

Grilled Mushrooms

by chivalric

It's all about cheese, mushrooms, and an unexpected kiss.

One-shot Story

Chapter 1 of 1

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Severus Snape groaned with pain when he put the last of the cheese curds into the form. In the past hours, he'd been warming and stirring the milk, had released not all, but most of the cheese whey, had finally cut the remnants to curds, and now, at least for the moment, it was enough. The cheese needed to rest for at least a day, and Merlin, he was grateful for it.

Pity cheese-making was such a strenuous job. Even more so as he couldn't use magic the cheese tasted a lot better when he performed each step by hand, and that meant hours and hours of work.

One of those days he'd need to look up some Muggle-technology, as Hermione had suggested quite a while ago. So far, though, he hadn't had time to do so.

Stretching his neck and shifting his shoulders, he was just about to let out a sigh of relief when some muscles decided to cramp, and he let out a surprised yelp. "Damn, fucking pain; damn, fucking snake," he hissed and just managed to slump down on a small stool he'd put in the barn a while ago very nearly, he'd landed on his arse, and that would have been most embarrassing. "I wish I could torture her for what she's done to me."

Well, the snake was dead, killed by Longbottom, whereas he'd survived due to Lucius's quick thinking and the fact that the blond wizard always carried a bezoar in his pocket. He'd saved his fellow Death Eater's life; strange thing, actually, as Snape was sure Malfoy hadn't liked him too much when they were both serving the Dark Lord.

Things had changed since then, of course. For once, Snape didn't teach at Hogwarts anymore. Instead, he'd torn down his house at Spinner's End, had built himself a better and larger place, and earned his living with selling personalised potions, honey, and cheese. Hand-made cheese. The only problem was that he could barely walk after he'd stirred the milk for hours.

"Having problems with the shoulder again?" The silken voice that came from the barn's entrance didn't surprise Snape. Lucius often paid him a visit, mainly because the man couldn't stand his big, empty house for too long. Narcissa had decided to leave him and now lived with her lover in France. Draco was married to Luna Lovegood, little Scorpius was the most horrible brat alive, and therefore, Lucius needed some distraction at least three or four times a week. A distraction like paying his former colleague a visit every now and then.

"The shoulder's killing me," Snape snapped, but remained seated. "As you know damn well. What do you want, Malfoy?"

"My wonderful daughter-in-law told me you should try soothing it with one of those interesting alternative Muggle therapies," Lucius said casually and without a hint of

sarcasm. Snape knew that Lucius was, for some strange reason, genuinely fond of Luna, possibly because she had married Draco instead of hexing he boy to pieces for daring to court her. "She showed me a few tricks; I thought I'd come by and give it a try."

Snape sighed deeply. "Wonderful. Where have the times gone when I was feared throughout the world? Now all I am good for is to serve as a guinea pig."

Lucius chuckled dryly and stepped behind his friend. Despite their quarrels, they got along well and enjoyed each other's company as long as they didn't try to be too friendly with each other. "Being feared is overrated, as you know only too well, Severus," he said and placed his hands on Snape's shoulders. "Now relax. I will try a localised treatment. I understand that a full treatment is better and more effective, but then, I will need another little while to fully master that task. However, Luna said I'm a natural, so let's give it a try, all right?"

Before Snape could object or get up and out of Lucius's reach, the blond wizard had moved his hands and now held them a few inches above Snape's neck, fingers spread ever so slightly, and without touching Snape at all. "Relax," he murmured and closed his eyes. "I'll do my best not to mess this up."

"How reassuring," Snape grumbled, but as getting up was not an option anyway because his shoulder really hurt badly enough to make even breathing painful, he remained seated and tried not to look too sceptical. *Since Luna's married to Draco, Lucius has adopted some odd habits,* he thought sourly and cast his cheese a check-up glance. *Soon, he'll tell me he's having tea with Sybill.*

A sudden warmth spread through Snape's body, its centre in his neck and shoulder. Surprised, he gasped, and then he realised that the pain eased away, faded into the background, and was overlaid with a general feeling of comfort. "What the hell?" he murmured, but Lucius cut him off.

"Shh," the blond wizard said. "I think I just found the problem here. Another few minutes, and you should feel considerably better."

"I already do," Snape murmured back and then kept his mouth closed. The warmth was accompanied by a faint tingle, as if a feather was getting stroked over his skin, which was of course ridiculous, as he was fully dressed.

Silence filled the sunlit barn; neither wizard moved for another little while. Then, finally, Lucius stepped in front of Snape. "That should be it," he said, sounding smug and satisfied. "Guess if I do that once or twice a week, your days with an aching shoulder will be over soon."

"Hmmm," Snape replied thoughtfully and carefully moved his head to the left and right. "You could have a point here." Getting up, he found he felt good, not at all as if he'd spent all morning making cheese.

Surprisingly enough, more heat spread through him. He stood only an inch away from Lucius; it must be the other wizard's body heat he was feeling. Under no circumstances this could be something else.

He would have stepped back, but behind him was the chair.

"Would you be interested in a more thorough treatment?" Lucius asked, a small smile tugging at his lips. "Besides, you look flushed; it seems as if you wear too many clothes."

"Merlin, Lucius, what a lousy chat-up line," Snape replied dryly. "Couldn't you come up with something more sinister? You're Slytherin; you should act accordingly."

Lucius rose one pale, innocent eyebrow. "Chat-up line? Sinister? What on earth are you talking about?"

