Epiphany

by Rantipo1e

Summary

"The wave of envy and adoration rolled through the room in shiftings and quiet sighs."

Bellatrix has an epiphany, and suddenly sees everything in a new way.

Harry would have been a very dangerous child, if things had happened a little differently :)

Notes

See the end of the work for notes

Snape stood in front of the throne and stared at the Dark Lord.

He did not bow and he did not speak.

And Bellatrix felt herself freeze with disbelief. Then she felt her lips pulling wide away from her teeth, felt the surge from her heart making her hands clutch, her fingers; her nails digging into her palms with a deep throb.

Severus Snape was finally going to get what he deserved.

The Dark Lord reclined slowly, one elbow on the armrest, perfect and languid with satisfaction, taking his time. One of his hands hung negligently below his chin now, the tips of his fingers moving on the threads of his power. His head tipped in thought, and the sinuous motion of his neck was beautiful.
"Severus."

The voice whispered down her spine, low and sweet, warming her, making her breath catch with the prospect of violence. Bellatrix watched his eyes, his hands for the slightest sign of his intent, feeling for his will, ready to follow his gesture. And she felt the elation -- if the Dark Lord did not wish to do it, then she would.

But he continued to speak gently.

"Severus," he said. "I am invulnerable." And he leaned his head forward to make sure that Snape understood; "no other wizard can ever harm me."

Then he rose, still languid -- leaving his throne to step close to Severus, close enough to kiss.

He touched Snape's cheek with one finger and the wave of envy and adoration rolled through her, through the room, in shiftings and quiet sighs.

But Severus Snape was unmoved. He only smiled a small smile; the corners of his mouth turning up minutely in what should have been a pleasant expression.

Something had changed.

There was a hiss of parseltongue and a burst of light.

And the dark lord's face began to slip in some impossible way, began to crumple, slowly at first but then faster and faster, his body folding inward on itself with a hideous unstoppable soft rustling.

Then he was still, a heap of strange shapes on the floor - unrecognizable. In the quiet, Nagini flowed toward it, circling it and enfolding it with her long body. She lifted her head and reached out with her tongue as if to tickle his cheek, to wake him. But he was gone.

She was lost. When she looked up, Severus Snape was sitting on the Dark Lord's throne -- in her belly she felt the outrage of it. And there was something next to the throne. Something had got in somehow and it was coming out into the open, a grotesque little creature with dirty little feet and large fierce eyes that made her skin crawl.

But she could not think for a moment, because it had soft flushed cheeks and lips like a cupid's bow.

It was an untidy child with crude muggle glasses, vulgar muggle shoes and ridiculous patched trousers - shabby, grimy, alien. Its eyes glistened and darted as it stood protectively in front of the throne. Its brow was furrowed in anger.

The room was silent because of the bizarre picture it made -- and the creature could sense their fear. Satisfied, it relaxed its stance and leaned back against the arm of the chair, still watchful.

Snape's hand was empty. But in the child's hand there was a wand.

And it was not a wizard.

This creature had killed the Dark Lord.
Severus Snape moved one hand from the armrest and petted it, fingers threading through its hair.

The wild uncanny thing did not move.

Then his fingers parted the hair on its forehead, and she saw the mark.

Something opened wide inside her chest.

With a hand on Snape's knee the child hoisted itself up into his lap and lay against him, still wary. But Snape's arm came up around it, and Severus Snape was transformed before her eyes into something terrible and beautiful -- guardian of this extraordinary creature -- something that had been hidden inside the man she had known. She did not know him any more.

The child rested sweetly at ease in the curve of Snape's arm, its jumper riding up over the pale soft skin of its belly where a kiss would go. Then the fingers of Snape's hand moved to touch there, trailed slowly down its thigh, full of knowledge.

The child's legs fell open over Snape's thigh.

And her heart began to beat slowly in her throat, her chest, her face warming but her eyes clinging to those fingers, following the gesture.

The child was still watching her, its hand coming to rest on top of Snape's. And then she heard its voice again, hissing -- lisping from the small rosy lips. The serpent heard and answered, untwined herself from the wreckage on the floor and wound up the armrest to bring her head near the child's hand.

And Bellatrix knelt -- overcome by the gaze, by the fingers tracing slowly up the child's thigh, by his small hips shifting. She heard him breathe, heard herself breathe, watching the fingers on that soft skin, perfect flesh so unlike her own.

Abashed, she lowered her gaze to the child's feet, to the socks which fell down as his legs hitched up, the small rounded ankles.

She closed her eyes.

But in her mind she could still see the hand moving higher, over the child's sex. She could still feel his eyes on her, hear his sighs, her own.

She knew they called her mad, and she was now in utter confusion. But her madness was only a lack of fear.

And she felt her heart, her breath welling up within her as she leaned forward to kiss the toe of one small shoe.

End Notes

Based on completely work-safe fanart by mnemeosyne. I imagined what Bellatrix would
imagine if she saw it :)

Thanks to a_stone_ginger for the idea that got me started, and to tryfanstone for the title.

And thank you to the lovely people who have left kudos! You make me happy like a walk on the beach. And I'm so glad you liked it <3

Please [drop by the archive and comment](#) to let the author know if you enjoyed their work!