

# au clair de lune

*by bellarossi*

Not every story has a happy ending. Written for lulabelle72 at hpcon\_envy who asked for dress robes, fairy lights and an air of melancholy.

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*Chapter 1 of 1*

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She's standing by the fairy lights strung up on the balcony, dressed in champagne-coloured robes which turn her eyes to molten gold. She holds a wine glass in one hand and a lighted cigarette in the other.

The night sky seems muted tonight. The moon pulsates weakly in the darkness; only the soft twinkle of the little lights and the warm glow from the ballroom seem to provide any source of illumination.

'Severus,' she murmurs as he approaches. 'I don't suppose I should be surprised.'

'No,' he replies. 'But I confess I did not expect to see *you* here.'

He leans against the railings, a study of elegance from his beautiful, black, silk dress robes fastened with silver buttons to the hair gathered at his nape and tied with a black ribbon, contrasting starkly with his pale skin, defining his sharp cheekbones and glittering black eyes.

She scoffs softly. 'Didn't you? No, I suppose not. I've always hated these things. Harry would have hated it, too.' She takes a drag of the cigarette and sighs out the smoke through a long puff of breath. 'I don't think there were more than five people who actually knew him at all.'

She taps the ashes over the edge of the railing and watches the tiny little specks fall down, down, down.

He doesn't reply. He didn't really know the boy either.

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'I wasn't aware you smoked.'

She holds out the cigarette in reply. He takes it from between her fingers; as he smokes, he takes in the musk of her perfume and the sweet smell of her breath. Then he drops it beneath his foot and crushes it under the heel of his boot.

There are still a few burning embers when he steps back.

She watches him beneath heavy-lidded eyes but does not stop him.

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They can hear the faintest strains of music from the ballroom below; the arpeggiated piano chords of Debussy's Clair de Lune. She closes her eyes, setting the wine glass precariously on the railing.

Then she says, 'Dance with me.'

Before he can give her a scathing reply, she places her body neatly against his and places a hand on his shoulder. Automatically, he takes her other hand and her waist and before he's quite realised it, they are moving as one.

He doesn't speak. Her body is soft and warm, like spun-gold in his hands, and she moves gracefully.

She places her head on his shoulder, and he tightens the grip on her waist. The music has already died away, but still they move slowly across the balcony to their own silent tune.

They slow to a stop. She raises her head, her molten-gold eyes fixed on his glittering black ones. There is a moment of electric connection between the two. Their noses touch. Her eyelids flutter to a close. Then—

Then the wine glass slips and falls, shattering with the ear-splitting sound of broken crystal, and the blood-red wine spills across the stone floor.

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One of the fairy lights shudders and blinks out of sight.

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She begins with the cuffs, unbuttoning them slowly and placing a kiss after each button. Then the front of his robes, the top button first.

*Flick, flick, flick.* She stops at the button at his hips, raising her eyes.

He tangles his hands into her hair and groans softly.

She rises up, pushes him onto the bed and slowly, tortuously, languorously kisses him until he feels he can comfortably navigate the seas of her mouth.

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He can smell the musk and the cigarette smoke, but the bed is empty when he wakes. Her liquid-gold dress robes are still lying on the chair, pooling on the floor. There is no note, no indication that she might return.

He isn't really surprised.

Because Harry Potter's widow could never love *him*.