The Domino Effect

by Dr Jeckell and Mrs Hyde [archived by HPFandom_archivist]

Summary

HP/SS – Slash – Complete!!!!! Harry discovers that when he kills Voldemort, all of his Death Eaters will die as well through the bond that they share with the Dark Lord through their Marks. Harry vows to do anything it takes to allow Severus Snape to escape that fate.

Notes

Note from SeparatriX, the archivist: this story was originally archived at HP Fandom, which was closed for health and financial reasons. To preserve the archive, I began manually importing its works to the AO3 as an Open Doors-approved project in August 2016. I e-mailed all creators about the move and posted announcements, but may not have reached everyone. If you are (or know) this creator, please contact me using the e-mail address on HP Fandom collection profile.
**Like Dominos**

**Title:** The Domino Effect  
**Author:** Dr. Jeckell & Mrs. Hyde (aka Taran & Magdelena)  
**Rating:** NC-17  
**Pairing:** Harry Potter/Severus Snape  
**Warnings:** Non-consensual sex, Violence, Adult Language, Sexual Situations, MPreg  
**Summary:** HP/SS – Slash – Chapter 1 of ?. Harry discovers that when he kills Voldemort, all of his Death Eaters will die as well through the bond that they share with the Dark Lord through their Marks. Harry vows to do anything it takes to allow Severus Snape to escape that fate.  
**Disclaimer:** We do not own any of the characters herein (only the plot). All the characters in the Harry Potter universe belong exclusively to J.K. Rowling, Warner Brothers, and anyone else JKR chooses to allow to play with them. We are publishing our fanfiction writings only for our own selfish desire to be a part of their world.  
**Authors' Note:** Thanks to the incredibly wonderful beta job that Sev1970 did for this story.  

~*~  

**Chapter One – Like Dominos**

Albus Dumbledore paced his large office fitfully, knowing what had to be done. It was necessary to save his dear friend’s life, and the Headmaster knew that it was for the best. He also knew that it would bring two longing hearts that needed each other together. His only reservation was that he simply couldn’t stand the thought of once again manipulating and forcing Severus into a situation he had not chosen for himself.

Throughout all his thirty-six years of life, Severus had been pushed, prodded and forced into doing things for others. He very rarely was allowed to make his own decisions and choose his own path in life. The Headmaster himself was to blame for much of that, and he regretted the necessity of it. Albus had known from the moment he laid eyes on the eleven year old, that he would play a vital part in the coming war. He just hadn’t known quite how vital at the time.

Severus had been led down a dark, lonely path that brought him to the hem of the Dark Lord’s robes. Again, it wasn’t what Severus would have chosen for himself, but he wasn’t exactly given a choice. Between the pressures from family and his peers, and a deep lack of self-worth, Severus did as he was told and took the Mark. It was only after his first kill that Severus truly gave in to despair and returned to Albus for a forgiveness he would never give to himself.

Albus sighed as a gentle knock fell upon his door. He composed himself before bidding entrance to the only hope left for Severus. The time had come to once again push Severus into a new direction.

“Welcome, Harry. Have a seat.”

Harry nodded, and closed the door behind him, stopping briefly to gently brush his fingertips along Fawkes’ brilliant plumage before settling in one of the armchairs in front of the Headmaster’s desk. It had been nearly a year and a half now since he had torn apart the Headmaster’s office after the events at the Department of Mysteries. Since that time, he and Dumbledore had talked frequently, and as a result, Harry had come to understand that the elder wizard truly had his best interests at heart.
However, Harry had also learned to read Dumbledore quite well, and the Headmaster’s manner and body language had Harry very concerned. It was the same sad look that Dumbledore had given Harry when he admitted that he had been mistaken in not confiding in Harry sooner about the Prophecy.

“You needed to see me, Headmaster?”

"Yes, Harry. Would you like some tea?" Albus asked as he sat behind his desk. Without waiting for Harry's answer, Albus picked up the little tea pot in his slightly shaking hand and poured two cups. He set one in front of Harry and sipped slowly from his own while he gathered his thoughts.

"There is something of importance that we need to discuss. I find myself having difficulties on how best to broach this rather delicate subject, however." Albus took a deep breath, not looking Harry in the eye. "You see, you are getting older and much stronger. You've learned a great deal this past year and… Well, I believe you are nearly ready to end this war you have been thrust into."

Albus sighed as he thought about all Harry had been through and how much was still to come. The young man had lost so much and now Albus had to break the news that the one man who had taught him the most would be lost as well if Harry couldn't, or wouldn't, do what was necessary to stop it; so much depended upon the young wizard of barely seventeen already. Now Albus was giving him the direct responsibility of another human life.

Harry furrowed his brow, trying to force back his irritation and anxiety at Dumbledore's ambiguity. "Headmaster, with all due respect, you're doing it again. Will you please just tell me whatever it is I have to deal with, allow me to have the tantrum that you're obviously expecting me to have, and then we can get on with whatever it is I have no choice about anyway?"

Harry rolled his eyes at his own rambling, and then again fixed his gaze imploringly on the aging Headmaster.

Albus smiled and his eyes twinkled for a moment before fading back to a dull blue paled by age and worry.

"I wish it were so simple, little one. There is one problem with the fall of the Dark Lord. We, that is several of us in the Order, believe that when Voldemort is defeated…his Death Eaters will die with him through the bond of the Mark."

Harry shrugged nonchalantly, the weight of Albus’ words not hitting him yet.

"Forgive me sir, but I don’t exactly see the problem. I mean anyone who’s thrown in his lot with Voldemort deserves to…” Harry’s voice trailed off, and his eyes widened as a memory from his fourth year flashed through his mind; the sight of Severus Snape boldly uncovering his arm and showing Cornelius Fudge that the Mark had returned. “Oh, bloody hell! Professor Snape!”

Harry watched Dumbledore sadly nod his head, and closed his eyes against the flood of emotions that threatened to overwhelm him. He and the Potions professor had been forced by Dumbledore to declare a truce during the summer after his fifth year. The man had continued to school Harry in Occlumency, and Harry had slowly and grudgingly developed a deep respect for the Potions Master and the difficult and necessary role he played to obtain information for the Order.

Harry had barely admitted to himself how much the prickly man had come to mean to him, but in light of this new revelation, Harry was having a difficult time denying Severus Snape’s importance in his life. His heart ached with the knowledge that yet another person he knew and cared about might die. With a fierce determination, Harry looked up and met Dumbledore’s eyes.
“If you don’t already have a plan to prevent him from dying, you’d best come up with one soon.”

"We do have an idea, however," Albus said, holding his hand up to stop the flood of hope suddenly filling Harry's bright green eyes, "it is not a simple plan and it will involve a lot of work and sacrifice on both your parts. Also, Severus can know absolutely nothing of it in order for it to work. This will not be easy, Harry." Albus shook his head sadly.

Harry nodded his head earnestly. “Whatever it takes, sir. I won’t let him die. I’ll do whatever you ask.”

Nearly two hours later a shaken and pale Harry Potter left the Headmaster’s office. He walked dazedly back up to Gryffindor Tower, barely acknowledging his housemates as he stumbled through the common room and up to his dormitory. Thankfully, he didn’t run into any of his roommates. He quickly changed into his pajamas, and climbed into his bed, closing and warding his curtains.

It was only after he lay back against his soft mattress and the conversation he had just had with the Headmaster replayed through his mind, that the implications of what he had just agreed to do sunk in.

The headmaster had explained that the only way to save Severus was to remove the Dark Mark and the only way to do that was to replace it with the Mark of another strong wizard, that other wizard being Harry. To change the Mark, and thus the bond, was very difficult. It had to be a similar bond to what was already in place.

Harry had thought that would be easy enough. He just had to bond to Severus and while that wasn't entirely a pleasing notion, he would do it happily if it would save the man's life. It wasn't until Dumbledore had begun explaining about the Domination Bond, that Harry began to worry.

For Harry to take the bond away from Voldemort, he had to prove himself to be stronger by completely and totally dominating Severus Snape! The very idea of anyone dominating that man was absurd. Harry simply couldn't picture Severus Snape being submissive to anyone, least of all with Harry Potter!

Harry was just starting to accept that idea when Dumbledore explained even further. Complete dominance included in the bedroom. Harry would have to seduce, possibly even rape Severus. He had to show strength in every aspect of their lives. He had shuddered and gawked at the white haired wizard and what he was asking Harry to do.

Harry rolled onto his stomach and pulled the pillow over his head. He didn't want to think about it anymore. He didn't want to think about what Dumbledore said next.

Dumbledore told Harry that it would never work properly if Severus knew anything about it. He would never be able to completely submit to Harry if he knew he had to. There would always be subconscious thoughts holding him back. Harry hated that something so important and relevant to the man’s life had to be kept from him, but Harry would do whatever it took to keep Severus in the dark about everything.

Harry had asked how he would know if it worked, if he had to do something specific to put his own Mark over the Dark Lord's. That's when he got the real kick in the chest. Dumbledore said that Harry's Mark would appear only when Severus fully submitted and became impregnated. The pregnancy would be a symbol of Harry's full dominance and Severus' submission. With that full dominance established, the bond would be completed.

Harry whimpered as he thought about it all. Not only did he have to force Severus into submission
and an unwanted bond, but he had to get the man pregnant as well. He hated the plan and hated Voldemort more than ever before. He cared about Severus and he wanted a family, but not like this. He certainly wasn't in love with the man, far from it, and he wasn't ready to become a father. More than that, though, was the thought that it had been done to Severus once before.

Dumbledore said that it had been different the first time and that Severus hadn't been forced into a pregnancy or anything like that. Severus had submitted when he took the Mark, but this bond had to be stronger in order to tear it away from Voldemort. They had no choice.

Harry had still been in shock after Dumbledore had finished explaining the plan and what Harry had to do. He had simply nodded his acceptance, thanked the man and left. Now, as he tossed around in his bed, he remembered the tears in the pale blue eyes and felt the sorrow and regret that had poured off the old man.

He sat up in bed and angrily wiped his own tears away. He wondered briefly if he was strong enough to do it, then brushed it aside, telling himself that he would be, that he would do what he must. He was determined to do anything to save the life of his respected teacher.

~TBC~
Formulating a Plan

Author's notes: HP/SS – Slash – WIP. Harry discovers that when he kills Voldemort, all of his Death Eaters will die as well through the bond that they share with the Dark Lord through their Marks. Harry vows to do anything it takes to allow Severus Snape to escape that fate.

Title: The Domino Effect
Author: Dr. Jeckell & Mrs. Hyde (aka Taran & Magdelena)
Rating: NC-17
Pairing: Harry Potter/Severus Snape, Ron Weasley/Draco Malfoy (secondary pairing)
Warnings: Non-consensual sex, Violence, Adult Language, Sexual Situations, MPreg
Summary: HP/SS – Slash – Chapter 2 of ?. Harry discovers that when he kills Voldemort, all of his Death Eaters will die as well through the bond that they share with the Dark Lord through their Marks. Harry vows to do anything it takes to allow Severus Snape to escape that fate.
Disclaimer: We do not own any of the characters herein (only the plot). All the characters in the Harry Potter universe belong exclusively to J.K. Rowling, Warner Brothers, and anyone else JKR chooses to allow to play with them. We are publishing our fanfiction writings only for our own selfish desire to be a part of their world.
Authors' Note: Thanks to the incredibly wonderful beta job that Sev1970 did for this story. If Harry’s friends’ reactions seem a bit OOC this chapter, please consider that this is now mid seventh year, and a great deal of maturing has occurred for all involved; the war has escalated, and they have been forced to put aside petty adolescent issues that we all have the time and luxury to endure.

Chapter Two – Formulating a Plan

Severus sagged against the door, letting his utter exhaustion take hold now that he was at last safely in his rooms. He flung the silver mask and muddied robes he had worn to the meeting to the floor, and crossed the room to his desk. He retrieved a vial of potion from the upper drawer, his hand trembling almost too much to grip it. Fortunately, he was able to guide the potion to his lips, and to down it. Almost immediately, he felt relief flood through his system as the potion worked to counter the aftereffects of the Cruciatus.

Tonight’s meeting had been the worst thus far. Severus was amazed that he had escaped with his life. The Dark Lord was growing more suspicious by the day of his Potion Master’s loyalties, and more displeased by his inability to bring Harry Potter to him. In the end, Voldemort had been lenient. Realizing Severus’ worth as his Potions Master, the Dark Lord had only reduced Severus in rank. However, this new position would offer Severus much less valuable information, but with the same level of risk he had always faced.

Severus settled back into one of the plush armchairs in front of his fire, trying to organize his thoughts and settle his nerves before he met with Albus to give his report. Before he knew it, his eyes drooped and failed to open as he drifted off into a restless sleep.

When he awoke, it was to the feel of a warm blanket across his aching body and the scent of hot chamomile tea. He inhaled deeply, savoring the comforting aroma that seemed to fill his whole
“Albus, you old, interfering fool,” he grumbled, but the glitter in his eyes belied his words and harsh tone. Gratefully, he poured a cup of the soothing tea and munched slowly on the biscuits, as he began allowing his memories of the meeting to replay through his mind.

Severus’ anger grew with every bite he swallowed, remembering his terrible evening. Bellatrix Lestrange couldn't resist the urge to add insult to injury after he had unceremoniously been cast out of the Dark Lord's inner circle.

"That bloody Bellatrix," he growled, dusting crumbs from his chest. "Telling me I'm nothing more than a common brewer now! That bloody bint wouldn't even know how to brew a simple restorative drought! And Lucius! That bastard can't even blend his own shampoo!!" he shouted at the raging fire in front of him. "Bloody bastards, all of them!"

Severus’ anger was quickly replaced by pain as the bruises he had sustained reminded him of their presence. He looked towards the bathroom and sighed. He really didn't have the energy to run a bath, change and crawl into bed. He had already decided to wait and talk to Albus in the morning, it was Saturday and he didn't have to worry about classes.

With a wave of his hand, his chair stretched out. He made a few more languid gestures, retrieving a pillow from the bedroom, and dousing the lights. He yawned loudly and stretched, then pulled the blanket up under his chin and quickly fell asleep again.

~*~

The next morning found a resolute Harry Potter pacing back and forth in front of a worried Hermione Granger in the Room of Requirement awaiting the arrival of two more people. The bitter tears he had cried last night had dried up and gone, and Harry vowed to himself that he would focus solely on the need to save the Potions Master’s life.

Harry had slept fitfully during the wee hours of the morning, and had come down to breakfast looking so lost and troubled that his two best friends had refused to take no for an answer. While Hermione had accompanied Harry to the Room of Requirement, Ron had diverted his path to retrieve the one person who Harry felt might be able to give him some valuable insight.

Harry heard the creak of the door opening, and turned just in time to see Ron Weasley helping his boyfriend removing the invisibility cloak that had concealed him during their journey. Harry couldn’t stop the slight smile that crept onto his face at the sight of Ron and Draco Malfoy smiling happily at one another.

Though Draco had publicly denounced his father’s association with Voldemort early in their sixth year, and then shortly after admitted his feelings to a very receptive Ron, the two still hadn’t come out to the general population of Hogwarts because of their fears for the focus it might place on the Weasley family if their relationship was known. During the ensuing year, Draco had more than made amends to Harry and Hermione, and had become a valued member, at least privately, to their group of close-knit friends.

The two boys quickly settled down, and encouraged Harry to tell them what had upset him so.

Harry took a deep breath, and launched into his tale, telling his three increasingly incredulous
confidantes everything Dumbledore had told him. Only when he finished speaking, did it occur to
him that his news also meant that any of Draco’s relatives who were marked would suffer the exact
fate that he was determined to prevent from happening to their professor.

“Gods, Dray, I know there’s no love lost between you and your family, but…”

“Harry, please don’t,” Draco said dismissively. “They signed their death warrants the moment they
took the Mark and signed their lives over to him. My father killed my own mother because she
supported me in my decision. He, nor my Aunt Bellatrix, will get an ounce of sympathy from me.
Severus Snape is the only one amongst them who has had the courage to turn his back on the Dark
Lord, and he’s the only one that deserves our concern.”

"So…" Ron asked with a questioning look. "Um… just how are you going to dominate Snape,
Harry? I mean, it's not like you can just walk up to him and say, 'You're going to submit to me
whether you like it or not!' He'll hex you three ways from Sunday before you could even finish
talking!"

Draco snorted and rolled his eyes. "You've no idea just how right you are, Ron," he muttered. "I just
can't see him being submissive. He needs to be taken care of, not dominated. All I can say is, good
luck, Harry!"

Hermione sighed sadly. “Much as I hate to admit it, they’ve both made very valuable points. The
very thing that saves Professor Snape’s life may actually break his spirit. I’ve got a pass for complete
access to the Restricted Section so I’ll start researching alternatives for you there, but at the moment
I’m not only worried about Professor Snape, I’m also worried about you. Handling the act itself is
one thing, but have you really considered the aftereffects? You’re talking about a situation that will
bind you to a wizard you can barely stand for life, not to mention the fact that if the spell works
correctly, you’re going to be a father.”

Harry sighed and leaned back into the cushions of the couch. “You think I haven’t thought of this?
I’ve always dreamed of having a family of my own, and never once was Severus Snape part of the
equation.” Harry paused, and left out a shuddering breath. “Of course, I’ve never much considered a
future past the final battle with Voldemort.”

“Oh, Harry,” Hermione cried, reaching out her hand to touch Harry’s.

Harry squeezed Hermione’s hand for a moment before continuing. “It occurred to me right about the
time that the sun was rising, that I was actually pretty okay with the idea of becoming a father, even
with Snape.” Harry shrugged. “If he doesn’t want it, I have no problem with raising it myself. If he
does want to keep the baby, then I’ll make sure that no matter what happens that I’m always a part of
his or her life.”

"Is it just me," Draco whispered loudly to his boyfriend with a smirk, "or is he giving in to the idea
of marrying and having a family with Severus awfully quick?" Ron just snickered and shook his
head looking at Harry.

Harry’s eyes narrowed and all the rage and frustration he had felt the night before returned. “If you
can’t be helpful, GET OUT! Less than twenty-four hours ago I agreed to do whatever I had to in
order to save Snape’s life. That MIGHT include bloody well RAPING the man! Do I LOOK happy
about that fact to you, Draco? Ron?”

Harry’s anger deflated as suddenly as it had risen, and he crumpled back into the sofa cushions. “All
I ever wanted was a fucking family. It’s the only thing I’ve ever cared about, and since as usual I
have no bloody choice about my life, I’m taking what fate gives me and trying to fucking well make
the best out of it. And as for Snape… It took me a long time to admit this, but the man has been working for twenty years to make amends for one stupid mistake. He’s going to get the chance to live through this whether he likes it or not.”

"Harry, I…” Draco shrank back from Harry's anger and cuddled closer to Ron.

"Harry, he didn't mean anything by it. It's just funny that it would have to be this way. I mean, you and Snape have got to be THE most unlikely couple in the world!” Ron laughed lightly trying to ease the tension as he held Draco to his side. "All kidding aside, though, how do you plan to go about this?"

“I don’t bloody well know,” Harry mumbled, wincing as he glanced at the hurt look on Draco’s face. “Dray, I’m sorry. I know you’re just trying to help me. I’m just so fucking scared and I truly have no idea what the hell I’m going to do, Ron. I haven’t the first clue of how to dominate a man like Severus Snape short of spelling him immobile and taking him. And that’s something I’m NOT willing to do unless it’s a last resort.”

“There must be another way,” Hermione whispered quietly.

Harry shrugged. “I thought maybe if I had some idea about the Marking ceremony itself, it might give me a place to begin. Did you ever hear your family talking about it at all?”

"I don't think there's really any set ceremony for it," Draco said thoughtfully, his eyes unfocused as he tried to recall what he had heard about taking the Mark. "I think you only need to hold his arm, or where ever you want the Mark to show, and when there is complete dominance on your part, and complete submission on his, the Mark will appear and the bond will form. Of course, there could be more to it than that, but that's all I remember hearing about."

"Which brings me right back to the fact that I have to dominate Severus Snape. How does one even BEGIN to do that without going so far as having to take the man against his will? He enjoys intimidating students as a hobby!” Harry whined.

“Harry,” Hermione said softly, laying her hand on Harry’s sleeve, “I’m not trying to pry, but um… do you have much…erm…experience in this?” she asked awkwardly, a slight blush staining her cheeks. “I know you and Charlie got together a bit this summer, but…”

Harry snorted, his pensive expression replaced by a wide grin. “Yes, Hermione, I don’t think the sex will be a problem. I’m quite comfortable with initiating sexual contact, or even with being the more aggressive partner, BUT this is Severus Snape. How EVER does one get HIM to submit?”

"Well, spells and curses are an obvious no. That wouldn't work for achieving total submission," Draco supplied.

"Hmm…” Ron stood and began pacing the small room. He muttered to himself as he sorted through what he knew about the domineering man, what exactly Harry 'had' to do, and how best to go about accomplishing this near impossible task. He opened his mouth several times to speak, then shut it again with a shake of his head.

"Well… You could always blackmail him into submission… at least as a start," he finally said, looking directly at Harry.

“Blackmail?” Hermione inquired, disbelief and amusement warring for control on her features. “And what could Harry possibly have to hold over Severus Snape’s head?”

Harry had looked hopeful when Ron had begun speaking, but found himself agreeing with
"Let’s rationalize this, okay. The best relationships start with respect, right?" Ron waited for three nods of agreement. "You already respect him, obviously or we wouldn't even be discussing this, and I believe he respects you, Harry, at least, to some degree. Snape… er, Severus?" Ron shook his head, not sure how to address the man that was going to be bonded to his best mate. "Anyhow, he's Slytherin and Slytherins respect strength. Am I right?" he asked Draco, who nodded.

"They also respect cunning, deviousness, guile, and shrewdness," Ron said with a smirk. "You need to blackmail him with something he'd never see coming and can't counter in some way. Something that truly shows your Slytherin side, so even while he's being forced to do something he doesn't want to, he'll respect you for it."

"Why do I have a feeling you have a specific ‘something’ in mind?" Harry inquired with a smirk.

"What if you threaten to expose him as having affairs with several students??" Ron grinned and waggled his eyebrows at his fellow conspirators.

Harry’s smirk spread into a wide grin. "Ronald Bilius Weasley, what EXACTLY are you suggesting?"

Ron snickered and rubbed his hands together as he laid out his plan. By the time he was finished, everyone was in stitches imagining Snape's reaction. It was a pretty grand plan and would require the cooperation of several other students, but they were all confident that it would work. Snape would be left with little option but to follow Harry's orders.

~TBC~
Author's notes: HP/SS – Slash – WIP. Harry discovers that when he kills Voldemort, all of his Death Eaters will die as well through the bond that they share with the Dark Lord through their Marks. Harry vows to do anything it takes to allow Severus Snape to escape that fate.

Title: The Domino Effect
Author: Dr. Jeckell & Mrs. Hyde (aka Taran & Magdelena)
Rating: NC-17
Pairing: Harry Potter/Severus Snape, Ron Weasley/Draco Malfoy (secondary pairing)
Warnings: Non-consensual sex, Violence, Adult Language, Sexual Situations, MPreg
Summary: HP/SS – Slash – Chapter 3 of ?. Harry discovers that when he kills Voldemort, all of the Death Eaters will die as well because of the bond that they share with the Dark Lord through their Marks. Harry vows to do anything it takes to allow Severus Snape to escape that fate.
Disclaimer: We do not own any of the characters herein (only the plot). All the characters in the Harry Potter universe belong exclusively to J.K. Rowling, Warner Brothers, and anyone else JKR chooses to allow to play with them. We are publishing our fanfiction writings only for our own selfish desire to be a part of their world.
Authors’ Note: Thanks to the incredibly wonderful beta job that Sev1970 did for this story. If Harry’s friends’ reactions seem a bit OOC this chapter, please consider that this is now mid seventh year, and a great deal of maturing has occurred for all involved; the war has escalated, and they have been forced to put aside petty adolescent issues that we all have the time and luxury to endure.

~*~

Chapter Three – Co-Conspirators

Severus yawned and stretched his aching muscles. He had slept in his chair for the third night in a row, and was deeply regretting it. He had spent the weekend avoiding as many people as he could, only surfacing for the occasional meal to keep Albus happy. At lunch on Saturday, he had noticed Potter and his cohorts giving him odd, calculating looks and had wondered what they were up to. That wonder turned to dread as on Sunday Potter and his friends were out-right staring at him, and Potter even smiled at him several times.

Severus took a deep breath and prepared himself for his first class of the week. Just his luck, it was seventh year Slytherins and Gryffindors. He didn't know what the Gryffindors had planned for him, but he was certain it was going to be a very long day.

A low growl escaped as the first students began to wander in. It wasn't that he hated children per say, it was more that he hated the students who refused to pay attention and had no respect for what he had to teach, and that was nearly every student at Hogwarts. He waited impatiently until they were all seated, and the door closed behind the last student, Neville Longbottom as usual, before rising stiffly, but gracefully, from his desk.

"Your assignment is on the board. I expect you to do it quickly, silently, efficiently and without aid from myself or fellow students. Get to work!"

Harry tried to suppress his anxiety as he watched all the players move into place. In the end, they had
discussed sketchy version of the ‘plan’ with the entirety of the Gryffindor seventh year, as well as one of the sixth years. The others had been only informed that a prank was being planned on the Potions Master. The students had been instructed to get in as close physical proximity of their professor as possible, and to prolong any contact.

Harry hated the idea of blackmailing Severus, cognizant of the fact that every step to dominating Severus was a step closer to saving the man’s life, but also to breaking his will. Harry panicked whenever he thought of how utterly fucked up things would be after the bond had been ripped away from Voldemort, and focused instead on the simple knowledge that there was no other way to save Severus’ life.

Shaking off his concerns for the moment, Harry nodded to Hermione, and the bushy-haired girl put the first stage of the plan into action. She waited until Severus was just about to pass her desk and then screeched. She scrambled up onto her workstation, her feet dangling over the edge. Just as Severus turned to question her, Seamus ‘accidentally’ knocked Severus forward, pushing the Potions Master between Hermione’s parted legs.

Severus gave a mild grunt as he was knocked into Granger's desk, bruising his thighs and instinctively putting his hands around her slim body to keep from falling over. Before he could fully steady himself, he felt Granger's arms wrap around him and hold his face to her bosom. He shuddered almost violently at the close contact and tried to pull away.

"Ms. Granger, let me go!" he nearly yelled into her chest.

Before Severus could argue further, Ron’s voice called out as a couple of muffled, indistinct clicking noises were heard. “It’s all right, Hermione. I’ve got him.”

Hermione loosened her hold on the Potions Master, with a sigh of relief. “My apologies, sir. I absolutely detest snakes. Ever since that incident in second year with the Basilisk, I’m absolutely petrified by the sight of them.”

“Herman!” Harry cried, taking the small snake from Ron’s hand. “I had wondered where he had gotten off to!”

"Twenty points from each of you," Severus growled as he straightened his robes. "Herman, Mr. Potter?" he asked softly, giving an incredulous look at the snake with the odd name.

Harry flashed Severus an evil smirk. “Herman was the father of the Munsters, a Muggle television program. I thought the name was quite fitting as my Herman is quite green and has a rather square head, just like his namesake. Herman Munster was known for causing destruction wherever he went, and since my lovely little Herman is also quite deadly…” Harry trailed off, meeting Severus’ eyes with a calculating look. “Isn’t it amazing how dangerous the most innocuous-looking creature can be?”

Severus gave Harry a questioning look. He wondered if that was a veiled threat or something else. The young wizard didn't seem to be threatening him… Perhaps it was a warning… He would have to be on his guard for danger, just in case.

Before Severus could even complete his thought, however, Harry’s plan had an unexpected side effect. While Hermione had been playing her part, Neville had continued with preparing their joint potion. Severus whipped around just in time to see Hermione scuttle out of the way as milky white liquid boiled over from Neville’s cauldron.

Neville tried to back away from the hissing cauldron, but only managed to step into some of the
slippery substance. He flailed around, attempting to catch onto something to steady himself, and wound up on his knees in front of the Potions Master, clinging to Severus’ robes just as a couple more of the odd clicking sounds occurred.

Severus never heard the clicks or snickers from the class, as he was too busy growling at Neville. The cauldron sputtered a few more times, continuing to spit its contents. By the time it had settled, Neville had the sticky goop sliding down his chin and a small puddle between his knees. Severus' robes were remarkably clean for a change.

"Longbottom!!" he growled loudly, his voice echoing off the stone walls. The inept student only held his robes tighter and stared up at him in shock, his mouth hanging open with milky fluid still dripping down his chin. Severus growled again and stepped away, causing Neville to fall into him as his hands were still clenching his robes. Severus jumped as Neville's forehead came into contact with his pelvis.

"Longbottom!!" he yelled again. "Let go of me and clean this up at once!"

Neville scurried to comply, Hermione assisting him. He mouthed the words 'I'm sorry' to Harry, but Harry waved off the apology. Harry couldn’t have been more pleased with the way that the morning was going. Count on Neville to screw up in reverse. Neville was only supposed to detain Snape and ask him several questions, visibly cringing at the man’s reaction, but this interaction had been priceless!

The rest of the Potions class was spent with several more students having rather odd interactions with the Potions Master. One of the oddest being when Draco walked up to Severus’ desk to check the original list of ingredients against the one in his book. He bent over Severus’ desk to compare the parchments, repeatedly asking questions as the Potions Master stood nearby.

Severus was becoming jumpy and nervous at all the close physical contact. He was unaccustomed to it and didn't quite know how to react to it. He saw Draco's hand reaching out to him and panicked. He grabbed Draco's hand and held it down with his own against his desk. He then leaned in close so their faces were just inches apart.

"Mr. Malfoy," he whispered, his panic turning to anger, "return to your seat and stay there. I don't know what game you are all playing, but it ends now!"

"Game?" Draco asked, fluttering his eyelashes and giving an innocent look. "Whatever do you mean, sir?" Draco gave him a mildly seductive smile as Severus' eyes narrowed suspiciously.

"Sit down!"

The rest of the class continued without another incident. Harry had already obtained more than sufficient material, and knew when to stop pressing the Potions Master. Later that evening, Harry and Ron met with Colin Creevey to see the results of the pictures Colin had been snapping quietly, under the cover of Harry’s Invisibility Cloak, during the Potions class.

“These are going to be perfect,” Harry commented to a beaming Colin.

“I don’t know, mate,” said Ron. “I’m not sure if they’ll be enough though. I mean he can still make excuses that they aren’t real.”

Harry nodded in agreement, and sighed, knowing that they’d have to take the final step. Harry flashed a questioning look at Ron. “Are you sure you’re both okay with this?” he asked cryptically.

Ron hastened to reassure Harry. “We wouldn’t have volunteered if we weren’t. He wants to help. I
want to help.”

With a resigned sigh, Harry turned back to their younger housemate. “Colin, how much do you know about manipulating pictures?”

~*~

Three hours later, a blushing Colin Creevey handed Harry the additional picture he had requested, and Harry offered him a slight smile.

“Thanks, Colin. And don’t forget, you can’t tell anyone about Ron and Draco.”

Colin nodded fiercely in agreement, his eyes snapping for a moment to the two sated-looking seventh years, who were cuddling against the wall of his small photography laboratory.

Harry thanked Colin again, and as the three left, Colin slumped down into a chair. As if anyone would believe what he had seen if he told them?

~*~

Severus shifted in his chair, pulling his robe tighter around his slim form, and yawned. He had been thinking about the day he’d had, the odd behavior of the students and Potter's cryptic words, until he was exhausted. His desk was cluttered with scrolls to be graded and potions books to be read for research, but he lacked the energy and ambition to even care about them.

Just as he started to drift off, there came a soft knock upon his door. Expecting it to be Albus checking as to why he had missed yet another meal, Severus grumbled the password that would open the door. He remained where he was in the darkened room and waited for Albus to speak.

Harry was shocked when the door to Severus’ suite of rooms opened up to him at his knock. He had prepared himself for this moment for the last two hours, but now that it had finally arrived, it was nothing as he had expected.

