

The Afterlife, According to Draco Malfoy

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The Afterlife, According to Draco Malfoy

by [tigersilver](#)

Summary

Warnings: Lashings of angst, humour (deadpan, naturally) and major character death. A sad/funny/hopeful/happy endings Gift!Fic for these wonderful persons (whom I hope will forgive me, for giving them

Death!Fluff): sesheta_66 , faithwood , marguerite_26 , myths_by_kynx & alafaye

Summary: 'Tea is not a proper substitute for astral brooms': The Afterlife, according to Draco Malfoy

When Harry died (they were really very elderly then, the both of them, and Harry had said to him just yesterday it was 'Past time, Draco. Really, it *is*'), the light went out in Malfoy Manor.

Tory came straight through the Floo and sat with him; endless hours spent not drinking cold tea and not eating warm biscuits. She announced her intention to stay over in her old suite, and the children arrived in a flurry shortly after. The Manor bustled with life, full to overflowing, but Draco was chilled.

Sirius Ares (Lily's son, naturally) helped him Apparate round a Cook's tour of the rooms, many of them now shut down tight and blanketed with dust-covers against the decades of quiet lassitude. He was on a search for that lone room that wouldn't remind him so sharply of Potter—take a breather, maybe—but there were none. Harry had permeated the Manor with his presence, exactly as he'd filled Draco to the brim and then some, and there was no single spot that Draco couldn't call 'Harry's'. Not one.

Except their bedroom was now a cold and empty place. Not even twelve hours gone and the sheets were already Arctic and frigid. Young Sirius Ares only passed over a handkerchief (clean, Draco noted, and acknowledged at that at least Ginevra's children had proper manners) and waited patiently whilst Draco retrieved yet another jersey against the persistent chill.

It was the dead of winter when Harry passed. The dead of night. Truly 'dead' now, with no hope of rebirth, ever. Draco, returned by the young sprig with care to Tory's twittering, only sighed.

There was naught to do but wait, then, and he well knew the frustrations of *that*. Had he not waited till Harry was finally ready for him—years and years, until he was quite sure he'd withered away and simply hadn't noticed? That his heart, so eager once and burning, had dulled to but a grey-hued coal? But then Harry had come, at last, tardy as usual, slow off the mark—as usual—and rescued him from sinking into the dullards. He'd had his renaissance then; come alive again to the utmost, and they'd immediately travelled off to warmer climes, too.

Which had helped, Draco admitted, nodding over memory, at the time. Stoppered the wisps of lingering gossip; sent the ravenously nosy over the verge nicely. Italy had been lovely, with Harry. Everything had, with Harry.

He nodded, too, when Scorpius suggested he should indulge in a brief holiday, gain his spirits back, and murmured polite nothings to send his too-concerned son off track. He wouldn't be leaving the Manor, no. Not again. It had been his home once more, beloved to him and deeply precious, once Harry had come to live there.

Without Harry, there was no home—no 'warm', no haven. There was only waiting for the Hero to notice *he* was waiting to be rescued once more—perchance to stop off his astral Nimbus (of course he'd have *that*, the git) and yank an impatient Draco aboard behind him, heedless of creaky old bones and a persistent ache, and whisk him away beyond the lowering clouds of leaden almost-January and the ashes of sullen loneliness.

There was only the waiting to manage, but...

Draco could, in the interim, store up a few pithy words for the git when he saw him again; force him to sit up and take notice when he finally bothered his arse into a proper bustle and returned to claim his impatient lover.

'Git', while an old reliable, had been heavily overused when Harry still lived (was that only yesterday? Couldn't be. It felt like ages ago...Draco sighed again and waved away yet another cup of tea Tory offered him.) Besides, it held no fangs when one was past the ripe old age of one hundred fifty. Everyone was a 'git', to Draco. Even Draco.

'Prat' was one left over from Hogwarts. Harry would likely laugh at him fondly, and mayhap fake a punch or some such. Draco smiled. Yes, that one, then. It was...nostalgic. And Harry *would* laugh, which was always a contagious process, somehow. He'd not truly laughed till Harry had come to be with him. He'd not known how.

'Arse'...well, Harry had always been one, true, but more because he didn't notice things that were right under his sodding nose. Certainly, he could sniff out a mystery like a bloody Muggle bloodhound, but the obvious? Oh, no! Harry bloody Potter was pants at the obvious. Why, how long had it taken him to divest himself of that travesty of a marriage? How many years till he'd caught on to what Draco had been telegraphing endlessly: *I want you. I need you. Please remove those fucking blinkers and see me, you arse. I'm right here, wanker. And you want me too, just as much as I want you, so don't bother to deny it, Potter.*

'Wanker'! That was a good 'un, and one Draco had always enjoyed employing, especially with Harry. It was a private joke between them, really, because of course they'd no need to engage in lonely wanking sessions when they had each other. Though they did, at times, for each other and merely for the sheer voyeuristic pleasure. Harry's cock, even the bearded-in-grey version, had been a sight for sore eyes. How Draco would miss it—

How could he ever actually manage to bear this? Did no one understand that? Did no one notice?

