

Article Seven, Paragraph Two

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1

Chapter 1 of 1

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Article Seven, Paragraph Two

Lucius Malfoy stared at the note again, as though the glare from his cool blue eyes alone could change the words. But they stayed the same, mocking him with their enduring power.

Mr. Malfoy:

Per Article Seven of Wizard Law 1436, I hereby request that you meet with me to discuss the terms of the repayment of your wizard's debt. The time, date, and address are at the bottom of this letter. Should you need to reschedule, please inform me within 24 hours of receipt of this message. Should you decline to acquiesce to this informal request, I will file a formal request with the Wizengamot, as I am entitled to do under Article Six, Section C of Law 1436.

Sincerely,

Hermione J. Granger, Ministry of Magic Medicinal Research Department, Order of Merlin, First Class.

Lucius sneered. Calling in her debt, was she? Fine. He'd be glad to oblige her. The sooner he was free from all his obligations, the better. He'd repaid most of his debts already, one way or another. It had been a difficult six months, that time before the end of the war. No one had wanted to believe he was capable of reforming. Only Severus and Dumbledore had seen the whole truth. Legilimency was a handy thing.

Lucius hadn't defected for good or noble reasons. Not at first, at least. He was a Slytherin, but more than that, he'd been a sadistic bigot. No, it was not the sounds of angels singing nor a bump on the head that had changed him, made him turn to the side of light, and eventually go over in earnest. It had been something much simpler, much more personal than that.

The Dark Lord had killed his son.

It was then that Lucius had realized, as Severus had done years before him, that the Dark Lord was mad. Truly mad, and would not content himself with killing muggleborns and muggles. He would take the life of whomever he felt like. Lucius had not been bothered by that idea much, once. Until the day the Dark Lord had dumped Draco's lifeless, bloody body at his feet.

"I did not think you capable," Lucius had choked, struggling to stop his tears.

"Then you are a fool," was all the Dark Lord said before walking away.

Lucius had gone to Hogwarts that same night. The rest was now history.

And here was Hermione Granger, the muggleborn who was now the right hand of Arthur Weasley, who was the new Minister of Magic, calling in a debt Lucius had imagined she would rather forget. Well. It would be interesting, he'd realized, to see what she could possibly want from him. She didn't need money, status, or power. She had those on her own. He was at a loss. His meeting with her was to take place at a prominent inn in Hogsmeade in ten minutes. He'd know what coin his debt was to be repaid in soon enough.

There was an envelope on the door when he arrived. Expensive grey parchment paper, with his name, nothing more. Opening it he read:

I apologize, but I have been delayed. Please go in and make yourself comfortable. I shall arrive within the next ten minutes. H.G.

He rolled his eyes. Late for a meeting she had requested? That was rather rude. But by the terms of the law he had to wait. He casually destroyed the note and envelope and opened the door, slipping into the room and soundlessly closing the door behind him. Before he could turn he sensed a presence and a familiar deep voice asked:

"Lucius? What on earth are *you* doing here?"

Lucius whirled about, startled to see Severus sitting in a plush burgundy chair in the suite's sitting room, sipping what looked like brandy. He quickly schooled his features to impassivity. "I might ask you the same question, dear Severus," Lucius drawled, crossing to sit in an empty chair opposite his friend. "*Accio brandy*," Lucius called, pouring himself a glass when the bottle flew to his hand.

Severus shook his head, the dim light of a table lamp gleaming off his raven hair. "I am awaiting the arrival of Hermione Granger."

"As am I," Lucius said in surprise, sipping from his glass. "It concerns the repayment of my wizard's debt to her."

"That is why I am here as well," Severus said, his normally pale features looking even whiter than usual. "I do not understand why she wishes to see both of us together, however."

"It is most unusual," Lucius agreed, a slight frown marring his aristocratically handsome features. "Doubtless she has the same request for us both, and wishes to save time."

"A logical conclusion," Severus agreed.

They continued drinking and talking when there was a slight rustling at the door and Hermione came in. "Oh, good!" she exclaimed. "You're both here. I do apologize for being late: I had an emergency meeting at the Ministry."

Both men had rose when she entered, waiting until she had seated herself in the final chair before resuming their places. She followed suit with their drinking and poured herself some of the cherry brandy she'd specifically had the staff leave in the sitting room.

"Miss Granger," Severus said as she took a sip, "I must tell you that this was a highly... unusual means of declaring intent. Sending a letter, having both myself and Lucius here at the same time..."

"Perfectly legal," Hermione said placidly as she took another drink.

"I did not intend to question the legalities of it," Severus replied. "I am merely... curious."

"As am I, Miss Granger," Lucius added. "Why the clandestine behavior? Hardly seems fitting for a Gryffindor."

