

Roman Revolution

Von viv-heart

Kapitel 3: 452 BC

Early 452 BC, City of Rome, Age 18

"This is stupid!" Hermione complained to Draco who rolled his eyes.

"You are just fine with it, because your people are the ones with all the power! Isn't your uncle part of the commission? And of course your father!" she continued and Draco sighed.

"Would you shut up?" he asked and she glared at him.

"Rabastan is not my uncle. His brother is," Draco said and stood up, ignoring the part about his father who had been chosen as one of the Decemviri because he had been part of the embassy. "You should really stay away from politics." He was looking at the Tiber, his back turned to Hermione, pretending to watch the ships and fishermen.

"Women shouldn't get involved, especially those like you."

Hermione stared at his back in horror, deemed speechless, for several seconds.

"Excuse me?" she jumped up from where she had been sitting and marched over to him. "What did you just say?"

"I said you should stay away from politics," Draco repeated, his back still turned to her so she couldn't see his face.

Hermione grabbed his arm and tried to turn him around to face her but he strained his muscles and she wasn't able to do anything.

"What's going on?" she demanded. They had been meeting for two years on a more or less regular basis to discuss everything from art to science to politics and military and had become friends over that span of time and Draco hadn't said anything hurtful or hateful since the first few weeks to her.

"Nothing," Draco barked. "Leave me alone!"

Hermione crossed her arms over her chest and stomped her foot but didn't leave.

"Talk to me, Draco! Something is clearly wrong!"

"Nothing is wrong!" Draco replied with annoyance. "You are just getting on my nerves! You have been complaining constantly since the Decemviri have taken over! It's none of your business and yet you act as if it was!"

"You wouldn't say something like that to a Matrona," Hermione said.

"But you aren't one!" Draco shouted at her and she stuck out her chin in defiance.

"So this is how it is. And I thought you have grown up," she muttered and turned on her heel, leaving him to stare at the Tiber alone.

Ooo

It took Draco two months to talk to Hermione again. He grabbed her arm as she passed him, making a point of ignoring him completely.

"Can we talk?" he asked, adding a soft "please" when he saw her furious glare.

"What do you want?" she asked, crossing her arms over her chest.

"Somewhere more private?" he suggested lamely and Hermione snorted.

"What happened to being afraid of being accused that you took my virginity?"

Draco's cheeks flushed slightly and he looked away. "You are married," he mumbled so quietly she barely heard him.

"What does that have to do with anything?" Hermione asked in irritation.

"Could we just talk somewhere more private?" Draco pleaded and started heading off in the direction of a nearby alley. Hermione followed after a second of hesitation.

"What do you want?" she had barely caught up with him when he turned around and pressed her against the wall, kissing her.

When he let go, Hermione raised her hand and slapped him so hard his head snapped around. "What do you think you are doing?" she shouted at him, not caring if anybody heard her.

"Something I should have done long ago," Draco replied, rubbing his sore cheek. "And let's be honest here, something you have wanted for a long time now too."

Hermione turned around and started walking away. "Don't talk to me ever again," she said without looking at him, but once again, Draco caught her arm.

"Look, I am sorry. Really sorry," he said, sounding desperate now. "I shouldn't have done that and I should not have said those things. I am an idiot and... It's just too much."

Hermione looked at him, not sure what to do. "Then why did you do it?" she asked finally.

Draco sank down to sit on the street and Hermione scrunched her nose, but didn't say anything, waiting for his explanation instead. If Lucius Cornelius Malfoy Draco didn't care about sitting on the dirty street something was very, very wrong.

"Since my father came back he is pushing me into getting married," he said. Lucius Malfoy the older had been away on embassy business for almost two years and had only returned a short time before the fight between Draco and Hermione.

"So what?" she asked. "Most of those our age are married. I am."

"A couple of things," Draco sighed and looked up at her. "First of all, he told me to stop spending time with you. You are supposed to be bad company for somebody who aspires to have a political career and strives to be consul one day. Rumours and bad blood and all that. That's why I said those things last time. I tried to do what he asked me to. But I failed. I missed you, Hermione. I really, really missed you. He introduced me to this girl I am supposed to marry, Fabia Astoria, and she is pretty and smart and nice, but she isn't you."

Hermione frowned. "What are you getting at?" she asked sceptically, fearing where this was going.

"I think I am in love with you," Draco said weakly and ran a hand over his face, looking away.

