is the last thing on your mind when you wriggle your tight little bum in front of a man's face. You want it fucked."

It was uncharacteristic of Lucius to speak so crudely and as the older man's hand reached down to clamp over the tempting piece of flesh, Bill found himself starting to grow aroused.

"No...," Bill gasped as Lucius' lips moved from one side of his neck to the other. "I don't want to have sex with men. I don't like it."

"Liar," Lucius' fingers stroked Bill's stiffening cock, lightly at first, then with growing firmness. "You want it. You want this." Lucius ground his own erection against Bill. "You love the way it feels when it fills you, when it moves inside you..."

Bill's reply was a mere whimper as his body betrayed him yet again. He needed no urging to get on his knees so that Lucius could follow through on his words.

"Mine   only   mine," Lucius punctuated each word with his thrusts. "Say it!"

"Yours...," Bill panted as he felt his climax approaching. "Only yours! Oh, Merlin!"

With a guttural cry of triumph Lucius came. As the older wizard's seed filled his back passage, Bill spilled his own on the sheets beneath him before collapsing in exhaustion.

"My lord master."

"What is it?" Lucius' tone was curt. He was not in a good mood. He steadfastly refused to admit that his earlier confrontation with Bill had anything to do with it. He'd collapsed into sleep almost as soon as Bill had fled the room. When he awoke several hours later the satisfaction he'd felt in savaging Bill's emotions had gone, leaving in its place an unaccustomed feeling of regret.

Sensing his master's irritation, Heny grew even more apprehensive.

"My lord   one of the slaves..."

"You'll have to be more specific," he snapped. "I do have hundreds of the creatures."

"Bi-ru."

"What about him?" A small frisson of alarm rippled up his spine. He had not seen Bill at all in the hours since he awoke and Henry would not be this nervous without reason. Had the young idiot done something unthinkable?

Lucius apparated straight into the bedroom carrying Bill's unconscious form which he laid on the bed. With quick flicks of his wand he lowered the temperature of the room and set the air above the bed circulating as if blown by a fan. Then the tip of his wand emitted a fine spray of cold water which he used to wet Bill down thoroughly. It was imperative that he get the young man's core temperature down as quickly as possible.


Flinging open the lid of a chest he hunted through the contents, pulling out herbs and other items which he dumped into a round mortar. While the pestle began to grind the contents of the bowl, Lucius conjured a bowl of water to the bedside table. Dipping the tip of his wand into it, he made it icy cold. Then he soaked a linen cloth and began to bathe Bill's face.

The pestle done with its work, Lucius poured some of the fine powder into an earthenware beaker of water and caused the contents to swirl around until no trace of the powder appeared. Lifting Bill's head, he held the cup to the parched, cracked lips and poured a little into his mouth, feeding him the potion bit by bit.

The hours blurred together in a repetitious haze of the same actions performed over and over until Lucius saw sweat starting to bead on Bill's skin. It was the first sign of the overwhelmed body's own cooling systems reviving enough to do their work.

With a small sigh of relief Lucius moved on to assessing the damage to Bill's skin. The usually creamy smoothness was red and peeling in most places. As Lucius carefully turned Bill over to examine his back, his mouth tightened into a thin line as he noticed the blisters that had developed along Bill's shoulders. He knew even more would follow.

Covering Bill with a cool wet sheet, Lucius leaned out the bedroom door and snarled for a slave to get him beeswax. Then he returned to rummaging through his chests once more. Keeping one eye on Bill who was beginning to stir restlessly in bed, Lucius melded his ingredients into what looked like a brown sludge to be slathered on almost every square centimeter of Bill's skin.

"Bill  can you hear me, Bill?" Bill opened his eyes. His head was pounding and his stomach churned with nausea. A hazy vision of Lucius leaning over him swam before his eyes and a distant voice asked worriedly, "Bill, how are you feeling?"

Part of his brain wanted to tell Lucius to 'sod off', yet the words wouldn't come. Instead he whimpered, "Hold me..."

Before Bill had a chance to retract them in embarrassment, he was gathered up in a strong pair of arms and held close. Lucius' normally warm skin felt cool against his own and Bill's muddled mind knew that for some reason he must be running a high fever. He felt the press of soft lips against his temple and with a contented sigh, Bill snuggled against the firm muscled chest and closed his eyes again.

It was shrieks of pain that caused Bill's eyes to open again. He sat up in alarm only to be hit by a wave of dizziness so strong that he had to fall back with a groan. He curled up in the linen sheets and waited for some sense of equilibrium to return so that he could try again.

"Bill?"

Lucius came into the room looking calm and unruffled. So what was that screeching about? Bill tried once again to sit up, this time successfully owing to Lucius' strong arm behind him.

"I heard screams."

"I was meting out punishment to a few slaves."

Lucius had used a short burst of the crucio curse on them.

As soon as he awoke in the early afternoon of the next day, Lucius left a slave to watch over Bill then had the rest of the servants assembled in the compound. He swiftly sifted through their minds and found three that had noticed Bill unconscious yesterday but had done nothing. He had just giving Heny orders to have the slaves sold to work in the mines as soon as they recovered from their punishment when the maid servant came running to tell him that Bill was awake.

Bill couldn't recall Lucius ever bothering to discipline any of the slaves beyond a blow here and there. Heny usually administered the harsher punishments.

"What did they do?" Bill asked curious as to what would be so serious that Lucius himself felt the need to administer the punishment.

"Negligence." Lucius saw no point in telling Bill that the three slaves had deliberately left him in the sun to die of heat stroke. If Heny hadn't overheard one of them talking about it, their wish just might have been granted. The memory of how close he'd come to losing Bill made him add harshly, "I'll be punishing you as soon as you're well enough for it."