Harry had expected to be met by a scowling, intimidating Potions Master, but instead he saw that what Draco had alluded to was very true. The Severus Snape that Harry was looking at right now was nothing like the image he portrayed. Harry had never seen the man looking this broken, this exhausted, and something within Harry gave at the sight.

It had been easy to allow himself to be somewhat lighthearted when he had been discussing the plan to dominate Snape with his friends. It had even been almost fun when they had been effectively pranking Snape in class and gathering the blackmail material that Harry now held clenched in his hand. It had been easy to forget for a few hours that a man’s life depended on Harry’s strength and his power, and his ability to force the man before him into utter submission. Although Harry’s sensibilities recoiled at the thoughts of what that might require, he also knew that saving Severus Snape’s life could go a long way to healing the part of his own soul that died a little with every death in the war.

Harry took full advantage of Snape’s closed eyes, and after closing the door quietly, he crossed the room to Snape’s side. He took a few moments to just stand and look at the man he would be bound to. Severus Snape had been bound to a master since he was eighteen years old, and he would have no choice about the fact that his ‘servitude’ would continue, or to whom he would serve.
A sad smile flitted across Harry’s face as he looked at the soft raven hair, the pale skin, and the slender body of the man…of Severus. Exactly when had the man become Severus to him, and not Snape? There had always been something about the man that attracted Harry to him, even before now. He wasn’t classically attractive, but he had a certain beauty that Harry could appreciate. Harry couldn’t help but wonder what the child they would share would look like, or if he would even be allowed to be a part of that child’s life when all of this was over and Severus knew the truth. Harry promised himself that he would see to it that Severus Snape never looked this exhausted and worn ever again; that he would provide whatever care and comfort Severus was willing to allow.

Harry schooled away his emotions, and prepared to play his role; ready to have it all said and done so the truth could be known.

“It was so kind of you to let me in so easily, Severus,” Harry murmured huskily, taking advantage of the man’s shock and possessively cupping Severus’ cheek. “Had I known you would let me in so readily, I…”

“What the hell do you think you’re doing?” Severus questioned darkly, glaring up into bright green eyes, but didn't move away from Harry's touch. "How dare you come into my private rooms uninvited! I demand that you leave at once!"

Harry forced an evil smirk onto his face, and let his fingers run the length of Severus’ jaw, as he began to speak. “Uninvited? You opened the door for me, Severus. One would think you were expecting me.”

Harry chuckled harshly at Severus’ gobsmacked expression, and moved to the chair opposite Severus, sitting down imperiously as he forced his body to ignore how warm and perfect his hand had felt against Severus’ flesh.

Severus straightened up in his chair and aimed a death glare at the young man. He dusted off his robes, tried to smooth down his long, inky black hair with his hands, and squared his tense shoulders painfully before turning to faced Harry unswervingly.

"I'll ask once more before I remove you from my suites. What are you doing here?" he said evenly.

Harry lifted the folder in his hand, and glanced at them pointedly. “Actually, Severus,” Harry commented, emphasizing the Potions Master’s given name, “I am here to talk to you about a bit of a trade. You have something I want, and I believe that I have something you want as well…something that Albus Dumbledore and the Board of Governors will find very interesting as well, I believe.”

Harry set the folder on the small table between their chairs, and indicated for Severus to take the stack. "Go ahead, I'm giving you first chance to fulfill my terms. If you refuse, the Headmaster's office is my next stop."

~TBC~

Review Replies: Thank you sooo much to everyone who has reviewed so far: amanda, akalterego, Occasus, LeeLeePotter, and 12635397. We've answered your reviews on the review page under your original review.
Chapter Four – Blackmail

"What could a Gryffindor possibly have that could force me to do anything?" Severus said with a smug smile as he picked up the folder. The first thing he saw was a photo of himself and a seventh year Slytherin student. He thought nothing of the angle of the photo, which made it appear as though he were leaning in to kiss the young wizard. He snorted and flipped to the next picture as he stood up and began pacing around.

Severus snorted several more times before looking over at Harry with an inquiring look. When he reached the picture of Neville Longbottom on his knees in front of the Potions Master, everything clicked into place and he gasped. The only thing that would have made it more graphic would be the absence of all clothing. As it was, the positioning of himself and Longbottom, and the angle of the photo, made it clearly appear as though the klutzy wizard had just performed fellatio on him, with even the sticky white 'sperm' sliding down Longbottom's chin.

Wide-eyed and pale, he sorted through more pictures, and then stopped at another, gasping and sputtering. He stared at the photo, then at Harry, then back to the photo.

"Granger?!" he yelled. "But…" he glanced at Harry again, then back. "But… But she's a GIRL!!" He made a disgusted look and continued to pace for another moment before he stopped. His jaw hit the floor and was quickly followed by the rest of him as he sat down heavily. He was shaking, sweating and paler than Harry had ever seen him.

"You've gone completely mad! No one would ever believe this!" he yelled, throwing the final picture at Harry. It was the most graphic and the most damning of them all. It was also, in Severus'
opinion, the most ridiculous. It showed a very naked Ron Weasley and Draco Malfoy engaged in intercourse. That in itself was more unlikely than catching the Dark Lord singing show tunes. What was more, and quite incriminating, was the fact that they were obviously at Severus' desk while he stood over them with his wand raised as though forcing them into the act.

"You will never get away with this, Potter!" he growled angrily even though his heart was beating a mile a minute.

“Oh won’t I?” Harry questioned, his voice dripping with venom, and his heart racing a mile a minute as he forced the malicious words from his lips. “I rather disagree. You’ve made quite a few enemies amongst your students, my dear Professor Snape, and they would like nothing better than to see you gone from here. Every single person in these pictures has already signed statements admitting to feeling pressured by you to perform sexual acts with them.” Harry lied easily as he sniggered, looking in Severus’ eyes, more like James Potter than the young wizard ever had before. “Feel free to check your desk. I’m sure you can still find ‘evidence’ of Ron and Draco’s liaison in your classroom.”

Harry took advantage of Severus’ shocked silence, stood from his chair, sauntered over towards Severus, and cupped the older wizard’s tired and drawn face in his hands. Lowering his lips to just an inch from Severus’, he whispered against them. "Give me what I want, and this all disappears. Deny me, and I ruin you. What is the word of a former Death Eater against the hero of the Wizarding world?”

"What could I have that you could possibly want so badly?” he asked in a trembling whisper, his eyes slightly cloudy from apprehension and mild curiosity.

Harry stood for a moment, knowing that this was the opportunity he had waited for. But a small voice inside his head, a voice that suspiciously sounded like Draco’s, made him stop and truly look at how weakened and utterly defeated the usually strong, stoic man had become. Harry knew that if he went through with their plan he might save Severus’ life, but he would destroy the man’s will. Knowing that they still had a bit of time before he had to force the bond upon the Potions Master, he made a split second decision.

Harry ghosted his lips along Severus’ cheek, and down to his earlobe. “Actually, I came here initially wanting nothing less than to spread your thighs and pound inside of you,” Harry whispered seductively, “but I’ve changed my mind. That’s not enough. You see, Severus, by the time I finally take you, you’re going to be begging me for it. You will be willing to subvert your every desire just to have my cock inside of you.”

Severus shivered at the touch of Harry’s lips, breath and words. He then shook his head out of Harry’s light grasp and turned away.

"Why? Why would you want me when no one else ever has?” he whispered softly, his voice shaking as much as his body.

“Don’t worry about the ‘why’ Severus, just let me show you how much I want you. I did all this,” Harry indicated the photographs with a sweep of his hand, “because I’m not above blackmailing you to get what I want. Let that be enough of an explanation for now and give yourself over to me; let me own you. Take a step back from the control you have to exert when you’re in front of everyone out there.”

"Own me?!” Severus shouted incredulously. "No one 'OWNS' me, Mr. Potter!" he pushed Harry back and stood. The sudden anger that rose up and darkened his already black eyes, was now pouring off him in waves. "Go ahead and take your bloody photos to Albus. He'll never believe you,
"Dumbledore won’t even be part of the process, Severus,” Harry replied low and dangerously, his heart beating a staccato rhythm in his chest, hating himself for the trump card he knew he had to play, the bile rising in his throat even as he spat out the bitter words. “I’ll go directly to the Board of Governors, and you will lose your job and your only refuge from the Dark Lord. Do you really want to take that chance, Severus? Can you really afford to?"

Harry closed the space between them again, and cocked his head. “I’m sure Voldemort won’t be happy to find out that his only spy in Hogwarts is no longer of use to him. But then again, I’m sure he can find other,” Harry’s eyes drifted down to pointedly stare at Severus’ crotch, then raised them again to meet his eyes, “uses for you. Is that it, Severus? Would you rather have the Dark Lord buggering you than me?”

"At least the Dark Lord offered me something in exchange for my services. What could you possibly offer?” Severus asked ardently, his arms crossed over his chest and his temper still running hot even though he knew he had no real options here.

Finally, a question Harry could answer from his heart. Sighing softly, Harry gently brushed his fingertips against Severus’ sleeve. “I offer you my everything, Severus, and I offer it to you forever, if you wish it. I will always care for your interests, needs, and safety,” Harry continued sincerely, “Do you really want to throw that chance away?”

Severus' anger drained as his eyes shifted between Harry's, searching for lies, but all he saw hidden behind the bright green orbs was truth and compassion.

"What would you have me do? Kneel and kiss your robes, master?” he asked bitterly. He didn't trust anyone, least of all Harry Potter and he wasn't prepared to give in quietly to anyone.

Before he realized what he was doing, Harry's hand slapped harshly against Severus’ cheek. “Don’t you EVER call me that! I am not him, and I refuse to become him. I want your body Severus, your soul is yours to keep. I'll never ask you to kill or destroy in my name, and I swear to you that one day I will annihilate him. Not just for you, but for me.”

Severus gasped and stared at Harry in shock. Harry spoke with such passion that Severus had no choice but to believe what Harry said was true. He wasn’t after Severus' soul. Severus nodded quickly and bowed his head, not meeting Harry's eyes.

"What do you want me to do?” he asked softly.

Harry forced himself to calm down, his emotions running wildly. He blew out a breath, and raised a hand to lift Severus’ face until their eyes met, hating that Severus flinched as Harry’s hand drew near.

“First of all, you will not rob me of the view of those eyes of yours. They are dark, mysterious, and absolutely beautiful,” Harry stated sincerely, as he lowered his hand from Severus’ chin, only to trail it down the older wizard’s body, ghosting it over Severus’ cock. “Second, I want to see exactly what you hide under those robes. Strip for me.”

Severus clenched his jaw at Harry's touch. At Harry's words his eyes grew large before narrowing into a glare. He stepped away from Harry and began to quickly unbutton his black teaching robe.

Harry nearly crowed in triumph as at last the verbal dance they had been engaging in ended with him getting Severus to acquiesce. Perhaps this wouldn’t be as difficult as Harry had suspected. Perhaps
he could…

Severus had already removed his outer robes, and when he had turned to lay his robes on the chair he had been sitting in, he stayed with his back to Harry as he began unbuttoning his shirt. As the shirt slid down one pale shoulder, Harry’s eyes were suddenly riveted to the man’s creamy skin and he had to force back both the rage and bitter sadness that threatened to overwhelm him.

The Potions Master’s back was riddled with scars, some quite obviously recent whip lashes that still hadn’t been healed properly. As Severus kicked off his shoes and removed his trousers and pants, Harry saw evidence of more of the Dark Lord’s handiwork. Harry was even more shocked when he realized exactly how thin and drawn the man had become. He was barely more than a walking skeleton.

At Harry’s gasp, Severus turned on his heel and faced the younger wizard. More scars littered his front as well, and his ribs protruded from his chest. Harry could see shame filling Severus’ eyes for a moment before he was able to shutter away his emotions, obviously misreading Harry’s reaction. True, Harry had been disgusted at what he saw, but not because of Severus himself. He was reacting to the years of abuse and neglect that had led to his professor’s current state, and he hastened to make the Potions Master understand that.

“You need someone to take care of you, Severus,” Harry forced his voice to be steady as he moved towards Severus, reaching out gently to trace along some of the scars, and feeling the Potions Master tensing under his touch. “And I am going to be that person, whether you like it or not.”

Severus gave Harry a questioning look. He was so filled with confusion from the entire evening, that he just didn't know how to react. He was surprised by the level of compassion his most disliked student was showing him, and even more surprised by his own tolerance of it. Only last year he would not have stood for being blackmailed by anyone, least of all Harry Bloody Potter! He'd have found a way out of it somehow. Now, however, he found himself giving in almost too quickly. He was certainly losing his edge, though not to the extent his fellow Death Eaters believed.

Severus nodded his head curtly and waited for Harry to further direct him. His heart fluttered, his pulse raced, and his legs shook as, with a mix of exhilaration and dread, he anticipated Harry's next move.

Harry continued his lazy touches on Severus’ body, continuing to trace his fingertips along the Potions Master’s scars. Marshalling his courage, Harry moved away from Severus a bit and met the man’s eyes.

“From now on, Severus, when we are alone, we are going to do things my way. And I can’t think of any position more fitting then you on your knees in front of me sucking my cock down your throat.”

After his pronouncement, Harry calmly moved away from Severus, and sprawled back into his chair, looking up at the Potions Master with a raised brow as if challenging the man to refuse him.

Severus cast his eyes to the floor and struggled to keep his anger in check. Had anyone else spoken to him in such a way, they would be writhing on the floor in pain before they could finish their words.

He knelt between Harry's knees and, with trembling hands, he reached out to open the young man's robe. He kept his head lowered and let his hair curtain his face from the intense green eyes that followed his every move. As first the robe, then the over-sized jeans came open, Severus began to tremble more and more. It had been a long time since he had performed oral sex on anyone and he couldn't remember if he had ever done it by choice.
Harry couldn’t help himself; as he felt hands reaching for his belt, and eventually opening his
trouser, his body naturally reacted to Severus’ proximity. Harry’s cock twitched with arousal, as his
hands reached instinctively to gather Severus’ long hair back from his face.

The Gryffindor could feel the reluctance radiating off the older wizard though, and Harry hated that
he was willingly causing the man even more pain. He was just about to push Severus away, ashamed
at his body’s reaction given the circumstances, and to call the whole charade off, when his eyes
locked on the blackened skull and serpent of the Dark Mark standing out on Severus’ inner arm,
seemingly mocking Harry. Harry steeled his courage, and resolved to see this through to the end.
However, that didn’t mean that he couldn’t continue to do everything to reassure Severus that Harry
would not cause him any more pain then absolutely necessary.

“Shhh, Severus, calm down; you’re doing just fine. As long as you do what I ask of you, nobody’s
going to get hurt.” Harry’s tone was understanding, but still held a note of command. “Come on
now, I can’t wait to feel that gorgeous mouth of yours taking me in. Touch me Severus; no more
delays.”

Severus visibly relaxed as he glanced up at Harry. His eyes locked with Harry's as he stuck the tip of
his tongue out, dragging it roughly over the exposed flesh between Harry's hot thighs. He almost
smiled at the gasp of delight he brought forth. The glitter that shone in Harry's emerald eyes was
almost enough to make up for the humiliation he felt.

He reached into Harry's loose trousers and gently released the hot, hard organ. He lowered his head
and gently took the tip into his mouth, massaging it with his tongue. He started off sucking gently,
then began to suck harder as Harry moaned in ecstasy. Severus nearly moaned in pleasure himself as
Harry's fingers weaved softly through his long hair and caressed his scalp. Slowly he worked his
throat down, sheathing Harry's cock in wet warmth.

Harry groaned as lust and need overcame any reservations. Thoughts of plans and blackmail all fled
from his thoughts, and centered on the moist cavern that was slowly and sensuously driving him
mad. The feel of the silky strands of hair against his pelvis was sheer bliss, and Harry resisted the
urge to tighten his grip in Severus’ hair and buck up his hips into the man’s mouth.

“Fucking brilliant,” Harry croaked out breathlessly. “You look so utterly gorgeous, like you’re meant
to be right there between my thighs.”

Severus choked back a growl at Harry's words. He felt utterly used and worthless. He wrapped his
long fingers around the base of Harry's cock and began squeezing it gently in time with the up and
down movements of his mouth, attempting to bring Harry to climax quickly and put an end to this
nightmarish event. His increased tempo soon paid off as the trim body beneath him tensed and he felt
Harry's balls begin to tuck up tightly to his scrotum.

Unaware of how Severus had interpreted the words he had meant to be reassuring, Harry allowed
himself to fall utterly into the fantasy that Severus was doing this by choice.

“Oh, gods, Sev’rus; I’m so close.”

All it took to push him over the edge was the sight of Severus’ head bobbing up and down on his
cock. Harry let out a stream of curses, and tightened his grip on Severus’ head, forcing the older
wizard to stay still as he arched up and climaxed into the man’s waiting mouth.

Severus gagged briefly before he was able to start swallowing. He ignored the musky, slightly spicy
taste, and thanked Merlin that it was over. He gasped and gulped fresh air when Harry finally
released him. He sat with his head bowed, his chest still heaving. He felt dizzy and thought he might
pass out, so he steadied himself with his hands on Harry's knees.

Harry was overwhelmed by a surge of protectiveness when he saw how Severus had reacted. He shook off his post-orgasmic sluggishness and let out a shuddering breath, trying to compose himself. Carefully, he tucked back his still-sensitive member into his jeans, and then slowly reached out one hand to cover one of Severus', as the other gently tucked an inky strand of hair behind the man’s ear.

When Severus looked up in surprise at Harry’s tender actions, Harry leaned forward and slowly and deliberately licked the corner of Severus’ mouth, where a trace of his own come remained. Severus gasped in response to Harry’s action, which gave the Gryffindor the perfect opportunity to sweep his tongue into Severus’ slightly opened mouth.

The kiss lasted only a moment, before Harry pulled back, not even giving Severus a chance to respond. Harry offered Severus a soft smile before speaking. “I told you earlier that I had no desire to be like him.” Neither Severus nor Harry needed clarification that Harry was speaking about Voldemort. “I will NOT hurt you unless I don’t have any other choice.”

"I…” Severus shook his head, uncertain what he wanted to say or ask. He was utterly baffled by Harry's words and actions. He decided to stay silent for now and see what Harry would do next. "What now?" he asked quietly, his eyelids drooping tiredly.

Harry motioned for Severus to rise, and then stood himself, finishing closing the clasps on his trousers, and smoothing down his robes. He couldn’t help but sigh at seeing his usually unflappable Potions Master so hesitant and confused.

“Now you order yourself some food from the kitchens, you go about your nightly routine, and you get a good night’s rest. I will be back tomorrow night; we are far from done here.”

Harry brushed his lips against Severus’ cheek before turning and walking to the door. His hand was on the doorknob when he turned back to look at the Potions Master, all traces of his earlier tenderness gone from his features as he sneered. “And if I even hear a whisper that you’ve tried to go to Dumbledore or anyone else about this, I won’t hesitate to owl the Board. Good night, Severus.”

~TBC~

Authors’ Note: We just had to share with you a comment from our lovely beta, Sev1970. She sooo hates it when we write mean!Harry. *smirk* Here’s her comment: “This is so mean!!!!! Gah – Poor Severus! I know it has to be done this way, but…Severus!!!!!!! Screams at the injustice of it all!!!” *snicker*

Review Replies: Thanks to Sparkin, LeeLee Potter, Kat, magalud, akalterego for your reviews. We have answered each of your reviews individually underneath your original review post.
Moving Forward

Author's notes: HP/SS – Slash – WIP. Harry discovers that when he kills Voldemort, all of his Death Eaters will die as well through the bond that they share with the Dark Lord through their Marks. Harry vows to do anything it takes to allow Severus Snape to escape that fate.

Title: The Domino Effect
Author: Dr. Jeckell & Mrs. Hyde (aka Taran & Magdelena)
Rating: NC-17
Pairing: Harry Potter/Severus Snape, Ron Weasley/Draco Malfoy (secondary pairing)
Warnings: Non-consensual sex, Violence, Adult Language, Sexual Situations, Graphic Sexual Content, Rimming, MPreg
Summary: HP/SS – Slash – Chapter 5 of ?. Harry discovers that when he kills Voldemort, all of the Death Eaters will die as well because of the bond that they share with the Dark Lord through their Marks. Harry vows to do anything it takes to allow Severus Snape to escape that fate.
Disclaimer: We do not own any of the characters herein (only the plot). All the characters in the Harry Potter universe belong exclusively to J.K. Rowling, Warner Brothers, and anyone else JKR chooses to allow to play with them. We are publishing our fanfiction writings only for our own selfish desire to be a part of their world.
Authors' Note: Thanks to the incredibly wonderful beta job that Sev1970 did for this story.

~*~

Chapter Five – Moving Forward

Severus squinted into the steaming cauldron before him, checking color, consistency, and scent. He held his wand in one hand and a cup of dried herbs in the other, and as the first bubble broke the creamy orange surface, he dusted the herbs over the top and backed up a step. As expected, a puff of gray smoke mushroomed over the large cauldron. When it eventually dissipated, he peered in to see the results, and scowled. What should have been an orange glow was no more than a muddy brownish mess. Growling loudly, he waved his wand and cast the cauldron angrily into a corner where it crashed into several other discarded pots.

Through the clang, Severus failed to hear the knock on his door. When the noise from the cauldron and its contents hitting the wall had died down, and he turned back to set down another cauldron, a heavy pounding landed on the door, shaking its hinges.

"Go away!" he shouted. He filled the cauldron with water and started the fire under it, adjusting it to a suitable flame. "Bugger off!" he yelled louder as the pounding continued.

Severus then growled again as the knocking resounded even more loudly. Slamming his stirring rod on the table, he stormed to the rattling door, his wand raised menacingly.

"I said, bugger off!" he snarled as he pulled it open.

"I don’t think so,” came the reply of Severus’ visitor, who of course, HAD to be none other than Harry-BLOODY-Potter. “Temper, temper! We are in a foul mood today, aren’t we?” Harry asked.
Harry couldn’t help but smirk at the apoplectic look on Severus’ face. Completely unaffected by the man’s anger, Harry merely pushed past Severus and haughtily sauntered into the room, perching on the edge of Severus’ workstation.

“You weren’t at breakfast today. I trust you did what I requested and ordered food in?”

Severus merely glared at Harry for a moment. "Of course,” he replied snidely and turned back to his steamy cauldron.

Harry’s voice held a note of steel when he responded, emerald green eyes flashing in anger. “You WILL do as I say, Severus; not in just our sexual activities, but in all respects.”

Glaring in the Potions Master’s direction, Harry hopped down from the table and strode imperiously over to the fireplace, grasping a handful of floo powder from the mantel. He threw the glittery powder into the flames, and leaned forward.

Severus couldn’t hear what Harry was saying, but before Harry had even stood from the fireplace, a house elf popped into the room with a tray laden with sandwiches and tea, quickly set down the tray, and popped out of sight.

Harry motioned towards the tray, and gave Severus a withering glare. “You WILL sit and eat right now. It’s quite obvious from the amount of potions you’ve apparently ruined this morning,” Harry noted as he glanced significantly at the pile of cauldrons near his feet, “that you are not at your best. EAT, and I’ll take care of these.”

Without another word, Harry walked to retrieve the cleaning supplies.

Severus threw himself angrily into a chair in front of the food and glared at it, as though it was the cause of all his problems.

"What the bloody hell does it matter if I eat or not?” he grumbled, just loud enough for Harry to hear.

Harry looked up from where he had begun scrubbing one of the cauldrons clean, allowing the arrogant mask he had been wearing to slip, his face betraying his true concern for the Potions Master. “You still have an important role to play. I won't just let you wither away. Just because your spying isn't working out anymore, doesn't mean I don't still need you!”

"Need me for what?” Severus asked with annoyance and curiosity, turning to look at Harry.

“Do you honestly not know?” Harry asked incredulously. “You are the only person who never expected ‘great’ things from me. You've kept me grounded in so many ways, and yes, I’m not going to lie; initially I hated you for it. You were always so horrible and cutting, but after what happened between us during my fifth year, I was forced to realize that you’re so much more than the veneer you portray. After recognizing that, it was much easier to comprehend that though your methods left quite a bit to be desired, you always had my best interests at heart.”

Harry sighed softly and offered Severus a tight-lipped smile, wanting to reassure the man but without betraying how much of a toll this whole act of blackmail and domination was taking on his psyche.

“And that doesn’t even begin to cover how much I admire what you’ve sacrificed for the Order.”

Severus just scowled and turned back to the tray of food in front of him, trying to cover the light blush that tinted his cheeks pink. He appreciated Harry’s honesty and his words. He felt valued for the first time in his life. No one else, not even Albus, had ever shown him such respect.
He almost felt affection for the young wizard, until he looked back at the tray sitting in front of him. He remembered why the teen was in his lab in the first place and sighed. He didn't like to be pushed around and certainly didn't like being blackmailed by one of his own students. Severus shook his head and picked up half a sandwich. He took a small bite and chewed slowly.

Harry cheered inwardly as he saw Severus following his earlier directive and at least attempting to eat. He continued cleaning the cauldrons methodically as he tried to quell his anxiety. It had been almost disturbingly easy to agree with the plan to force the new bond between him and his Potions Master, his desire to save Severus’ life far outweighing the impressive mountain of negatives associated with the idea. However, putting the plan in action had far different consequences.

Harry couldn’t even begin to describe how wonderful it had felt to feel Severus’ lips wrap around his cock last night; and a part of him hated himself for it. After crawling back into his bed in Gryffindor Tower, Harry had cried himself to sleep with the realization that he was desperately attracted to Severus Snape, the one man who would likely, after the bond had been completed, hate him much more than he had ever hated Harry’s father.

After Harry finished his work and stowed away the cleaning supplies, he looked up to see Severus staring resignedly at his plate. Harry could see that the man had made a genuine effort to eat, and so the reluctant Gryffindor forced the mask of arrogance and control into place and moved to Severus’ side.

He brushed his fingertips along Severus’ cheek. “All finished, Severus? Are you ready to fulfill my next requirement?”

Severus shivered lightly at Harry’s touch but didn’t shy away. "And what would this 'requirement' entail?"

Severus felt happy and comfortable for the first time in a long time. It had been too long since he had forced himself to sit and eat a real meal, small and simple as this one had been. He wanted to thank Harry for his kindness, but was still suspicious and angry over the blackmail, and so remained silent.

Harry was determined to make sure that Severus received at least some pleasure out of their twisted little relationship, and had spent the better part of the morning knowing exactly what he wanted from Severus this time.

“I want you to get up and strip off your robes for me, Severus. Then I want you on the desk, on your hands and knees.”

Harry could feel the anxiety rolling off Severus in waves, and he chuckled darkly in reassurance. “No, I’m not planning to fuck you this time, Severus. That will come later tonight, in your chambers, where I can be inside you for as long as I like without the chance of interruption.”

Severus stood shakily, fighting to calm his racing heart and laboring lungs. He turned away from Harry, the same as he had the night before, and stripped off his lab robe, then started to unbutton his pale blue shirt.

"You're going to pay for this, Potter," Severus growled under his breath, too low for Harry to hear.

Harry watched Severus methodically strip himself, and a bitter wave of sadness washed over him as he reminded himself that Severus would never willingly choose to be with him in this way. Harry blinked back angry tears as he watched Severus quietly arrange himself as he had been instructed. Harry could literally see the tension in the man’s muscles; the barely repressed fury that Severus was forcing himself to quell for fear of Harry’s promised vengeance with the blackmail materials.
Slowly, the young wizard moved until he stood between Severus’ spread legs, his hands gently reaching up to stroke the Potions Master’s back. Whatever Severus had been expecting, it obviously hadn’t been Harry’s soothing touches along his scarred back. The older wizard arched his back and let out a soft moan as Harry continued his gentle touches up and down the creamy white.

Harry continued lowering his hands until tenderly, almost reverently, he spread apart Severus’ cheeks. He then leaned forward, his tongue tracing a path upward from Severus’ sac, along his perineum, finally reaching its goal. Harry’s tongue then circled Severus’ anus, moaning at the feel of the muscle twitching under his ministrations. Ever so carefully, Harry thrust his tongue inside, smiling in delight as he felt Severus buck instinctively back towards him.

Severus gasped at the first touch of Harry's tongue against his arse and tried desperately not to react to it. He clenched his jaw but couldn't stop from pushing back against that sweet wetness. No one had ever done that to him before. He had done it to others and had witnessed their pleasure, but never had he imagined it would feel this good.

Panting hard enough to make himself dizzy, Severus leaned his head down on the desk, groaning loudly. His mind closed out everything except the erotic waves of pleasure Harry kept sending through his body and soul. He would deal with guilt and confusion later.

As he felt Severus acquiesce to him, Harry relaxed considerably. One hand moved to rest against Severus’ hips, and he continued to thrust his tongue inside Severus’ channel. He teased at the opening, loosening it with his caresses, and lathing the area with his tongue until it was liberally coated with saliva. Meanwhile the other hand slid into his pocket, removing and then quietly opening a jar of lubricant he had stowed in his pocket earlier.

When Harry was satisfied that Severus was sufficiently relaxed, he carefully inserted a slickened finger into the tight hole. Thigh muscles tensed beneath Harry’s fingertips, and Harry hastened to reassure the Potions Master.

“Shh, I’m not going to hurt you, but I’m damned well going to make sure you get some pleasure out of this,” Harry soothed, verbalizing his earlier thought as he placed a soft kiss against Severus’ tailbone.

Severus didn’t respond, but Harry could feel the man forcing himself to relax, still obviously expecting Harry to cause him pain. A part of Harry knew that the rough treatment would eventually come, that there would be a time when he would have to force unwanted attentions on the scarred and broken man that had been entrusted to his care, but he could give Severus this. And after it was all over, Harry could only hope that Severus’ memories of the gentleness would overwhelm his knowledge of the deception and pain he had endured.

Harry gently thrust his finger inside Severus, feeling the muscle give slowly. He continued to kiss and lick tenderly along Severus’ back as he nudged a second finger inside the older wizard. The second finger easily slid alongside the other, and Harry curved them, searching for that nub of tissue that would…

“Severus, are you in there?” came a voice from the hallway, accompanied by a polite knock at the laboratory door.

Harry’s head snapped up, realizing belatedly that neither he nor Severus had locked or warded the door.
Review Replies: Thanks to FeyLynn, marauderslover, LeeLeePotter, sparkin, Kat, Terri, and akalterego for your reviews! We've answered your reviews on the review page underneath your original review. Thanks again for all the encouragement!
Interruptions and Ultimatums

Author's notes: HP/SS – Slash – WIP. Harry discovers that when he kills Voldemort, all of his Death Eaters will die as well through the bond that they share with the Dark Lord through their Marks. Harry vows to do anything it takes to allow Severus Snape to escape that fate.

Title: The Domino Effect
Author: Dr. Jeckell & Mrs. Hyde (aka Taran & Magdelena)
Rating: NC-17
Pairing: Harry Potter/Severus Snape, Ron Weasley/Draco Malfoy (secondary pairing)
Warnings: Non-consensual sex, Violence, Adult Language, Sexual Situations, Graphic Sexual Content, Rimming, MPreg
Summary: HP/SS – Slash – Chapter 6 of ?. Harry discovers that when he kills Voldemort, all of the Death Eaters will die as well because of the bond that they share with the Dark Lord through their Marks. Harry vows to do anything it takes to allow Severus Snape to escape that fate.
Disclaimer: We do not own any of the characters herein (only the plot). All the characters in the Harry Potter universe belong exclusively to J.K. Rowling, Warner Brothers, and anyone else JKR chooses to allow to play with them. We are publishing our fanfiction writings only for our own selfish desire to be a part of their world.
Authors’ Note: Thanks to the incredibly wonderful beta job that Sev1970 did for this story.

