

A Sore Winner

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Chapter 1 of 1

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His oil-covered hands traveled slowly down her sides and up along her spine at a maddeningly slow pace. Long fingers splayed, every one left a trail of heat in its wake. Each long stroke alternated between subtly firmer than a caress and feather-light; each long, firm, stroke elicited a low moan from the woman laying face-down before him, and each trail of teasing fingertips had her undulating and arching in an attempt to deepen the touch.

"Severus!" she gasped.

"Don't you mean... *Master?*" he purred, seductively, as his hands crept up under her torso to cup her ribcage. "You may go."

"Go? You can't be serious!" she huffed.

"Day three on your schedule, had you won, was 'Slave will help Mistress improve a skill of her choice,' was it not? I've practiced my massage technique, Slave. You may go," he whispered.

"But Severus!" she exclaimed as she sat up. "I've apologized for trying to trap you into the bet!"

"You *did* trap me into the bet," he corrected. "What you *tried* to do was rig the results. A bet is a bet—isn't that what you said, Hermione?" He stood.

"Bastard!"

"Indeed," he replied, as he closed the door behind him.

By the seventh day of dismissed apologies, Hermione was despondent. Apart from instructions from Master to Slave, he spoke not one word. Despite what her foolish list outlined, she feared he'd coolly prove his point—and silence would resume. She had never done anything so *disrespectful* before. Would she have the chance to never do it, again?

She entered the cold, dark bedroom with a sigh, then screamed as she was grabbed from behind.

"What was day seven, Slave?" he asked as his hold tightened.

"M-make love to my dutiful Slave," she whispered, voice quavering.

"That is correct," he replied.

He frowned as the tears on her cheeks caught the light from the doorway. "You're crying."

"I'm so sorry!" she cried, as she buried her face in his chest. "I love you! Please—"

"Please, what?" he asked as he raised her chin and met her eyes.

He could barely hear her reply. "Please don't make me leave."

His face softened. "Foolish girl," he muttered as he kissed the tears from her cheeks. "I was hurt and angry, but I could never stop loving you."

Salty lips met as fingers found buttons.

And not very soon after, day seven was complete.