"Mmmm, why?" the initial burst of adrenalin triggered by the screams had gone, leaving Bill even more tired than he had been before. He yawned and rested his head against Lucius', closing his eyes.

Because you scared the hell out of me. Lucius wasn't going to say those words aloud. It irritated him. He didn't like the idea that anyone could have such power over him.

"I don't have to explain anything to you." Lucius said in as cruel a voice as he could manage under the circumstances. "I am master here."

But he was talking to himself. Bill had fallen asleep again.

Bill woke slightly confused, not quite sure why he was in bed since the light coming through the garden doors indicated it was well into the day. He sat up and swung his feet over the side of the bed.

"No  no!"

Bill looked and saw one of the maid servants kneeling just inside the doorway of the bedroom.

"What?" Bill asked, puzzled.

"The master says that you are to stay in bed." She explained.

"Rubbish," Bill scoffed, rising from the bed in spite of the dizziness he was feeling. He was stark naked and there was a time when that would have kept him in the bed until the girl left, but the Egyptian casual attitudes towards nudity had rubbed off on him. He staggered towards a basket on top of a chest where his clean loincloths were kept.

As Bill plucked one from the basket he started to shiver violently, struck by a sudden inexplicable chill. He leaned against the chest as he felt his knees start to buckle.

"What the devil are you doing on your feet?!"

Lucius strode into their bedroom, summoned by the frightened maid. He took one look at the shivering Bill and carried him back to the bed. He summoned a wool blanket from one of the





chests in the room and added it to the bedding over him.

Lucius picked up a goblet from the bedside table and handed it to him. Bill's hand shook so hard that it was difficult to drink, but as soon as he took a sip, a wave of warmth swept through him. He even felt a little stronger. Lucius took the cup from him.

"What was that?" Bill asked.

"Vitalium," Lucius said. "Your body hasn't recovered enough to regulate your internal temperature."

"Recovered ...?" Bill echoed questioningly. His brow furrowed as he tried to remember exactly what had happened. "I don't   remember..."



"Heat stroke."

"Oh." Bill tried to remember, but the memories were still vague.

"I'll have food sent in." Lucius said adding firmly. "You continue having a lie in until I say otherwise."

Lucius had sounded annoyed, but between shivering with cold and sweating from hot flashes, Bill slept and as he slept he dreamt of Lucius. In those dreams Lucius gently held him, telling him in a soft voice that he'd be fine while banishing the nightmarish creatures that chased him. Bill knew he must have been hallucinating some of it and yet other parts of it were real, too. Which ones?

The vitalium potion did its work. Bill woke the next morning plastered comfortably against Lucius, feeling neither too hot nor too cold. He was completely healed. Nonetheless Lucius ordered him to stay in bed another day. Bill couldn't remember a more boring day in his life.

He saw no one aside from a servant that brought in his meals. The only thing to he could do was lie in bed and think about what had happened the details of which were sketchy. He remembered his argument with Lucius, but little beyond that. Yet he could tell that Lucius had obviously put a lot of effort into taking care of him, personally, in spite of the harsh words they'd exchanged. Lucius didn't return to their room until evening by which time Bill was overjoyed to see anyone that would be willing to have a conversation with him. He waited impatiently for Lucius to finish bathing, but after the shower slave departed and Lucius emerged from the bathroom, Bill sat up eager to talk about something   " anything.

"I have something for you," Lucius said, as he settled himself on the overstuffed mattress.

"What?"

A gift after a spat? That was like ... no, it couldn't be.

Bill didn't know if he was disappointed or relieved when Lucius opened his hand to reveal a mere bead. It was plain clay, unpainted, not even glazed, merely baked into hardness.

"This amulet will protect you from further sun damage," Lucius explained. His slender fingertips slipped beneath the thin wire around Bill's neck sending tingling sensations through his body. With a quietly muttered incantation the bead merged onto the wire. The fingers then continued to trace along Bill's collar bone and he shivered, but not from a cold flash. "You've neglected your duties these last days, slave," Lucius murmured in a husky desire filled voice, his fingers now trailing feather light down Bill's chest.

"Forgive me, master," Bill replied in an equally low voice. He'd never called Lucius 'master'

before, had been quite stubborn about it actually despite Lucius' insistence and yet now it slipped quite naturally from his lips.

"You'll have to make it up to me." Lucius leaned forward, his mouth almost but not quite touching Bill's, one of his hands resting firmly on Bill's hip.

"I will, master," Bill wrapped his arms around Lucius' neck as he locked their mouths together in a deep kiss, pulling Lucius down atop him as he fell back onto the mattress.

For the first time Bill gave himself willingly to Lucius. He didn't try to rationalize it by calling it gratitude or explaining it as 'Stockholm Syndrome'. He just wanted this man and left it at that.

By the time the two had exhausted themselves and collapsed together in a tangled heap, Bill felt suffused with a glow that he'd never experienced before and filled with satisfaction that he had definitely demonstrated to Lucius that he could be as limber as any trained acrobat.

Two months later...

Bill suppressed a groan and rolled out of bed, dashing to the room where the toilet was. Dropping to his knees in front of the chair with keyhole shape carved into its marble seat Bill emptied the contents of his stomach into the large clay chamberpot placed under it.

He'd been queasy for the last couple of days, but this was the first time that it had been this bad. The first morning he thought perhaps it was food poisoning, but Lucius had many spells and enchantments purifying all the food and drink in the villa and his stomach did seem to improve as the day went on. As he knelt with his spinning head resting on his hands he wondered if he were coming down with something. Ancient Egypt was rife all sorts of diseases that were rare in Britain.

"When were you planning to tell me?"

Bill turned his head and saw Lucius standing in the doorway.

"Tell you what?" he asked wearily.

"That you're pregnant."

Bill turned his head away, "It's probably just the flu."