~*~

Chapter Six – Interruptions and Ultimatums

“Just a minute!” Severus cried. His rising libido dropped like a rock and before he could make a move, Harry grasped him around the waist, lifted him off the desk and set him on his feet on the floor. Just as Severus was calling for his wand, Harry spun him around and gave him a hard, forceful kiss that sent shivers down his spine.

Severus spelled his clothes back in place, smoothed down his hair and dashed to the nearest simmering cauldron, while Harry did the same. The Potions Master threw the first thing he could reach into the bubbling pot and created a mild explosion.

“Come in,” Severus growled, gritting his teeth more from the fear of being caught with Harry than from the annoyance of being interrupted when he was enjoying the younger wizard’s ministrations.

The door to the dungeon laboratory flew open, and an obviously concerned Remus Lupin rushed inside, his heightened sense of smell overwhelmed by the acrid smoke still billowing from the ruined potion. Remus stopped just opposite where Severus was working to clean up the mess he had just produced. “Sweet Circe, Severus! I hope my knock didn’t distract you and trigger that…”

“No, Moony, I’m afraid that was my fault, as usual,” Harry commented.

Remus whipped around, his attention having been so focused on Severus that he hadn’t even realized Harry was in the room standing near another cauldron.

“I distracted him at a critical point, I’m afraid,” Harry stated quietly; his eyes downcast as he
attempted to calm his racing heart, and his arousal still peaked as he chanced a glance up at Severus’ flushed face.

Remus looked back and forth between Severus and Harry for a moment, realizing that something was off about both Harry and Severus’ scents. His senses were heightened so close to the full moon, and they had been assaulted by the overwhelming stench of the cauldron fumes when he had entered the room, but now as he filtered out that scent and focused on the more subtle ones, he could sense anxiety pouring off both Severus and Harry in waves. That in itself wasn’t odd, but there was something else just underlying it that he couldn’t immediately put his finger on.

“I did not expect you quite so soon, Lupin, but this,” Severus indicated the ruined potion with a sweeping gesture, “Is most certainly NOT your fault. Having to deal with Potter being here has pushed my already frayed nerves to a…razor’s…edge.” He spat out the last few words as he began walking to the door connecting to his office. He turned back towards Remus as his hand rested on the doorknob. “If you will wait here, Lupin, I shall retrieve your potion from my office.”

Remus nodded. “Thank you, Severus. That is much appreciated.”

“Potter, accompany me and we shall discuss when you will make up this detention,” Severus lied smoothly. “I have tired of your presence today.”

Harry nodded mutely, then offered Remus a tired smile. “I’ll catch you later, Moony. Have fun running tonight.”

As Harry hurried after Severus, passing near Remus, suddenly the werewolf’s nostrils flared as he finally recognized the scent he hadn’t been able to place earlier. It was arousal…but not the usual heady scent. No, this arousal was one tinged with fear, coercion and shame, and both Harry and Severus nearly reeked with it.

~*~

“Oh, relax, Severus. He didn’t see anything and you covered it all very well.” Harry grinned in relief at Severus’ quick thinking as he stepped up to him. He pulled Severus to him by the front of his robes and planted another rough kiss on the man’s slightly bruised lips. “By the way, before I go, I want the passwords to your rooms,” he said when Severus pulled away.

“Potter!” Severus growled softly. “This has got to stop! We could have been caught! And not only would I lose my job, but you would likely get expelled, as well!”

“Potter!” Severus nearly shouted before remembering Lupin was on the other side of the door.

“Yes, you are.” Harry glared at Severus, his arms crossed over his chest, daring the man to say no again.

“Potter,” Severus snarled through gritted teeth.

“Yes. You are.” Harry glared at Severus, his arms crossed over his chest, daring the man to say no again.

“Harry!” the younger man corrected.

Severus growled and ground his teeth. Finally he was forced to give in.

“Fine. They are: Tearmann, Santuario, Heiligdom, and Sanctuaire. You can figure out for yourself, which one opens which door,” he said smugly as he turned towards the goblet on his desk.
Harry moved up behind Severus and pulled the man’s hips back against his crotch. His half-hard length pressed against Severus’ arse as he whispered in Severus’ ear. “You will find every ‘sanctuary’ you ever needed in me. Until tonight, Severus.”

Harry’s teeth nipped Severus’ earlobe before he pulled away and strode out of the office door. Once safely in the hall, the door closed behind him, Harry slumped against the wall, nervous laughter escaping for a moment before he could control himself. He took a few deep breaths and finally pushed himself off the wall, heading towards Gryffindor Tower. He needed a shower, rest, food, and advice; and not necessarily in that order.

~*~

Severus braced himself against the desk as he fought with his warring emotions. He had actually enjoyed the ways Harry had touched him, the way Harry treated him with care and compassion, and hated himself for it. It was only a game to the young hero, a way to take out his frustrations of the war and his impatience with not being able to defeat the Dark Lord. He knew Harry couldn’t really care about him, for him. No one could want him for anything more than a valuable tool to be used and cast aside. And yet… Harry seemed to want more…

Severus slammed his hand down on the desk in frustration. Nothing made sense, least of all Harry Potter’s current behavior and his own reactions and rising emotions.

“Severus?” a soft voice called from behind.

“What?!” he shouted, turning to see a concerned Lupin standing in the open doorway. “Here,” he said, almost apologetically as he held out the goblet with trembling hands.

Remus took a deep breath and accepted the steaming cup from Severus’ hand. He drank back the potion, eyes never leaving Severus’ form. Severus looked more nervous and tired then Remus had ever seen him. Something had caused the man to lose his usually perfect composure, and Remus’ anger grew as he came to what he thought was the reason why.

Grimacing at the taste, he offered the empty goblet back out towards Severus. “Now would you like to explain to me what exactly is going on between you and Harry? Exactly how much have you coerced him into?”

All the color first drained and then rushed back into Severus’ face. His chest heaved and his eyes blazed with more anger than Remus had ever seen. Remus cringed internally as he realized the error of his conclusions. He watched with sadness and shame as Severus’ anger dissolved almost immediately into hurt.

“Get out,” Severus said with a deadly soft voice, his eyes misting over. He took the goblet in his shaking, white hand and turned away.

“Severus?” Remus asked gently.

“Just go,” he said in a quivering, whispered voice. Severus closed his eyes and stood trembling. “Harry was right. No one would believe me,” he said so softly Remus barely heard him.

“I’ll believe you,” Remus said as he reached out to gently touch Severus’ shoulder. He drew back quickly when Severus flinched and jumped at the light touch. “Just tell me what’s going on. What has he done to you?”
“Nothing… It doesn’t matter… I,” he said indecisively.

“It does matter, Severus,” Remus urged. “At first I couldn’t put my finger on what I scented back there in your lab, and that’s because it wasn’t typical arousal.” Remus slowly approached Severus, as one would with a hurt and frightened animal, willing the man to trust him. “Obviously you and Harry are engaged in some sort of sexual relationship, but I’d venture a guess that it’s not one of your choosing. I’m still confused about what I scented from him, but it’s evident that you’re not the one in the position of power here. So I’ll ask you again. What has he done to you?”

“You wouldn’t believe me,” Severus repeated, more emphatically than before. “There’s no way you would take my word over the ‘Golden Boy’.”

“Oh I wouldn’t?” Remus questioned. “You forget, for seven years I shared a dormitory with that young man’s father. I may have been his friend, but James Potter had a cruel streak in him when it came to you. When I was a child, I didn’t have the strength or the sense to stand up for what I believed was right,” he continued, bitterness lacing his voice. He sighed resignedly and squared his shoulders. “Now I do. If Harry is becoming like James, then I want…no…I NEED to know it, Severus. Tell me.”

Severus looked at Remus with tired eyes, uncertainty plain to see. He sighed quietly and gave a curt nod. He walked over to his small sofa and sat with Remus at his side, watching him closely. With a shaky voice he began to tell Remus everything that had happened over the last few days with Harry Potter.

~*~

Harry made it back up to Gryffindor Tower without running into anyone. The rest of the students were at lunch, or off in Hogsmeade, offering Harry the freedom of not having to answer any questions about his whereabouts right away. Harry hurried into the shower, trying to wash away the anxiety and tension, and finding it impossible. That had simply been too close. Remus had almost caught them together. Losing himself in pleasuring Severus had been wonderful, but it had also been risky.

He stepped out of the shower, dressed mechanically, and made his way to his dormitory. Flopping down on his bed, Harry threw an arm over his face and tried to force his body to sleep. Not for the first time, Harry realized how out of control his life currently was, and knew that there was no way to stop it. Just when he was about to give up on the idea of sleep altogether, the door to the boys’ dorm cracked open, and Ron’s head peered in.

Ron looked relieved at finding Harry there. He strode fully into the room, beckoning for the empty space behind him to follow.

Harry watched as the door closed seemingly of its own accord. Only then did Draco emerge from under the confines of the Invisibility Cloak. Both boys crossed to Harry’s side, Ron perching on the foot of Harry’s bed as Draco erected locking and silencing charms on the boys’ dorm door before he settled himself on Ron’s bed.

“Are you all right? We’ve been looking for you all over the castle,” Ron stated quietly. “I take it you went to see Snape?”

Harry sighed, pushing himself up and backwards on the bed until he rested against the headboard comfortably and then summarized the morning’s events for Ron and Draco. When he was finished,
he sighed bitterly. “Gods, of all people it had to be Remus.”

Draco’s eyebrow arched in question. “I’m not quite following. Why is it especially bad that it was Lupin?”

“Because I have no doubt whatsoever that Severus will confide in Moony,” Harry answered, running his hand nervously through his hair. “He’s probably the one person that Severus would trust, despite their past. And if he does tell Remus, then I’ve got to involve Dumbledore. He’ll have to stop Remus from intervening and ‘saving’ Severus from me, which is the worst part of it all. Once again, Severus will have trusted in someone and they will have failed him. It will only serve to reinforce his feelings of worthlessness.”

“Well, isn’t that the point of all this? That he realizes that there is no other choice for him but submitting to your will?” Ron questioned.

“I know that,” Harry whispered softly, his words barely audible, “but I don’t want to save his life by breaking his spirit completely. There has to be some way back for him after the bond has been transferred, but I don’t think there is. He’s going to finally have a reason to truly hate me, and the reality of that makes me feel so utterly disgusted that I just don’t know what to do.”

Draco stood and paced for a moment before he faced Harry’s bed. A flicker of hope sparked within Harry when he saw the determined look on the Slytherin’s face. “You know, Harry, domination and submission isn’t just about the sexual act itself. The reason that a person wants to submit himself in a relationship is so that someone else is completely in control of his life; that he’s cared for and loved. And that just might be enough to make Severus realize that this wasn’t just some power play for you. There are a million small ways that you can show that to Severus without pushing the sexual relationship.”

“Yeah, I mean without even realizing it you started that today by demanding he eat, and cleaning those cauldrons for him,” Ron added.

“I didn’t plan that though. It just sort of happened that way. I wouldn’t have the first idea of what to do.”

“Just do general, everyday stuff,” Draco said as he sat next to Harry on the bed. “If you think he’s hungry, make him eat. If you think he’s tired, send him to bed. Basically, be the adult! I don’t mean you have to make him feel like a child, but care for him and take care of him as if he were.”

“I guess,” Harry said skeptically.

“I know!” Draco exclaimed, with a grin and a warm light in his eyes. “Father used to do this with Mum when I was younger. If she were just reading, he’d have her sit at his feet. Or sometimes, he’d spend hours combing her hair. She said it was very relaxing and comforting, and really, I think Father enjoyed it as much as she did!” He snickered and smiled at the memory from a time when both his parents had been truly happy.

Ron nodded in agreement. “Harry, it’s what normal couples do for one another. It’s a sign that a relationship is about more than sex. It’s probably one of the reasons why Dray and I always have to be touching one another,” Ron commented even as he was idly stroking his hand on Draco’s calf. “I have to force myself not to do this in public. I spent my whole life watching my parents express their love a million different ways without ever having to say it.”

“But, I’m not in love with Severus,” Harry interjected, almost sadly.
“Of course you aren’t, Harry,” Draco observed sarcastically with a derisive snort. “That’s why you haven’t tried to find ways to stall the inevitable. That’s why…”

“Don’t, Draco,” Harry begged, “Just don’t. This is already complicated enough without adding in that variable. All that matters is Severus.”

~TBC~

~*~

**Review Replies:** Thanks to Magalud, foolishwandwaiver, LeeLee Potter, FeyLynn, Chrissie, Danielle, Jill, sparkin, Kat, and akalterego for your reviews! We’ve answered your reviews on the review page underneath your original review.

We apologize for there being such a break between chapters. It was completely unintended. Unfortunately, real life issues took precedence. Thanks again for all of your encouragement!!!
Protectiveness and Tenderness

Author's notes: HP/SS – Slash – WIP. Harry discovers that when he kills Voldemort, all of his Death Eaters will die as well through the bond that they share with the Dark Lord through their Marks. Harry vows to do anything it takes to allow Severus Snape to escape that fate.

Title: The Domino Effect
Author: Dr. Jeckell & Mrs. Hyde (aka Taran & Magdelena)
Rating: NC-17
Pairing: Harry Potter/Severus Snape, Ron Weasley/Draco Malfoy (secondary pairing)
Warnings: Non-consensual sex, Violence, Adult Language, Sexual Situations, Graphic Sexual Content, Rimming, MPreg
Summary: HP/SS – Slash – Chapter 7 of ?. Harry discovers that when he kills Voldemort, all of the Death Eaters will die as well because of the bond that they share with the Dark Lord through their Marks. Harry vows to do anything it takes to allow Severus Snape to escape that fate.
Disclaimer: We do not own any of the characters herein (only the plot). All the characters in the Harry Potter universe belong exclusively to J.K. Rowling, Warner Brothers, and anyone else JKR chooses to allow to play with them. We are publishing our fanfiction writings only for our own selfish desire to be a part of their world.
Authors' Note: Thanks to the incredibly wonderful beta job that Sev1970 did for this story.

~*~

Chapter Seven – Protectiveness and Tenderness

Remus gently pulled the door to Severus’ suite closed and sighed softly. He had spent the last several hours talking to the confused man, who had run through a course of emotions concerning Harry Potter. It was obvious that Severus liked being cared for and enjoyed Harry's attention, but he still felt himself unworthy and unlovable. Remus wanted to shred the persons responsible for Severus' lack of self-esteem.

What had Severus the most confused, however, was the fact that Harry used the photos as blackmail to force him into such a situation, when he could have asked for better grades, money, or any number of other things. All Harry had asked for was Severus himself, and the Potions Master simply couldn't understand why anyone, especially the 'Boy-Who-Lived' who could have anyone he wanted, would go to such lengths to get him.

Remus could offer no advice, so he sat and listened attentively. He bubbled with anger toward his best friend's son, but he bit his tongue and allowed Severus to ramble. He offered to speak to Harry, to find out why he was doing this, but Severus turned snow-white and begged him not to, and said he would deal with it on his own. Remus could see and taste the fear emanating from his friend, so he nodded and gave his word to leave it be, for now.

Remus had probably stayed longer than he should have, but wanted to make certain Severus was okay before leaving for the night. When Severus, who was stretched out on the sofa, finally started to drift off, Remus remained in the chair facing the other until he was sure the exhausted man was asleep then finally took his leave.
As he made his way up from the dungeons, Remus could feel how near the full moon was, the wolf in him itching to be set free. He caught a familiar scent approaching and growled in anger and a protectiveness he didn't know was there. He stopped on the stairs and waited for his prey.

Harry headed down to the dungeons actually feeling refreshed, having napped the late afternoon away. After his conversation with Draco and Ron, the three had collected Hermione and snuck down to the Kitchens to nick some food, and then retired to the Room of Requirement to gossip about some of their classmates.

Spending a couple of hours in the company of people who knew Harry’s true intent, and just having a good time, served to divert his thoughts from obsessing over every detail about his interactions with Severus, and helped him regain his focus. Harry had spoken with Dumbledore briefly about his concerns about Remus, and the Headmaster had assured Harry that should Remus come to see him that he would find a way to allay the werewolf’s concerns. This also helped to calm Harry, whose entire focus needed to be centered on keeping Severus alive, instead of his fears about the man’s reaction to the subterfuge.

As Harry was thinking about his plan for Severus this evening, he was completely shocked when he started down the stairs and faced a very angry werewolf.

Remus growled low and glared at Harry for several moments before he spoke. "You remind me more and more of your father," he said with distaste, his voice low and rough due to the coming change. "I know what you've been doing to Severus. Be careful of the fires in which you play. A wounded animal can be very dangerous, as can a protective one."

The werewolf stepped close to Harry, smelling fear, shame, pain and oddly, protectiveness. He desperately wanted to question the young wizard, but bit his tongue, holding to the promise he had made.

"I promised him that I wouldn't speak to you… so I won't." With that, he brushed angrily past Harry to continue up the stairs.

Remus’ harsh and unforgiving attitude affected Harry deeply, but Harry had no choice but to brush back the revulsion and humiliation that Remus’ cold and bitter words had evoked in him. He wanted to reach out so badly to Remus, but he knew that Severus’ need for Remus was greater than his own. Instead, he choked back a sob, and whispered, “Thank you, for being the one person he can trust.”

Remus turned and gave Harry a hard look, confused by Harry's strong emotions as well as his words.

"I still love you, Harry, just as I loved your father," he said softly before rushing up the stairs and out to the Forbidden Forest where he would run throughout the night.

~*~

Harry paused for a moment outside the door of Severus’ private suite and took a calming breath, trying to soothe his rattled nerves. Remus’ feelings had been expected, but the comparison to his father had still managed to blindside Harry. He braced himself, settling into the cool veneer he had adopted for his sessions with Severus and spoke the last of Severus’ passwords, slipping into the Potions Master’s sitting room.

His cool mask slipped at the sight before him. Severus was laying on his couch, fast asleep, soft lips
slightly parted. A wisp of onyx hair and coal black eyelashes made for a stark contrast against Severus’ pale features. Harry frowned though as he realized that even at rest, Severus still looked anxious and drawn. He crossed the room, and knelt by the Potions Master’s side, raising a finger to gently stroke the hair from Severus’ cheek, tucking it behind the older man’s ear even as he leaned down to brush a chaste kiss against Severus’ forehead.

In a flash, Severus was sitting bolt upright, his wand wavering slightly in his hand and pointing directly between Harry's bright green eyes. He let out a long shaky breath as he lowered his wand, glaring at Harry's shocked expression.

"Don't do that again," he said between clenched teeth. "What do you want?"

Harry recovered from his momentary shock, and cocked his head, fixing Severus with a glare of his own. “I believe we have already established what I want, or more precisely, who I want, and as for touching you, I shall do it whenever, wherever, and however I want.” Harry pointedly raised his hand to settle possessively against Severus’ cheek. “I want you to enjoy our interactions, Severus, but never forget that I am in control here.” Harry nodded towards Severus’ hand. “Put your wand away, now.”

Severus timidly kept his eyes down and slipped his wand back into its hold up his sleeve. He was kicking himself for how easily he gave in to Harry's demands. He was normally a very strong, independent person, not the sort to allow anyone to dominate him and certainly not to take care of him. Somehow, though, it seemed natural to obey Harry… almost as though it were his destiny, if he were the type to believe in destiny. He took a deep breath and forced himself to relax.

“Look at me, Severus.” Harry’s calloused thumb gently stroked Severus’ cheekbone, encouraging Severus to obey his command. He waited until the tired, obsidian gaze was locked with his own before continuing.

Harry’s other hand slid between Severus’ knees and he pushed them apart, scooting forward until his body was between the Potions Master’s legs. He pulled Severus’ face towards him until their lips nearly brushed. “I’m not going to hurt you, but I need you to understand that this is going to happen between us, whether you want it or not. You are going to be mine, and no force on earth or in the heavens will stop me, not even Remus Lupin. I love him dearly, but he will not stand in my way; no one will.”

Harry moved his head back a few inches, and studied Severus’ face seriously for a moment. “And I really don’t think you want them to. I think you’re beginning to enjoy this more than you’re willing to admit.” Harry planted a soft, possessive kiss on Severus’ lips and then again drew back. “I could feel the way your body was trembling with need earlier today, and maybe if you’re good and follow my directives tonight, we will get back to that.”

Severus opened his mouth to respond, but couldn't find any words to say. When Harry was kissing him, all he wanted to do was melt into the strong arms and warm body and let the world fade away around them. Staring into the shining, passionate green eyes was like looking into the sun, blinding and beautiful all at once. He gave a small nod and swallowed hard, not knowing what he was giving in to, but willing to take a leap of faith, trusting in another, as he never had before.

“Good.” Harry leaned in and again captured Severus’ mouth with his own, his tongue automatically darting between the already parted lips to savor the taste of the older man’s mouth. He kept the kiss gentle but possessive, thrilling when he felt Severus slowly responding. Harry backed off, nipping once at Severus’ lower lip affectionately before pushing himself up until he was standing before the older wizard.
Harry barely stepped back, and began slowly stripping off his clothing. When he had stripped off everything except his boxers, which were tented with his unmistakable erection, Harry stood still, watching as Severus instinctively leaned forward. Harry reached out a hand to Severus’ shoulder to stop him. “No, Severus. This is not about me tonight; this is about you.”

Not waiting for a reaction, Harry turned on his heel and headed in the direction of Severus’ bedroom, calling back over his shoulder. “Strip completely and meet me in your bathroom.”

Severus stared wide-eyed at Harry's young toned body, Harry's words echoing in his ears. He shook his head to clear it and stood up. Quietly and quickly, Severus stripped down to his pale white skin, laying his clothes neatly on a nearby chair. He stepped quietly into his spacious bathroom.

While Severus had been undressing, Harry had been hurriedly arranging things in the bathroom. He had dropped some bath oils he had found into the large bathtub, and had started filling it with water which was almost uncomfortably hot. After charming the water to stay warm, Harry spelled the light from the sconces a bit lower, and moved a low stool, shampoos, bathsoaps, sponge, and several large fluffy towels near the tub. Just as he had finished placing the final item by the tub, Severus walked into the room.

Harry walked slowly towards Severus, his eyes roaming the body of the proud man before him greedily. “I know that earlier today I told you I was going to fuck you tonight, but I want to set your mind at ease. I believe I shall wait on that particular gratification for at least another night. I was interrupted in my earlier attempts to see to your pleasure and comfort, so I want the chance to finish that first.” Harry held out a hand to Severus. “Come, let’s get you in the bath.”

Severus felt his cheeks warm a little as Harry reminded him of their earlier activities. He quickly schooled his face into a blank mask, not wanting Harry to see his true feelings. He was surprised by the gentle strength in which Harry held his hand and helped him into the deep, hot bathwater.

Severus gasped as his toes touched the steamy water and he fell back against Harry. If not for the younger man’s well balanced feet, they both would have crashed to the tiled floor, but Harry caught him easily.

"It's too hot!" Severus said with a slight whine.

Harry chuckled softly, and accio’d his wand. He spelled the water a few degrees cooler, and then placed his wand on the nearby stool. “That better?” he quipped.

Severus gave Harry a glare, then reached his hand down and tested the water. He sighed contentedly before he could suppress it. He blushed lightly as Harry once again helped him in. This time, Severus sank slowly into the warmth and comfort of the water. It had been a long time since he had last soaked in a hot bath. His normal morning routine was a quick shower and shave.

He gave a soft moan as he sunk lower, his neck supported by Harry's strong hand until his head rested on the edge of the tub. He suddenly felt completely relaxed and at ease in Harry's tender care.

Harry knelt behind the tub, slowly breathing in and out to quell his rising ardor. The delightful sounds that Severus had made had gone straight to his cock. When at last he felt a bit more in control, Harry reached for the sponge and bath gel he had placed near the tub earlier. He drizzled a bit of it onto the sponge, and then dipped it into the water. Perching on the edge of the stool, Harry began gently washing Severus’ neck, chest and arms.

Severus kept his eyes closed and allowed himself to get lost in the sensations. His heart pounded wildly at every touch, his body shivering in spite of the heat of the water. He bit his lower lip as
Harry moved the rough sponge over his sensitive nipples and he fought against the urge to arch up into Harry's touch, moaning again, instead.

Harry bit his lower lip to suppress the urge to lick the length of Severus’ collarbone and suckle the juncture of his shoulder and neck. Instead, he moved along the side of the tub, dipping the sponge lower and gently cleansing Severus’ abdomen. Harry swept the sponge methodically over Severus’ crotch, almost moaning himself as Severus easily, trustingly spread his legs to give Harry access. Harry swiped the sponge quickly and efficiently, resisting the urge to linger.

Moving further down the tub, Harry then swept the sponge over each of the long, slender legs in turn, making sure to soap and rinse each foot carefully before he again moved to settle on the stool behind Severus’ head.

Harry didn’t resist the urge to nuzzle his nose against Severus’ cheek before whispering softly in the Potions Master’s ear. “Lean forward for me. I need to get your back.”

Severus shivered in spite of the hot water. Keeping his eyes closed, he leaned forward, his head bowed to allow Harry to wash the back of his neck as well. His mind started to wander as Harry slowly worked all the tension out of his body. He was almost desperate to know the young wizard's motives for treating him with such loving care, but didn't dare ask. He didn't want to do anything that might cause Harry to stop.

Harry dipped the sponge in the water, and brought it to Severus’ head, one hand gently cupping the Potions Master’s chin and encouraging him to lean his head back as he drizzled the warm water through the coal black strands. Once Severus’ hair was completely saturated, Harry dropped the sponge onto the floor and squeezed out a dollop of shampoo onto his hand. After setting down the bottle, he rubbed his hands together so that both of his hands contained a bit of the gel and then gently began to rub the foamy substance through Severus’ long hair, his fingertips massaging Severus’ scalp and gently working through the knotted strands as he went.

A smile spread across Harry’s face as he heard the soft moans and sounds of appreciation that Severus tried so valiantly to hide from him. He took his time with rinsing and conditioning Severus’ hair, finally rinsing it completely before encouraging Severus to lean back against the back of the tub.

“Relax for a bit longer. I’m going to dry off, and I’ll be waiting in the sitting room for you. I’ve left towels for you on the stool.”

While Harry was talking, he stood and nonchalantly stripped off his boxers, which had become damp while he was bathing Severus. He then picked up one of the towels and proceeded to dry himself, eventually wrapping the towel around his waist.

Harry trailed a fingertip along Severus’ arm, and leaned down so his lips almost brushed the Potions Master’s. “Don’t dawdle too long, however. I do still have plans for you tonight.”

Severus shifted nervously in the water as his libido leaped at Harry's sensuous voice. He nodded curtly, then sighed as Harry left the room. His burgeoning hard-on faded fast as he became anxious about what exactly Harry might have planned, however, he had to admit that he had thoroughly enjoyed his young suitor's attentions. Never had anyone shown such sweet devotion to his needs.

He sighed uneasily as he pulled himself up from the comforting water. He reached for a towel and surprised by its soft warmth, he couldn't resist bringing it to his face and inhaling the clean scent. He stepped out of the tub and dried himself quickly, then wrapped a dry towel around his narrow hips the same way Harry had. He took a deep breath before entering the sitting room.
Review Replies: Thanks to Kat, Danielle, LeeLee Potter, Jill, Terri, foolishwandwaver, Calanor, and sparkin for your reviews! We've answered your reviews on the review page underneath your original review.
Chapter Eight – Possession and Ownership

Harry looked up as he heard Severus enter the room and forced himself to bite back the inappropriate snort that almost escaped. He knew the older man was probably trying to make himself do otherwise, but Severus was unable to school away his utter shock at the fact that Harry was sitting comfortably in one of the armchairs near the fireplace, one foot casually tucked up under him, and fully dressed.

When Harry had exited the bathroom, he had quickly rustled around in Severus’ bedroom for the items he needed, and had thrown on his trousers and shirt. He had barely settled himself into the chair when Severus had emerged.

“Come over here and sit down on the rug near my feet.” Harry saw Severus reach to remove the towel from his slim hips and quickly admonished the older man. “Leave that towel right where it is. I don’t believe I requested for you to remove it. Now do as I instructed.”

Severus shook his head slightly, confusion clear on his face. He folded down to his knees facing Harry, expecting him to want pleasuring. He looked up at Harry with bright eyes and a blank face, waiting for Harry's instructions. He forced his heart to slow and his breathing to even out. He was caught between wanting to run from the room screaming and wanting to do anything Harry asked of him.

“Not like that, Severus,” Harry corrected, his voice low and soothing. “Turn around and sit with your back against the chair in between my legs.” Harry moved his left leg over to give Severus more room, his right leg still tucked up under him.
As Harry stretched to reach something from the table, he could feel the tension radiating off the older wizard, and calmly laid a hand on Severus’ shoulder in an attempt to comfort him. “I’m not going to hurt you, Severus. You are mine now, and I take very good care of things that belong to me. You’re never going to want for anything ever again; I swear it.”

Harry brought his hand around to show Severus what he had reached for. “It’s only a hairbrush. I told you I wanted to take care of you tonight.” Without explaining further, he gently began brushing through Severus’ long, damp hair.

Severus sat stupefied and frozen in place as his mind raced uncontrollably. He had never felt so uncertain in his life. He tried turning his head to question Harry, but the young man firmly turned his head back and told him to sit still. He decided to let Harry continue for now, and ask questions later.

Harry blew out a frustrated breath. “Relax, Severus. I know that you’re still wary of my motives, but you should know by now that I am not here to shame or ridicule you. I simply want to do things for you, to take care of you.”

"I'm…I'm not accustomed to such…attentions," Severus said nervously as he forced his shoulders to relax and let out a long breath.

“Well, learn to get used to it.”

Harry lightly kissed the crown of Severus’ head, and then went back to carefully brushing his hair. Slowly, the tension eased out of the older man, and he leaned against Harry’s leg. His eyes slid closed and he moaned softly at the pleasurable sensation as the brush traveled across his sensitive scalp. Eventually, Harry abandoned the brush and began to card his fingers through Severus’ hair, gently massaging the man’s head. Slowly, the peacefulness of the act started to lull Severus asleep.

Harry chuckled at the unbelievable scene of the Potions Master sleeping contentedly, the man’s head resting against his thigh, ebony hair fanned out across Harry’s lap, one hand gently holding the calf of his leg. Harry leaned forward, and nuzzled his nose against Severus’ ear. “Come, Severus. Let’s get you to your bed. I think that any other plans I might have had for you need to wait until you’re awake enough to enjoy them.”

Harry guided the groggy wizard to his bed, removing the towel from Severus’ slim hips. Severus’ eyes shot open when he felt the towel being removed, but Harry hurried to reassure the quickly tensing man. “Hush now, I’m only getting you comfortable so you can sleep. Now get in bed.”

Severus complied with Harry’s directive, his eyes half lidded but still fixed on the younger wizard as he found himself being covered with his duvet.

Harry then leaned down and initiated a possessive, demanding kiss that left no doubt to the fact that he still intended to have absolute control over his professor. After the kiss though, he bid Severus goodnight and withdrew, leaving a confused and strangely contented wizard to slowly drift back into dreamland.

~*~

This scene repeated itself for the next two weeks. Harry continually monitored that Severus was eating and resting properly, sporadically helping the man with a bath. Nightly they would sit, Severus at Harry’s feet, with Harry’s fingers running through his professor’s long hair.

On several occasions, Harry and Severus did engage in sexual acts, but it was usually with Severus
being the recipient. Once, Harry finished what he had begun in the Potions classroom, and another time, he spent the entire evening mapping out Severus' body with his tongue and hands, only giving in and suckling Severus to orgasm at the Potions Master's begging. Other times were spent in mutual fulfillment, each giving and receiving pleasure.

Their time together became almost companionable, and Harry was almost able to forget, at least for a short while, that there was an ultimate purpose to his interactions with the Potions Master, an irrevocable act that he would have to perpetrate sooner rather than later because outside of the sanctuary of Severus' rooms, things were anything but peaceful.

Remus had abided by Severus' request, and had not approached the Headmaster, but as soon as he had recovered from the full moon, he spoke to Severus again about the matter. Severus ranted and raved, pouring out all his confused emotions. When he was done, he had all but thrown the werewolf out of his rooms, demanding that he at least be allowed the dignity of handling the situation on his own.

