

ragdoll

by bellarossi

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Chapter 1 of 1

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For **zauza** at **hpcon_envy** who asked for Severus & Lucius in the 70s. (She also asked for the Yule Ball, but I wasn't able to fit it in.) Thanks to my **betKatie**; you're a star!

Like a doll, I thought. She looks like a doll. So fragile and delicate... so easily broken.

She was a pretty little Muggle, small and skinny with straight brown hair and green eyes.

It was the eyes, perhaps, that led me down that path of treachery.

Green like fresh mint, green like emeralds, green like...

'Beautiful little piece of filth, isn't she,' Lucius murmured in my ear. He bent down and grabbed her chin, shoving her head roughly against the dungeon wall. Her face was obscured by the dancing light of the flame sconces, but the look of pure terror on her silenced face was unmistakable.

The Dark Lord sat upon his throne and watched with an indulgent smile.

Lucius placed a loving kiss on her forehead that made me sick to my stomach and whispered, 'She's mine, Severus.'

I shivered. I was going to be sick. I was going to die. I was going to dig the deepest, dirtiest, emptiest hole, and I was going to bury myself alive so no one would hear my screams.

I was eighteen years old.

My first Dark Revel, as they were called—my first debauchery. For the first time since I had joined the Death Eaters and branded my arm with that black disfigurement, I caught a whiff of the pure, unadulterated *fear* radiating from my bones, bitter and pungent and putrid like the cheap aftershave my father used to wear. I hoped to God no one else could smell it because it was choking me to death.

There was no way I could allow Lucius to take her. To rape her, to mutilate her, to... to... oh Merlin, it couldn't happen. Not with those eyes fixed on mine, innocent and pleading. I had to do something, anything, *anything*.

Lucius would kill me for what I planned to do, but I would sooner die than watch her submit to Lucius like a ragdoll. I didn't know her. She could have been anyone; I might

have passed her on the street and never seen her again. But I couldn't ignore those eyes. There was no way I could shake off the sense of condemnation that would bind me like hundred-tonne shackles.

I was no Death Eater; I could see that now. I was a coward, a nothing, a nobody. I craved power and knowledge I didn't deserve. What I deserved was a coffin made of rotting wood with my name on it. But clearly, I was not lucky enough to be destined for such a fate.

'My Lord,' I said, watching Lucius' head snap up to regard me suspiciously. 'My Lord, I would like to have the girl, if it pleases you.' I was sure to inject as much respect and oiliness as I could get away with.

The Dark Lord's eyes flicked from me to the girl, then to Lucius' silent fury before settling back on me with an air of amusement, twirling his wand around his fingertips. 'She is a lovely one, indeed. You like her, Severus?'

I nodded tersely.

'But I see Lucius has claimed her for himself... how interesting. Well, seeing as she is your first—'

'But... my Lord!' Lucius interrupted furiously. 'I—'

'Play nicely, Lucius,' replied the Dark Lord, cutting Lucius off with a dangerous gleam in his eyes. 'Don't be selfish; you've had your share. Very well, Severus, you may take her. Be gentle,' he said mockingly, a lascivious leer on his face. It was all I could do not to gag.

Lucius gave me the most venomous, hate-filled look I had ever received and roughly shoved the girl into my arms. 'Have *fun*,' he spat, his strong hands leaving bruises on her alabaster-white skin.

'Thank you, my Lord. Your kindness is undeserved.' This much, at least, was relatively true.

'Mm,' replied the Dark Lord noncommittally as he twirled his wand round and round.

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I took her to a dingy little cell as far away from the main room as I could manage, locking the door and covering the room with as many wards as I could think of that would not give cause for suspicion.

I laid her gently on the floor and removed my cloak, covering her with it.

She was in so much pain. Lucius' dark purple bruises were the least of her problems; she was close to death. Her skin was white, her lips were blue, there were deep bags under her eyes and she was naught but skin and bones. Her brown hair was matted with dried blood, cuts and bruises covered her body and she was probably suffering from internal organ damage. She fluttered in and out of consciousness; I felt a stab of pain every time those green eyes flicked out of sight. Each time felt like the last.

Then she opened her eyes and whispered, 'Please kill me.'

My heart stopped beating.

I... I couldn't. I *wouldn't*. Killing her would make me one of *them*. I couldn't sell my soul like that. No, I thought. Don't make me do it. Oh, God *don't make me do it*

'Please,' she moaned, clutching my branded, ugly, disfigured, disgusting excuse for an arm. (My fault, I told myself harshly *My fault*.) Her green eyes filled with tears, and her spindly fingers trembled. 'Kill me, please, it *hurts*, it hurts so much,' she sobbed. 'Don't make me live, I want to die. *I want to die*.'

I was a broken shell of a man, reduced to nothing by her pleas. I sat there for what seemed like hours as she sobbed and begged and pleaded for me to end her life.

Then I decided to stop being a coward. Because that was all I was: a coward, nothing but a scared little boy in an ugly smock that would never amount to anything. But this much I could do.

I whispered the two words that made her fall silent and gently closed her eyes. Her empty, lifeless green eyes. Lily's eyes.

And I took the first step towards salvation—and destruction.

FIN.