"You're a Weasley, you should be familiar with the symptoms." Lucius snorted. "All things considered, I guess I should be surprised it hasn't happened sooner."

"If you thought it was possible, why the devil didn't you take precautions?" Bill demanded.

"Perhaps because I believed that the relative infertility of the Malfoy line would trump the prolific breeding capabilities of the Weasley line." Lucius said flatly.

"Well, you were wrong." There was a tremor in Bill's voice as he began to seriously consider the possibility that Lucius was right. "Guess we Weasleys win again."

"Oh, this is just capital," Lucius said breaking into harsh laughter. "And how proud your parents would be if they could only know! Their favorite son, one of the heroes of the Order of the Phoenix, set to give birth to the next generation of death-eaters! My word, won't that be a glorious announcement to make at their next meeting."

"All this time and you're still obsessed with your lost war!" Bill exclaimed. "It's a baby, Lucius! Not some club to use on my family and friends. Death-eaters, dark lords  what does it even matter now that you're exiled in time?"

Bill heaved himself to his feet and pushed past Lucius. Retaining just enough presence of mind to snatch up clothing, he bolted from the bedroom. As always he went to the garden where he was assured of privacy in his misery.

He curled up beneath a sycamore tree, his stomach still churning as violently as his thoughts.

Damn the man, Bill thought. Why can't he just get over it and move on?

Bill had avoided analyzing his feelings for Lucius until now. He had accepted the fact that he wanted the silvery haired wizard sexually, that he might even need him, but he was afraid to delve any further than that. Now, however, they were going to have a baby together.

Together. That was the sticking point. They weren't really together in the way that Bill had always believed that people who had children should be. That Lucius wanted him physically was obvious, but would someone as blood-proud as Lucius want a baby from a clan he'd always despised? More importantly, what sort of life would this child have?

Bill was going crazy just lying there thinking about everything so he got slowly to his feet and wandered to the other side of the villa's enclosure where he started to busy himself in the physical work of the day. That was the one thing about life in ancient Egypt. There were plenty of things to keep him from dwelling on his problems.

Bill steadied the yoke balancing the two large leather buckets filled with water and trudged back to the kitchen.

"Have you gone barking mad? Put those down now!"

Bill was startled by the suddenness of Lucius' barked order. The older wizard was glaring at him.

"Wha --? It's just water."

"Put those down now!" Lucius repeated. He turned to a puzzled Heny, who had been ordered to follow him outside.

"This slave," Lucius indicated Bill with a sweep of his hand, "is not to do any hard labor from now until his baby is born."

"His baby?" Heny looked confused and he glanced around at some of the female slaves in the kitchen-yard. As far as he knew no female had dared cast her eyes on the master's male concubine, let alone get pregnant by him, and even if one had, why would that exempt him from labor?

"Yes, his baby!" Lucius reiterated. "He's pregnant!"

"\*He\* is the pregnant one?" Heny exclaimed in surprise.

"But how is that possible, my lord? He is not a woman."

"Are you questioning me?" Lucius snapped.

"N-No, of course not, my lord," Heny stammered. "He will only have the lightest of chores until you say otherwise."

"Very well then," and Lucius turned to stomp back into the house, leaving Bill to stare after him

completely dumbfounded.

A sudden realization came to Bill. It wasn't that Lucius never wanted to be kind, it was that Lucius didn't know how to be kind. Or, as vague memories of the older man cuddling and comforting him through his illness came back to him, perhaps Lucius was afraid to show his softer side. A death-eater would naturally view such a thing as a weakness.

Surrounded all his life by the boisterous affections of his family, Bill knew it to be a strength. He'd show Lucius. A slow smile came to Bill's face. He didn't need magic to teach Lucius about kindness.

Bill's smile faded as he became conscious of the stares of the Egyptians. Better educated than many, Henry was not as superstitious as the average Egyptian and he had not quite accepted the general belief that Bill was some sort of incarnation of Set enslaved by their powerful master. Yet no normal man could become pregnant. It wasn't natural. He wasn't sure what to think. The feelings of the others, though, were clear. They were horrified and soon all the others would know and feel the same.

With an unhappy sigh, Bill followed Lucius back into the house.

Bill spent a lot of time sweeping and dusting in the following days, those being the chores Henry deemed lightest and there was always a lot of dusting that needed to be done in such an arid country. Beyond that Bill was left chiefly to his own devices. He spent his free time in the kitchen, much to the dislike of the kitchen staff. Beyond sour looks, though, they dared do nothing further. Bill tried his best to ignore the coldness and concentrate on what he was trying to do.

Carrying a tray, Bill trotted up the stairs built into the side of the house to where Lucius was relaxing on the roof. The dark wizard was reclining on a chaise beneath a striped linen awning watching the watercraft on the Nile while a slave slightly off to the side languidly waved a large fan.

"Thought you might like a bit of a nosh," Bill announced as Lucius looked at him questioningly.

He set the tray down on the small table next to the chaise. Lucius looked at it curiously.

"Is it... that looks like... a crumpet?"

"As close as I could come. The ingredients are simple enough and available but it was the quantities I couldn't quite remember so I had to experiment a bit."

"You know how to cook?" Lucius was astonished.

"Not everyone has house elves." There was a time when Bill's tone would have been heavy with sarcasm, but now it was just a simple statement of fact. "That papyrus should be all you need to transfigure your ordinary Egyptian vintage into a rather nice Beaujolais."

Lucius picked up the scrap on which bore Bill's neat lettering. He said the words aloud, glancing at Bill to see if he got the pronunciation and inflection correct. Then he took up his wand and touched the tip to liquid in the goblet as he cast the spell.

There was a vague ripple on the surface and the color deepened. Setting his wand aside, Lucius lifted his cup and sipped.