Harry had his own problems to deal with during that time. Voldemort had become bolder, making more frequent attacks on Muggle villages. The Headmaster had warned Harry no less than three times that the time was soon coming when Harry would no longer be able to forestall the inevitable, and he urged Harry to complete the bond as soon as possible.

Severus paced around his rooms nervously. He had been so tense all day, so much so that he hadn't been able to eat anything. Harry had warned him the evening before that he had something 'special' planned for the next night, and Severus was quite certain he knew what Harry had in mind and wasn't sure he was ready for it. He had kept Harry at bay for two weeks and knew it couldn't last forever.

It wasn't that he was a virgin and didn't want to give up his virtue to Harry Potter, it was in fact, the exact opposite. He was experienced, too experienced, but had never enjoyed the act. None of his partners had cared for his pleasure, only their own. Then again, none had ever cared for him the way Harry seemed to, either.

He glanced at a mirror as he paced past it and stopped to glare at his reflection. "You're a fool!" he growled at the pale face that glared back at him. "What are you doing, giving in to him? You're a Death Eater! You don't deserve someone like him, and you can't keep him anyhow! You're not going to survive this war and even Harry Bloody Potter can't stop it!" He turned sadly away, scratching at the hideous mark on his left forearm. "Nor do you want him to. Freedom…" he whispered softly.

Not even a second later, fire burned through his arm, blazing a trail from the Dark Mark all the way up and across his chest. Severus took a deep breath and nearly screamed. Just as he started for his closet to retrieve his mask and robes to answer his Master's summons, a knock sounded on his door.

Harry hurried down the steps to the dungeon, not caring for once who saw him heading to his destination. Harry had been in the Headmaster's office when word had come from their other spy that Voldemort was planning on launching an attack on Hogwarts within the week, and had need of his Potions Master. Harry’s gaze was a mix of fear and determination as he nodded stiffly to the Headmaster before taking off for Severus’ chambers.

The time for delays had long since passed, and Harry forced away the fear that what he was about to
do would negate the weeks that he had slowly built a burgeoning level of trust with his Potions Master. He knocked for only a moment before muttering Severus’ password and barging in the door. The sight of Severus clutching his arm only strengthened Harry’s resolve.

“And where exactly do you think you are going, Severus?” he snarled.

Severus was shaking even as the worst of the pain faded away. "I'm being summoned. I have to go," he said with a rough voice and turned back toward the closet.

“Oh, I don’t bloody well think so!” Harry sneered, swiftly closing the door behind him and advancing on Severus. “You are MINE, not his. I have sacrificed many things to that madman, but I will not allow him to have you. The last time you came back from him, he had nearly broken you; I will NOT allow him another chance at hurting you. You are answering that summons over my dead body.”

Severus stood gaping at Harry. He couldn't have hidden his shock if he'd wanted to. His mouth opened and closed several times as he tried to come up with something to say. The extreme possessiveness and protectiveness was unexpected, to say the least. He knew Harry had 'claimed' him, but he had no idea that Harry's feelings were so strong as to force him to defy the Dark Lord.

"Harry… I have to go. I can't just stay here. We need whatever little information I can get from these meetings. Something's brewing, I can feel it, and I need to find out what he's planning, if I can."

Severus continued to stand staring at Harry, never in his life having been more unsure of what to do. He knew ignoring the call was a death sentence, and yet he felt compelled to do as Harry demanded. He also felt that he should yell at Harry, admonish him for making such a demand and stating that he would make his own choice and wouldn't allow Harry to control him any longer. He just couldn't make his tongue work the words into the air. Instead, he clamped his jaw shut and said nothing more.

Harry had to think quickly, because suddenly he realized that it was not just from Voldemort’s tight control that he had to wrest Severus. The Potions Master’s sense of duty to Albus Dumbledore would push him to ultimately defy Harry even moreso than the threat of Voldemort’s cruelty.

“Let our other spy find out the fucking plan. You don’t actually think that you’re Albus’ only source of information, do you? You don’t think he completely trusted you, do you?” Harry spat out, the lie falling easily from his lips.

Severus’ eyes widened with hurt at Harry's words, even though he knew them to be true. He didn’t believe that Albus had trusted him, that he could be trusted, and now he knew it without a doubt.

Sensing Severus’ hesitation, Harry closed the remaining distance between them, and pinned Severus against the wall with his body. “I am the only one who gives a bloody damn about you, and I am in control now, not Voldemort, and NOT Albus Dumbledore.”

He pushed Harry away forcefully and turned his back to him. With his arms crossed tightly over his chest and his eyes squeezed shut, he tried to control his raging emotions. He was hurt, betrayed and angry. He could feel his world crumbling around him as he stood motionless against its pressure. He felt Harry’s presence behind him, the only thing he had left to hold on to. Harry cared about him; he had taken care of Severus, and had protected him.

Severus sighed tiredly as he slowly faced Harry. Most of the emotion had drained out of him, and he looked defeated. He lowered his arms to his sides, ignoring the slight pain that remained from the Mark. As he looked at Harry, he saw a host of emotions pass through the bright emerald eyes that watched him closely. He was curious about the pain and anger he saw, but said nothing. The
strongest emotions he witnessed were compassion and hope.

"What do you want, Harry?" he asked softly, his voice giving a hint of hope and wonder.

“The same thing I’ve wanted from the beginning of our time together…you. I will not allow you to leave these rooms tonight, Severus. And I will never allow Voldemort to hurt or control you again,” Harry stated confidently, magic crackling around him as he insinuated a hand between Severus and him and began rubbing the older man’s cock through his trousers. “As of tonight, you are mine. I will possess your body, and wipe away any traces of ownership by anyone else.”

Severus gasped at the touch, and then leant into Harry, his hands lightly pressing against Harry’s chest. "I am yours," he whispered.

Harry’s mouth closed possessively over Severus’, bruising in its intensity. His hand left Severus’ cock only to anchor against the man’s hip, his other hand sliding around to cup Severus’ arse. Panting harshly, he broke the kiss, whispering a spell against Severus’ lips. Almost instantly, Harry could feel their clothing dissolving off them, and his hand closed around Severus’ half-hard length.

“Let’s take this to your bed, Severus.”

Severus couldn't speak, so he simply nodded. He took Harry's hand and quickly led them to his room. He started to crawl onto his large bed, then stopped and looked at Harry nervously. He knew exactly what Harry wanted, but still wasn’t sure he was ready for it. He was scared to give over such control, even to someone who claimed to care so much about him.

"Harry, I…”

“I promised you that I did not want to be him,” Harry reassured, raising a brow to make sure that Severus understood his veiled reference to the Dark Lord. “And I meant that.”

His hand stroked gently over Severus’ cheek in an attempt to calm the nervous wizard. After the steps he had taken to prove to Severus that he cared about him, he didn’t want to ruin everything by having to force the man tonight. “Willingly submit to me, Severus. Let me make love to you; show you how good it can be.”

Harry’s words, 'Let me make love to you', rang loudly and sweetly in Severus' ears. He had never heard those words directed at him before. With tear-clouded eyes, he stared at Harry, searching his eyes. All he saw was hope as he nodded again, then leaned in to gently kiss Harry’s bright red lips.

"I am yours, Harry," he whispered with the slightest of smiles and a light squeeze to the warm hand he still held.

~TBC~

~*~

Review Replies: Thanks to jamie, snowpuppies, Calanor, Countess Charisma, Kat, and magalud for your reviews! We've answered your reviews on the review page underneath your original review.
Chapter Nine – The Bond

Harry breathed a sigh of relief at Severus’ unexpected acquiescence. Truly, he had expected more of a fight from the man, and a part of him worried that perhaps in trying to relieve himself from the need to force Severus into sexual intercourse he had finally done what Voldemort could not, and had broken the Potions Master’s spirit. Harry hadn’t wanted to tear at the trust that Severus had in Albus, but he knew of no other way to get Severus to submit completely to him physically. Harry promised himself again that after this was over that he would do whatever was necessary to help Severus know just how many people truly cared about him, how many people truly loved him.

Harry froze as the realization of what he had just admitted to himself struck him suddenly. He knew that his feelings for the Potions Master had been slowly undergoing a transformation over the past weeks, but at this very moment as he stared into the bright onyx eyes before him, Harry knew that he had fallen in love with the man who he was about to bond his life to.

Without any further hesitation, shoving all doubts and fears to the back of his mind so that he could concentrate on the task he could not fail at, Harry stepped forward and covered Severus’ lips with his own.

Severus hesitated for barely a second before allowing himself to melt fully into Harry’s warmth. Slowly he sank down to the bed, pulling Harry down on top of him, their lips never parting. He moaned softly at the comforting feel of his lover’s weight pressing down on him. As Harry moaned as well, the kiss was deepened and Severus was lost to new sensations.
Harry broke the kiss, leaving Severus panting for air as he slowly traced his way down the older man’s body, mapping out the Potions Master’s body with fingertips and lips and tongue; driving the older wizard into a state of fevered arousal. When Harry’s lips finally closed around the head of Severus’ cock, the older wizard groaned in relief. Harry suckled the moisture that was already dripping from the slit, and then bathed Severus’ cock in long, broad, teasing swipes of his tongue.

After only a few passes, Harry’s head lowered to suckle Severus’ sac, one hand moving to encircle Severus’ cock, even as the other hand pushed Severus’ thighs further apart. Harry’s tongue drifted down even lower, and slowly circled the Potions Master’s entrance before pushing inside. His hand on Severus’ cock mimicked the shallow thrusts he was making inside the slender body, and when he felt the thigh beneath his fingertips beginning to tighten as Severus spiraled towards orgasm, Harry pulled back completely, stilling his ministrations, and crawled up the bed to Severus’ side.

Severus fell back against the pillows breathing heavy and trying to calm his heart. He turned toward Harry, his eyes searching Harry’s as he reached out and gently caressed Harry’s cheek. He leaned in to kiss Harry and carefully rolled until he was stretched out over the younger man’s slim body, covering it completely with his own.

“My turn,” he whispered when their lips parted. He slowly kissed, nipped, and suckled his way down Harry’s chest, pausing at his navel to tease it with the tip of his tongue. He latched his lips onto Harry’s hip-bone, leaving a bright mark. He momentarily bypassed Harry’s raging erection and made his way to his inner thighs. He nipped lightly at them, then bit harder, eliciting a gasp from Harry.

Severus looked up and was awed at first by the look of pure rapture on Harry’s face. His face relaxed and he smiled very gently. He went back to work with heightened enthusiasm, pleasuring Harry to the brink of orgasm, then, as Harry had done, he stopped and crawled back up to lay beside his panting lover.

Harry allowed himself just a moment of staring into the expressive onyx eyes of his lover, a moment to believe that Severus truly wanted this as much as he did, that Severus loved Harry as much as Harry loved him. But as Severus moved to tuck a strand of his long hair behind his ear, Harry saw the black skull and serpent standing out sharply against the pale skin of Severus’ arm. He saw the reddened, angry skin around the Mark, and knew that Voldemort would not wait long before he summoned his errant Potions Master again.

His resolve strengthened, Harry reached out to the bedside table and grabbed the jar of lubricant. Turning back to face Severus, he startled the man by placing the jar in his hand.

Harry offered Severus a feral smile. “I told you that I was going to have you submit to me in every way. One of those ways is watching you stretch yourself in preparation for my cock.”

Severus sat up as his eyes widened in apprehension. He stared first at Harry, then at the jar of lubricant in his hand.

“Harry, I…” he whispered, his voice shaking as much as his hands. He had known it was coming from the start of Harry’s ‘attentions’, he even wanted it now, but he was afraid. Afraid of pain, heartache, and let-downs. He knew Harry cared for him and wouldn’t intentionally hurt him, but his past experiences had left a mark far deeper and dark than the skull on his arm.

Besides all of that, he really had no idea how to go about it. No one had ever taken the time to prepare him for intercourse, and they had certainly never used anything more than spit as a lubricant.

“Relax,” Harry ordered, the note of command in his voice tempered by his soothing touches to Severus’ face. “I want to guarantee you the least amount of discomfort possible, but if you keep tensing up like this, it is going to hurt no matter how slick you are.” Harry’s eyes closed for a
moment as he willed back the panic that was building inside of him. He reopened his eyes and met Severus’ gaze. “Don’t make this any more difficult than it already is. Everything we have shared thus far has been pleasant, hasn’t it? Trust me to make this good for you. Tell me what has you so tense.”

“I…” Severus blushed with embarrassment. “Well… I don’t know how!” he finally blurted out, bowing his head and hiding behind his curtain of shiny black hair.

Harry looked at Severus in shock, which quickly gave way into anger as the realization of exactly how abused and misused the man beside him was. “None of your other partners have ever…” he trailed off angrily, clenching his teeth.

Seeing Severus begin to turn away at the tone of his voice, Harry hastened to explain the reason for his rage. Taking Severus’ face in his hands, Harry brushed the Potions Master’s hair back and forced the man’s gaze up to meet his own. “I am not angry with you; I am angry with the bastards who you have been forced to endure before. Never again. I swear by my life that none of them will ever touch you again.” Harry’s lips closed possessively over Severus’ for just a moment before pulling back. “And as for this…” he continued, gesturing toward the jar in Severus’ hand, “…I’ll guide you through every step if you like, telling you exactly what I want you to do. I’ve already had my fingers inside of you, this will be no different.”

Severus nodded his reluctant agreement, and allowed Harry to push him back on the bed. He tensed again as Harry settled behind him, pushing one leg up towards his chest.

Harry placed a tender kiss against the Potions Master’s shoulder as he calmly reached out and took the jar in the other man’s hand, removing the lid, and tossing it to the side. With his free hand, he reached to lace his fingers with Severus’, dipping both of their index fingers into the slippery substance. Setting the jar aside for the moment, Harry lay down on his side, and began brushing kisses along the Severus’ spine, as he slowly brought their joined hands towards the older wizard’s entrance. Both fingers encircled the puckered hole, Harry positioning Severus’ finger so that it pressed against his own entrance. Ever so gently, Harry pressed down on Severus’ finger, encouraging the man to breach himself.

“That’s it, slide it deep inside. Take it for me.”

Severus’ back arched as his fingertip pressed against his own prostate. His moan of pleasure shot a jolt of arousal directly to Harry’s cock, and Harry growled with need, nipping at Severus’ collarbone as his own fingertip pressed down on Severus’ and wiggled its way inside the tight channel.

Severus had never felt so possessed, so utterly controlled, or so aroused. He shuddered as Harry’s finger slid in next to his own. He whimpered and gasped as Harry pulled their fingers out slowly, then gently pushed back in. They set a slow rhythm, in and out, brushing against his prostate on the in stroke, twisting gently on the out.

After several minutes of this, Harry pulled his own finger out, telling Severus to add a second finger, then left him to continue on his own. Severus felt Harry move into a sitting position behind him and knew he was being watched. He shifted on the bed, giving Harry a better view. He continued his slow rhythm, his heart racing from sexual tension, his mind circling over the power Harry held over him. It was just as euphoric, if not more so, as the touch Harry started.

Harry reached down into the jar of slick and again covered his fingertips. Leaning forward he spread the slick substance over Severus’ other two fingers, before leaning back and coating his cock with the lubrication left on his hand. “Add another finger for me, and fuck yourself hard with them. I want you fucking all four fingers before I enter you.”
Harry saw Severus watching him as he slowly stroked his own cock, anticipation, desire, and fear still warring for dominance in his eyes. “Don’t you worry, my Severus. You’re going to love having my cock stroking inside of you. I can’t wait to feel those walls of yours clenching around me; can’t wait to pound into that arse and claim you as mine.”

Severus couldn’t suppress a low moan at Harry’s possessive words. He gingerly pressed a third finger against his opening and, wincing slightly from mild pain, pushed it in next to the other two. He stopped his movement and allowed himself a moment to adjust. It had been a long time since he had engaged in intercourse. He wasn’t sure he could accommodate four fingers anymore, but he would follow Harry’s orders and do as he asked, just to keep the feeling of being wanted alive for as long as possible.

Harry moved so that he could lie facing Severus, and captured the older wizard’s mouth with his own once again in a deep, searing kiss. Meanwhile his still-slickened hand snaked down to capture Severus’ half hard cock. His hand slid up and down the shaft, teasing Severus into full arousal. “That’s it,” he whispered against Severus’ lips, encouraged by the low moans that again were emanating from his partner, “Now add the fourth. I want you so needy that for once you stop thinking.”

Severus was breathing hard as he nodded briskly, his eyes locked with Harry’s. He bit back a whimper and tried not to let his pain show as he worked the last finger in, adjusting himself on the bed to reach better and force his fingers deeper. The pain receded very quickly and gave way to a wave of desire and arousal he had never felt before. He stared deep into Harry’s eyes, searching for mischief or deceit, but only found deep longing and passion.

He gasped, feeling his orgasm mounting and wanted to warn Harry to stop caressing him before he exploded, but he was pretty sure Harry didn’t want him to speak and that the younger wizard knew exactly what he was doing. He began panting harder and louder as he neared his much needed release.

Harry could feel Severus tensing with need, and seeing his partner finally submitting to the pleasurable sensations that he was feeling, was nearly Harry’s undoing. “Fuck. No more waiting; need to be in you now,” he rasped. Abruptly he stopped his ministrations, his hand moving from Severus’ cock to still the fingertips that were now pumping so enthusiastically in and out of the Potions Master’s body. He tugged at Severus’ hand, encouraging him to remove his fingers, and moved so that he was kneeling between Severus’ splayed legs.

“I think you should just about be spread enough for me now,” Harry said with a small smirk and ran his fingertip lightly over Severus’ anus.

Severus glanced down at Harry’s cock, then raised an eyebrow to Harry, his eyes glittering. “You flatter yourself,” he said with only a touch of real sarcasm and a fair bit of humor.

Harry was shocked by the sharp wit that he hadn’t seen from Severus in a long time. He didn’t know if he should laugh, or punish the man for the mild insult. Before he could decide, he was distracted by Severus softly moaning his name while Harry’s fingers continued to caress his entrance. He decided to ignore the comment and settled a pillow beneath Severus’ hips. He leaned down over his lover to kiss him tenderly, his cock nudging at Severus’ entrance. “Tell me you want me to do this. Submit to me, Severus and I promise I’ll always take care of you.”

“Yes, make love to me, Harry,” Severus said without hesitation. He stared deeply into Harry’s eyes,
his cool hand on his warm cheek. He had never willingly given himself to anyone, but there was no uncertainty, no doubt about what he was doing now. “Take me, Harry. Make me yours. Take care of me,” he whispered.

Severus’ plea stopped Harry cold; with those words Harry knew that Severus had submitted to him fully. He could feel the crackling along his spine as his innate magic reacted to Voldemort’s Mark, starting to build to the crescendo it would need to destroy the link with the powerful evil wizard. Harry wondered, not for the first time, if it was right to make this life or death decision for Severus.

Though it hadn’t started out that way, in his heart of hearts, Harry knew that he had fallen deeply in love with the Potions Master. Harry could only hope that his love, the bond, and the child that they would create together would give him the opportunity to convince Severus that the words he was about to speak were the absolute truth, and not part of some machination to free him from Voldemort and save his life.

“I will, angel,” Harry whispered against Severus’ lips, his eyes clouding over with tears as he canted his hips forward a bit, his cockhead pushing against the loosened muscle. “You will be mine for always.”

Harry’s eyes fluttered shut, as he slowly sunk into the tight, velvet heat of Severus’ body. He felt Severus’ legs cinching around his waist, and he leaned forward even more, capturing Severus’ hands with his own, lacing their fingers together, pressing his forehead against the Potions Master’s as he tried to control the urge to simply ram into the willing body beneath him.

After the act was completed, Severus would know exactly how manipulated he had been, and their lives would be irrevocably changed. If there was one memory Harry wanted Severus to take away from this night, it was that their lovemaking was different from all of Severus’ other horrid experiences. With that thought in mind, Harry continued to enter inch by inch, listening to Severus for sounds of discomfort, until at last he was fully seated inside his lover’s body.

“You feel so bloody good, so tight.” Harry lifted up a bit and opened his eyes, taking in the look of rapture on Severus’ flushed face. “Gods, you’re beautiful. I love you… so very much,” he whispered.

Severus’ breath caught in his throat at Harry's words. He tried to find his voice to tell his young lover that he loved him as well, but couldn’t manage to work his lips and tongue. With one small move on Harry's part, all rational thought was swept away into a wave of pure pleasure. All he was able to do was gasp and shudder, his back arched up off the bed as his prostate was assaulted when Harry began to gently rock in and out of him. He tightened his grip around Harry’s fingers, his legs locking around Harry's waist, and he moved his hips in time with Harry's careful thrusts.

After all the anticipation that had led up to this final step, Harry knew he couldn’t last long. Harry pumped into Severus time and time again, angling his thrusts to make sure that Severus achieved the maximum pleasure that he could from the coupling, and trying to stave off the inevitable as long as possible.

As their lovemaking built to its climax, so did the magic that was swirling around them, and finally Harry knew that he couldn’t hold out any longer, feeling his orgasm rapidly approaching. One hand moved to encircle Severus’ length, but froze in midair as Harry felt the stirring of Dark Magic coursing through the Mark. Growling with frustration as he saw Severus’ face contort with pain, he moved his hand instead to cover the Mark.

“He is not fucking welcome here in our bed,” Harry growled out through clenched teeth. “The Dark Lord is no longer allowed to subjugate you. You are MINE,” he shouted. With one final thrust he
spilled into Severus, feeling the other wizard clenching around his shaft as he too came, streams of pearly seed decorating their chests.

Severus was too possessed by orgasmic bliss and pain to notice the shift in magic as it twisted around them like a tornado. As he reached his limit and was thrust over it, he screamed out Harry's name, which seemed to weave into the magic itself, though he never detected it.

Severus grunted with his release, then blinked up into Harry's shining eyes for a moment before the darkness could pull him into its warm arms. Something felt different, but he couldn't grasp what it was. He let himself fall into the soft mattress and into a deep sleep.

~TBC~

~*~

**Review Replies:** Thanks to Jaima, FeyLynn, magalud, LeeLee Potter, Melody demort, Jill, lightgoddess, Hambares, Calanor, Kat, sparkin, Terri, and Danielle for your reviews! We've answered your reviews on the review page underneath your original review.
Chapter Ten – The Truth at Last

Severus mumbled softly in his sleep, feeling a twinge deep in his gut that spread warmth throughout his entire body. It intensified enough to wake him, then receded and settled in the pit of his stomach. His eyes fluttered open, quickly scanning the room, searching for the source of his waking, and he sighed contentedly as Harry shifted behind him, the younger man’s hold around his waist tightening protectively. Severus closed his eyes and snuggled deeper into Harry’s embrace and fell back to sleep.

---

Severus awoke before Harry early in the morning. He yawned and stretched, still wrapped securely in the younger man’s arms. Harry moaned a little and kissed the back of Severus’ neck, but didn’t completely awaken. Severus pressed back against Harry’s lips and smiled to himself. He had never woken feeling so content or relaxed. There was no pressing work to be done nor were there any staff meetings to attend. For the first time in years, he could allow himself time to leisurely wake up in his lover’s arms.

He yawned again, which turned into a moan as his stomach rumbled menacingly and his bladder screamed for release. He sighed, then began disentangling himself from Harry’s limbs. He lightly rubbed the warm thigh that covered his own before moving it gently. He gently pulled Harry’s arms from around his chest and stomach, then slid out from under the covers.
He stood for a moment, staring down at Harry’s peaceful face. He gently touched the Gryffindor’s cheek and moved an unruly lock of black hair off his forehead. He suddenly gasped softly as his stomach twisted uncomfortably. He turned and dashed into the bathroom, closing the door as quietly as he could. He just managed to reach the toilet before his stomach began emptying itself.

When his stomach was drained, Severus straightened up and moved to the sink. He ran cold water, which he used to rinse his mouth, then splashed on his face. He kept his eyes closed as he breathed heavily, fighting off a wave of dizziness. He groaned as his bladder screamed for attention. He moved back to the toilet and sighed with relief.

Severus returned once again to the sink and started to wash up. It was then that he noticed it. A tingle in his left forearm, right where the Dark Mark of his former Master should have been. He stared in wide-eyed wonder, his heart racing, at what now decorated his arm.

Gone was the ugly black skull and serpent, the chosen symbol of Lord Voldemort, and in its place was a red lion’s head with the initials HP. Severus began to shake with fury as he started to realize what had happened. His breath caught in his throat and he started to hyperventilate. He fell heavily to the floor, shivering, his eyes squeezed shut, his jaw clenched tight. He wrapped his arms around his naked legs, dropped his head down onto his knees and started rocking. The anger and betrayal he felt overwhelmed him.

It was nearly an hour before Severus could move. “Bastard,” he whispered. “Stupid, foolish bastard,” he said, his voice rising in anger. “Arrogant, pathetic fool!” Severus rose to his feet, wrapped a dressing gown around his shoulders, and threw open the door.

He stood in the doorway, glaring at Harry, letting his anger build before he opened his mouth to yell with all the fury, pain and anger he had within him.

“GET OUT!”

Ignoring Harry’s startled gasp, Severus began circling the bed, picking up various items off the floor, pillows, clothes, and shoes; and started throwing them at Harry. He continued to shout, yell, and curse Harry so loudly, he was certain Harry’s housemates in Gryffindor tower could hear him.

Harry tried to move out of the reign of fire. He fell off the side of the bed, covering his head as he rolled. When he reached the living room, he turned to start shouting himself, but was silenced by a pillow in his face. He stumbled and fell on his naked arse. He growled as he stared at Severus, and then got back to his feet and started to yell over Severus’ loud voice.

“Severus! Just stop and listen for a moment!”

“Listen?! To more lies? I’ve heard enough, POTTER!!” Severus flicked his wrist, throwing open the door. He gave Harry a hard push to his chest, throwing the smaller wizard out into the hallway and slammed the door shut.

“Severus! Open the bloody door!” Harry screamed, pounding on the unyielding wood.

“Harry?”

Harry swung around to see a harried looking Dumbledore rushing towards him. Before he could acknowledge the Headmaster, the door opened.

“That’s better!” Harry growled, thinking Severus was finally obeying his command. Before he could say anything, he was hit with a bundle of clothes and shoes. “Severus!!”
Severus turned and glared at Albus, his eyes flashing with pain and resentment, all at once understanding that Albus had known about what Harry had been doing to him all along. He slammed the door in Harry’s crimson face.

Harry magicked on his clothing, not even realizing that he was doing so wandlessly. He absently reached down and retrieved his wand from where it had been tossed with his clothing. When he straightened up, he scowled at the Headmaster. “It’s done. I fucking did what you asked. Now, is the bastard here so I can get on with what’s left of my life?”

Albus was shocked at the venom in Harry’s voice, and saddened by the utter defeat he saw in the younger man’s eyes. “Yes, he’s nearly breached the castle wards. Order members are portkeying in, the younger students are being led to safety, and the older students and teachers are already poised for the battle.” Albus gazed warily at the door to Severus’ chambers. “I waited until the last possible moment to retrieve you. I am so…”

“Please, sir, not now,” Harry whispered, refusing to let the horrible sense of loss overwhelm him. He had known that Severus’ reaction would not be favorable, but it still was slowly killing him inside knowing that he had possibly irreparably lost any chance he had with the man he now knew he loved, because he had lied to him and had not given him a choice about saving his own life with the bonding. “I am going to kill Tom Riddle, and then YOU are going to explain this to Severus.”

Harry brushed his fingers lightly over the solid wood door and whispered, “Be safe, my angel.” He then whispered a series of intricate wards that would lock the door and could only be released from the side Harry was on. There was no way that Severus could open it from inside the room. He would remain safely tucked in his rooms until Harry returned and released him.

He closed his eyes and sighed sadly, before turning and leading Albus up the staircase and out the main doors of the castle.

~*~

Severus glanced around his nearly empty rooms, looking for items he might need. From the moment he had closed the door on the two men he had trusted most before their ultimate betrayal, he had whipped his wand about ceaselessly, setting up trunks, causing various potions paraphernalia to pack themselves into said trunks, and shrinking clothes and furniture. As his spacious rooms were magically emptied, he pulled on his clothes, muttering and sputtering angrily.

He had just picked up a quill to write a rather nasty letter of resignation to Albus, when a knock fell loudly upon his door. He ignored it until Remus’ agitated voice reached him. He stormed to the door and tried to throw it open, but it stayed where it was and his hand slipped off the knob with such force, that he fell back and landed on his arse with a painful thud.

“What the bloody hell?” he wondered out loud as he stared at his door.

“Severus?” Remus called.

Severus moved to his knees and tried the door again. It didn’t make the slightest move.

“That little, lying, son of a whore!” he yelled. “Remus! The little bastard locked the door. Try to open it from your side.”

Severus knew it would be useless for him to try to undo Harry’s wards. The young wizard had shown his ability more than once in not only disarming wards, but in placing them as well. He stood
up, his arms crossed over his chest and fumed at the door, pouring all his anger and frustration into the solid oak as if that alone would cause the door to give up in fright.

It took several combinations of spells, but it wasn’t long before Remus was able to break Harry’s wards and open the door. When he did, he nearly pulled it shut again. Severus stood menacingly staring at him, death shining in his dark eyes.

“Severus, what’s going on?! Who locked the door? And why are you here when Voldemort’s at the castle gates?!” Remus asked in a rush, fearful of hearing the answers.

“Did you know?” Severus questioned in his most deadly soft voice. He still shook with rage as he stared at yet another man he had come to trust.

“What?” Remus shook his head in confusion.

“DID YOU KNOW?!” Severus asked again.

“Know what?! What the hell’s going on?”

Severus suppressed a sigh and closed his eyes as he was flooded with relief. At least there was still one person in this godforsaken world that he could still trust.

“Let’s go,” he said, pushing past Remus and into the hallway. He had to protect Harry regardless of what the boy-hero had done to him. He had just started for the stairs that led to a rear exit in the castle, when he was stopped by a voice that sent a cold shiver down his spine.

“Hello, Severus,” Lucius Malfoy said in a sickly-sweet voice.

Before he could turn around, Remus was hit by a stupefy spell and dropped to the stone floor beside him.

“Or should I call you… traitor?”

Severus took a few calming breaths before turning around. He was apprehensive, but not entirely afraid. Malfoy may have beaten him down in the past, but this time, he had enough anger to charge him for a fairer fight.

Severus faced Malfoy with his head slightly lowered, glaring observantly at his enemy through the dark locks that partially hid his face. He watched Malfoy’s slim form approaching him unafraid, as though he didn’t believe Severus to be any sort of a threat to him.

“Don’t look so scared, Severus,” he said as though to a frightened child, mistaking Severus’ anger for fear. “My master will join us shortly. He’ll take care of you.” The last was whispered directly into Severus’ ear.

Severus shuddered with disgust as Malfoy slid his tongue suggestively into the Potions Master’s ear. He nearly gagged on the strong smell of Malfoy’s expensive cologne. He turned his head away and ground his teeth in anger and revulsion as Malfoy slid a hand over his arse.

He carefully and quietly triggered the release in the holder on his right forearm, causing a small dagger to drop neatly into the palm of his hand. He gave a first, and then a second quick thrust of the dagger, puncturing both of Malfoy’s lungs before he could utter another word. He pulled back and looked defiantly into Malfoy’s shocked face, an evil smirk gracing his lips.

“Don’t look so scared, Malfoy. Your master will be joining you shortly,” he said as Malfoy tried to
gasp and slid down Severus’ body to the floor. Severus knew Malfoy was dead before he even
turned to help Remus to his feet.

As soon as Remus was standing, Severus turned on his heel and charged up the stairs, the werewolf
on his heels.