Snape sighed. "I'm neither blind nor daft," he said. "Did you honestly think I wouldn't figure out sooner or later why you pay me a visit every second day? You are interested in me. No use to deny it."

Lucius smiled. "Of course I'm interested. And you figured it out really late. I would have thought you'd come to that conclusion months ago."

"Months ago I was busy creating a new cheese," Snape pointed out. "Now what are you taking the next step or are you too of much a coward to do so?"

Lucius seemed genuinely offended. "I'm not a coward. I'm taking things slowly, that's all. With patience, I figured, I would eventually manage to lure you into my arms." There was a mocking subnote in his voice.

Snape had no intention to let Lucius get away with it. "Patience is overrated, Malfoy," he said, grabbed the other man's neck, and kissed him.

Neither man heard the silent footsteps; neither man saw the shadow on the ground, cast by a woman holding a tray with various little titbits. Only when she stood right next to them, only when she cleared her throat, did they break their kiss and look at her.

"Hermione," Snape said and tugged his shirt back into his trousers. Somehow, a few buttons had opened, too. He hurried to close them whilst Lucius brushed his long, golden hair behind his ears and tried hard to get his breathing under control. "I thought you were still in the kitchen, trying to figure out what to do with the cheese and those mushrooms you bought at the market."

Hermione cast him a thin smile and held out the tray. "I did figure it out, Severus. Actually, I asked Molly to provide me with a recipe. And whilst I was at it, I did some additional cooking. I thought you might like to try the result. Obviously, though, you are otherwise occupied."

Snape and Lucius shared a somewhat embarrassed look. "Well," Snape said and then didn't know how to continue. It wasn't often that he lacked an answer, but right now, he had no idea how to explain the situation.

"My fault, Hermione," Lucius cast in and took a chilli-filled praline from the plate. "I admit I've tried to seduce him, and I know I shouldn't have done it with him being in a relationship with you and all. My apologies; it won't happen again."

"Won't it?" Severus asked and sounded surprised and a bit disappointed.

"Won't it?" Hermione asked, too, and nearly at the same time. She didn't seem to believe the statement at all.

The blond wizard sighed. "Well, I certainly enjoyed kissing you, Severus. Still, I promise it won't happen again, with Hermione being so obviously offended. For now, I would like to wish you both a good day; I consider it best if I leave now." He took a step back and turned to leave the barn, his cloak swishing across the wooden planks. It would have been a much more graceful exit, though, if Hermione hadn't reached out and snatched a fistful of his mane. Simultaneously, she took the praline from his fingers and put it back on her tray.

"Leaving is not an option, Lucius," she said categorically and pulled his hair until he stood next to her. "First, you dare to kiss my lover; second, you try to steal one of my pralines. And third, you dare to lie to me. Unacceptable."

Lucius visibly tried not to rip his hair free he seemed to know that if he did, the blond strands would be left in her hand, as she clearly had no intention to let go. "I didn't lie, Hermione," he bit out through gritted teeth. "And you, Severus, shouldn't laugh! After all, it was you who kissed me, not the other way around."

Hermione raised a questioning eyebrow and allowed the golden strands slip through her fingers. Lucius looked visibly relieved. "Of course you lied. You said it won't happen again, and that's simply not true. Do you think I haven't seen you two checking each other out in the past weeks and months? As soon as I'm gone, you'll shag each other senseless."

"I did not check anyone out," Snape said categorically.

"Liar," Hermione shot back. She took a piece of goat cheese and ate it. "Hmmm. A masterpiece, Severus. The fig-filling is most compelling."

Slowly, Snape took one piece of cheese for himself, his eyes never leaving Hermione's face. But instead of eating it, he offered it to Lucius.

Lucius smiled and closed his lips over the Potions master's fingers, devouring the small piece of cheese. "Delicious," he purred. "If you are as good in bed as you are in the barn, it would be a real pleasure making love to you." Then he turned his attention to Hermione. "For someone who has just caught her lover kissing someone else, you are surprisingly unimpressed," he said. "But maybe you are just hungry?" Picking out a cracker sprinkled with a mixture of garlic, ginger, and cinnamon, he placed it between her lips and watched her bite it in half, then swallow it.

"I knew something was going on in here," she replied and placed an affectionate kiss on Severus's cheek. "I can see into the barn from the kitchen window. Frankly, I wasn't that surprised when you kissed, but there is a rule in this house: neither Severus nor I am allowed to cheat. If we are interested in someone else, we have to let the other one know."

Severus slipped an arm around her waist he knew her well, and he knew what she wanted. As already pointed out, he wasn't blind. "You are greedy, little witch," he said softly. "Me and Lucius together, at the same time?"

She leaned into his touch, but with one hand, she found Lucius's shoulder and pulled him closer. Instead of kissing Severus, she kissed the blond wizard. Caught between both men, she moaned longingly when they both embraced her. "You and him together, at the same time," she whispered after she'd broken the kiss. "There must be some punishment, after all, for you didn't tell me that you desire him. You two can play on your own once I'm satisfied."

Lucius scooped her up. "Works for me," he said. "Not in the barn, though; we might upset the cheese. I assume you have a bed somewhere close?"

Severus took the tray out of Hermione's hands. "Excellent idea, asking Molly for the recipe," he said after he'd eaten a mushroom. "Nearly as good as sneaking up on us." And with that, he led both his lovers into the house, into his bedroom, and into his bed, which was more than big enough for the three of them.