"Very good," He started to offer Bill a taste, then stopped. "No, not in your condition," he said with a shake of his head. "It would not be good for the baby."

Bill felt no resentment. Instead he was oddly pleased. His fears about how Lucius felt about the child to come were allayed. The dark wizard may not have chosen to have a half-Weasley child, but at least he did care about its well-being.

Lucius picked up one of the crumpets and spread some butter across before taking a bite. Smiling, Lucius tugged Bill down to sit next to him and held the crumpet to the up to the younger man's mouth. Bill took a bite, then Lucius. They continued trading off bites and as Bill's lips occasionally closed over Lucius' fingers, Lucius remembered the feel of those lips over other portions of his body.

By the time the crumpet was consumed, Lucius' gray eyes were smoldering with a hunger of a different sort. Bill was not unaware of the effect he was having nor was he unaffected himself. Nonetheless, he was not an exhibitionist and when Lucius pressed him back against the cushions of the chaise Bill glanced at the other slave, still waving his fan, but with his gaze staring fixedly off into the distance.

Lucius understood his meaning and snarled to the slave, "Wait at the base of the stairs and don't let anyone come up."

The fan waver hastily set the fan aside and fled from the rooftop terrace.

"Why so shy, my little slave?" Lucius purred, pulling the front of Bill's loincloth free. "You're a pretty enough piece," His hand caressed the creamy skin of Bill's inner thigh before moving to lightly finger Bill's ball sac. "with many charms."

Bill affected a demure look.

"My charms are for the eyes of my master alone," Bill murmured.

"Just for his eyes?" Lucius asked. "What of his pleasure?"

"Ahhh!" Bill jerked as Lucius firmly squeezed his intimate parts. "Yes! Whatever pleases my master."

"Judging from the amount of butter you brought," Lucius observed. "You must have hoped that your master would want to take his pleasure of you multiple times."

Bill blushed, but didn't miss a beat. "My master is a virile man." He trailed his fingers slowly up Lucius' chest, enjoying the shivers he created as he circled one of the nipples he encountered. "I would have everything he needs in readiness for his pleasure, however many times he wants it."

"His pleasure," Lucius leaned forward and sank his teeth lightly into Bill's earlobe. "And yours."

They spent several hours engaged in love-making, with Lucius living up to Bill's statement of his master being a virile man. Bill lay sprawled on his stomach atop Lucius, eyes slowly closing with the need for a short nap.

"You are all your master needs," Lucius whispered in a soft voice, not intending for Bill to hear the words. "You alone."

He didn't see Bill smile.

"What the devil are you doing up there?"

Bill looked down from his perch on a tall stool in a storage room to see Lucius glaring up at him.

"I'm looking for a baby cot."

"A what?"

Bill laughed as Lucius' look of consternation changed to confusion.

"A substitute actually," he clarified. Bill was roughly six months along in his pregnancy by his calculations and nesting urges were beginning to surface. "We've got to keep him in something and since there are no baby cots in thirteenth dynasty Egypt," Bill returned to rummaging the upper shelves. "I thought a large basket with handles would work. Then I'd be able to tote him wherever I was working. Sometimes I'll use a sling like other mothers, but..."

"Bill," Lucius took a deep breath to keep the panic he was feeling out of his voice. It seemed to him that the stool was teetering with each movement his very pregnant concubine was making. "Get down from there now."

"Huh --- right," Bill started to move then paused, suddenly realizing that while climbing onto the tall stool had been easy, his awkward shape made getting down much more problematic.


Sensing his predicament Lucius swept him off and into his arms, holding him tightly for a moment before setting him on his feet.

"You don't have to keep the baby with you at all times," Lucius said. "One of the..."

"Lucius, I hope you won't think me a paranoid first time parent," Bill interrupted. "But we can't trust anyone with our baby. None of them." Bill looked at him intently. "They've been afraid of me from the start and this pregnancy has made them even more scared. Frightened people are dangerous people."

"I won't say that your fears are unfounded," Lucius remembered how some slaves had left Bill collapsed in the kitchen garden when he'd been overcome by too much sun. "But I shouldn't have to tell you that I will protect our child with my life if necessary."

Bill smiled. There were many things he was uncertain of with Lucius, but that was not one of them. Still, it was reassuring to hear him say the words aloud.

"I know, but sometimes  sometimes things happen anyway." Bill saw a pained expression cross Lucius' face and knew that he'd inadvertently caused the older man to remember his previous son, dead by his own mother's hand.

"I'm sorry," Bill said softly. He lifted his hand to caress the side of Lucius' face. "I didn't mean to..."

"No, it's all right," Lucius turned his head to kiss Bill's palm in a rare display of genuine affection. "Just because we're centuries ahead of them in magic doesn't mean we shouldn't stay on guard. There are others beyond our household that are uncomfortable with your pregnancy." Lucius guided him out of the storage room. "Tell Heny what sort of basket you want and if it can't be found in the riverside market, he'll have one commissioned."

Lucius couldn't forget that conversation with Bill though. He sat at his desk for an hour thinking of the whispers that circulated in the background whenever he appeared at court.

Even Pharaoh, who ordinarily lavished much attention on the powerful Vizier Horemkef, seemed to be distant of late. Lucius had no gift of 'sight', but he had learned the hard way not to take any chances.

Lucius waited until they were alone in bed to show him the bead he'd created that afternoon. Like the previous one it was simply baked clay, but this one had an Eye of Horus drawn on it.

"What's this one for?" Bill asked as Lucius magically attached it to the wire around his neck. "Something to help with swollen ankles?"

"I told you to rest more often for that," Lucius chided.

"Ah, so no help for swollen ankles, then what?"

"An amulet for a safe pregnancy." Lucius told him.

"I've seen enough pregnancies to know I'm okay." Bill said lightly, leaning over to kiss Lucius. He didn't want the older man worrying needlessly. "So work on the swollen ankles next, ok?"