~*~

Harry stood on the steps to the castle with Albus, looking over the grounds, barely listening as Ron,
Draco, Minerva McGonagall, and Mad Eye Moody updated Albus on their readiness for battle.
Teams of students, professors, and Order members were poised and ready for the battle with the
Death Eaters, leaving only one job for Harry… the Dark Lord. Harry’s anger at what he had been
forced to do to Severus was ignited even further by the sight of Voldemort chanting spell after spell
to take down the school’s wards.

“We’ve stationed some of the older students at the entrances to the dormitories, and I’m glad that we
did. A group of four Death Eaters managed to make it inside the castle. One of the secret
passageways must have never been collapsed. According to Harry’s map, the three that were headed
for the Slytherin dungeon have been subdued.”

McGonagall’s words finally penetrated Harry’s thoughts. “And the other one?” he interjected, his
eyes widening with fear.

Instead of McGonagall’s Scottish brogue replying to Harry’s question though, he heard a deep voice
rasp out a reply from behind. “Lucius decided to pay me a visit.”

Albus stumbled at Harry’s side, a sure sign that the wards surrounding Hogwarts had fallen
completely, the Death Eaters swarmed through the Hogwarts gates, but Harry didn’t even notice. His
attention turned completely to the two men quickly striding up to their group, his mouth hanging
open in shock. “Severus? Oh my gods! You’re covered in blood. Are you all right?”

Severus glared dangerously at Harry, his heart beating wildly, his chest laboring to breathe at the
sight of the one he had dared to trust with his heart. He could see the fear and concern in Harry’s
face, but couldn’t allow himself to believe that it was anything more than just a continuation of the
role Harry was playing with him. He ignored Harry and turned to Draco.

“Draco, your father will never hurt you again,” he said with finality. He gave the young man a brief
hug as he was overcome with relief. “Never again,” he vowed in a soft whisper against Draco’s head
before releasing him.

Harry started towards Severus, noting the man’s look of utter surprise as the blonde Slytherin turned
immediately into Ron Weasley’s strong embrace. The look quickly turned into a scowl, directed at
Harry, as Severus must have realized that the Gryffindor was about to address him.

Harry pleaded with his eyes for Severus to follow his directive. “You need to get back into the castle.
I need to know that you both are safe and will survive this. If you don’t, then none of this was worth
anything.”

Any reply Severus would have made was cut off as a jet of red light flew past Harry’s shoulder.
Harry turned around and immediately began casting a volley of defensive and offensive spells, his
eyes seeking out Voldemort even as he still begged Severus to heed his command. “Please,
Severus,” he shouted above the din of the approaching Death Eaters.
“The hell I will!” Severus barked at Harry, just as he raised his own wand.

He shouted a spell and threw his wand out in front of Harry where it stopped, hovering at chest level, and began to spin. He heard several gasps of amazement as he weaved the intricate protection spell that hadn’t been seen since the time of Merlin. It had been lost and forgotten over the centuries, mostly due to its difficulty of use. It was one of the most delicate of spells and could only be cast by the strongest of wizards. Severus had found reference to it in an old book of defensive magic, but not the actual spell. He had researched it for several years, but finally had to just recreate it on his own, with some help from Professor Flitwick.

Severus held out his wand hand, palm facing his wand, holding it steady as fine threads of gold, silver, and copper bound together. It formed a large shield that would protect Harry and himself from all but the most deadly curses. Just as he stepped up next to Harry, Harry’s words hit him like a great typhoon.

“BOTH?!” he cried, his free hand automatically moving to protect his stomach. The magical shield wavered, his wand hand shaking as he looked at his flat stomach. He suddenly felt faint and nauseous. He had to fight a moment to keep the contents of his stomach in place.

He looked back up at Harry with fear, pain, and anger flashing in his onyx eyes. He felt the weight of Harry’s betrayal trying to pull him to his knees. Not only had Harry stolen his freedom and chained him with a bond, but left him with child, as well.

Severus closed his eyes and took several deep breaths, clearing his mind. The repercussions of his own foolishness would be dealt with after the battle. He only had to ensure Harry was alive afterward for Severus to hate.

~TBC~

~*~

Authors’ Notes: Thank you to everyone who has been so concerned about Taran’s health. You will all be happy to know that he has completed his four weeks of chemotherapy, and is almost back to his old self. He and his family have been through a very difficult stretch with him almost being hospitalized several times due to his severe reactions to the treatments, but thankfully he has once again survived this bout of throat cancer. We don’t know how quickly updates will come, but hopefully, if both of us stay healthy, we’ll be updating much more frequently.

Thank you also to all of our reviewers: gemma, PHANTOM, neuroticsquirrel, leeleepotter, magalud, daughter_moon, Hambares, Jill, Jamie, Calanor, Jaima, Alter, Danielle, lightgoddess, and Kat. We’ve answered your reviews on the review page underneath your original review.

A few people have asked us to email them when we update. We’re notoriously bad at remembering to do that. *sheepish grin* So, if anyone is interested, Magdelena has a yahoo group to update you on when and where you can find her stories. She also uses it to update the group members on this co-written tale. Sign up HERE.

And FYI, we are not going to attempt to update/change this fic in any way so that it includes the new HP canon from HBP. Taran hasn’t even finished his copy of the book yet. :)

All our best,
Magdelena and Taran (aka Dr Jeckell and Mrs Hyde)
Author's notes: HP/SS – Slash – WIP. Harry discovers that when he kills Voldemort, all of his Death Eaters will die as well through the bond that they share with the Dark Lord through their Marks. Harry vows to do anything it takes to allow Severus Snape to escape that fate.

---

**Title**: The Domino Effect  
**Author**: Dr. Jeckell & Mrs. Hyde (aka Taran & Magdeleena)  
**Rating**: NC-17  
**Pairing**: Harry Potter/Severus Snape, Ron Weasley/Draco Malfoy (secondary pairing)  
**Warnings**: Non-consensual sex, Violence, Adult Language, Sexual Situations, Graphic Sexual Content, Rimming, MPreg  
**Summary**: HP/SS – Slash – Chapter 11 of ?. Harry discovers that when he kills Voldemort, all of the Death Eaters will die as well because of the bond that they share with the Dark Lord through their Marks. Harry vows to do anything it takes to allow Severus Snape to escape that fate.  
**Disclaimer**: We do not own any of the characters herein (only the plot). All the characters in the Harry Potter universe belong exclusively to J.K. Rowling, Warner Brothers, and anyone else JKR chooses to allow to play with them. We are publishing our fanfiction writings only for our own selfish desire to be a part of their world.  
**Authors’ Note**: Thanks to the incredibly wonderful Sev1970 for betaing this story.

~*~

**Chapter Eleven – The Final Battle**

Harry couldn’t spare a glance at Severus as the spells began flying at him furiously. He heard the defiance in Severus’ tone, and knew that his only hope of saving the annoyingly protective git he had fallen for was to end the battle as soon as possible. He faltered a second in his casting when he saw the wand stopping before him and watched the shield materialize before his eyes.

Seconds later Severus stepped to Harry’s side, and the Gryffindor winced as he heard the Potions Master’s tone, knowing the older man realized the extent of his deception. Harry moved protectively in front of Severus, even though logically he realized it was Severus’ spell that was actually protecting them both. He fired curses as he attempted to convince his lover to return to the relative safety of the castle. “Yes, BOTH, Severus. You’re carrying our child, so will you please bloody fucking … *Stupefy*! …get your arse back to the castle … *Expelliarmus*! …so that I can… *Petrificus Totalus*! …kill this madman and gain us both back our lives?!”

Any answer Severus might have given was cut off as a hissing voice interrupted the two. “How delightful! It appears that my lovely traitor has become the bitch of the Potter boy. How quaint. And a child? Perhaps I might let the traitor live and raise the child as my own.”

Power and magic crackled along Harry's nerve endings, as he turned to face the most powerful dark wizard their world had ever seen. "Over my DEAD body!"

Severus remained emotionless as he heard the words between Harry and the Dark Lord, the sounds of the battle falling into a dull buzz around his head. He tuned out the shouted curses and counter
curses, the screams of pain, triumph and anger. Nothing mattered now but Harry and Voldemort. This was where the true battle was taking place, the outcome deciding the fate of their world.

Severus listened as they spoke, both their voices rising in anger until they were shouting like a couple of school children over a ball, himself being that which they fought over. He heard Harry angrily telling Voldemort that Severus was now his and would never let anyone take him away. Likewise, the Dark Lord also attempted to lay claim, citing original ownership. He began to see that everything until now had been a power struggle, first between Tom Riddle and Albus Dumbledore, now between Lord Voldemort and Harry Potter. He had never imagined that he would be the prize to be won or lost. It had nothing to do with Muggles or Mudbloods, only domination over the weak.

From the corner of his eye, he saw Albus falter and fall to his knees, but couldn't work up the emotions he thought he should feel. There was no regret, no sadness, no sense of loss, not even anger. He supposed that was due to his high concentration on the protective shield that continued to stave off Death Eater attacks. The only thing he felt was the weakening of his magical strength. He couldn't hold the shield much longer.

"Potter," he said softly, gasping for air as a particularly strong curse ricocheted off the shield and weakened him further. "Stop your chattering and finish him."

"I don't know how," Harry whispered over his shoulder, his voice heavy with desperation.

"Yes, you do!" Severus yelled back, flinching as more Death Eaters concentrated on breaking through his shield. He knew they wouldn't use the Killing Curse for fear of taking away their Lord's pleasure. "Think, boy! What power have you had every bloody time you've fought and defeated him?"

Harry gave him a quizzical look, not comprehending. He turned back to throw an insult at the now laughing Voldemort.

"Your mother helped you the first time. She gave you the power you need now. Love, you fool!" Severus yelled exasperatedly. "Love stopped him when you were a baby. The second time, the love you had for your parents, then it was Godric Gryffindor's love for his family that forged the sword you used and every time since, it has been your love for your friends!" Severus was shouting to be heard over the din of the battle and the Dark Lord's self-righteous rant. "Bloody hell, Harry! You wielded it against me like a sword, now use it against him!"

Harry felt the pain in Severus' words and stared at his wand. Somehow, everything suddenly made sense. Severus was right about everything. He stared at his wand for a moment, his mind clearing, his heart slowing. He thought about all the people he loved and cared for, Ron, Hermione, Remus, Hagrid, the Weasleys, Albus, teachers and acquaintances he had never really gotten to know, but cared about just the same, and Severus. He felt a warm smile tug at the corner of his lips as he thought about Severus and how much he had truly come to love the hard man. Now, there was a baby, and the thought of the life growing inside Severus made Harry realize how much he had to lose if he failed to kill Voldemort.

When he looked up at Voldemort, he saw fear in the reptilian eyes. Voldemort opened his mouth to shout the most deadly of all curses, but Harry was faster. With complete calm and serenity, he spoke, never bothering to raise his wand.

"Avada Kedavra, Tom Marvolo Riddle."

Harry watched the blue streaks of magic jump from his body and strike the Dark Lord in the middle of his chest, spreading across his slithery form. He almost laughed at the sight of Riddle's body
bursting into flames and slowly melting into a puddle of gooey ashes, reminding him of the witch in *The Wizard of Oz*.

Harry's triumphant smile shattered with the protective shield. He gasped as Severus' wand spun off to his left, the glittering magic that had staved off Voldemort's Death Eaters sparking weakly, then vanishing. He spun around in time to watch Severus sink slowly to his knees just as howls of pain started up from all around them.

Ignoring the dying men and women who had given their souls over to a madman, Harry rushed to Severus' side, afraid that the bond hadn't worked, that Severus was going to die anyhow. He dropped heavily to his knees beside his exhausted lover and reached out to touch his shoulder.

"Don't touch me!" Severus growled and twisted away.

Severus felt heavy, his body drained of all energy, his mind whirling around a thousand thoughts at once. He was elated by their victory, relieved to have it over with, and still felt cheated. What was to be his final penance for his crimes had been taken out of his grasp and left him feeling dispirited. As much as he wanted to hold Harry, to feel a sense of comfort and love, he knew he didn't deserve it, even if Harry had truly loved him.

Severus heard the cries of Death Eaters among the cheers of students, teachers, and others who had come to fight at the side of Albus Dumbledore and Harry Potter. He knew that if it hadn't been for Harry's deception, that his own voice would be carried away in the wind as well and knew with certainty that there would be few, if any, to mourn his loss, not that he had ever tried to change that fact.

Without looking at Harry, he called for his wand and slowly got to his feet. Shaking off Harry's assisting hand and nearly falling back down, he looked around at the devastation that was once the lush green lands of Hogwarts School of Witchcraft and Wizardry. While the castle itself seemed to be unmarred, the grounds were stained with blood and fire. Trees were uprooted and broken, a good section of the Forbidden Forest was ablaze, Hagrid's little hut was leveled and still shaking, even the tall goalposts on the Quidditch pitch were gone. The smell of death lay heavy in the air like a dense fog, and the sun had disappeared behind dark, ominous clouds as though it didn't wish to witness the ruination of its third child.

Severus hadn't realized the extent of the battle, having been focused on protecting Harry, and was stunned by the number of people and creatures that surrounded them. He spotted Remus with what he assumed was his 'pack' of fellow werewolves, the Centaurs from the Forbidden Forest, led by Firenze, teachers and students, and many others that Dumbledore had recruited to fight for the side of Light. He was relieved to see an apparently uninjured Draco as he ran from the main doors of the school to a sea of red-heads, a bright smile on his pale face.

He turned for a final look at the one who had taken his freedom and his heart, which he had tried so hard to protect. He didn't stop to inquire about Albus, or to count the list of fallen comrades. He felt dizzy and utterly exhausted, not even certain he could make the journey, but too hurt to stay. So, with a final sad sigh, he apparated away.

~*~

Harry felt himself go cold when Severus shook off his hand. He was momentarily distracted as Hermione embraced him fiercely, but he quickly struggled out of the witch’s grip just in time to see his future vanish into thin air.
Severus had gone, and had taken their unborn child with them. All at once the guilt of what Harry had perpetrated against the man he had fallen in love with overwhelmed him. Killing the Dark Lord didn’t even give Harry a moment’s pause, but his betrayal of a man who had done so much to redeem himself permeated his thoughts. Harry fell to his knees and screamed out his lover’s name. “SEVERUS!! NOOO!!!”

Tears streamed down his face, and he shrugged off his friends’ attempts to comfort him.

Albus, obviously weakened, sat heavily on the ground in front of Harry. He raised a hand to Harry’s cheek only to have it batted away. His eyes were filled with tears as he tried to calm the young man. “My boy, I will find Severus, and I will make him understand that you only did this because I asked you to.”

Harry glanced around, and noticing that only Draco, Ron and Hermione were nearby, he turned back to Albus, glaring daggers through the older man. His voice hissed out low enough so only the four would be able to hear him. “I started this because you asked me to, but I finished it because I cared too much to watch him die. Now I’ll be bonded forever to a wizard who cannot stand the sight of me. He is having a child… my child… a child that I will probably never be allowed to even see, much less raise myself. Severus is never going to forgive me for this. None of your tea, lemon drops, or platitudes are going to help this situation.”

“Harry, I’m sure right now Severus is frightened, feeling like he is once again bound to a master. But as soon as he has some time to deal with…”

“Didn’t you hear me, old man,” Harry bit out. “I’m not talking about Severus’ bond with ME, I’m speaking of my bond with HIM. He’s as much my master as I am his.”

Albus’ tired eyes looked up at Harry speculatively. “I’m afraid I don’t understand.”

“I fell in love with the insufferable git,” Harry snarled. He yanked his robe and shirt sleeves up his arm and exposed his marked skin to Albus. A green coiling serpent was clearly visible, wound around the initials ‘SS’ low on Harry’s left forearm. “And somehow it changed the bloody magic of the spell. I’m his forever, too, whether he wants me or not. I’ve just freed myself from the being who’s been obsessed with me since my birth, and now I’m bonded to a wizard who finally has reason to hate me for my own actions instead of my father’s.”

~*~

The black-robed, masked figure standing mere feet from Remus gasped in mid-spell, his left arm suddenly bursting into flames. Remus’ eyes lit up with the orange glow enveloping his opponent, his startled gasp lost in the screams of pain and anguish. Remus lowered his wand slightly and looked around. Everywhere he looked, Death Eaters were ablaze, their masks melting against their flesh, their voices rising into the air with the clouds of smoke billowing from the fires.

He suddenly understood what was happening. The Dark Mark all of Voldemort’s followers had branded on their arms were connected to him in more ways than Remus suspected. It was not just a Domination bond that held them, but a Domino bond. When the dominant one died, he took his bond-mates with him, thereby creating a domino effect of death.

"No," he whispered in alarm as he realized that the deadly curse would also be taking Severus with it. He was about to lose the only close friend he had left. In a blind panic, he began racing around the blood-soaked grounds, ignoring the stench of burning flesh. He pushed his way through the crowd
of Lycanthropes that had joined the side of Light to protect the very society that had ostracized them, and finally spotted a small huddle of people near the largest ball of fire on the field.

He ran towards them calling Severus' name. He stopped short when he saw Harry on his knees in despair. All hope fled until the words of Harry and Albus reached his sensitive ears. He shook his head in confusion as he tried to comprehend the meaning of their conversation. His shock turned to relief, but was quickly replaced with anger when he suddenly understood the mark Harry was showing Albus. Apparently, Voldemort wasn't the only wizard strong enough to cast a domination bond.

Remus stepped into the circle of people, his eyes ablaze with a fire hotter than that coming from the remains of the Dark Lord.

"He trusted you, Harry," he said softly, his voice rough and hoarse from shouting curses and counter-curses, anger rolling off his tongue. He didn't care that Harry had, in the process, bonded himself to Severus as well, he at least had had a choice in the matter. "Just another betrayer, another one who used him selfishly."

"You think I don’t know that?" Harry questioned, his words spat out angrily as he surged to his feet to face Remus. "Do you think I didn’t realize from the moment I agreed to this plan that he would hate me? That I would be nothing more than another on the list of people who betrayed him?"

"I am the one who asked Harry to do this, Remus," Albus interjected, as he wearily climbed to his feet with Ron and Draco’s assistance. Leaning heavily on the two younger men, his own strength almost completely sapped, he pressed on, attempting to help Remus understand what had truly happened.

"It is I who you should be blaming. This was not some whim of a headstrong student. When Severus first told me that their bonds with Tom would have this affect on him and his fellow Death Eaters, I had to find a way to save him. He is the son I never had, and I would not let him die. Moody, Shaklebolt, and I exhaustively researched, but could find nothing to break the Mark except to have a stronger wizard take Voldemort’s place in Severus’ bond. Would you have rather seen him consumed in flames like all of those around you simply because he made the wrong choice when he was a mere child himself? Thank the gods that Voldemort thought that Percy Weasley was more valuable remaining unmarked, or we would have had two spies to save from a certain death."

"You could have told him…” Remus protested, beginning to understand Dumbledore’s position, but still steadfastly refusing to believe that such a deception needed to take place in order to achieve Severus’ safety. “Given him a choice…”

"But that would have made it far too easy, Remus," Harry stated quietly, again drawing the attention of the group back to himself, his usually vivid green eyes looking cloudy and lifeless as they gazed at the spot where Severus had disapparated from. “No, that had to be one of the bloody essential parts of the bonding ritual. He had to completely and utterly subjugate himself to me for me to be able to wrestle the bond away from Voldemort. There’s no way he could have done that if he would have known what I was doing. I don’t know how I ever thought this could turn out anyway but horribly wrong.”

~*~
Hermione, Ron and Draco stood together watching as Harry walked forlornly into the castle, Dumbledore being levitated to the Infirmary by McGonagall, and Remus stalking off to gods only knew where.

Suddenly, Draco broke the terse silence. "Something about this just isn't right. Why does Harry have Severus' bond-mark? Hermione, we're going to need to take another look at that research you started when we first found out that Dumbledore had asked Harry to do this. Somehow, I don't think just the fact that Harry dominated the Professor out of love, instead of out of want for power, would have been enough to create a reciprocal bond."

"What are you thinking?" Ron inquired.

Hermione' eyes widened as she answered for Draco. "He's thinking that for Harry to receive a mark as well, the Professor would have to have feelings for…"

"Don't even finish that statement, Hermione," Draco warned. "We can't let Harry know any of this now. It would be cruel to get his hopes up after what he's endured. We've got to find out for sure before we tell either of them."

"So…" Ron, scratching his head, staring up at the slowly clearing sky with a look of deep thought on his face. "Would that be something like…? I don't know, like a sublimation bond, maybe? I mean, if Harry bonded Snape to him with domination, could Snape have done the same in reverse?"

"I just don't know, Ron" Draco said softly. "We'll just have to look it up."

The three sighed in unison and slowly followed the path Harry and Dumbledore had taken, leaving behind the still smoldering battlefield, and all the fear and pain that went with it.

"So… um, does this mean Harry's pregnant, too?" Ron asked as they entered the school.

"No, you twit. Of course, he's not pregnant! Only Severus is," Draco replied, looking at Ron like he was off his rocker.

"Just checking."

~TBC~

~*~

Authors’ Notes: Thank you also to all of our reviewers: leeleepotter, deb, Jaima, magalud, Kate, jamie, and Danielle. We’ve answered your reviews on the review page underneath your original review.

A few people have asked us to email them when we update. So, if anyone is interested, Magdelena has a yahoo group to update you on when and where you can find her stories. She also uses it to update the group members on this co-written tale. Sign up HERE.
Moving On

Author's notes: HP/SS – Slash – WIP. Harry discovers that when he kills Voldemort, all of his Death Eaters will die as well through the bond that they share with the Dark Lord through their Marks. Harry vows to do anything it takes to allow Severus Snape to escape that fate.

Title: The Domino Effect
Author: Dr. Jeckell & Mrs. Hyde (aka Taran & Magdelena)
Rating: NC-17
Pairing: Harry Potter/Severus Snape, Ron Weasley/Draco Malfoy (secondary pairing)
Warnings: Non-consensual sex, Violence, Adult Language, Sexual Situations, Graphic Sexual Content, Rimming, MPreg
Summary: HP/SS – Slash – Chapter 12 of ?. Harry discovers that when he kills Voldemort, all of the Death Eaters will die as well because of the bond that they share with the Dark Lord through their Marks. Harry vows to do anything it takes to allow Severus Snape to escape that fate.
Disclaimer: We do not own any of the characters herein (only the plot). All the characters in the Harry Potter universe belong exclusively to J.K. Rowling, Warner Brothers, and anyone else JKR chooses to allow to play with them. We are publishing our fanfiction writings only for our own selfish desire to be a part of their world.
Authors' Note: Thanks to the incredibly wonderful Sev1970 for betaing this story.

~*~

Chapter Twelve – Moving On

Severus appeared on the doorstep of a small, dilapidated cottage. He wavered for a moment, his hand grasping the knob tightly before regaining his equilibrium. He softly chanted the necessary spells to unlock the door, wiping sweat from his forehead with his free hand, then turned the handle. He barely managed to close the door behind him before he passed out.

When he awoke, it was to a dark room he didn’t recognize. He started to panic before his memory supplied him with answers. He closed his eyes and took a deep breath as the pain shot through his heart. He should be free right now, flying with the clouds; his sins burned away, ashes to the wind. He would have died happy if the war had come a day sooner when he would have been able to hold on to the feelings of love and joy Harry had given him, the acceptance Albus had shown him, and friendship from Remus. He had nothing now, nothing left to carry him through the nightmares and memories.

With a groan, Severus rolled to his side, his exhaustion weighing him down, and a day spent on a hard floor leaving him stiff and sore to the point where every little move was painful and tiring. He slowly made his way to his feet and lifted his wand, calling “Lumos” to light the room. He swayed dizzily for a moment as he gazed around the small room.

It was a small home that had belonged to his grandmother. It rested in a shallow valley near a quaint old Muggle town. He had only visited her once, but had truly liked the old woman. She was a potions maker, supplying the villagers with simple curatives and medicinal herbs, with a tongue sharp enough to cut glass.
Severus wandered around the little house, acquainting himself with the layout. Tomorrow, he would begin cleaning and making it hospitable, but for tonight, he simply wanted a cup of tea and a decent sleep. He found what he needed in the kitchen, and after performing a freshening spell on the little box of teabags and mild cleaning spells on the kettle and a single cup, he then made himself tea and took his steaming mug into the master bedroom, which really wasn’t much bigger than the other little room.

After a cleaning and freshening spell, Severus sank into the soft downy bedding, his body groaning at the unaccustomed comfort. He refused to think about Harry, the bond and the offspring he was now forced to carry, and let his mind wander into oblivion.

~*~

The first thing Severus was aware of early the next morning, was the ominous rumbling of his stomach. He groaned as he sat up, holding his stomach as though that would hold its contents in place when he moved. The next thing he noticed was the exhaustion that accompanied such simple movement. He cursed Harry’s name as he stumbled to the bathroom to empty what little was in his stomach.

After finishing his morning ablutions, Severus made his way to the kitchen. With a fresh cup of tea, he proceeded to look around the tiny house, assessing what needed to be done in order to make it hospitable again. The house was in amazing condition given that it had been uninhabited for so long. There didn’t appear to be mice or other rodents, only a few spiders who had claimed corners, window frames and lanterns for their intricate webs. It would be rather simple to clean, or at least it would have been if he weren’t so drained of magical energy.

Severus sighed heavily and set down his cup. He pulled one of his shrunken chests from his discarded robe. Enlarging it in the middle of the living room floor, he retrieved fresh clothes and went into the bedroom to change into what he hoped would pass for a Muggle-style outfit. With a few pounds of Muggle currency he kept stashed for emergencies, he left the little cottage, headed for the tiny town less than a mile away.

Severus found the general store easily and made his purchases, food and cleaning supplies, while giving as little information to the questioning shopkeeper as he could. He kept his answers short and curt, discouraging the friendliness of the older man. He clasped the bag to his chest and quickly returned to the cottage, avoiding the few people he encountered on the dusty streets.

The next few weeks were spent cleaning, with Muggle detergents and with magic when he had the energy. It didn’t take very much to tire him out, mostly because he never had a chance to recover properly from the battle, but also because of the pregnancy, which he was trying desperately to forget.

Once his new home was livable, he started on the unkempt, over-grown yard. He weeded until his hands were raw and his legs and back were cramped, and then weeded some more. He ate light meals prepared on the old log-fire stove and sat on his porch watching birds and the occasional deer as it wandered in search of food.

He kept his mind in strict reign, refusing to think about Hogwarts and his life there. He didn’t want to think about Albus and the sight of the old wizard being brought to his knees; he didn’t want to care. He pushed thoughts of Harry away with anger and pain, calling himself foolish, arrogant, and stupid for ever trusting the young man, and for thinking, even for a moment, that someone would mourn him, could love him. Most importantly, he wouldn’t allow himself to acknowledge the baby growing
within him. It was a clear representation of just how foolish he had been to believe he could pay for his sins and be set free.

As the weeks rolled by, however, it became harder and harder for Severus to maintain his ‘carefree’ attitude. He could no longer will his mind into a peaceful oblivion, away from thoughts of Hogwarts and his past life. His nights were full of dreams, touches and words he had craved for so long being whispered like the scent of flowers in spring.

Even his trips into town were becoming more difficult. He had learned the shopkeeper’s name, Liam, as well as his wife’s, Josephina, who ran a beauty salon. He also found a baker and butcher just down the street from the little shop. He had been forced to explain that he was the old apothecary’s grandson and was a professor on sabattical. He exchanged pleasantries with other townsfolk when they passed, but kept mostly to himself. He didn’t want friends and really didn’t need anyone poking their nose into his affairs. It was the long walk, though, that was becoming so difficult. He found that by the time he returned to his little home, he was exhausted. What strength that had started to return, was quick to leave, and he was sleeping far more than he could remember doing ever before.

He found himself jumping from mood to mood, and getting upset at the most minor of things. He growled at the shopkeepers for not having what he wanted, and glared at happy young couples walking down the street. He even yelled at a deer once for walking through his view of the land.

Coming to terms with the baby taking space in his stomach was taking longer. He blamed the baby for everything that went wrong. He woke up every morning feeling nauseous and spent his first waking hours in the bathroom, emptying his stomach of meals from the day before. That, in turn, left him feeling weak and drained, making him lose his appetite until late into the morning, when he would suddenly find himself ravenous. He tried to curb his appetite, worrying about gaining weight and being noticed by the villagers, but just couldn’t seem to stop eating once he started.

The cravings were the worst part. He resisted buying sweets in town, but would wake in the middle of the night wanting ice cream or chocolate, or any sugary substance. He would have a piece of fruit and go back to bed, where he would lay for an hour desperately not thinking about candy apples, peach cobbler, and Honeydukes, the sweets shop in Hogsmeade.

It was two months after the fall of the Dark Lord, and the night he had been bonded to a new master, when the cramping started. Severus awake with a jolt in the middle of the night, pain twisting his stomach into knots. He sat up gasping, his arms wrapped tightly around his waist. He was nearly in tears from the pain, but forced himself to stand and walk around the little cottage, hoping to work out the cramps. When the pain only seemed to get worse, he started to panic, thinking there was something very wrong with the baby… his baby.

He was about to start up the floo in the living room fireplace, when a surge of immense pain shot through his stomach like a firecracker. He fell to his knees with a gasp and fainted. When he woke up, the sun was streaming down on him and the pain had subsided, leaving only a dull ache. He decided to wait to see if the pain returned before contacting Poppy Pomfrey, the medi-witch at Hogwarts. He used his wand to convert an old chair into a comfortable rocker, then sat down
rubbing his stomach soothingly and humming softly to the baby he hadn’t wanted.

~*~

Every available spare moment between revising for their NEWTs, found Hermione, Draco, and even Ron, diligently searching for answers to the questions that had plagued them about Harry and Severus’ bond. The weeks after Severus’ disappearance had seen a flurry of activity. Dumbledore and Remus had been searching for Severus everywhere, to no avail. Harry had drifted further and further into a deep depression which would find him one minute sobbing out his grief and loss and the next his white-hot blazing temper erupting without warning. The three friends had tried to approach Harry to help him deal with his loss, but Harry closed himself off from even those closest to him.

For the first time, Harry had used his fame to his advantage. When the Ministry had offered to grant him anything, Harry’s only request was that he would be judged on his work thus far in his years at Hogwarts, and not forced to sit for his NEWTs. The Minister had readily agreed to his request. Therefore, while his friends were busily studying, Harry would be holed up in the Room of Requirement, or in Severus’ empty, deserted rooms reliving the events of the past months in his mind and viewing his every action from both his and Severus’ points of view.

But thoughts of the past were not the only things that plagued Harry. Whenever he would begin to think about the future that lay ahead of him, a future free from Voldemort, his heart would clench, the knowledge that he would likely spend that future alone, killing him slowly. Rationally, Harry knew that Severus had every right to flee, and not trust that Harry could have possibly had sincere feelings for him, but each night as he went to bed, he prayed to whatever gods might listen that Severus would remember his declaration of love, and would understand that if everything else had been a machination and a lie, which had taken away Severus’ freedom of choice, that Harry’s care, concern, and love had been nothing but the truth.

~*~

Hermione, Draco, and Ron had researched the bond exhaustively in Hogwarts’ library, and had found nothing. As the weeks wore on, Draco resigned himself to the fact that there was only one place that they could likely find the information.

“This place is enormous!” Ron exclaimed as he stepped out of the floo into the library at Malfoy Manor. “I think it’s almost as large as Hogwarts’ library.”

Ron barely was able to hold back a snort of laughter when he saw that Hermione was staring at the rows and rows of tomes, practically drooling in her eagerness to absorb new information. He apparently wasn’t the only one who had noticed.

“Down, Granger,” Draco warned as he laid a hand on her sleeve. “Remember where you are. Most of these books are teeming with Dark Magic. I don’t think that even your curiosity goes that far.”

Hermione sighed and nodded sadly. “You’re right, of course. Sorry, just the thought of all those books…” she said, her voice trailing off wistfully.

Ron rolled his eyes and shifted his gaze warily about the room. “Let’s just get this over with, this place gives me the creeps.”
“Try growing up in it,” Draco muttered under his breath. Almost immediately he felt Ron’s arm slipping around his waist, and the warm, comforting presence of his boyfriend conforming to his back. Draco let out a breath he hadn’t realized he had been holding.