Hermione stood there speechless for several seconds, trying to process what he had just said.

"What do you expect from me now?" she sank down on the street next to him.

"I don't know," he shrugged. "You are married. You have more than thousand reasons to hate me. don't even know how you stuck along for so long. I have never treated you the way you deserve. And of course, I can't marry you even if you wanted me," he laughed bitterly.

"For how long is this going on?" Hermione put her arms around her knees and lied her

head on them, watching him from under her lashes.

"Started shortly after we started our challenges. You have impressed me when we were kids and then you grew into this strong, smart and pretty woman and well... I should have seen it coming," Draco explained, trying to sound bored but failing spectacularly.

Hermione blushed. "You think I am pretty?"

"Is that the only thing you are surprised about?" he raised an eyebrow.

"I know that I am strong and smart! But there aren't many people calling me pretty," Hermione looked away and Draco put a hand on her back carefully, scared that she would pull away.

"Is that because of your darker skin?" he asked.

"You mean my Greek descendant? Of course. And my big teeth and my bushy hair. Not even Justinus thinks I am pretty and I am married to him," Hermione sighed. "But at least that means I have some time until I am expected to pop out babies. If it was possible and I had married Ron, I would be carrying my second child by now at least."

"What about me?" Draco winked at her, and she could see how much it bothered him that she spoke about Ron that way when he continued. "Would you have really married him if you had the chance to marry a patrician?"

"You want an answer," Hermione straightened up and Draco pulled his hand away.

"Of course," he said, but continued hastily when he saw the look on her face. "But take your time. I can't ask you for anything."

"I need to think," Hermione stood up. "I'll see you later," she said and turned to leave, Draco watching her disappear around the corner before he stood up himself.

Ooo

Hermione found Draco during the public revelation of the 10 tables containing the suggestions for the laws and their public discussion.

He was accompanying his father and his friends, but excused himself under false pretences when his eyes met hers. She ditched her husband too and followed Draco into another side-street.

"Fancy seeing you here," he drawled and she had the sudden urge to smack him again.

"You knew exactly that I would be here," she said and he smirked at her.

"Of course. But what do you think? They did a good job, didn't they?"

"Sure," she agreed unhappily. "I still can't believe Riddle changed his political course this much and actually tried to cooperate with the people."

"He is not an idiot," Draco said. "He knows that a successful politician can only survive with the support of the people. He still thinks that you are below him, though. But that doesn't matter as long as his politics are fine."

Hermione grimaced, but had to admit that he was right. Riddle didn't become consul by spreading hate but by manipulating and paying his way up, together with good tactics and changes of policy in crucial moments.

"But that's not all you wanted to talk to me about, I assume," Draco interrupted her thoughts and Hermione ran a hand through her hair.

"You are right. Let me ask a question first. What do you want from me? What do you expect?"

Draco bit his lip, contemplating the answer. "I don't expect anything. I am not going to violate another man's wife. And everything else depends from your answer."

"Another man's wife? Is that how you see me?" Hermione crossed her arms over her chest, glaring at him.

"For Jupiter's sake, no!" Draco exclaimed. "I told you what I think about you and who

you are to me! I am just very familiar with the story of Lucretia!"

Hermione had to smile at how flushed he was. "I think I like you too, even though you are an egoistic ass. But you are an ass to everyone, so I don't take it personally."

Draco scooped her up in his arms before she even finished speaking, kissing her again and Hermione kissed him back this time.

"If we want to keep this up, we should choose more private places from now on," she said after they broke apart, glancing over her shoulder.

"Don't care," Draco muttered, pressing his lips against hers again, but she put a hand in front of his mouth.

"Draco," she glared at him. "I am still married. It won't do any good if we are seen together like this."

He rolled his eyes but let go. "Somewhere more private might be better anyway," he agreed with a sly smile and Hermione groaned.

"I still can't believe you were so scared of being accused of taking my virginity two years ago."

"You are going to hold that over my head forever, aren't you?" he grinned at her. "By the way, did your husband already do that or do I get the honour?"

"We should go back," Hermione muttered quickly, her cheeks aflame.

Draco followed her, a respectable distance away as they made their way to where she saw Ron and Harry stand together with Ron's sister and Harry's wife Ginny.

"Two more tables with laws?" Hermione stopped and looked at Draco after she caught the words for the umpteenth time in passing. "They are demanding two more even before the first ten are approved?"