The summons to court was unexpected. Pharaoh had been in Memphis -- was still supposed to be in Memphis. The trip alone was unusual. Some Pharaohs spent much of their time moving their court up and down the Nile, making their presence felt throughout the kingdom, but Neferhotep II preferred to avoid such upheavals.

Grudgingly Lucius told Pharaoh's messenger that he would be there. As the young servant ran back Lucius called for his litter bearers as he went to change into court clothing. He made a special effort to do so quietly because Bill was napping.

Now entering month eight, Bill tired easily. He took cat naps in the late mornings and afternoons and was now curled up on their bed fast asleep. Lucius looked down and was surprised by the stirrings of lust he felt. The swollen body should have seemed grotesque to him and yet it did not. This was his lover swelling with a child of his making and all Lucius wanted to do right now was climb atop the bed and bury himself deep into that body.

Narcissa had never inspired such feelings in him pregnant or not pregnant.

He debated waking Bill to say that he was going to the palace, but decided against it.

They'd definitely end up making love if he did so and Lucius doubted he'd be gone long. With servants running ahead to clear the way, Lucius' sedan chair was carried swiftly through the streets to the palace. He strode through the columned Great Hall toward the throne where Neferhotep II sat and his skin started to prickle. Pharaoh looked nervous. In fact Lucius could almost smell the anxiety in the crowd of nobles.

Legilimency and Occlumency were the arts of penetrating and defending the mind, arts that were in their infancy in ancient Egypt. Only a few priests had any skill at Legilimency, the winged ones they were called, but none were very adept at shielding their minds.

Lucius slowed his pace and locked eyes with Neferhotep. Quickly he delved through the various layers of Pharaoh's mind. He saw his enemies whispering their poisonous lies, undermining the faith that Lucius had worked hard to establish by preying on the gullible man's fears. He could hear their whispers. The power to create life in other men? Even demonic ones? Only gods did that. He could use the baby as proof of a divine status that excelled Pharaoh's. Viziers had seized the throne before and in troubled times such as this the people just might prefer the protection of someone powerful enough to enslave a demon and force him to bear a child.

Too late Lucius saw the imprudence in allowing Bill to be thought more than human. Awe of his supposed power had turned to fear. The trip to Memphis was the High Priest of Amun's idea, to get Pharaoh away from Lucius' influence, to plot against him.

Lucius sifted more swiftly through Neferhotep's mind. Did they intend to strike him down here? No. Pharaoh was not ready to lose such a valuable servant. Lucius almost sighed with relief, but stopped suddenly, a horrified look on his face.

"Lucius!" Bill's desperate cry exploded in his brain.


"Lucius!"

"How dare you!" Lucius roared at the Pharaoh.



The last thing Pharaoh Neferhotep II saw in his life was a blinding flash of green light. Frozen by fear the royal court watched as the Grand Vizier Horemkef disappeared before Pharaoh's body hit the marble floor.

Bill didn't know what woke him, but almost immediately he saw the dagger plunging down towards him. Reacting swiftly he seized the wrist holding the weapon and the tussle began. Hampered by his physical condition Bill found it difficult to do more than just keep the knife from slicing into him. He wasn't able to wrest it from his assailant. Then suddenly the attacker was pulled from him and hurled against the wall with such force that Bill could hear the sickening sound of a skull crack.

"Are you all right?" Lucius demanded seizing Bill by the arms and looking him over anxiously. When he didn't get an immediate response he gave the younger wizard a little shake. "Bill?!"

"Give me half a sec to catch my breath," Bill said shakily. "I'm still a bit  

He looked at the figure slumped against the wall and gave a start. "Heny! But why...?"

"We don't have time," Lucius said urgently. He helped Bill off the bed. "We have to leave here   now!"

"But why?" Bill asked bewildered.

Bill watched as Lucius tore the lid off one of the gilded chests in the room and pulled out a large bag of rough natural line. He dumped the contents of several smaller jewelry filled boxes into the already stuffed bag before hustling Bill out of the room. They bumped into two servants who were startled by their master's sudden unheralded return but they jumped hastily out of the way as Lucius snarled at them.

Down corridors to Lucius' office where he grabbed scrolls that he had been studying, tossing them into another bag, heedless of the mess he was creating. Lucius' two scribes, upon hearing the commotion, poked their heads through the door and stared in astonishment until Lucius barked at them to go to their homes if they valued their lives. The heads disappeared. The Grand Vizier never made idle threats, but Lucius was not the one they had to fear.


"Troops will be here any minute." Lucius said as he sprayed a ribbon of flame across the room. Dried wood, reed and papyrus, the room was quickly engulfed, it would leave nothing behind for the other wizards and priests to make use of after he was gone.

"Troops?" Bill repeated as they burst out of the house. A scream came from inside, whether it was from the fire or the discovery of Heny's body, Bill couldn't know. Farther out beyond the walls of the villa compound was an even greater noise, not unlike the clamor of an angry mob.

"What's going on?"

"Not now!" Lucius snapped, pulling Bill across the way to the small shrine that all nobles had.



Once inside Bill watched as Lucius once again worked the complex magic that opened the door into time. But where to this time  or rather when?

"You first," and Lucius shoved Bill through the glowing opening.

Bill knew he was regaining consciousness as opposed to waking up but he couldn't remember how he lost it to begin with. Instead of a comfortable well-stuffed mattress he was on a thinner pad of straw or maybe reeds. His head, however, was resting on a lean muscular thigh.

"Lucius?" he mumbled, opening his eyes. Wherever they were it was dark, lit only by a single lamp resting on the floor an arms length away. The faint light cast shadows on walls. "What happened?"

"Lie still and rest," Lucius said sternly as Bill struggled to sit up. His hand gently stroked Bill's head.