Ron whispered an apology against Draco’s neck, and a promise that he would never let anyone hurt Draco ever again. Draco squeezed Ron’s hand in thanks, but quickly separated himself from his lover in order to complete their task. More than anything, he wanted the man who had been the only positive role model in his life to be able to find the same happiness that he had found with Ron. There was no question in Draco’s mind that Harry’s love for Severus was reciprocated, though he doubted that Severus himself even knew how he felt about the Gryffindor.

Draco chanted a summoning spell and several tomes flew off the shelves surrounding him to cluster in a pile on the desk. In the end, they had four books to peruse. The trio quickly gathered the texts and flooed back to Hogsmeade. They hurried up to the castle, and stayed secluded in Hermione’s Head Girl room until late in the night. Finally, they found what they were looking for.

“Bloody hell, I think this is it!” Ron handed over the book he had been reading to Draco, who held it so that both he and Hermione could read the passage that Ron had highlighted.

“The Domino bond was originally created to bind the Master/Mistress of the house to his/her servants, slaves, and concubines,” Hermione quoted aloud from the text. “Unfortunately, the spell was flawed. If feelings of love and devotion were shared between the Master/Mistress and the one they were bonding to themselves, a reciprocal bond would form instead. The Master/Mistress would still be the Dominant of the pairing, with the subordinate’s will still subjugated to their Master/Mistress. However, the fact that the subservience was willingly accepted out of love and need, rather than fear of the dominant partner’s power, would alter the magic of the bond, therefore also Marking the Master/Mistress as well. The type of bond created instead was, in each of the cases recorded, the equivalent of a Marriage bond.”

Draco took the text from Hermione’s hand and continued reading aloud. “If the Domino bond is to be used, it should be used with extreme caution. The Dominant should be certain that he/she has no personal feelings for their potential supplicant, other than the desire to subvert the other’s will to their own, before casting the spell. It is strongly suggested that sexual intercourse between the two partners should be limited to the one sexual act which completes the bond.”

Silence reigned in the room for several minutes as the three friends tried to absorb all they had learned; that their suspicions had finally been confirmed.

“Do you think Snape has any clue that he…” Ron started quietly.

“That he loves Harry?” Draco finished, his eyebrow arching in question. At Ron’s affirmative nod, his lips twisted into a wry smile. “I don’t think he has the slightest clue.”

~TBC~

~*~

Authors’ Notes: Thank you also to all of our reviewers: Morgan_leFaye58, magalud, Kat, LeeLee Potter, deb, Calanor, GryffRavHuffSlythendor, and Danielle. We’ve answered your reviews on the review page underneath your original review.
A few people have asked us to email them when we update. So, if anyone is interested, Magdelena has a yahoo group to update you on when and where you can find her stories. She also uses it to update the group members on this co-written tale. Sign up HERE.
Author's notes: HP/SS – Slash – WIP. Harry discovers that when he kills Voldemort, all of his Death Eaters will die as well through the bond that they share with the Dark Lord through their Marks. Harry vows to do anything it takes to allow Severus Snape to escape that fate.

Title: The Domino Effect
Author: Dr. Jeckell & Mrs. Hyde (aka Taran & Magdelena)
Rating: NC-17
Pairing: Harry Potter/Severus Snape, Ron Weasley/Draco Malfoy (secondary pairing)
Warnings: Non-consensual sex, Violence, Adult Language, Sexual Situations, Graphic Sexual Content, Rimming, MPreg
Summary: HP/SS – Slash – Chapter 13 of ?. Harry discovers that when he kills Voldemort, all of the Death Eaters will die as well because of the bond that they share with the Dark Lord through their Marks. Harry vows to do anything it takes to allow Severus Snape to escape that fate.
Disclaimer: We do not own any of the characters herein (only the plot). All the characters in the Harry Potter universe belong exclusively to J.K. Rowling, Warner Brothers, and anyone else JKR chooses to allow to play with them. We are publishing our fanfiction writings only for our own selfish desire to be a part of their world.
Authors’ Note: Thanks to the incredibly wonderful Sev1970 for betaing this story.

~*~

Chapter Thirteen – Facing the Future

Severus stumbled through the door, dropping his packages on the floor before falling heavily in the rocking chair by the fireplace. He leaned into the soft cushions, his head back and his eyes closed. His heart was beating hard and fast and his chest heaved with every breath he took.

He had been to the village, and the excursion left him utterly exhausted. He had already cut back his visits to once every two weeks, and even that was becoming too much for him. It had been four months since Harry had stolen his heart and his freedom in one painful blow, and Severus still hadn't regained his energy from the final battle against his former Master. Instead of growing stronger, the pregnancy, which he had finally accepted, was draining him and making him weaker. He couldn't perform the simplest of magic anymore, and sometimes just walking from the living room to the kitchen left him gasping for air.

Even the villagers were beginning to notice Severus' lack of energy. Liam, the shopkeeper, had offered him several different medicinal herbs and teas that would help boost his energy, and even sleep herbs to help the dark rings around his eyes. Severus had declined the suggestions, uncertain of what harm his unborn child might suffer because of the herbs. He assured the keeper that he was fine, telling the man it was just spring allergies affecting him.

Because of his exhaustion, Severus had begun making arrangements to have groceries and other necessities delivered to his little cottage on the outskirts of town in order to save his energy.

Besides worrying about his lack of energy, Severus also began to worry about showing. He had
noticed that his stomach wasn't so flat, a small round bulge was forming and his trousers were tightening. With the warmer spring weather, he wouldn't be able to hide behind layers of clothes. The warm days they'd already had seemed hotter than any other spring he could remember, and it was only going to get worse as summer came.

He stretched out his long legs and rubbed his abdomen softly, feeling nauseous and dizzy. The morning sickness, which lasted all day now, hadn't lessened at all, and in fact, seemed to be getting worse the farther along he got; the cramps were frequent and excruciating. He realized, after that first bout of cramps, that it was from his body adjusting to the foreign object that was his child. It was shifting organs and making space where none was supposed to be in a male body.

Severus had just started to drift into sleep when he heard a tap on his window. He got up stiffly and stretched his aching back, then moved to the tiny kitchen window and opened it when he saw a large barn owl carrying a package. The bird flew in and landed on his table to allow Severus to remove the brown-paper wrapped box. As soon as it was free, it gave a hoot of thanks and flew back out the window.

Severus checked the label and saw that it was the new clothes he had sent for from a maternity shop in Diagon Alley. He hoped that it hadn't been traced, but knew someone would find him eventually.

Opening the box, he found three pair of black trousers, three white cotton shirts, and six pair of boxer shorts. All of the items were pre-spelled to adjust to the size of the expecting 'mother', so he wouldn't need to use any of his own magical energy to make them fit properly. They were also spelled to hide the pregnancy for up to seven months. By the eighth month, he wouldn't be able to hide in his clothes anymore and just had to hope the villagers wouldn't see him.

He pushed the box aside for the moment and headed for his bedroom. He stopped and looked in on the empty room that would become a nursery. He hadn't had the strength yet to do anything more than remove the few items of old furniture.

"Soon," he whispered in promise as he patted the roundness that represented his child. "Soon I'll get your nursery finished, child. Then you'll have a real home."

Entering his room, Severus sat on the edge of his bed and looked down at his stomach. He shut his eyes to push back the tears that threatened as he thought about his child. He didn't want it to grow up not knowing both parents, but he just couldn't bring himself to forgive Harry, or trust him ever again. As he thought about Harry, his mood quickly changed to anger, his tears of pain becoming tears of rage. He yelled in frustration, then damned himself and the pregnancy for the change of hormones that made it impossible for him to control his emotions.

He threw himself into bed, pulled the covers up over his head and cried himself to sleep, worrying about the baby, and how he was supposed to raise it to be someone unlike himself.

~*~

Dear Severus,

So much of what happened between the two of us was a lie that I know you must be unsure where the lies ended and the truth began. You have no reason to believe anything I say, but I want you to know that it tortured me to have to force you to consent to be with me. I know you probably think I delighted in your suffering, that I enjoyed forcing you to be subservient to me, but nothing could be further from the truth.
There were many things I despised about what transpired between us. I hated every cruel, degrading thing I said to you. I hated the fact that my actions reminded you of such a difficult time in your life when my father and his friends treated you so maliciously. I hated the fact that you needed to be manipulated in the first place. But more than any of that, I hated that your freedom of choice had to be taken away in order to make this actually work.

I loved touching you, taking care of you, making you take care of yourself. I dreamed of doing that for the remainder of my days. I loved kissing you, exploring your body, feeling your mouth and your hands on me, and gods forgive me, I loved being inside of you. I felt connected to you in a way that I never had before with any partner, and it had nothing to do with the damned bond. I don’t know when I started falling for you, but when you let me take you, when you gave yourself to me, I wanted to believe that it was because you truly wanted me. Loving you was never a lie, Severus. You’re the only man I’ve ever loved, and without you I just don’t know how to go on.

But with all that said, I still wouldn’t change a thing that I did. From the moment Albus approached me with his plan, I knew that I had to do it. You sacrificed too much for us, and I refused to allow you to die for your perceived sins. You made atonement for those long ago, and your future should be yours to command. I want you to know that I will not ever bother you again, if that is truly what you want. I had always relished the thought of becoming a father and having a family, and I have to admit that at one point I deluded myself into believing that maybe one day we could share that dream together.

I also need to share the truth with you about one particular lie I told you. Albus’ faith in you never wavered; he always has had the utmost of trust in you. I hated that I had to take that away from you by telling you that he had another spy checking up on your movements. In fact, quite the opposite was true. Albus did have another spy, Percy Weasley, but he used information that YOU retrieved in order to test Percy’s true allegiances.

There are so many things that I want to tell you, my Severus, my sweet angel, but it’s not like you’re ever going to even read what I’ve written so far, so what’s the point? I hope that wherever you are, that you are safe, and that you’ve found the peace you deserve. But I would like you to also know, that if you ever need sanctuary, you can still find it with me.

Yours forever,
Harry

Ron looked at the parchment that he held in his hand, and then glanced warily at his sleeping friend. He was supposed to be retrieving his friend for supper… nothing more. He, Hermione and Draco still hadn’t quite figured out what to do with their newfound knowledge about the bond his best friend shared with Severus Snape, and the two would likely have his hide for doing this without their agreement.

Ron offered his slumbering friend a sympathetic look. Harry’s hand was still clutching the quill he had written with, his fingertips still stained from the ink he had used. His head was cradled on the crook of his arm, and dried tear tracks were evident on his face. Ron knew in his heart that Harry had never intended to send the letter he had written, but something told him that despite everything they had learned about the bond, the only way Harry and Severus would truly be happy was if Snape believed Harry’s feelings were genuine, and subsequently realized his own.

His decision made, Ron copied the parchment with a flick of his wand, and laid Harry’s original back in the exact spot he had found it. He quietly let himself out of the Room of Requirement, and headed for the Owlery. He could only hope that Hedwig could find the wizard, and that if she could, that Snape would actually read the letter once he realized who it was from.
Remus sighed sadly as he stared at the little house at the top of a low hill. He had been searching for Severus for nearly six months. This was his last hope, and while it appeared to be occupied, he couldn't be sure it was by Severus. The fact that there were no wards protecting the property had Remus thinking it couldn't be housing one of the land's most powerful wizards.

Remus took a deep breath, then proceeded up the little cobblestone walkway. He was still amazed at finding the old settlement that had belonged to Severus' grandmother. It was still registered under the witch's maiden name, which Remus hadn't known, nor had Albus. Percy Weasley had stumbled upon it at the Ministry while searching for land titles that had belonged to deceased Death Eaters. It had been left to Severus, but had never been filed under his name after she died.

He knocked softly on the door and waited, unknowingly holding his breath. When the door swung open after his second knock, he released his breath in a rush of relief. Standing before him was Severus Snape. He couldn't help the smile that curved his lips, even while Severus stared blankly at him.

"Well, it had to happen sooner or later, I suppose," Severus said with an air of mild disappointment.

"Severus! I'm so glad I finally found you!" Remus was nearly in tears as the overwhelming relief poured over him. He hadn't realized until now just how worried he had been, and how much he had truly missed the snarky man. He wanted nothing more than to wrap his arms tightly around Severus and hold on, but the distance in Severus' eyes kept him back.

Severus moved aside and allowed Remus entrance to his little home. He led Remus through the hall and into the sitting room. It was then that Remus really took notice of his old friend. The graceful stride that had made Severus appear to float through the halls of Hogwarts was gone, replaced with slow, careful steps. Severus' shoulders drooped with fatigue, and his head hung low. The pride that had once held his head high seemed to have vanished. Even the shine was gone from his hair, leaving it dry and tangled.

"Severus?" Remus asked worriedly. "Are you alright?"

Severus waved the other wizard over to a large plush chair and then sat down gingerly in a well-padded rocking chair. By the time he sat down, Severus seemed to be out of air and panted heavily. He sat with his eyes closed, his hands resting on his protruding stomach, and rocked gently for a moment before looking at Remus again.

"I'm fine, just a little tired," he said dismissively.

Remus saw the dark circles around the other wizard’s eyes, and the pallor of his face. Severus looked anything but fine. While his stomach had rounded, the rest of his body seemed to have thinned, and Remus didn't think Severus had room to lose weight in the first place.

"Severus, you don't look fine. What's wrong? Is there something wrong with the baby?" he asked.

"It's fine, Remus. The pregnancy is just taking a lot out of me. Would you like some tea?" Severus made to get up, but Remus could see how much of a strain it was.

"I'll get it. You just sit and relax," Remus said, and left before Severus could respond. Finding the kitchen easily enough, he started rummaging around and was rather surprised by the amount of food in the cupboards. There were crackers and biscuits, canned meats and fruits, and even what appeared
to be jars of homemade raspberry preserves. Even the little refrigerator was well stocked with fresh produce and meats.

Remus brought the hot tea back into the living area and was shocked to find Severus asleep in his chair, a fact that worried him more than the weight loss. Remus was tempted to pick Severus up and take him back to Hogwarts where Poppy could care for him. Severus, however, woke from his light slumber as Remus set down the tea tray.

"Severus, what's wrong? It's not like you to fall asleep like that! And really, you look awful!"

"I'm fine, Remus. I'm just tired, that's what happens when you're pregnant." Severus sat up a little straighter and took a cup from the tray. His hand was steady, but Remus couldn't help noticing the way Severus held the cup in both hands, as though afraid of dropping it.

They began chatting, Remus explaining the extensive search that had been underway and how Percy had eventually located the cottage. Severus told Remus about the nearby town and the kind merchant who delivered food to him once a week. When Severus explained that it was because he was showing so much, Remus only half believed him. He didn't think Severus had the strength to walk to the end of his property, let alone all the way to town.

Within an hour, Severus had tired to the point of his eyes closing regularly then shooting back open. Remus suggested Severus lay down for a while, but the Potions Master insisted on staying up, claiming to be fine. They chatted a while longer, both avoiding the subject of Harry and Albus. Then, during a lull in the conversation, Severus' eyes drifted closed and didn't reopen right away, so Remus remained quiet and let him sleep.

Remus rose quietly and looked around the small cottage. He found Severus' room and brought out a soft quilt. He gently laid it over Severus' sleeping form, careful not to wake him. He then continued to look around.

Next to Severus' room was a smaller room. Remus poked his nose in and gasped. Severus had begun to create what was sure to be the perfect nursery. The walls were painted soft yellow with green trimmings, a large, thick plush throw rug covered most of the floors, and a small, comfortable rocking chair rested in the corner. There was no other furniture in the room yet, except for a little night stand which was painted Slytherin Green and Gryffindor Red, and a snake and lion lamp that stood on top of it. The base of the lamp looked like it was carved from stone and hand-painted.

"It's not done yet," came a soft voice from behind him that made him jump. Remus turned in time to see Severus struggle out of his chair and quickly moved to his side when Severus began wavering on his feet. After a moment with his eyes closed, Severus gently pulled out of Remus' grasp.

"The rest of the furniture should be here next week," he said as he moved to the doorway Remus had just been standing in. One hand held the doorframe while the other gently caressed his rounded belly as he stared, deep in thought. "The crib is being made from mahogany as is the dresser. The changing table will be oak, I think."

Remus stood back and watched Severus closely. Even his voice sounded weak and distant. When Severus' hand slipped weakly down to his side, Remus stepped closer. Severus had never appeared weak before, tired yes, but never to this point of exhaustion and Remus couldn't help but worry. He was ready for it, when Severus' legs gave way as he passed out, and lifted the man gently into his arms. He stayed by Severus' bed until the man regained consciousness, worrying and fretting over whether or not to contact Poppy and Harry.
Authors' Notes: Thank you also to all of our reviewers: deb, Sarry, magalud, Lil_Nezumi, antipyro, Danielle, Morgan_leFaye58, Kat, SeparatriX, and GryffRavHuffSlythendor. We've answered your reviews on the review page underneath your original review.

A few people have asked us to email them when we update. So, if anyone is interested, Magdelena has a yahoo group to update you on when and where you can find her stories. She also uses it to update the group members on this co-written tale. Sign up HERE. You can also use the feature on HPFandom that allows you to have update notifications of your favorite stories emailed to you. Simply mark this story as one of your favorites, and you'll get an email letting you know right when we upload.
Visitors

Author's notes: HP/SS – Slash – WIP. Harry discovers that when he kills Voldemort, all of his Death Eaters will die as well through the bond that they share with the Dark Lord through their Marks. Harry vows to do anything it takes to allow Severus Snape to escape that fate.

Title: The Domino Effect
Author: Dr. Jeckell & Mrs. Hyde (aka Taran & Magdelena)
Rating: NC-17
Pairing: Harry Potter/Severus Snape, Ron Weasley/Draco Malfoy (secondary pairing)
Warnings: Non-consensual sex, Violence, Adult Language, Sexual Situations, Graphic Sexual Content, Rimming, MPreg
Summary: HP/SS – Slash – Chapter 14 of ?. Harry discovers that when he kills Voldemort, all of the Death Eaters will die as well because of the bond that they share with the Dark Lord through their Marks. Harry vows to do anything it takes to allow Severus Snape to escape that fate.
Disclaimer: We do not own any of the characters herein (only the plot). All the characters in the Harry Potter universe belong exclusively to J.K. Rowling, Warner Brothers, and anyone else JKR chooses to allow to play with them. We are publishing our fanfiction writings only for our own selfish desire to be a part of their world.
Authors’ Note: Thanks to the incredibly wonderful Sev1970 for betaing this story.

~*~

Chapter Fourteen – Visitors

Severus sighed heavily as Remus puttered around the kitchen preparing breakfast. He had tried to convince the werewolf that he didn’t need a caretaker, that he could manage on his own as he had been doing all his life. Remus, however, refused to believe it, citing his lost weight and pallid, sallow complexion as proof that he needed help.

He was about to tell Remus that he only wanted a piece of toast for breakfast, when there was a knock on the door. He sighed again and started to struggle to his feet.

“That’ll be Liam,” he explained when Remus gave a questioning look.

“Sit! I’ll get the door,” Remus said, pushing Severus gently back into his chair. Before he reached the door, however, it swung open and a stout man not much older than himself, came in carrying a large paper bag over flowing with food.

“Good morning, Severus,” he called.

“Sit! I’ll get the door,” Remus said, pushing Severus gently back into his chair. Before he reached the door, however, it swung open and a stout man not much older than himself, came in carrying a large paper bag over flowing with food.

“Good morning, Severus,” he called. “I brought - Oh! You have company! Hello, I’m Liam,” he said giving Remus a wide smile.

“Remus,” Remus returned the greeting as he reached to take the burden from the shopkeeper, but the man turned and set it on a counter and began unpacking it himself, placing everything in its rightful place. Remus was surprised by the way Liam knew the kitchen so well, shocked that Severus had let the man become so familiar with his home.

“Well, it’s good to see someone here to take care of Severus, finally!” He turned and gave Severus a
stern look, appraising him and judging his fitness. “You still look awful, Severus. Have you been able to keep anything down yet today?”

“I only just got up,” Severus replied with annoyance.

Liam huffed and shook his head before turning back to his task of putting away groceries. “Well, at least you finally have someone here to help out. It’s about bloody time someone came to check on you!”

“We didn’t know where he was!” Remus defended himself. “I’ve been looking for him for the last six months.”

“Well you can’t be a very good wizard then, can you?” Liam asked irritably.

Remus looked at Severus in shock, wondering why he would have told a Muggle that he was a magic user, but Severus looked just as surprised as he, and a full two shades paler than before.

“What?” Severus asked softly, his heart rate accelerating and his hands lying protectively over his protruding stomach.

“Oh, please! Everyone knew your grandmother, and everyone knew she was a witch. Besides, that pregnancy of yours has gotten rather hard to miss,” Liam said looking pointedly at Severus’ stomach and giving a good-natured chuckle.

As Severus began to tremble slightly, Liam reassured him that everything was okay and that the townsfolk had no problem with magic users.

“So, anyway, I can tell Josephina that her sister doesn’t need to come look after the salon while she comes to look after you. Remus can take care of you now…” Liam’s voice trailed off in thought, then he turned to look at Remus. “You are staying, aren’t you?”

“Yes,” Remus replied firmly at the exact same time Severus stated ‘No!’ Remus turned to glare at Severus, then smirked. “The moment I leave here, Severus, I will be going straight to Harry to tell him where you are.”

“You wouldn’t dare!” Severus glared back, but he could see the conviction in his friend’s eyes.

“Oh, yes, I would!”

Severus tried to stare him down, but it was no use. Remus wasn’t going to leave Severus peacefully.

“Fine,” he growled.

“Ah, good! Wonderful!” Liam said clapping his hands. “I’ll tell Josephina that everything’s all set, then, and perhaps, you can treat him better than that St. Mango’s place he went to. They really didn’t seem to do him a bit of good there.” He gave Remus a hearty handshake and gently squeezed Severus’ shoulder before departing.

“I don’t need to be taken care of, Remus,” Severus said angrily after Liam had left. “I can take care of myself.”

“Severus, under normal circumstances, I wouldn’t question that, but these aren’t normal circumstances. You’re so weak right now.” Remus sat across from Severus at the little table and stared into his dark eyes. “I’m worried about you and after you fainted… Well, I’m not leaving you alone and that’s that.”
Severus looked down at his stomach, where his hand caressed light circles over it, and sighed again. He knew he wouldn’t win this argument and didn’t have the energy to try.

“Alright,” he whispered sadly.

Remus smiled and gave a gentle squeeze to the hand resting on the table, then returned to making breakfast.

“So, you’ve been to St. Mungo’s? What did they tell you?” Remus asked as he set a plate of sausage and eggs in front of Severus.

“That I’m pregnant,” Severus said dryly as he looked down at his food and grimaced. Remus watched in amazement as Severus actually turned green and he just managed to conjure a bucket before Severus could paint the floor.

Remus sighed and shook his head. He helped Severus clean himself up, then made him eat a piece of dry toast and sent him to bed. He sat next to the sleeping man and wondered what he could possibly do to make Severus feel better and regain his strength.

He gently stroked the matted hair as a restless Severus tossed and turned, muttering Harry’s name in his sleep. When Severus finally relaxed into a deeper sleep, Remus kissed the pale forehead and crept out of the room.

He sat in the living room and thought about calling Harry, but decided to give it a few days though, and see what happened.

~*~

Harry stirred from his restless sleep to the sound of a familiar voice. “So this is where you’ve been keeping yourself.”

Harry sighed, and reluctantly sat up in bed, pushing back so he could lean against the headboard. “Can I help you with something, Charlie?”

Charlie didn’t answer immediately, instead taking his time to observe Harry. Charlie had been out in the field, since before the Final Battle, helping to corral a group of dragons that had been discovered in the mountains of Liechtenstein. He had been desperately worried about Harry, and he knew from Ron’s increasingly anxious letters that Harry hadn’t been dealing with his situation well, but seeing the young man in person was a shock to his system.

Harry’s usually bright eyes, which used to be filled with warmth and emotion, were now rimmed with dark circles, and looked dull and lifeless. Harry had obviously lost weight, his clothing hanging on him as it had each summer when he had been retrieved from the Dursley residence.

Thus far, Harry had rebuffed all of his friends’ attempts at reassurance, and had refused categorically to search for Severus Snape. Yet still, he refused to sleep anywhere but Severus’ old bed in the Dungeons. Charlie was determined to get his young friend, and former lover, back on track.

Charlie finally answered Harry’s earlier question, crossing his arms over his chest and meeting Harry’s gaze unflinchingly. “Actually, yes, you can. I’d like you to get up off of your arse and start living again.”

“Look, Charlie, I…”

Charlie’s resolve to be tough with Harry melted as soon as he saw the hopeless look in the younger
man’s eyes. He quickly crossed the few steps to the bed, and gathered Harry into his arms. “No, this is me you’re talking to. I’ll agree that these are far from the best of circumstances, but one day soon you are going to be a father.” Harry started to protest, but anticipating Harry’s reaction, Charlie forged ahead. “Whether or not you are a part of that little girl or boy’s life is not the issue right now. Either way, they are still going to know who you are. Do you want them to think of you like this?”

Harry’s shrug of indifference reawakened Charlie’s earlier ire. He moved his hands to Harry’s shoulders, pushing the younger man away from him rather abruptly, and forcing Harry to meet his gaze. “Oh, you do, eh? You want your child to think of you as some whiny fool who didn’t get things his way, so he just gave up and wallowed in self-pity? I should think you would want your child to understand, even if Severus never does, that you did what you did because you valued their other father’s life above all things.”

Harry sighed, knowing that Charlie wouldn’t be willing to leave unless he gave him some answers. “I’ve gone over it in my head a thousand times, Charlie. There’s no other way it could have worked. If he had known…”

“The spell wouldn’t have worked. I know.”

“He was ready to die. He had made his peace with that. Who was I to be selfish enough to take that choice away from him?” Harry asked brokenly, looking away from Charlie.

Charlie’s touch gentled, and he moved a hand up to cradle Harry’s face, bringing Harry’s teary gaze back up to his again. “Someone who loved him enough to want him to have a second chance at the life he never had. Why aren’t you out there fighting for him? Fighting for the love you’ve found?”

“If Severus wants or needs me, he knows where I am,” Harry replied softly. “I’m not going to burden him with my presence, or burden my heart with that kind of unrequited love.”

“What if he feels the same way you do?” Charlie offered, dangling the bit of information in front of Harry that he had obtained just earlier from Ron, Draco, and Hermione.

“He doesn’t, Charlie. He submitted to me only because he was frightened not to. He…”

Charlie reached for Harry’s arm, turning it over in his grasp, and pushing the robe sleeve back so that he could trace the Mark on Harry’s forearm. “If that were true, this Mark wouldn’t be here.”

“What the hell are you on about?” Harry demanded, wrenching his arm back from Charlie’s grip, a spark of his old self finally coming to the surface from under the layers of self-doubt and guilt.

“Hermione, Draco and Ron have been researching, and they found out some information about why you were marked as well,” Charlie answered honestly. “It seems that the Domino bonding spell was flawed in several ways.”

“How so?”

“First off, people who are lovers already aren’t supposed to enter into that particular bond. If they do, it can create a reciprocal bond.” Charlie shared with Harry all that Hermione and Draco had explained to him just earlier that day.

There was a glimmer of hope in Harry’s eyes, which was quickly doused as he muttered his next words. “But Severus and I weren’t…I mean that was the first time…”

“It was the first time that you had intercourse, but not the first time that you engaged in sexual relations with him. Harry we had sex for nearly a month before the first time you penetrated me. Did
that mean we weren’t already lovers before then?”

“True. So, couldn’t that have been enough…? I mean, there’s no way that he can possibly have feelings for me.”

“Harry, listen to me. Your friends were reluctant to tell you this because they didn’t want to raise your hopes falsely, but personally, I don’t think there’s any doubt that Severus loves you too. I honestly don’t think he would have been as devastated by what he saw as your betrayal if he didn’t love you, not to mention the fact that the bond wouldn’t have been reciprocal if there hadn’t been love there on his part as well. He didn’t make love to you because he feared your power; he did it because for the first time in his life he felt safe and loved.”

Relief flooded through Harry’s frame, his eyes sliding shut as he blew out a breath. “Which is why he felt so much more betrayed when he thought that everything on my part had been an act.”

“I think so.”

Harry’s eyes reopened, and when they locked with Charlie’s, they were as full of light and determination as Charlie had remembered. “I want to see this book.”

“I thought you might.”

~*~

After a quick shower, and a change of clothes, Charlie and Harry had set off for Hermione’s room. They had found only Draco and Ron there, lounging in the small sitting area, but the two had quickly retrieved the book Harry was interested in from its hiding place.

Draco, Ron and Charlie sat quietly as Harry perused the ancient tome. Finally, he lowered the book to the desk, and looked up to meet his friends’ worried gazes. For the first time in months, he allowed himself a slight smile. “I’m so sorry for how awful I’ve been. I had no idea that you all have been working so hard for me.”

“Don’t thank us yet,” Draco advised with a snort. “Just because Severus loves you doesn’t mean that he’ll be willing to accept you back. Or even be willing to listen to you.”

“I know that, but it does mean that I didn’t rape him,” Harry said quietly.

“I know that, but it does mean that I didn’t rape him,” Harry said quietly.

“I know that, but it does mean that I didn’t rape him,” Harry said quietly.

“Harry, you didn’t…” Ron protested.

“I know I didn’t physically force him, but all this time I thought that the only reason he really gave in at the end was because he was fearful of what I might do,” Harry stated emphatically. “Taking a broken man is rape to me.”

“So what are you going to do now?” Charlie inquired.

Harry stood from the chair he had been occupying, and ran a hand through his hair as he stared out of the tower window. “I’m not sure. I mean he doesn’t want me to find him, obviously, so I suppose I’ll just try to get on with my life, be the best person I can be, and be here if he wants me.”

“Oh no, you won’t,” Hermione interjected harshly. Harry whipped around just as the outer door to the Head Girl’s rooms clicked shut. He could tell by the set of Hermione’s jaw, and the worried look in her eyes that she didn’t bring good news. “Not unless you intend to sacrifice both Severus AND
“What?” Harry’s knees almost buckled from beneath him as he stumbled back into the chair that he had just vacated. Hermione wasted no time in opening the book she had been carrying with her in front of him, and opening it, pointing to a passage for Harry to read.

“I was worried that perhaps we hadn’t found everything, and I was right.” Hermione glanced at each occupant of the room worriedly as she summarized what she had found. “If the bonded pair is separated for an extended period of time during the pregnancy, there haven’t been any recorded cases of the parent or child surviving the birth.”

~TBC~

~*~

Authors’ Notes: Thank you also to all of our reviewers: deb, liza123, LeeLeePotter, Danielle, Morgan_leFaye58, Kat, magalud, SeparatriX, antipyro, Jaima, and Sarry. We've answered your reviews on the review page underneath your original review.

A few people have asked us to email them when we update. So, if anyone is interested, Magdelena has a yahoo group to update you on when and where you can find her stories. She also uses it to update the group members on this co-written tale. Sign up HERE. You can also use the feature on HPFandom that allows you to have update notifications of your favorite stories emailed to you. Simply mark this story as one of your favorites, and you'll get an email letting you know right when we upload.
Chapter Fifteen – A Necessary Reunion

Harry tried to steady his breathing, and to not panic at Hermione’s words. Slowly, he felt a sense of peace, as he resolved himself to the fact that he needed to finish what he had started. His voice strong and clear, he turned to meet Hermione’s worried gaze. “I need to get to Severus now.”

“Harry, that’s a lot easier said then done. Albus and Remus have been looking for Severus since he disappeared,” Hermione explained.

Ron nodded in agreement. “Yeah, mate. They’ve had Percy tracking down leads at the Ministry, and they’ve been using every tracking spell imaginable. He’s just vanished.”

