

Roman Revolution

Von viv-heart

Kapitel 2: 454 BC

454 BC, City of Rome, Age 16

Hermione rushed through the corridor, excitement bubbling through her veins. She couldn't wait to talk to her friends and share the news with them.

She stopped in her tracks at the unexpected sight in front of her when she reached the atrium, not sure what to do.

Ron and Harry were standing there, their arms crossed over their chests, staring down a third young man, who was staring back at them.

"Hermione," Harry called out to her, relief evident in his voice. "I am glad you came."

"It would have been surprising, if I hadn't," Hermione replied, her eyes shifting between the three young men.

"Oh, right," Harry continued, when he saw her look. "This is-"

"We've met before," Draco cut him off, his eyes firm on Hermione. "No introduction necessary."

"You have?" Ron asked in disbelief, speaking for the first time since Hermione's arrival, as he had been too preoccupied with staring daggers into Draco.

"We have," Hermione replied coolly. She remembered the encounter with clarity, even though eight years have passed since then. She also remembered trying to catch a glance at the boy, and later young man, whenever she caught sight of the distinctive hair colour of his out of the corner of her eye. It didn't happen often and she wasn't wiser than before.

"What is going on?" she asked, breaking the silence as the three young men had returned to watching each other.

"I am sure you heard," Draco muttered.

"If you are talking about the embassy being send out to Athens to study their written laws, I have. But that doesn't explain your presence here."

"His father is part of the embassy together with mine and Sirius," Ron grunted. "Like that could work."

"They are talking in the garden," Harry rushed to inform her, and Hermione nodded.

The whole ordeal made quite some sense, even though she had to agree with Ron, that choosing those three men wasn't the smartest move. It was common knowledge that Ron's father, Appius Veturius, and Lucius Cornelius Malfoy were political rivals and even more, had a personal feud with each other.

Lucius Iunius Brutus, called Sirius, Harry's former tutor, was considered the black sheep of the family, and was on quite bad terms with Lucius Malfoy, who had married his cousin Iunia Narcissa, as well.

On top of that, Sirius and Veturius weren't the best of friends either, as Veturius' wife and Ron's mother Papiria Molly stood in constant conflict with him.

"Who chose the embassy?" Hermione continued her questioning. "And when? The news about an embassy being sent out have barely spread and nobody mentioned who the members were!"

"The Senate," Harry replied. "They have voted as soon as they agreed on it, but had decided to keep it quiet, to give them time to prepare themselves before they have to speak to the people."

Draco snorted and Hermione turned to look at him.

"Do you have something to say?" she asked.

"I just can't believe how naive you are. Albus might pretend to be a pebble-lover all he wants, but anybody with a little brains can notice that he is manipulating all of us. Do you really think, this quite unexpected constellation is supposed to get anything done?"

"Shut up, Malfoy!" Ron barked, and Harry caught his arm to prevent him from doing anything stupid like attacking Draco.

"What are you getting at?" Hermione asked Draco sharply, ignoring Ron. Decimus Postumius Albus, was one of the most respected members of the senate and an all-beloved man and head of the most respected school in Rome. It was quite unusual to hear any sort of critique or bad words about him. But then, she frequented in his closest circles.

"Do you really think, that he of all people would want the laws to get written in stone? He teaches rhetoric and law, and his students are among the best in Rome, but they bend the law more often than not. Getting everything written down, would make that a lot harder."

"Seriously? Are you even listening to yourself?" Harry asked, disgust evident on his face. "How about you question the filthy lies your family feeds you?"

Draco inhaled sharply through his nose and closed his eyes in an attempt to control his rage.

"You don't know what you are talking about," he hissed. "You will see, what will come of this."

"Shut up, you-" Ron growled, just as the three older men walked in to the atrium.

"What's going on?" Sirius asked, looking between them.

"Nothing," Harry replied quickly, and while nobody seemed convinced, no further questions were asked.

"Let's go," Lucius said to Draco, who nodded in response.

He followed his father, but stopped at the door and turned to Hermione.

"If you are really any smarter than they are," he motioned to Harry and Ron, "you'll think about what I've said."

oOo

Draco was walking back home from a visit to his aunt, when he felt somebody catch his arm. Without thinking, he spun around and pressed the person to the nearest wall with his body, his left arm on their neck.

The person yelped and Draco looked down on the supposed attacker and let go immediately, stepping back a few steps to give them place.

"You shouldn't jump people like that. You are lucky it's forbidden to carry weapons in the city," he sneered.

Hermione flushed, rubbing her throat. "I called your name several times, but you didn't react!"

Draco grunted, rolling his eyes. "What do you want?"

"To talk to you, obviously," Hermione crossed her arms over her chest. "After all, I was supposed to think about something."

Draco sighed. "Well? What's your mind-numbing conclusion?"

"Stop being a dick!" Hermione hissed.

"I've been a dick to you since I've first met you, so get used to it or let it be," Draco drawled. "After all, it's been you who has initiated every single conversation."