"We're safe enough for the moment."

Memory started filtering back to Bill.

"Heny tried to kill me and you said troops were coming..."

"My enemies banded together and convinced Pharaoh that I was a threat to his throne, that bloody idiot!" Lucius swore. "They wanted me dead, but Pharaoh thought it would be a sufficient demonstration of \*his\* power over \*me\* to merely kill my 'familiar' and thus deprive me of a source of power. Heny was offered a title and a position of power if he would do the deed while I had been called away."

"Lucky you came back in time," Bill said shuddering at the thought of what might have happened.

"No luck involved," Lucius told him. "You called me to you via the Eye of Horus." He touched the bead lying against Bill's throat. "I set it to keep an unceasing vigil over you, although I hadn't expected treachery from my own steward."

"But you were expecting some sort of trouble?" Bill remembered how Lucius had had a bag ready. "You had an escape plan."

"Yes," Lucius said shortly.

Lucius had anticipated the need to flee, but it was more than that. As the baby's birth drew nearer, Lucius was increasingly worried about his ability to deliver it. The magic involved in removing a baby from a man was exacting. Not expecting such a situation he was unprepared and without reference tomes. More and more he wanted an experienced healer to deliver the baby.

"Where are we?" Bill asked, his eyes looking over the rather barren room.

"In the cellar of a muggle peasant," Lucius said with distaste. "I'm fairly certain that the opening of a temporal door in that vicinity will have set off some alarms. I wanted as few magical traces for the aurors to follow as possible, so as soon as I changed us into local muggle clothing and got you outside the tomb, I bribed a muggle peasant to transport and hide us here. Tomorrow we'll catch a train to Cairo."

"A train? If they're looking for us they'll be searching trains." Bill pointed out.

"They'll be searching wizard trains," Lucius said adding with a grimace. "We'll use the muggle

trains."

Conversation seemed to sap all of Bill's strength. Whether it had been the fight or the flight, Bill was tired and his head ached. His stomach seemed to curdle at the idea of eating any of the stew and flatbread their host brought them. He drank some bottled water at Lucius' insistence and went back to sleep.

Bill felt better when Lucius woke him. It was early morning and before they could head for the train station they had to dye their distinctive hair color with muggle products. Aurors would expect magical disguises, would even have charms in place to dispel them, but they'd never think that Lucius would go to the effort of non-magical concealment.

They were left at the Luxor train station in time to catch the only morning train to Cairo. As might be expected it was crowded, but to Bill's relief Lucius' glare worked on muggles even better than it worked on wizards. They did not have to stand and Bill dropped into his window seat with a sigh of relief.

It was in Cairo that Lucius got a port key. The train ride had been long and Bill had started getting train sick. It was pretty much all he could do to keep from being separated from the older wizard once they'd disembarked into the crowded station. Lucius' grip on his wrist was like iron however and when they came upon a crushed soft drink can that had been dropped into a gutter just outside the station, Lucius bent to pick it up. With a flash they were in Roma Termini.

Lucius steadied Bill, who was reeling from the suddenness of being transported. He produced his wand and with a quick flick, put them into less conspicuous clothing then he hurried Bill out of the station.

For Lucius the worst was over. The aurors' best chance of catching him was in Egypt with its limited transportation options and a wizard population so dwindled in numbers that magic was more easily traced. Luck had also been with him in that the port key that had originally brought him from Rome to Cairo was still in the gutter where he'd dropped it over a year ago. So much for the civic street cleaners. It was a good thing he hadn't chosen Singapore as a jumping off point. Now that he was back on the continent he could count on assistance from fellow dark wizards to help him.

For Bill the trip descended into a nauseating blur. Every time he started feeling marginally better there was always a dizzying floo trip or port trip that left him feeling absolutely wretched. They were always on the move with no more than a couple of hours of rest, never time enough for Bill to recover. Each hop left him more wretched than before until finally his strength left him as they emerged from yet another fireplace and he collapsed.

"S♦♦"Sorry," Bill mumbled as he felt Lucius lift him up in his arms. "C♦♦" Can't..."

"Ssshhh, just rest now," the older wizard said soothingly. "We're home at last."

Something tickled his nose. Sleepily Bill brushed it away and burrowed deeper into the soft bedding. The tickling came back and Bill swatted at the annoyance twice more before finally opening his eyes to see what it was.

Lucius sat on the edge of the bed dressed once again in his traditional black. He held roses in his hand, blood red, which he had been brushing against Bill's face, teasing him awake. Now that Bill's eyes were open, he ripped the petals from the blossoms and sprinkled them over Bill.

"Lovely," he said surveying the effect.

"Quite so."

Bill propped himself up on his elbows. He was in a huge four poster bed with elaborately embroidered drapes. A fire blazed in a fireplace, a cheery counterpoint to the dark, rather gothic furniture in the room. The heavy curtains were still drawn over the windows, but a weak light was still managing to force its way through.

"Where are we?" Bill asked in bewilderment.

"Malfoy Manor." Lucius said in a tone that implied it should have been obvious.

"God, Lucius," Bill gasped. "This is the first place the ministry will check if..."

"The spells and wards that protected the manor during my absence will keep my presence secret enough." Lucius harrumphed at the implied insult to his skills. "No one enters or leaves without my permission."

Was there a slight emphasis on the word 'leaves'? Was it a warning? Did Lucius think he'd try and escape? Bill sighed heavily. That's what he should be thinking about right? And yet it was the furthest thing from his mind.

Lucius insisted that Bill remain in bed until after the healer's visit. Bill worried that they'd be betrayed and reported to the ministry, but Lucius assured him that this healer would say nothing. The dark wizard didn't add the words 'not if he wanted to live'. Bill would never adjust to the ruthlessness of the Death Eater's circle.