“Damn.” Harry unconsciously stroked along his forearm, where the Mark uniting him with Severus lay. He tuned out the cacophony of voices around him, focusing his thoughts inward in search of a solution. All of a sudden, the answer occurred to him, and he held out his arm to the others, their voices immediately quieting as Harry’s voice rang out. “What about through this thing? It’s how Voldemort called his followers to him, and how he tracked their movements. I’ve seen him using Wormtail’s to call them.”

“It can’t be that simple,” Draco argued. “Dumbledore would have thought of it already, and come to you asking for you to try to contact Severus.”

“No,” Harry argued, “You haven’t shared your information with him, your findings about the bond we share, so he’s still thinking of the original Domino spell. Voldemort never had a Mark himself, so
he always used one of his Death Eaters’ Marks to make contact, but it makes sense that if I have a
Mark, I should be able to follow it to Severus.”

“Let us get Dumbledore,” Charlie urged, hearing the resolve in Harry’s voice.

“No, there’s no time to waste. Dumbledore can wait. I haven’t come this far to let them die now,”
Harry stated, calmly and certainly. “Even if I’ve lost Severus forever, I can’t lose my child.”

In a scene all too familiar from his memories during fourth year of the graveyard where Voldemort
returned to corporeal form, Harry placed his fingertips to the Mark as Voldemort had, and
immediately an almost uncomfortable warmth coursed through him. The Mark began pulsating
against his arm, the green growing nearly florescent against his skin. “Take me to my bonded,” he
commanded, and in a flash of light, he was gone.

~*~

Harry stumbled as he reappeared, his Mark still pulsing gently against his arm. The room he had
apparated into was dark and the curtains were drawn. Harry retrieved his wand from his pocket, and
quietly whispered ‘Lumos’, lighting the tip. The sight he saw in his wandlight made him seethe with
rage even as his heart ached. Before him was the man he loved, sleeping. Severus looked worn,
unbelievably thin except for the rounded swell of his abdomen, the dark circles under his eyes visible
beneath his onyx lashes, and behind him, his arm thrown protectively over Severus’ abdomen, was
Remus Lupin, also asleep.

Remus' eyes fluttered open and blinked several times, adjusting to the light from Harry's wand. He
knew instinctively, that the one holding the wand wasn't a threat, but it took a moment for him to
focus on Harry's face. When he did, he sighed with relief, not seeing the look of fury on the younger
wizard's face.

"Oh, thank Merlin you're here," Remus whispered as he carefully let go of Severus and got off the
bed. He came around the bed, checked to see that Severus was still sleeping soundly, then ushered
Harry out the door into the living room. He left the door ajar so he could listen for Severus in case he
awoke and needed assistance.

"I'm so glad to see you, Harry," he said quietly, turning on lights and heading for the kitchen to make
tea. "Did Percy contact you? I only just found Severus a few days ago and haven't really had a
chance to call you or Albus yet."

“It doesn’t take that long to make a firecall, Remus,” Harry bit out coldly, and then expelled a
shuddering breath, willing himself to calm down. “No, never mind, it’s not my place to say who
Severus finds comfort with. I’m glad that you’ve been able to be there for him. I know that he
probably has no desire to see me, but Hermione uncovered some information that led me to believe
that both he and our child would be in great danger if we continued to stay separated.”

One part of what Harry said caught Remus' attention. 'Who Severus finds comfort with' sounded a
bit odd until he realized exactly the position he and Severus were in when Harry came into the room.
He gasped at the implications of Harry’s words and turned to look at him, his face flushed with
embarrassment.

"Harry! There's nothing going on between Severus and me! We were only sleeping together—That
is... I was only keeping him company! Really, Harry, it wasn't at all what it looked like. He's...
Well, he's been very moody and he was upset last night, so I stayed with him and we fell asleep.
That's ALL that happened."

He turned back toward the teapot sitting on the counter and said softly, "Besides, I'm not the one he's in love with."

Harry snorted, and ran a hand nervously through his hair. "You're not the only one who seems to believe that. My friends have found evidence that have led them to believe that the spell wouldn't have been altered unless Severus had feelings for me too. I'm not going to believe it until I hear it from him, though."

"Don't hold your breath," Remus said as he set the steaming pot onto the table. They sat across from each other and Remus poured the tea. "You've a long road ahead of you, Harry, if you want to get back into his life. I'm not saying that it won't happen, just not right away. Severus doesn't forgive easily. As for his feelings for you, however, his being in love with you isn't just a hopeful belief, it's a known fact. You may not have noticed, but he talks in his sleep." Remus gave Harry a smile and sipped his tea.

"If you need further evidence, I'll tell you about last night. Severus was upset because I wanted to call you. I told him that he needed help, but he's trying to prove, mostly to himself, that he doesn't need to be taken care of."

Remus sighed and ran a hand through his hair. He knew Severus wouldn't want him telling Harry this, but he was worried about Severus and knew Harry was the only one who could really take care of him the way he so desperately didn't want to need. Harry had taken care of Severus once and he could do it again. More than that, though, Remus wanted to see them both happy.

"He started to cry and said, 'I don't want to love him'. I think he meant to say that he didn't want to need you, but he already does love and need you, Harry. He just doesn't want to admit it and he doesn't want to feel it because he's been hurt so many times before. What you did, and yes, I know it had to be done, was the last thing he expected of you. The pain he's gone through from it should be enough proof, too. He wouldn't hurt so much if he didn't love you."

Harry nodded, and sipped at his cup of tea, trying to come to grips with all that he had learned in the last few hours. "I have no right to ask for his forgiveness. What I did... the lies I told him to coerce him into being with me... I don't know if I can forgive myself."

Harry nodded, and sipped at his cup of tea, trying to come to grips with all that he had learned in the last few hours. "I have no right to ask for his forgiveness. What I did... the lies I told him to coerce him into being with me... I don't know if I can forgive myself."

Harry placed his cup down on his saucer. "How is he? Physically, I mean. He looks like he hasn't been caring for himself at all."

"But he has. He has all the right foods here. He's really trying to make this work, Harry. He just can't keep anything down."

Harry sighed, his shoulders slumping in defeat. "Then it is the bond. Once again, something is forced on him. Yet another damned reason for him never to forgive me."

"Well, at least we agree on that," came Severus' dark voice. He was standing, rather unsteadily, in the doorway glaring at Harry. "So, you called him after all," he said to Remus without taking his eyes off Harry. "I don't need you, Potter. Get out of my house!"

"He didn't call me," Harry answered calmly but firmly, standing from his chair and turning so that he faced Severus. "For your information, I had planned on never bothering you again. However, earlier today, I found out some information about the bond. If we don't stay together for the remainder of the pregnancy, I doubt that either of you will survive the birth. And seeing how drawn you look, I can only agree."

Severus' anger suddenly changed to fear, which he was unable to keep from showing. He stepped
back from Harry, his chest heaving wildly.

"No, you're lying!" he yelled. "I won't let you take it! You can't have my baby!"

Severus burst into tears and ran from the room. He entered his bedroom and slammed the door behind before either Harry or Remus could react to his outburst.

Remus stood to go to Severus, but Harry waved him off, stepping up to the door himself. “No, if we are ever going to work this out, it needs to be me.”

Slowly, Harry opened the door to the room, prepared to dodge hexes if need be. He wasn’t fully prepared, however, for the sight of Severus cowering in a corner of the room in fear. Harry approached him slowly, like he would a cornered animal, taking only a couple small steps towards Severus before he started to speak in an attempt to reassure his lover. “Severus, you misunderstood. I have no intention of taking our child away from you. In fact, the only reason that I’m here is to assure that our child survives, and that you are strong enough to carry the baby to term.”

Severus lifted his tear-stained face to look at Harry. "You won't try to take it after it's born?" he asked between sniffs and hiccups. He felt foolish and childish, but he had long ago given up trying to control his emotions while pregnant.

Harry fell to his knees before Severus. He began to raise a hand to reach out and touch the overwhelmed man, but stopped himself at the last moment, not knowing how Severus would react to his touch, and afraid to drive the man any further away from him.

“No, angel, this is one thing that you get to make every decision about. I’m not going to try to take the baby away from you; not now, not later. In fact, though it completely goes against my desire to protect you and our child, I need to give you another choice. What I said before was true. If I leave now, it’s very likely that both you and the baby will…” Harry paused for a moment, willing back the tears that pricked his eyes. “…will die. I saved your life once without your consent, but I won’t do it again. You get to make this decision about our lives. If you truly want me to leave, I will.”

Severus became angry again at Harry's words. "You're only saying that so I'll have to let you stay!" He gave Harry a hard shove, sending him rolling backwards, then struggled to get to his feet. Harry recovered quicker and tried to help, but Severus just pushed him away again.

"Your blackmail and lies won't work this time, Potter!" he shouted. "No one's going to believe that you're the innocent victim in this! Not when I'm carrying your Mark!"

“I’m NOT lying, Severus,” Harry responded, clenching his fists in an attempt to control his anger. “You’re not the only one who’s bloody well marked.”

Severus stopped cold and stared at Harry. "What are you talking about?" he asked nervously, not sure what to expect, but dreading what he already suspected.

“I’m talking about this,” Harry replied, pushing up his sleeve and turning his arm to face Severus. “The Domino bond apparently has certain flaws. Up until today, I thought that the reason for my being marked was because of my feelings for you, but apparently there are other reasons as well,” he answered cryptically. “Hermione, Draco, and Ron have been researching since you left. I only found out everything today, including the threat to you and the baby.”

Severus already knew about the flaws and understood perfectly why Harry was marked as well. He closed his eyes and tried to calm his breathing and his tears. He didn't want to admit even to himself that he had given in to Harry out of love. It was too painful to love anyone and he couldn't forgive
Harry for treating him the same way everyone else in his life had, like a puppet used only to entertain, one who bent to the will of the puppet-master. He wrapped his arms around his large belly as he began to shiver in spite of the warmth in the room.

"Fine. Stay then. I don't care," he said sadly with an air of utter defeat. He crawled cautiously into bed and struggled with the blanket weakly until it was pulled over his head. He wanted to sleep until the baby was born and after that, if Harry chose to take it away, he wouldn't fight. He didn't have the will to fight anymore and knew he couldn't win any argument with Harry Potter anyhow.

“Thank you, Severus,” Harry whispered. He quietly moved until he was at the head of Severus’ bed, and crouched down so that he was level with Severus’ face. Gently he uncovered Severus’ face, and as he did, risked brushing his thumb against his lover’s sallow cheek. “I promise I won’t let you down again.”

When the onyx eyes opened, staring at Harry in disbelief, looking so broken and needy, it only strengthened Harry’s resolve. “First off, we’re going to get you feeling better. I’m going to make you a bit of breakfast, and then if you agree, I’m going to firecall Poppy to see if she can send us some potions to help you gain your strength back. All right?”

"I have potions, from St. Mungo’s," Severus whispered, too tired to speak any louder. "They don't help." He tried to keep his eyes focused on Harry's face, but he was just too sleepy now to keep them open.

“Will you let me lay with you?” Seeing the look of panic that flashed through Severus’ eyes, Harry hastily continued. “Not like that. Nothing sexual. You never have to give me anything like that ever again. I just want to hold you. Maybe if we’re physically close some of my magical strength can help you through the bond.”

"Okay," he said softly, his voice barely audible as his eyes closed again. He knew he wouldn't be physically able to do anything even if Harry did want anything sexual. He knew as well, in spite of his anger towards the younger man, that Harry wouldn't push him like that, wouldn't ask something he wasn't capable of doing.

He sighed softly as he felt the bed dip. It had felt good the night before when Remus had slept with him. He felt safe and secure with someone next to him, even if that someone was Harry Bloody Potter.

Harry cautiously spooned up behind Severus, shuddering with relief as he wrapped himself around the man he loved. He then tentatively pressed a hand against the bulge in Severus’ abdomen, for the first time connecting with the child he had helped to create. He could feel warmth flooding his body as it had earlier, and his magic sparking just from being so close to his bonded. He felt filled with strength like he hadn’t known since the day of the Final Battle, even as silent tears coursed down his cheeks and he vowed again to himself to never let any harm come to either Severus or their child.

~TBC~

~*~

Authors’ Notes: Thanks to everyone who reviewed. Maggie is indisposed, due to Hurricane Katrina, and unable to post right now, so I’m doing so for her. Please send your good thoughts and prayers
her way. I’m not sure when the next update will be, as Maggie and her family are currently living at her mother’s home, and without reliable net access. I’m sure that as soon as she can, she and Taran will get back to writing this story for us.
The Spy Who Loved

Author's notes: HP/SS – Slash – WIP. Harry discovers that when he kills Voldemort, all of his Death Eaters will die as well through the bond that they share with the Dark Lord through their Marks. Harry vows to do anything it takes to allow Severus Snape to escape that fate.

Title: The Domino Effect
Author: Dr. Jeckell & Mrs. Hyde (aka Taran & Magdelena)
Rating: NC-17
Pairing: Harry Potter/Severus Snape, Ron Weasley/Draco Malfoy (secondary pairing)
Warnings: Non-consensual sex, Violence, Adult Language, Sexual Situations, Graphic Sexual Content, Rimming, MPreg
Summary: HP/SS – Slash – Chapter 16 of ?. Harry discovers that when he kills Voldemort, all of the Death Eaters will die as well because of the bond that they share with the Dark Lord through their Marks. Harry vows to do anything it takes to allow Severus Snape to escape that fate.
Disclaimer: We do not own any of the characters herein (only the plot). All the characters in the Harry Potter universe belong exclusively to J.K. Rowling, Warner Brothers, and anyone else JKR chooses to allow to play with them. We are publishing our fanfiction writings only for our own selfish desire to be a part of their world.
Authors' Note: Thanks to the incredibly wonderful Sev1970 for betaing this story.

~*~

Chapter Sixteen – The Spy Who Loved

Remus contacted Albus, as well as Harry’s friends, assuring them that both Harry and Severus were fine. Remaining with the two for several days to be sure Severus was not going to get worse, Remus witnessed with his own eyes that, indeed, Severus’ health was improving rapidly merely with Harry’s presence, and he bid the pair farewell, promising to check in on them soon.

Harry was true to his word to Severus. He never bothered the pregnant wizard during the days, keeping to himself, writing numerous letters and floo calling Hogwarts several times a day to inform the others of Severus’ progress.

Several large parcels had appeared for Harry, and the Potions Master wondered briefly at the large tomes and stacks of parchment that Harry had been perusing each night, but dismissed the younger man’s activities as pertaining to the NEWT exams that he wasn’t aware Harry wasn’t even scheduled to take.

When Severus found his strength beginning to return, he began to decorate the nursery in earnest. Harry only offered to help once, but at a glare from Severus, he backed away and didn’t ask again. Severus ignored the fact that Harry would occasionally appear at the doorway, bringing him food, drink, or nutritional potions, as if he was waiting for Severus to change his mind and allow him to help. Severus went about his decorating, but he always sensed when Harry gave up and left the room.

When Severus felt the child moving within him, he longed to share those tender moments of the
miracle he was carrying with his bonded, but then just as suddenly he would realize exactly how he had found himself in this situation. Severus ached with hurt and desire for something he thought he could never have with the younger wizard. It was only at night when Harry quietly slipped into the bed beside him, spooning up behind him protectively, that Severus would let down his guard and allow himself to believe that perhaps Harry was sincere in his words.

The next several months, at times, seemed to pass slowly, and at others seemed to speed by. Friends came to visit, and Liam and Josephina checked up on Severus every week. Josephina even offered her midwife services should Severus need help during delivery. She had given Severus instructions on how to breathe during labor and how to focus on one focal point to help him manage the pain. Severus wasn’t worried about the pain; after all, he’d been through many painful curses from Voldemort over the years.

In almost no time, the odd little family found itself with only two short weeks remaining before Severus’ due date. Severus had been in a flurry of activity that day, straightening and cleaning the little cottage with both magical and Muggle means.

He grumbled to himself as he realized that he was experiencing exactly what Poppy had predicted… nesting impulses. He snorted at the insanity of the other ‘impulses’ that had returned. Poppy had mentioned that sexual desire, often absent through much of a pregnancy, would return with vigor in the final weeks before giving birth.

Much as he wanted to, Severus found it difficult to stop his thoughts from wandering to his child’s other father, and how the tight denim jeans the young man seemed to enjoy wearing stretched ever so pleasantly across Harry’s long legs and tight arse as he bent and moved. Berating himself silently for his lack of control, Severus again began cleaning with vigor.

By the end of the day, he was exhausted emotionally as well as physically. Half the day had been spent in tears as he cleaned, thinking about all that might have been if Harry hadn’t betrayed him. The other half was spent in angry fits, throwing things at Harry when he dared interrupt Severus’ ‘nesting impulses’ or offered assistance.

They managed to sit through a quiet supper without Severus bursting into tears or yelling, though Harry saw the play of emotions clearly in Severus’ dark eyes. He watched closely as Severus fidgeted in his chair, shifting frequently and looking uncomfortable, but he kept quiet, not wanting to upset the pregnant man needlessly.

After clearing the table, Harry watched Severus waddle carefully out of the room. When Severus had returned to his bedroom, Harry went to the fireplace to make a call. Severus sighed tiredly as he closed the bedroom door. His back was aching terribly and was going to lie down, but realized suddenly that he needed to use the bathroom in a hurry. When he was finished, he began to return to the bedroom, but the sound of Harry’s voice made him pause. He stepped towards the living room to find out who Harry was talking to. What he heard made his feet stop and his heart freeze.

“I want everything taken care of. I asked for this to be done weeks ago, and it is still not handled to my satisfaction. I want my child to have the best of everything, and in order to do that, I need you to ready everything for me.”

“You bloody liar!” Severus yelled angrily once Harry had closed the firecall. “You always intended to take the baby from me! How could I have ever believed…?”

“No, Severus. You have it all wrong.”
“The hell I do. I heard you talking…” He turned and stepped into the bedroom.

“To my solicitor at Gringotts,” Harry called out before Severus could slam the door shut. When Severus paused, he continued. “He was supposed to have everything drawn up weeks ago. I’ve had accounts set up for both you, and for our child, as well as drawing up my will ensuring that our child receives, upon my death, not only all the Potter holdings, but the Black holdings as well.

“I’ve also drawn up papers stipulating that I give sole and complete custody to you. It’s been difficult because apparently it’s rare for a parent to want to give total support to a child while not being afforded equal custodianship. But we’ve finally got it all worked out. The baby is yours, legally, and he or she, and you, will have my financial support even if I should die.”

“But you might have other children…” Severus said softly as he turned back to look at Harry. “And the point is moot. Because of our bond when you die, I will die as well.”

“No, that’s part of what I’ve been doing, researching. There isn’t much information, as you well know, but when you have the child, the bond will change even further. Your life force will no longer be tied entirely with mine. And as for other children… Severus there won’t ever be anyone but you. So there are no future lovers for me, no future children, other than our own.”

“You don’t know that, you can’t. You’re too young.” Severus didn’t want to believe that Harry would never love anyone else. That would mean believing that Harry truly loved him and that was a fantasy best left to his dreams.

“Actually, Severus, I’m far too old. I was supposed to die in this conflict too, you know. I was supposed to die when Voldemort did. The only future I have, the only reason I have for living, is right here in front of me.”

Whatever answer Severus might have given was cut off as his back cramped painfully.

“Bloody hell, are you all right?” Harry said as he rushed to Severus’ side.

“I’m fine,” Severus said as he tried to stretch the cramped muscles. “Just have a sore back. Must be from all the cleaning I did today.”

Harry nodded and carefully helped him to the bedroom. He helped Severus ready himself for bed, then tucked him in. He risked kissing Severus’ forehead and smiled softly when his former professor allowed it. Quietly he crept from the room as Severus had already fallen asleep.

Several hours later, Severus awoke with a painful start. His back was cramping up again and though he was warm and otherwise comfortable, he couldn’t get back to sleep. Harry must have come to bed while he had slept, for he felt Harry pressed up against him from behind, as had become their custom. In Harry’s arms, he couldn’t help feeling secure and even happy.

He thought about what Harry had said that evening about giving Severus full, legal, custody of the baby. At first he was elated to know he wouldn’t have to fight Harry over the baby, but the more he thought about it, the more he wanted to cry. For all Harry had talked about loving him and the baby, the younger man wasn’t willing to fight for them. It made him feel even more unwanted than ever.

Carefully and quietly, Severus pulled himself from Harry’s embrace and off the bed. He crept to his dresser and opened the top drawer. Inside he found the letter Harry had sent him several months earlier. With shaking hands he took it out and walked slowly to door. He turned back to glance at Harry as he slept. Sadly, he watched as Harry moved into his side of the bed, and then he walked out of the door and into the nearby nursery.
Severus gingerly sat in the rocking chair in the nursery and looked around. The room was finally finished and was exactly what he had wanted. The theme was Noah’s Ark, with the crib for a ship and many animals spread out in the room, on the walls, the ceiling, the floor, as well as little stuffed toys the baby could play with when he or she was older.

Severus gasped as pain lanced through his back. He closed his eyes until the pain had dissipated some. He sighed heavily and looked down at the little brown envelope in his hand. He had to know what Harry had written so long ago and why he had never asked Severus about the letter.

Tears welled up in his eyes as Severus read the letter. No one had ever cared so much for him, not his parents, not even Albus had loved him so deeply. He began to realize that Harry hadn’t given up, but was only doing as Severus had asked. He was willing to break his own heart to give Severus what he most wanted, a choice.

By the time he had finished the letter, Severus was crying openly. He finally admitted to himself his love and need for the young man that had tricked him into living, and came to realize that his choice to die with Voldemort wasn’t just out of a need for freedom, but out of loneliness as well. He didn’t want to live alone, but hadn’t felt worthy of anyone’s love. Harry had shown him otherwise. Worthy or not, Harry loved him and he didn’t have to be alone anymore.

Just as he was about to rise from the chair and return to Harry’s side, pain seared through Severus’ spine and branched out to cover his entire body. He gasped loudly and sat back panting.

“Harry?” he called weakly. He swallowed hard, then tried to call again, but his second cry didn’t come out much louder than the first. Taking a deep breath, he finally was able to call out loud enough for Harry to hear him. “HARRY!!” he screamed in pain and fear.

~TBC~

~*~

Authors’ Notes: Thank you also to all of our reviewers. We’ve answered your reviews on the review page underneath your original review.

We’re sorry that once again RL has taken over, and caused us to have *gulp* three months between our postings. *meep*

If anyone is interested, Magdelena has a yahoo group to update you on when we update. Sign up HERE.
Chapter Seventeen – It’s Time!

Harry shifted restlessly in the bed, his body automatically moving into the warm area that Severus had just vacated moments earlier. He breathed in the clean, spicy aroma of Severus’ shampoo on the other wizard’s pillowcase, and was subconsciously soothed, again drifting off into a peaceful slumber. Several minutes later, however, his rest was abruptly ended when he heard Severus’ scream.

Bounding from the bed, Harry raced towards Severus’ voice, which sounded as if it was coming from the nursery. His heart leapt into his throat as he took in the sight of Severus gasping for breath, one hand protectively covering his abdomen as the other stretched back behind him, pressing against his lower back.

Harry stopped in front of the rocking chair Severus was perched in, panic and fear setting in for Severus’ life as well as the life of their unborn child. “Oh, sweet Merlin! Severus, what’s wrong?”

“I— Severus gasped, his eyes widening in shock. “I think my water just broke!”

“Water? What water?” Harry said, anxiously looking around the floor for a broken water glass.

“MY water, you fool!” Severus growled impatiently, his fear subsiding some as he realized he was in labor and the baby wasn’t in any immediate danger.

“Your water… OH! Oh, bloody hell! You’re in labor!” Harry’s jaw hung open for a moment as he stared at Severus’ belly. “I have to call Poppy! No, wait! St. Mungo’s!” Harry rushed from the room,
then came running back. “No, I have to call Remus! He wanted to know the moment you went into labor.”

Severus sighed and shook his head. “Wonderful! I’m bonded to an idiot! He can face the darkest wizard of our day without flinching, but he can’t even organize a thought when it comes to delivering our baby,” he mumbled to himself before calling loudly after the younger man. “Harry!” he shouted. “Go get Josephina,” he continued a bit more calmly when Harry rushed back into the room.

“Josephina?” Harry questioned, momentarily forgetting who she was.

“The midwife?!”

“OH! Right! Josephina!” Harry turned to leave, then looked back at Severus. “Shouldn’t I take you to St. Mungo’s?”

“Harry,” Severus started with strained patience. “I can’t Apparate, I can’t floo, and I sure as hell can’t Portkey!”

“Oh, right! I’ll go get Josephina and bring her here!”

Severus shook his head dismally as Harry hurried out again. He struggled to his feet, wincing in pain with every movement. He stepped out of the nursery and nearly walked right into Harry, who had returned carrying several scrolls of parchment.

“Here! You have to sign these!” Harry said breathlessly.

“NOW?!” Severus asked incredulously.

“Yes, it’s the custody papers. They have to be signed before the baby comes!” Harry thrust the papers, which had only arrived late that evening, into Severus’ shaking hands. He wouldn’t meet Severus’ gaze, but the Potions Master could clearly see the pain in Harry’s eyes as he spoke his next words. “I’ve already signed, but for it to be legal you need to sign as well signifying that you agree to everything.”

Severus clutched the papers to his chest as another wave of pain broke across his back. When the pain had lessened, he walked to the kitchen door and retrieved Harry’s Firebolt, ignoring Harry’s mutterings about calling Remus. He handed Harry the broom and feigned a smile.

“You go get Josephina and I’ll call Remus,” he articulated slowly to ensure Harry’s comprehension.

“Right! The midwife!” Harry grabbed the broom and quickly left the little cottage.

Severus sighed with relief and turned to go back to bed. As he pivoted on his heel, he caught sight of the low burning fire in the hearth. He looked down at the scrolls in his arms and stared at them for several moments before coming to a decision. Taking a deep breath, he stepped forward and threw the papers into the fire. He watched them burn for a moment, a tug of hope pulling his lips into a smile while he gently rubbed his abdomen. He returned to his bed and before he knew it, Josephina was rushing to his side, Harry on her heels.

“Severus!” she exclaimed when she saw his pale face. “How far apart are the contractions?”

“No contractions,” Severus informed her as he shifted, trying to find a comfortable position for his aching back. “My back…” He groaned as his back spasmed again.
“Oh dear! I should have warned you! Some women… err, birth-givers… experience contractions centered in their lower backs rather than in their abdomens,” Josephina explained before turning her attention to Harry.

“What can I do?” Harry asked nervously.

“Go boil some water. Then get some clean flannels and towels,” she told him. Harry nodded and quickly left the room.

“Why is it,” Severus asked between gasps, “that people always boil water when someone has a baby?”

“It keeps the husband occupied,” Josephina joked. She helped Severus move into a more comfortable position, then had him bend his knees. She uncovered Severus’ lower body, and placed a soft warm blanket over him. “It’s also for sterilizing my equipment,” she explained when he was settled.

“Equipment?” Severus asked with uncertainty. He watched as she pulled a towel-wrapped bundle from her bag and placed it on one of the bedside tables. As she opened it, Severus saw various knives and several different apparatuses he didn’t recognize, and didn’t want to think about what they may be used for.

“Relax, Severus,” she said calmly when she noticed him watching her. “Most likely, I won’t need any of this, but it’s better to have everything on hand, just in case.”

“Here you are,” Harry said as he brought in a large pot of steaming water. He nearly dropped it onto the floor when he saw the knives. “Anything else?” he asked in a high-pitched voice. Josephina thought he was going to faint as he stared at the utensils.

“Yes, Harry. A cup of tea, please.”

Harry gave Severus a worried look before nodding and racing from the room.

Severus sighed and shook his head at Harry’s antics. “Perhaps after all this is over he will remember he is a wizard and could have easily conjured both the hot water and the tea.”

Josephina chuckled for a moment as she started dipping her tools into the hot water, then turned to address Severus. She spoke softly, hoping to distract him from his continued worried glances at the sharp instruments.

“When did the pain in your back begin, Severus? And, do you know how far apart the contractions are?”

“I… I don’t…”

“About twelve hours ago,” Harry said as he came back into the room. He was carrying a teacup with both hands and held it out to her. He kept his eyes on Severus the whole time. “And unless he had another while we were gone, I’d estimate that his back pains are spaced out about five or six minutes apart.”

“That’s for you, dear,” she said with a kind smile to Harry, indicating that he should drink the tea he had brought. “You just might prove to be helpful yet. Now sit next to Severus and calm down.”

Harry did as he was told and pulled up a chair next to Severus. He sipped the tea as instructed, then set the cup down on the second nightstand. He lightly stroked Severus’ sweaty forehead with one
hand and took one of Severus’ hands into his other. He was suddenly very serene, even while Severus was groaning in pain. He knew at this moment that no matter what ever happened in the future, that he could no longer regret his actions to save Severus’ life. Though he was saddened that he would never be accepted as a part of Severus’ or his own child’s futures, he couldn’t help but be amazed at the dawning miracle that he was a part of.

“Severus, do you remember how I taught you to breathe? I need you to start doing that. It will help you control the pain. Harry, I know damn well that you were listening in when I was instructing Severus. I want you to do it with him. Help him stay calm,” Josephina instructed.

Harry reached out instinctively to link his fingers with Severus’, and gently led the other wizard in the breathing exercises he had indeed been paying rapt attention to.

When the pair had gotten a good rhythm going, Josephina lifted the blanket covering Severus’ lower body. “Now, Severus, I’m going to clean you up a bit and see how far dilated you are, okay?”

Severus nodded and the midwife began doing her job. Though she was Muggle, she had helped with nearly all the deliveries in the little town for the last twenty years, so even though this was the first child she had delivered from a man, Severus had every confidence in her. If there were any complications that she couldn’t handle, Harry could fetch Poppy in an instant.

The next several hours passed in a blur for Severus. Though his water had broken quickly, he hadn’t dilated fully until an hour after. Then it was an hour of pushing, crying, screaming and cursing. Through it all, Harry stayed by his side, holding his hand, stroking his forehead, cooing softly and panting with him, even through the transition phase when Severus spat every vile word he could think of at Harry.

Then suddenly, it was over. The blood-soaked babe slid from Severus’ body with a whoosh and moments later, a fierce cry pierced the air. Both wizards had tears of joy sliding down their cheeks as they watched Josephina attend to their newborn son. In a few short minutes, she had the child bundled securely in a warm blanket, and laid him on his father’s chest. Instinctively, the baby turned towards what he most needed and latched onto Severus’ nipple. Harry watched in wonder as he stood beside the bed and witnessed as Severus cradled their son to his chest for his first feeding.

~TBC~

~*~

Authors’ Notes: Thank you to all of our reviewers. We’ve answered your reviews on the review page underneath your original review.

If anyone is interested, Magdelena has a yahoo group to update you on when we update. Sign up HERE.
Decisions, Decisions

Author's notes: HP/SS – Slash – WIP. Harry discovers that when he kills Voldemort, all of his Death Eaters will die as well through the bond that they share with the Dark Lord through their Marks. Harry vows to do anything it takes to allow Severus Snape to escape that fate.

Title: The Domino Effect
Author: Dr. Jeckell & Mrs. Hyde (aka Taran & Magdelena)
Rating: NC-17
Pairing: Harry Potter/Severus Snape, Ron Weasley/Draco Malfoy (secondary pairing)
Warnings: Non-consensual sex, Violence, Adult Language, Sexual Situations, Graphic Sexual Content, Rimming, MPreg
Summary: HP/SS – Slash – Chapter 18 of ?. Harry discovers that when he kills Voldemort, all of the Death Eaters will die as well because of the bond that they share with the Dark Lord through their Marks. Harry vows to do anything it takes to allow Severus Snape to escape that fate.
Disclaimer: We do not own any of the characters herein (only the plot). All the characters in the Harry Potter universe belong exclusively to J.K. Rowling, Warner Brothers, and anyone else JKR chooses to allow to play with them. We are publishing our fanfiction writings only for our own selfish desire to be a part of their world.
Authors’ Note: Thanks to the incredibly wonderful Sev1970 for betaing this story.