Hermione glared at him. "Are you saying that your last comment the other day wasn't supposed to make me talk to you?"

"Exactly. I am not interested in what you have to say."

"Then why are you still here, you prick?"

Draco grimaced. "Fine. I am curious," he hissed. "And now talk."

"You are wrong about Albus having orchestrated the whole thing. It doesn't make sense. While I admit that he has quite a few unusual and controversial methods, he would welcome the law being written down as it will be easier to teach. Besides, he will retire from active law soon. But more interesting is that all three members of the embassy have been his pupils at some point – that means they follow his teachings and will only write down what is useful for them as I am sure your father at least wants to continue his career. He wants to try for consul again soon, right?"

Draco nodded.

"Well," Hermione continued. "If they write down the laws in a way useful to Albus it will be only good for him and his school. And the fact that they are all parts of different political wings only helps cover this up. What I don't understand though, is why he chose your father. After all, he might try to sabotage the whole thing."

Draco pinched the back of his nose. "Actually, my father has been a supporter of writing the laws down from the beginning. Meaning, he was the perfect choice for Albus if you are right. Jupiter, he is playing right into his cards."

"Wait, what?" Hermione blinked. "Are you sure?"

"Yes," Draco hissed. "So what?"

"We were both wrong," Hermione clasped her hands over her mouth. "This makes so much more sense!"

"Excuse me?" Draco rose an eyebrow. "What are you talking about?"

"This has nothing to do with Albus!" Hermione explained. "Maybe he initiated it, but it is weird that he got all of his candidates in!"

"Hermione!" Draco hissed. "Talk straight for Jupiter's sake."

"Your father's friends are behind this mess! I thought it was weird to send Sirius of all people, but they probably chose the people most hated by your father to go with him to change his mind!" she rushed out and Draco gaped at her.

"That's crazy, woman!"

"Just think about it," Hermione said. "Sirius never tried for a political career and is only known for his lifestyle! Why would anybody choose him?"

"He paid his way in?" Draco suggested.

"He could go to Greece any time he wants to. He does often enough!" Hermione protested. "Just consider it, Draco."

"No, you are crazy," Draco shook his head vehemently. "And I am leaving. This is ridiculous," he turned on his heel, leaving a fuming Hermione behind.

"What an asshole!" she muttered under her breath and started walking home.

OOo

"What do you want?" Hermione asked sharply when she saw Draco approach her.

He opened his mouth to say something, but closed it again and stopped for a moment. "Nothing," he said finally, returning Hermione's glare.

"Then what are you doing here?" she crossed her arms over her chest.

"None of your business," Draco replied and Hermione turned to walk away, but Draco caught her arm.

"Doesn't look like none of my business," she said, looking pointedly at his hand touching her bare skin.

Draco let go immediately. "Obviously, I wanted to talk to you," he hissed.

"What about? Our last encounter made it look like we had nothing to talk about ever again."

"You might be right," Draco muttered, his face showing clearly how much he hated saying those words to her.

Hermione rose her eyebrows. "That's... unexpected," she said flatly. "What changed your mind?"

"I heard something I wasn't supposed to," Draco admitted. "And now hush. I am not telling you more."

Hermione tilted her head, studying him for a long moment. "You are quite a weird one. I have to admit, that you don't make sense."

Draco crossed his arms and grunted. "You are one to say. You are the weird one. A woman who studies like a man..."

"Wait. You know about that?" Hermione asked in confusion.

"Did you think I said those things out of the blue?" Draco sneered.

"But how?"

"You are famous, you stupid bint! The smartest of her generation, a man in a woman's body, all that. I've heard quite a few senators cursing you and chastising their sons for not being able to match you," Draco explained with disdain.

"You say that like you are a match for me," Hermione said and Draco snorted.

"I am," he said. "As if I couldn't stand up to a plebeian, and a girl on top of that! Stop kidding yourself!"

Hermione's eyes narrowed. "Give me a place and a date. I will be there to show you who truly is better," she hissed. "You'll pay for looking down on me!"

"You need a date and place? Why not now?" Draco stepped closer, building himself up to his full height, staring her down in an attempt to intimidate her, but Hermione didn't even flinch.

"Go ahead," she said. "Try me, and I will try you. Let's set this once for all."

"Fine, let's start with the Iliad," Draco hissed and Hermione smiled sweetly at him, looking up through her long lashes as she started reciting the beginning of the epic. They dared each other with different tasks, neither of them bulking for several hours. Only when the sun started to set, Hermione broke out from her daze.

"I should go home," she said suddenly.

"Are you admitting defeat?" Draco grinned at her and she rolled her eyes.

"As if. Just giving you a break. You need to go home and think of some harder questions, Malfoy."

"Same time same place next week?" he asked instead of dignifying her jab with a response.

"Yes," she replied sharply, but there was a smile on her face and Draco grinned back.

"Good," he said. "And now go. I don't want to deal with any accusations concerning your virginity."

Hermione rolled her eyes. "You really are an ass."