Healer Owain Graves looked very much like a healer to the Death Eaters should look. He was gaunt. His sallow skin was accentuated by his dark and clothing. His voice was coldly disapproving as he questioned Bill about his pre-natal care to date and the glare he gave Lucius, who described their exhausting exodus back to the manor, would have melted stone.

"He's a Weasley," Graves said, dismissing Lucius' defensive argument about unanticipated thus unprepared for pregnancies. "They run to red hair and bellies that are easy to fill with babies. There's no excuse for shoddy planning."

Bill thought Lucius was going to reach for his wand and after that unflattering description of his familial traits, Bill was willing to push the healer into the path of any curse Lucius wanted to cast. Nonetheless he took his cue from Lucius and said nothing.

The healer was thorough and as far as Bill could tell, more than competent in his examination. He muttered occasionally, words that only his quill seemed to hear as it scribbled his case notes in a suitably illegible script on a piece of parchment.

"But luckily, you are a Weasley," Graves said at last. "Made for breeding, the lot of you and as such, the baby is fine." Then the healer seemed to unbend a little and smiled. "Would you like to see the it?"

"Yes!" Bill looked eagerly at Lucius who remained strangely silent.

Graves noticed Lucius' hesitation and gave the older wizard a withering look.

"If he doesn't want to watch he can go sit in another room."

"Oh, very well," Lucius grumbled ungraciously, feeling a pang at the look of confused hurt of Bill's face.

Graves summoned a large oval mirror from his bag. As it hung in mid-air where they could all see it Graves' wand traced lazy circles over Bill's abdomen. An image appeared in the mirror, just

so many lines of static at first and then it snapped into a full image.

"Oh," Bill breathed in awestruck wonder of this first look at his child.

"Two arms, two legs, every finger and toe in place," the healer's wand continued to move and the image in the mirror changed in perspective, rotating and turning. "A perfectly beautiful little girl, provided she doesn't get her sire's nose."

"There's nothing wrong with Lucius' nose." Bill declared hotly.

"A daughter?!" Lucius exclaimed with a start.

"Why do fathers always assume they'll breed up sons?" Graves snorted disdainfully to no one in particular.

Bill looked swiftly to see if Lucius was disappointed, but could see no sign of any negative emotion. Instead he was slumped in his chair looking as though a heavy burden had been lifted from his shoulders.

"You were relieved to hear it wasn't a boy," Bill said softly after the healer had gone.

"I was," Lucius confessed. "It's still too soon. I'd feel like he was trying to replace Draco. Maybe later ..." his voice trailed off for a moment before he continued in a brighter tone. "However, I can sincerely say that nothing could make me happier than to have a dozen daughters with long red hair."

Since they had returned from ancient Egypt Bill had worried that Lucius would abandon him. That while he had been good enough for a bed partner when there were no better choices, Lucius would now seek someone he considered a more worthy partner. This was the first hint from Lucius of how he felt. Bill leaned forward and gently kissed Lucius.

"I would be just as happy if those daughters had long silver hair."

It was the closest they'd come to saying 'I love you' without actually saying the words. Perhaps they'd never feel secure enough to say it aloud, but they'd taken the first tentative step towards it.

The healer had told Bill to stay in bed for the remainder of the day to catch up on his rest. He told Lucius to send a house elf to his office later to pick up a potion he was prescribing for Bill. An owl delivery might be noticed.

Lucius spent the day catching up on the political situation in England. He was surprised to learn that Fudge was back in office. That was the problem with democracy, Lucius thought, any idiot could vote and usually did. Still, it made things easier for him. Fudge was very susceptible to monetary persuasion. It might take some time, it might take some blackmail, but in the end Lucius knew he would be able to get a pardon.

Between downing goblets of Portnoy's Potion for the Pregnant, Bill busied himself readying the long unused nursery for the arrival of their daughter. Since going to the various shops in Diagon Alley was out of the question, Bill did his shopping in the various storerooms of Malfoy Manor. It was just as good, if not better.

He was having the house elves re-furbish the antique furniture he had picked out and clean the nursery from top to bottom. In the vast manor attics he unearthed large quantities of yellow cloth suitable for drapes and reupholstering the overstuffed chairs. A rocking dragon that emitted smoke through its nostrils when ridden was brought up from the cellar and placed by the sunny window.

Sitting in Lucius' study, Bill sorted through box after box of baby clothes from generations of previous Malfoy offspring, some of which had to be hundreds of years old. He was not put off by

Lucius' disinterested grunts whenever he interrupted the older wizard's work to have him admire a particular outfit. He didn't really expect the older man to be interested in the minute details of getting ready for the baby.

The baby's name had provoked discussions that fell just short of arguments. Bill had decided that the baby should be named Lucia. Sensing his growing power over Lucius, Bill stubbornly refused to consider any other suggestion and in the end Lucius gave in because he wanted to please Bill.

It was an unusual feeling, wanting to please someone. As much as he had loved Draco, he has never tried to please the boy, although he'd occasionally given him things just to stop his whining. He certainly never wanted to please Narcissa. In fact he frequently went out of his way to annoy her, just as she had done to him.

New, too, was the anxiety he felt as he paced the hallway, waiting. The healer was with Bill, who had gone into labor a little over an hour ago. Lucius was unable to concentrate on anything but what might be going on in the bedroom.

Graves was an expert, but Bill had had almost no pre-natal care and he'd been working too hard getting the nursery ready.

The door swung open.

"Malfoy?"

"How are they?" the words were out of his mouth before he could stop them. So much for the cold, detached Malfoy demeanor.

"Ready for visitors," the healer announced.

Lucius hurried into the room, his eyes going immediately to the big bed. Bill was propped up by many pillows, cradling a small bundle in his arms.