~*~

Chapter Eighteen – Decisions, Decisions

Harry crept silently from the room, his tears of joy turning into tears of sadness. He sighed heavily as he stared into the dying fire. Watching Severus cradling their son, Harry knew he loved the stubborn man more than ever before, but he would never get the chance to tell him, nor would he be able to watch his son grow up.

He had promised himself he wouldn’t do this, had steeled himself for this very moment. Ron, Draco, Hermione, Charlie, Dumbledore, and even Remus, had begged Harry to wait until after the child was born to make any major decisions about his role in the baby’s life, but Harry’s dreams had been haunted night after night with the look of sheer terror on Severus’ face when he thought that Harry was going to take away their child from him. Harry had vowed to himself at that moment that he would find a way to give over complete control of their child to Severus, as long as he could continue to financially protect the pair.

Despite what his friends thought about how Severus felt about him, Harry had seen no evidence of the fact that Severus wanted him. Severus had tolerated Harry’s nearness over the last several months only out of his concern for their child, and nothing more, of that Harry was sure.

Harry took in a deep breath as he promised himself that he would leave as soon as he was sure Severus was out of any danger. He had already made prior arrangements with Remus to come to stay with Severus and help him with the baby during Severus’ recovery. In fact, Harry was a bit surprised that Remus hadn’t shown up as of yet. He wondered to himself if perhaps Severus hadn’t had the time to contact the Lycanthrope before Harry had arrived back at the cottage with Josephina.
At least, Harry thought, the lies and deception that had started nearly a year prior were finally at an end. When he left the cottage tonight, he would be facing an uncertain future, one that would leave his heart and soul behind in his wake. As he wiped away his tears and squared his shoulders, gathering his courage, he withdrew his wand and prepared to stoke up the dying fire in the hearth. Just as he was about to mutter the necessary spell, he saw what was actually in the fireplace. His sadness quickly turned to anger when he realized he was looking at the charred remains of the scrolls he had handed to Severus before the baby was born.

Everything that he had so carefully constructed, every loophole in Wizarding law that he had found centered on one very important detail, that these papers were signed prior to the child’s birth. A revealing spell on the paperwork would have proven that Severus had consented to the custodial and financial arrangements prior to their son’s arrival. Now, likely due to one of Severus’ hormonal swings, making him paranoid that Harry was trying to trap him into some nefarious agreement, there was no way for Harry to fully release his parental rights in the Wizarding world.

“Severus!” he cried, reaching for one of the least burned scrolls. He pulled it out and shook off the soot, then stormed back into the bedroom, stopping only inches away from his former professor.

“What the hell is this?” Harry had to fight with his heart to ignore the painfully beautiful sight of his beloved nursing their son.

“Well,” Severus started, his voice soft and calm, a hint of amusement glittering in his eyes. “It looks to me like a burnt scroll.”

“Burnt scroll…?” Harry parroted sarcastically. “Yes, it’s a burnt scroll! It’s one of the scrolls I gave you to sign! Why were they in the fire?! These are the only copies I had! Now, I have to owl my solicitor for another copy! But since the baby’s here already, he’ll have to redraw them and that could take a week! Even so, I’m not sure how the hell I’m going to be able to terminate my parental rights now that he’s born. My solicitor said that this was the best chance we had of getting everything passed through the Ministry.”

“Oh, dear. I’m so sorry,” Severus said, looking not at all remorseful, but more amused than before. “Well, then, you might as well just not bother. I mean, if it’s going to be that much of an inconvenience for you.”

“Not bother?!?” Harry sighed in annoyance, his patience wearing thin at Severus’ apparent indifference. “Severus, I have gone through a hell of a lot to ensure you, and our son, are taken care of! I want to know that the two of you are going to be alright!”

“Well, the best way for you to do that…” Severus said, looking up at Harry through his long dark lashes, no longer amused, but rather uncertain and hopeful. “Would be for you to stick around and see for yourself…”

“Severus, I-…” Harry stopped and he stared at his bondmate incredulously. “You… You want me to stay?”

Severus looked to be on the verge of tears as he answered. “Yes, Harry, I want you to stay.” He tilted his head up further and looked directly into Harry’s emerald eyes.

Slowly, Harry smiled, then grinned, then laughed out loud as he leaned in and pressed his lips to Severus’, one hand gently caressing Severus’ cheek. When they broke the kiss, Harry rested his forehead against his lover’s.

“I love you,” Harry whispered softly. “I can’t ever hope that you could feel the same after all I’ve…”
“I love you, too, Harry,” Severus assured, interrupting Harry’s murmurings, his voice still rough and hoarse from all the screaming he had done during the labor and the delivery.

When Harry pulled back to look at Severus, tears of joy had returned to both pairs of eyes. Severus had never looked more beautiful to Harry as he did in that moment, feeding their new child and smiling with love and happiness.

Severus gave a big yawn and stretched as much as his aching body would allow, and he felt Harry climb onto the bed next to him and nuzzle against him. He smiled his thanks to Josephina, who had been hiding in the corner, giving the two wizards time to talk. She carefully picked up the baby and told Severus and Harry to rest. She would care for the child’s needs until one of them woke up.

As the door closed behind Josephina, Severus felt Harry’s arms wrap around him. He turned carefully onto his side and they both instinctively fell into their customary sleeping positions. Severus sighed contentedly as he entwined his fingers with Harry’s and held their hands to his chest. He fell asleep to the gentle sound of their breathing and the steady thumping of their hearts.

~*~

Harry strolled into the little cottage with a lilt to his step, humming softly to himself. It had been nearly a month since the birth of their son, and today was the day they would be leaving the cottage to return to Hogwarts with their newborn child, for his naming ceremony.

Harry and Severus had yet to make any real plans for their future. Severus had been offered his old position at Hogwarts, and Harry had been offered a position there as well. Additionally, Severus had toyed with the idea of opening his own Apothecary, while Harry had considered every career from solicitor to stay-at-home father. No matter their decision though, their family and friends had been urging them to come home. For the first time in their lives, however, neither was compelled to make a decision, and so, they hadn’t. The new term wouldn’t begin for another month, and so they had at least a week before they had to inform the Headmaster of their decision. Albus had assured them that would provide him with sufficient time to hire alternates for the positions if they did indeed decline his offers.

There was one decision Harry didn’t intend to put off any longer, however. He brushed his fingers against the pocket of his trousers, relieved to find the small jewelers’ box still there.

Until quite recently, Harry hadn’t even considered asking Severus to formalize their bond, not wishing to disturb the peaceful coexistence that the two had shared since their son’s birth. But when their friends had visited, Harry had watched as Severus gazed longingly at the rings that Draco and Ron planned to exchange at their wedding ceremony next month. Since that moment, Harry had been fixated on the idea that he and Severus should formally marry. The two had made great strides, sharing stories of their pasts and getting to know each other better, finding out that they had a great deal in common. Even though their relationship still remained a bit strained, Harry was hopeful about their future together.

Harry hadn’t dared push Severus into anything sexual, sticking to his original declaration that he would never force his attentions on the Potions Master again. He had only allowed himself casual affections – a touch of his hand to Severus’ hair, a light kiss or two, a gentle embrace when the two would watch over their son peacefully sleeping in the small bassinet they still had next to their bed. Harry had hopes that one day that would all change, but for now, the important thing was ensuring his bondmate of how very much he was wanted and needed.
Harry walked into the nursery and smiled at the breathtaking scene before him. Severus was sitting in the rocking chair, gently soothing their child to sleep, and singing a Muggle lullaby that Harry recognized. He choked up as he heard the words Severus sung, reinforcing to himself yet again that despite the circumstances that brought them together, there was nowhere that he’d rather be than a part of this family.

Harry quietly watched as Severus finished the song, and then crept across the room to Severus’ side, his breath hitching as Severus turned towards him and offered him a soft smile, even as he tilted his lips up for a kiss. “I didn’t realize you had returned,” he whispered even as he waved his wand to lower the lighting in the room a bit.

Harry brushed his fingertips against their son’s cheek as he pressed a tender kiss to Severus’ lips. “Only just now; I had to run an errand.”

Tossing out in a second all of the plans he had made for an elegant dinner and a formal proposal, Harry decided to take advantage of this perfect moment and ask Severus the question he had been longing to ask. He reached into his pocket to withdraw the ring box even as he dropped to his knee in front of Severus’ chair.

“I had to retrieve these.” Harry popped open the box to reveal two large rings, and one infant sized one, surrounded by runic symbols of protection. “I had one made for him as well, because I thought that it made sense for me to commit my life to both you and him.”

“Harry…” Severus began, his eyes wide with shock and surprise. Before he could continue though, Harry’s anxious eyes met his.

“Will you do me the honor of marrying me? Of formalizing our bond and becoming a family with me and our son? I know it’s not legally necessary, but I’d like to think back on the day of his naming ceremony and remember that it was also the day that you agreed to have me as part of your life; the day that you chose this family as your sanctuary.”

Severus stared at Harry for several moments, his heart caught in his throat and his eyes stinging with unshed tears. “I…” He swallowed several times before he could speak again. “Yes, Harry! Yes, I’ll marry you!”

Harry slipped the ring on Severus’ finger, both their hands trembling from excitement and relief. They kissed with more passion than ever before, then embraced. Severus held Harry as tight as he could with the baby still tucked in one arm.

“Thank you,” he whispered into Harry’s ear.

“For what?” Harry asked, looking curiously at Severus’ face.

“For giving my back my freedom,” Severus said simply, a contented smile on his lips.

Harry didn’t quite understand what Severus meant, but smiled back anyhow. It didn’t matter how Severus had attained his freedom, it only mattered that he felt it again. Harry vowed that he would never make another decision without consulting his husband. He would never again allow Severus to feel trapped in any way.

~TBC~
Authors’ Notes: Thank you to all of our reviewers. We’ve answered your reviews on the review page underneath your original review.

If anyone is interested, Magdelena has a yahoo group to update you on when we update. Sign up HERE.
Chapter Nineteen – Freedom

They returned to their little cottage several hours, a naming ceremony and an impromptu wedding later, with baby Joshua sleeping soundly in his ‘mother’s’ arms. Harry headed straight to the bedroom to turn on the lights so Severus could put the baby to bed, but when he turned around, he saw Severus going into the nursery instead.

Harry looked at Severus quizzically. “He’s going to sleep in there tonight? I thought you didn’t want to have him in the room all by himself yet?”

Severus shrugged as he placed their son in his cot. “It might be difficult us being separated; however, we can retrieve him if he fusses. I thought that it might be a good idea if we had the room to ourselves tonight.” When Severus turned to face Harry, there was a light in those black eyes that hadn’t been there in a long time.

“Now why would we need the room to ourselves?” Harry asked coyly, his lips quirking up in a smile.

“Oh, I don’t know…” Severus said casually as he glanced at his son once more. He cast a monitoring charm over the cradle so they could hear Joshua if he needed them, before stepping past Harry towards their room. “I had thought you might… well, want to take advantage of your new husband… However, if you’re not in the mood, you can always sleep on the sofa…”

Harry growled low, and then quietly chased after Severus, catching him at the foot of their bed. He
tackled the older wizard, throwing them both onto the mattress. Severus’ laughter filled the room with the sweetest sound Harry had ever heard, next to the sound of his son’s crying and cooing. Harry’s answering laughter faded quickly as he turned onto his side next to Severus. He reached out and gently pushed back a lock of ebony hair that had fallen across Severus’ face.

“I love the sound of your laughter,” Harry said softly.

Severus stopped laughing, but continued to smile at Harry, his eyes glittering with joy. “I haven’t felt like laughing in a long time. Thank you, Harry. Thank you for not giving up on me, or on us.”

Harry leaned in and kissed him, soft and slow at first, then gaining in passion and need as the kiss lingered. He rolled on top of his lover, then broke the kiss and looked down. “Are you sure you’re ready for this?” he asked, caressing Severus’ flushed face.

Severus returned the gentle touch to Harry’s cheek. “I’ve missed your touch. I crave it, I need it, Harry!”

“What about physically? Are you sure it’s alright?” Harry needed to know that Severus was ready and willing in all ways.

Severus rolled his eyes. “Harry, I’m a wizard! I was physically ready three days after Joshua was born!”

“Oh, right.” Harry smiled before capturing Severus’ lips again. Within seconds, he began undressing Severus, but got frustrated after only a couple of buttons.

“Must you always wear such difficult clothes?” Harry muttered when he broke the kiss so he could concentrate on opening the many buttons on Severus’ tunic.

“Must you always forget you’re a wizard?” Severus snapped back. He pulled out his wand and muttered a quick spell. Both his and Harry’s clothing disappeared in a crackle of magic.

Harry sat back on Severus’ thighs and glared down on him with only a touch of real annoyance.

“Well, where’s the fun in that?”

“The fun,” Severus said with a lusty glint in his eyes, “is in getting to the good stuff!” He suddenly grabbed Harry and turned them over so that he was straddling Harry’s waist. “I think this time, I’ll take control, if you don’t mind!”

Harry propped himself up on an elbow and brushed his lips against Severus’ as he spoke his next words. “Whatever you wish, angel. I am yours for the taking.”

Severus moaned, and Harry couldn’t resist capturing those sweet lips with his own. Eagerly, his tongue parted Severus’ lips, and his hand moved to the back of Severus’ neck, guiding the other wizard down on top of him, loving the feel of Severus’ weight pinning him to the bed. Severus’ long, inky locks brushed against the sides of Harry’s face, gently caressing and teasing along the younger man’s cheekbones in direct contrast to the thrusting tongue that was eagerly mapping out every corner of Harry’s mouth.

Severus reluctantly broke the kiss. He nuzzled Harry’s neck while catching his breath, then slowly started kissing his way to Harry’s throat and Adam’s apple, and then down the column of soft flesh. He paused to lick and suck at the tender skin that dipped into the base of Harry’s throat. All the while, Severus’ hands gently caressed Harry’s chest, playing with his nipples and rubbing lightly.
Severus’ mouth began following the path his hands had made until he reached one hardened nub. He sucked it into his mouth, and moaned as Harry shuddered and whimpered with pleasure. Severus then moved to the other nipple and swirled his pointed tongue around it for a moment before sucking it into his mouth as he had with the other. He looked up at Harry’s serene face and smiled around the nipple.

Severus took the nub carefully between his teeth, pulled his head back a little, and watched as the nipple was being pulled away from Harry’s chest. Hearing a gasp, Severus let go, seeing that the pleasure for Harry was now turning into pain. He kissed a soft apology to the reddening nipple.

Severus then returned to his downward descent, licking, kissing and nipping the supple flesh, his body rubbing against Harry’s. He stopped again when he reached Harry’s navel. He alternated sucking and dipping his tongue into the small indentation, tasting a little of Harry’s sweat. He looked up sharply when Harry began to giggle at the teasing of his belly button.

“Would you like me to stop?” Severus asked impishly.

“Don’t you dare,” Harry growled, his eyes twinkling with amusement. “Though you may want to try a bit lower, where I’m sure you’ll get a much different reaction.”

Severus just smiled, and then bowed back to his task. He followed the narrow trail of hair from Harry’s navel into his pubic region with his tongue. He licked at the coarse hair and pulled it with his teeth, enjoying Harry’s gasps of pleasure and slight pain. He then skirted around Harry’s weeping cock and began grazing his teeth along Harry’s thighs.

Slowly working down to Harry’s feet, Severus suckled on the younger man’s toes and bathed the soles of Harry’s feet with his tongue. When Harry again started laughing from the ticklish sensations, Severus abandoned the young wizard’s feet and started working on the underside of Harry’s muscular legs. Harry gasped louder than ever and started to squirm as soon as Severus’ tongue touched the back of his knees. Severus made sure to pay special attention to that area before moving on.

He pushed Harry’s knees up to his chest to give him complete access to Harry’s most sensitive body parts. Keeping his eyes locked on Harry’s face as best he could, he stuck out his tongue and gave a long sweep over Harry’s arsehole all the way up to the tightened balls. He stopped just before coming into contact with Harry’s precome-soaked cock.

Harry groaned as Severus once again halted his ministrations. He was already so close to the edge that being denied stimulation to his cock was torturous.

“Ruddy tease,” he murmured under his breath even as his hand moved to gather Severus’ hair back from his face.

Severus was more amorous than Harry would’ve thought he would be, but Harry would never say anything about it; he was rather enjoying his husband’s assertive side and knew they both needed this. It was not just the physical stimulation that was so overwhelming for Harry though, but also the emotional significance of this coupling. As much as Harry wanted to urge Severus on harder and faster, he knew how utterly important it was at this time to let Severus set the pace of their lovemaking.

“Yours, angel. Always and only yours,” he promised sincerely. “Please don’t stop.”

Severus’ heart skipped a beat at Harry’s term of endearment. He sighed softly, a smile tugging at his lips, then bent forward and took Harry’s straining cock fully into his mouth. His tongue swirled
around the tip, then glided along the throbbing veins as he moved further down until his chin was nestled against Harry’s balls. He pulled up slowly, then down again, beginning a slow, but steady rhythm.

As Harry moaned louder and bucked his hips, Severus started to hum around Harry’s cock to the same lullaby he had soothed their son with earlier. The vibrations sent a shiver through his lover’s body that circled back through Harry’s hands on his head, and down Severus’ spine. Severus’ hums soon turned to moans of his own as both their excitement rose to levels not previously obtained.

Harry could feel his body tensing, straining towards completion, but this wasn’t how he wanted it to happen, not with Severus giving and him taking. Gently, Harry urged Severus up, tugging at his hair. “Gods… Severus, feels so good, but not yet. Not without you.”

“I had no intention of allowing you to come yet, lover,” Severus whispered seductively as he crawled up Harry’s sweat-slickened body.

Harry was already breathing heavily, but when his eyes locked with Severus’, the depth of emotions – trust, love, and desire – were enough to steal his breath away for a moment.

His breath finally whooshed out in a moan as he felt Severus’ cock sliding against his own while his lover moved up higher in the bed. One of Harry’s hands moved down to Severus’ hip, encouraging Severus’ weight down on top of him even as he spread his legs.

“Fuck me, Sev. Need you to be inside of me when we come.”

Severus ignored the plea, choosing that moment to stretch out and cover Harry like a heated blanket. Capturing his bondmate’s lips in a searing kiss, he grazed his hips against Harry’s, rubbing their cocks together. He then climbed higher until he was sitting on Harry’s chest. He swiped his cock over Harry’s lips, making them glisten with his pre-come. Severus allowed Harry’s questing tongue to make contact with the tip, then pulled away teasingly. He loved the way Harry’s eyes flashed with lust and mild annoyance.

Slowly he gave in, letting Harry suck first on just the reddened head and then the length of his cock, as he slid it past Harry’s luscious lips. His breath caught in his throat at the beauty of Harry’s lips wrapped around his gently thrusting pole and he had to fight against climaxing too soon.

When Harry began swallowing, his throat closing and opening around Severus’ throbbing member, Severus threw his head back and began fucking into Harry’s mouth faster. He almost missed pulling out before the point of no return, but his mind was faster than his lust and he was able to retreat from Harry’s heated mouth before it was too late.

Severus sat back on Harry’s chest to regain his breath. Harry’s warm hands, which had been holding his arse and urging him forward, now ran soothingly up and down his sides. Severus closed his eyes and concentrated on the feel of Harry’s fast-rising chest and thumping heart. When he had calmed down, he scooted back and leaned forward for an electrifying kiss.

Staying on Harry’s chest, he reached for the bottle of lube that was sitting on the nightstand. When he had it, he broke off the kiss and moved further back. He opened the bottle and poured a generous amount into his hand. Grabbing onto both their cocks, he smeared them with the warm, slick substance and began slowly masturbating them together.

Severus smiled seductively at Harry, then released their cocks. He moved his hips further until Harry’s hard cock was behind him, sliding across the crack of his arse.
Harry’s glazed eyes snapped up to meet Severus’ questioningly. “Sev, what are you doing?” he croaked out, forcing down the urge to flex his hips up and bury himself in the sweet heat of Severus’ channel. “I thought… I mean I had assumed that you’d want…”

Harry blew out a breath, trying to calm himself enough to form a coherent thought. “I had assumed you’d want to fuck me. I want this to be a partnership between us. You don’t have to give yourself to me like this.”

“Oh, no, lover. I said I wanted to be in control this time. I didn’t say I wanted to top!” Severus said brazenly, knowing exactly what Harry has assumed. “It IS possible for the bottom to be in control, you know.”

Severus punctuated his words by holding Harry down against the mattress firmly. He rocked his hips forward and back, sliding his cock over Harry’s stomach and teasing Harry’s cock with his arse. He let his hands roam over Harry’s chest and stomach for a moment, then leaned forward for another hot kiss.

Harry took only a moment to process the information, as Severus’ tongue plundered his mouth, before moving one hand up to cradle Severus’ cheek, breaking the kiss and pressing their foreheads together. “I know that, but it also means that you trust me not to hurt you, and Severus, that means everything to me.”

Harry moved one of his hands from Severus’ hip to encircle his cock. Bringing it up between them, he lazily gripped Severus’ shaft as well, his hand sliding easily around both organs, slickening his fingers with lubrication. After only two strokes, however, he released both shafts and slid his fingers down between Severus’ thighs.

Severus whined in protest as Harry’s hand released him, but that objection dissolved into a moan the moment he felt Harry’s now greased fingers circling his entrance.

“May I?” Harry asked, his lips brushing against Severus’ teasingly.

Severus’ voice caught for a moment, then came out as a harsh, breathless whisper. “Oh, gods, Harry! Yes, yes, anything for you!”

Severus dropped his head onto Harry’s shoulder as he pushed back to meet the questing fingers. His chest was on fire as his heart thumped heavily and his lungs labored for breath. He had always preferred being the recipient, but he had never felt so much control over his own body, and the feeling was intoxicating and dizzying. He felt himself caught in the throes of orgasm without actually ejaculating and he thought he might faint.

Harry watched the play of emotions on Severus’ expressive face, reveling in the fact that this time he had all the time in the world to enjoy the journey instead of rushing towards the eventual goal of release. However, as the minutes dragged by, and he felt Severus opening up for him, his cock twitched with anticipation, and the need to bury himself deep inside his lover became almost overwhelming.

“Need to be inside you,” Harry whispered almost brokenly.

Severus merely nodded and sat up straight. With his hands on Harry’s chest, he slid his hips down until his arse was in line with his young lover’s throbbing cock. He lifted himself up as he reached back for Harry’s prick. He knew with a glance that Harry was too excited to last long.

With agonizing slowness, he lowered his body down and accepted his lover into himself, just as he
had allowed Harry into his heart. When he was fully seated, he stopped. Taking several deep breaths, Severus gave them both time to relax. He wanted, needed this to last more than a brief moment, like a couple of lusting teenagers. He needed to feel Harry in a way he had never felt with any other lover. He needed to make love for the first time in his life with someone who truly meant something to him with no strings or agendas, no coercion or pressure, just two hearts filled with love.

Severus opened his eyes slowly, looked down at the man that was now his husband and life-long partner and saw that Harry was probably struggling with the same feelings. The fact that Harry was willing to forego his own needs and let Severus set the pace, meant more to him than he could ever express with words. Freedom. He reached his shaking hands up to Harry’s face and caressed the flushed cheeks with a gentleness that belied his raging hormones.

When Harry opened his eyes and looked at him with love and understanding, Severus’ heart skipped a beat. He didn’t have to explain anything or justify himself in any way. Harry merely accepted him and waited patiently. Severus took a shuddering breath, then leaned down, careful not to dislodge Harry’s penis from its comfortable place within himself, and kissed his lover. It was slow and passionate, eager but unhurried, soft and possessive all at once.

Gently, Severus rocked forward, his lips dancing with Harry’s. He pushed back just as slowly and began a steady rhythm. When they finally broke for air, he leaned back and placed his hands on Harry’s knees for leverage, changing the angle and bringing himself more pleasure. When Harry took hold of Severus’ cock and started to pump it in time with his steady rise and fall on Harry’s body, Severus smirked his lover’s hand away and shook his head.

“Not so fast, lover-boy!” he admonished. “It will all ‘come’ in time!” Severus smirked lustily, his onyx eyes flashing with desire and amusement.

Harry groaned, closing his eyes and fisting his hands in the sheets in order to prevent himself from reaching out for Severus yet again. “Fuck, Sev. Such a bloody tease. You’re killing me here. I need to touch you.”

Severus snickered and leaned forward once more. He let his long hair dangle down, tickling Harry’s face and chest. As Harry growled in aggravation, Severus brought his lips to Harry’s ear.

“You have touched me, love. That’s why we’re here together,” he whispered softly, nipping lightly on the exposed earlobe and relishing in the shivers that ran through Harry’s body.

He sat up again and looked down on his frustrated lover, a mischievous glint in his eyes and a smirk on his lips. “Perhaps I should tie you down?” He laughed loudly when Harry barked out ‘No!’.

“Well, alright then, you can touch… just not ‘there’!”

Severus slid his hands down Harry’s strong arms and interlaced their fingers together, holding them against the bed above Harry’s head. He gave his new husband a long, deep kiss, his hips rocking slowly against Harry’s. He then leaned back again, taking their hands with him. He placed Harry’s hands on his chest, then let them go, allowing his lover to openly explore his chest as he rose and fell in a steady motion.

With maddening slowness, Severus increased the pace of their lovemaking until they were both breathless again and on the edge of ecstasy. Stopping the movement of his arse against Harry’s cock, Severus fell forward and wrapped his arms around Harry’s torso. Lightning quick, he flipped them over, not dislodging himself and smiled up at his shocked partner.

"Now, you may play!” he stated with a smug grin.
The fact that Severus was relaxed enough with Harry to laugh and tease in bed was absolutely amazing to the younger wizard. In a moment oddly reminiscent of their first night together, and mimicking Severus’ earlier actions, Harry stretched Severus' arms above his head, linking their fingers together. His eyes closed and he leaned his forehead against Severus' for just a moment. This time, however, it wasn't to pause and regain his physical control, instead it was to rein in the emotions which were threatening to overwhelm him. Although he had hoped and prayed for another chance at replacing the memories of that night, in his heart he had never truly believed he would get the opportunity.

On their first night, Harry hadn't been afforded the luxury of time. Voldemort's attempt to summon Severus had commandeered Harry's attention, and he hadn't been able to simply pause for a moment and enjoy the feeling of their combined magic swirling around them each time their bodies touched. Now, Harry was taking advantage of not having to rush their lovemaking. Without consciously realizing it, Harry began rocking his hips, gently thrusting against Severus' prostate with each flex of his pelvis.

Harry opened his eyes, and his gaze immediately fell on the simple Mark that now adorned Severus' forearm. He almost felt compelled as he leaned forward, gently kissing the Mark. “No more masters, Severus. Just you and me… forever.”

“Forever, love,” Severus whispered. He thought for a moment, then said almost shyly, “There’s just one… Well, I…”

“What, angel?” Harry prompted, while still smoothly thrusting into Severus. “You don’t have to be scared to tell me anything.”

“It’s just…” Severus turned his face away, his cheeks coloring not from passion this time, but from embarrassment. “I liked how it felt when you were taking care of me,” he said softly.

Harry shifted his weight onto one arm so he could bring his other hand up to Severus’ cheek. He gently prodded Severus to turn his face back to him. “Angel, I plan on taking care of you for the rest of my life, but it’s going to be because you want me to, not because some bond is forcing you into accepting me as your ‘master’.”

Severus smiled warmly and turned into Harry’s caress. He planted a soft kiss on Harry’s palm, then turned Harry’s arm and kissed the Mark his love for Harry had placed for the entire world to see.

“Make love to me, Harry,” he said softly, a smile brightening his face and sparkling in his eyes. “Make love to me with as much passion and conviction as the first time. Let’s make some more magic. Just not babies, this time!” he added with a wink.

Harry shuddered out a breath, attempting to control himself and not come immediately at the seductive, flirtatious timbre of Severus’ voice. He stilled himself only for a moment before lowering again to his elbows, his hands framing Severus’ face as he slid out almost completely before slamming back inside the other wizard’s tight channel.

The two shared sloppy, urgent kisses, sometimes no more than breathing into each other’s mouths, unwilling to deny themselves the sheer pleasure of being connected in as many places as possible, as Harry thrust his cock into Severus greedily. Everywhere they touched sparked magical tendrils along their nerve endings, heightening the sensual experience even more.

Their eyes locked, pupils fully dilated, as they synonymously felt their orgasms building. Though they both remained acutely aware that it wasn’t, in many ways this meeting was so perfect, so new, that it felt as if it were their first time together.
Severus arched up, one hand stretching above his head just as Harry reached out to shift position and steady himself. Harry locked his hand around Severus’ lower arm tightly, unable to stretch any further to comfortably link their fingers just as he felt his balls tightening with his impending climax. Severus felt it too, panting harshly as he clung with his free hand to Harry’s other arm, now braced against the bed by his face.

Severus screamed soundlessly as he climaxed, Harry’s name echoing through his mind. He felt as much as heard a crackle of magic as Harry, too, reached his peak and cried out his name. He felt a burn rush through his body, heating his very soul with love and peace that he had never felt before.

Forcing his eyes open, he found Harry asleep atop his chest. He fondly petted Harry’s sweat-soaked head for several moments before raising his arm to spell the lights out. When he did, he noticed the Mark on his arm had changed again.

“Harry?” he called softly, trying to rouse his lover gently. “Harry!” he said louder. “Harry, my Mark’s changed again!”

Harry’s eyes fluttered open slowly. “What?” he asked sleepily.

“Look!” Severus pointed to his arm when Harry finally raised himself up and off him.

The red lion’s head was still there, but Harry’s initials were gone. In place of the HP was now a green serpent wrapped around the lion. Underneath were the words, “Forever Love”.

Harry gasped, then looked down at his own arm. His Mark had changed as well. Just as with Severus’, the serpent had remained, but the initials were replaced with a red lion’s head and the words, “Forever Love”. Their marks were now identical, as though to announce the equality of their bond.

“I love you, Harry,” Severus whispered with more emotion than Harry could ever remember hearing from the stoic man. He felt his heart swell as his eyes filled with tears.

“I love you, too, angel,” Harry whispered back.

Severus rolled into Harry’s arms, gave him a slow kiss, then laid his head on Harry’s chest. In two short hours, he would likely be up again nursing their son, but for now he fell asleep feeling more secure and happy then ever, his dreams filled with a light that had never shone for him before.

~*~

Severus awoke with a start. He could only assume that Harry had used the milk he had expressed earlier to give Joshua both of his overnight feedings, because according to the clock, he had slept for almost six hours straight. He sat up quickly and clutched his stomach as it rolled and gurgled ominously. He threw off his blanket and dashed through the early morning haze to the bathroom, where he proceeded to vomit into the toilet.

Breathing heavily, he rinsed out his mouth, then stared at his reflection in the mirror. A look of confusion quickly turned to dread as he glanced down at his smooth stomach. He could feel the change in his magic already. He gently caressed his stomach, almost as though he could already feel it bulging with life.

He looked back at his reflection and growled. His husband was going to pay dearly for this one!
“HARRY BLOODY POTTER!!” Severus’ voice echoed through the little cottage and down into the valley where a grocer and his wife had just begun to open their little shop.

“Hmm…” Liam mused, a mischievous smile lighting his eyes. “My dear, I do believe your services may be needed again…”

“Indeed, my love,” Josephina replied, the same smile on her lips. “And to think, only married a day and they’re already onto their second child!”

The couple laughed good-naturedly and continued with their day as though it was perfectly normal in their little village, simply accepting the presence of two powerful wizards and their little family.

THE END

~*~

Authors’ Notes: Thank you to all of our reviewers. We’ve answered your reviews on the review page underneath your original review.

This story has been such a pleasure for both of us to write. Thank you for your kind reviews, your support, and for sticking with both of us while our RL’s got ugly.

All our love,
Maggie and Taran

Please drop by the archive and comment to let the author know if you enjoyed their work!