Draco sighed. He was tired, and dear Tory had not once ceased her soft battery of chatter, and all the many children and grandchildren were muttering and whispering amongst themselves, a murder of young crows in their sober blacks and best robes.

He closed his eyes. This was all so very wearisome. He was justifiably bored and annoyed with it, and rightfully so. They kept staring at him covertly, his family, as if he might bite, or bark out something sudden and mad, or perhaps burst into tears. Truth was, he'd not shed them. Hadn't had to, for ever so long, and with Harry in his life there'd been no need. No need...

Draco *was* tired, he admitted that. He'd not had his usual afternoon nap, not with Harry cold and stiff in the study, laid out in dress robes. He couldn't even consider sleeping, not with a corpse littering up his house. And all this fuss over suitable inscriptions on tombstones yet to be carved; all these suggestions, one after the other, as to what to place in the *Prophet* and the *Quibbler*, and questions as to whether the Ministry would be building a monument and

whether Draco wanted it at the Manor or at Hogwarts or somewhere else entirely—all of it was just so...very...exhausting.

With his eyes closed, he could almost hear Harry, as he'd been, just last night in the moments before sleep—Death—claimed him.

Softly.

"It's not so bad, Draco," he'd said, and his fingertips had whispered through what was left of Draco's baby fine hair. "Like Platform Nine and Three-Quarters, I'd say—or was it King's Cross? But...a station, and then you're off, on your next big adventure. Dumbledore told me..."

"Harry?" Draco had asked, after several long minutes had passed and Harry hadn't continued. "*Harry?*"

The green eyes popped open instantly, still bright as ever, never faded, and regarded Draco steadily.

"Draco. Don't fret, alright? It won't be long at all, I promise."

"I'll fucking kill you, Potter, if you leave me alone here—you know that!" Draco had instantly been up in arms, grey eyes narrowed keenly and a bite to his voice Harry likely hadn't heard in years. "I will, wanker!"

"Draco...Draco. It'll will be alright, I promise you. You'll hardly notice, I swear it. Gryff's Honour," Harry had murmured and Draco had shut his eyes to the soothing tones of it, still irate.

"I'd better not, git. You promised, remember that," he'd grumped, bashing down his favourite pillow, the one Harry always ended up sharing of a morning. "Remember, Harry."

"I've promised."

Draco earned a kiss for his temper, and they slept, finally, the winter winds buffeting the windowpanes and lulling them to dreams.

"I've promised."

Draco snored fitfully, in an old man's whistle and rasp, and Harry slept, too, ever so quietly... eternally.

With the advance of dawn, it was still as grey and as chill. Draco woke cold as the ice rimed on the ponds, and knew in a horrible instant he wouldn't be warm again in this lifetime, no matter how much tea was poured down his throat by the well-meaning nor how many jerseys he bundled himself into.

"I've promised."

When twilight descended (nearly sixteen hours later—a lifetime, a weary eternity), the family tiptoed out as one of the morning room, chary of disturbing him. It had been Draco and Harry's most favourite of all the many Manor rooms and the coziest, too, where they were all accustomed to gathering for hols and private meals and tea. Tory tucked a lap rug 'round her ex-husband's lap before exiting, hushing the younger ones and sending them off to livelier environs.

"Let him sleep. He must be exhausted, poor dear."

I've promised.

"I'm here."

Draco opened his mouth when he opened his sharp grey eyes, ready to snap back with a biting comment, until he saw what hovered before him, solid and firm as a boiled pudding. No ghostly white Harry, this. He was all colour—white, black, jolting emerald—and all most welcome body heat.

Draco rose to his feet easily, and fell into those familiar arms. It was odd, but lovely, being free again. His real (real?) body stayed behind in the armchair, but that was alright. The children would understand. They'd know what to do; what was proper and fitting. He'd every confidence they could sort it all out and really, two for one was the most economical. The Malfoy fortunes had not been built on wasting away Galleons foolishly.

"Oi! Potter! Is that your old?" He gasped when he saw it—and harder still when Potter whacked him in the arse with it by accident.

"Nimbus?" Harry grinned. "Oh, yes! Um, sorry 'bout that, there—didn't mean to, really. Was an accident, right? Not on purpose. But...but you'll likely remember Hedwig, too, won't you, Draco?"

"I do remember...wanker. Hulloo, old girl. You're looking fit as a fiddle and fine of feather. Harry! Don't be hitting me with that thing again, twat! Mind the bristles!"

"I won't; I promise," Harry blushed, shuffling his feet. "Er, hop on, will you? We've a ways yet to go."

I remember.

"I missed you, even in that short little while, Draco." Harry blushed; Hedwig twittered fondly; Draco didn't miss the shy duck of the cleft chin or the owl nips on the earlobes, not for a moment. "Did you miss me?"

"Git," he chuckled. "You're fishing again—so obvious—and of course I did," he added, smirking happily. "Prat."

"Good. Um...that's good."

"Sap."

I'm here.

With you, Harry. With *you*.

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