"Lucius, come look at her!" he cried out, his voice weak, but excited. "She's beautiful!"

"Perhaps you're a bit biased?" Lucius teased as he sat down and leaned over to peer at his newborn daughter. "No you're right. She's absolutely beautiful."

"And of course an old Death Eater like you is completely without prejudice?" Bill teased back as he shifted his burden into Lucius' arms.

Lucia greeted her other father with a yawn, but did not open her eyes. Her tiny hands were clenched into fists alongside her face, which was surrounded by wisps of red hair. Lucius kissed the top of her downy head then kissed Bill.

"Death Eaters prejudiced?" Lucius said, a touch of the Malfoy arrogance in his tone. "Never!"

Lucius had always thought that he had had every comfort available in his life, but in the weeks after Lucia's birth he learned that there were comforts that could not be bought or conjured. Bill and Lucia brought a warmth to his home that Lucius could never remember it having. There was something so peaceful about taking Lucia for an airing out in the wooded groves or simply watching Bill napping on the study sofa with their daughter sleeping atop his chest, so much so that Lucius began not to give a fig whether he got his pardon or not if life could continue like this.

Lucius thought about possibly moving his new family to the continent or even back to Egypt. Bill had occasionally mentioned missing Egypt and after all, Lucia was conceived there. He longed

to discuss the options with Bill, but he couldn't. He was afraid. At the back of his mind he remembered the argument they'd had long ago, when Bill had said he'd just been acting. What if Bill were still acting?

"Master?" Bascombe, his chief house elf had appeared in his study.

"There had better be a good reason for this interruption," Lucius said, a look of singular annoyance on his face.

"Two wizards are outside demanding to see you." Bascombe said. "From the Ministry of Magic."

Lucius arched an eyebrow at this unexpected news. With a wave of his wand the large study mirror shimmered and then reflected the scene outside the front gates of the manor. Arthur Weasley was pacing angrily back and forth while Albus Dumbledore stood calmly in place contemplating the reptilian plaque mounted on the gate.

"Bring them in." he sighed.

Arthur Weasley had ignored the rumors at first. It was absurd to believe that Lucius Malfoy would be stupid enough to return to England, let alone to Malfoy Manor. But when rumors of the dark wizard's companion, a tall, red-haired young man reached him, he demanded action. He'd been furious to learn that not only did Fudge know Lucius was back, he was considering a pardon. Knowing then that he'd get no help whatsoever from the Ministry, he decided to storm the manor himself to find the answers to the questions concerning his missing son. Dumbledore quickly intervened, offering to accompany Arthur, knowing that his friend's temper was running understandably hot.

Lucius met them in the grand foyer. Arthur's voice reverberated off the walls and high ceiling as he rushed towards Lucius.

"Where's Bill?! What have you done to my son?!"

That was certainly a question Lucius didn't want to answer, particularly to Arthur Weasley. After all, what hadn't he done to the other wizard's son?

"Tell me where my son is, you bastard!" the elder Weasley demanded. "Or I'll..."

"Arthur, calm down." Dumbledore laid a restraining hand on his friend's arm while looking at the dark wizard. "Lucius, I'm sure you understand how concerned Arthur is about his son. If you would please take us to him...?"

Phrased as a simple request, it was nonetheless an order. There could be no bluffing denial of Bill's presence in his household. Lucius steeled his face into an impassive mask as he turned to lead the wizards upstairs to the nursery. He'd just have to trust that Bill truly did have some affection for him otherwise his peaceful idyll was over.

"Lucius, you just missed it! She..." Bill's excited voice trailed off as he noticed that Lucius was not alone.

"Bill, we have visitors," Lucius announced.

Arthur noticed that there was no joy in his son's eyes at the first sight of his father in two years, instead there was alarm.

"Dad, what are you doing here?" he asked apprehensively.

"What am I...?" Arthur turned on Lucius. "What have you done to my son?! What sort of spell did you use on him?!"

Bill moved swiftly. Still holding Lucia, he interposed himself between his father and his lover.

"Stop it, dad!" he said sharply. "Stop it!"

"Bill, I'm more than capable of defending myself," Lucius said his voice quiet, but with dangerous undertones.

"Lucia is too young to see her father and her grandfather fighting." Bill said, his tone still sharp.

"Arthur," Dumbledore said. His tone of voice conveyed his smile which tended to be obscured by his long gray beard. "I think it's obvious that there's no magic at work here, at least not magic of the arcane variety."

They sat in one of the smaller parlors that night, the house finally returned to its usual calm state after what turned out to be an eventful day. Bill's mother had been summoned to the manor where she proceeded to weep over Bill and then weep over the sight of her first grandchild. She almost wept over Lucius but stopped herself in time and gave him a dagger-like stare.

Lucius was feeding Lucia her evening bottle, something he'd never done for Draco, but Bill's hands-on parenting philosophy was producing a lot of firsts in Lucius' life. He was surprised at how much he enjoyed it.

"I agree that being forced to marry at wand-point isn't exactly romantic," Bill was saying. "But you make being paroled into the custody of your spouse for the next fifty years sound the same as being thrown into Azkaban prison."

"You are deliberately misconstruing my meaning," Lucius tossed the empty bottle into the air where it disappeared back into the depths of the manor kitchen and shifted Lucia upon his shoulder to pat her back. "I was merely recounting the events of the day. As a matter of fact, the situation could add some intriguing variety to our usual nighttime play."

"Variety...?" Bill was puzzled at first and then his hazel eyes lit up as he comprehended Lucius' meaning. "Ahhh, warden and prisoner."

"Exactly."

Lucia emitted a rather sizable burp.

"I think it's m'lady's bedtime, don't you?" Bill suggested quickly. "Then you and I can go up to our bedroom and you can start serving your sentence."

End

[Back to index](#)

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