"We are all more than the symbols of our houses, Mr. Malfoy," Hermione answered. "As for the unorthodox approach... I wanted to be certain that both of you took me seriously." There was none of the little girl Severus had taught at school present now. In her place was a woman who radiated power and control.

"I see," Severus said. "Well, Miss Granger. Since we obviously did, perhaps you'd be so kind as to discuss the nature of the repayment you desire?"

"Interesting that you should choose that word," Hermione smiled. "Because that is precisely why I am doing this."

Both men frowned at her. "I don't understand," Lucius told her.

"It's very simple, really," Hermione said. She looked straight at them. "I want to take you to bed."

Severus and Lucius stared at her in shock.

"Both of you," she added, her voice almost casual. "Together. As payment for your debts, you will both submit to me for one night, willingly, without resistance."

Lucius laughed. He couldn't stop himself. "You must be mad. Or joking."

"I'm not joking, Mr. Malfoy," Hermione replied. "Nor am I mad that I'm aware of."

"Then perhaps one of your esteemed colleagues should examine you to make certain of that," Lucius hissed. "Because for you to even consider making such a request would have proven it to me beyond a shadow of a doubt!"

"Miss Granger, surely you remember that you were my student for seven years," Snape said. "Aside from the obvious immorality of such a request..."

"Oh, and you both are fine examples of morality, are you?" Hermione chuckled.

"That is the past!" Malfoy snarled. "In case you have forgotten, I have a wife..."

"Ah, yes, Narcissa, whom I believe is presently serving as mistress to Mr. Goyle for one month to repay a debt of her own?" Hermione asked sweetly.

The blood drained from Lucius' face. "How do you know that?" he asked, so stunned he didn't attempt to deny it.

"I have my sources," she answered breezily. She turned to look at Snape. "As for you, professor: I'm sure you can put aside your feelings for one night. After all, I am no longer a student and I am over the age of consent."

"Why?" Malfoy whispered, clutching his glass of brandy as though it could somehow save him from her requirements. "Why in the nine levels of Hell would you want such a thing from us?"

Hermione sighed. Well, she'd expected this, she reminded herself.

"To be completely blunt with you, Lucius: I'm tired of boys."

"I beg your pardon?" Severus asked, eyebrows raised.

"I have... curiosities," Hermione said. "There are things I want to try and a boy, or two boys, won't cut it."

Severus was flushed. Lucius' eyes were wide. "I find it difficult to believe that you can find no men to participate in whatever experiments you wish to do," Malfoy said.

"I could, if I wanted to waste my time trying to find the right ones," Hermione replied. "I have things to do, you know. I'm a very busy woman, and journals and potions books won't read themselves. Besides," she added with a small grin, "there are some things that both boys and men seem to be a bit hesitant about, if you take my meaning." She looked them up and down for emphasis.

"Then why not simply hire male prostitutes?" Severus asked. "For the right jingle of galleons, they would surely do anything you asked."

"As strange as this may seem, Severus, that's a bit more impersonal than I want," Hermione told him. "I want this to be discreet, but not with strangers. I want to know the men I do this with, at least a little. Sex with hired hands doesn't appeal to me."

"But is that not what we would be?" Lucius sneered. "Wiping the slate clean by us getting you off isn't much better."

"Such crude language, Lucius," Hermione chided, and it occurred to Malfoy that she was now using both their first names. As if she had the right. As if either of them would agree to this perverse insanity.

"I know you two, though, you see," she continued. "You aren't my friends, but you're not strangers. You're both Slytherins, so I know you won't have much problem fulfilling my requests. Your lot is known for being quite kinky," she grinned.

Lucius stood. "I have heard quite enough of this. Good day, Miss Granger."

He put down his glass and was about to turn when Hermione said: "I cannot, of course, force you to agree."

"Damn right, you can't," Malfoy retorted. Severus was still seated. This confused Lucius. Why had Severus not gotten up and prepared to storm out in an infuriated huff as well?

Severus spoke. "There is, however, the matter of Article Seven, Paragraph Two, Lucius."

"What? What are you prattling on about, Severus?" Lucius demanded.

"I believe Severus is referring to this, Lucius," Hermione said, calmly pulling a piece of paper from her purse and handing it to him.

Lucius snatched it from her with a scowl, then sank back into the chair as he began reading.

Wizarding Law Number 1436, Article Seven, Paragraph Two: Disinclination of Acquiescence to a Request for Repayment of a Wizard's Debt:

In accordance with Law Number 1425, and Law Number 1433, a wizard may refuse to the proposed terms of repayment of any wizard's life debt. However, if the request meets the criteria listed in Article Seven, Paragraph Three of Law Number 1436, and the wizard decides to decline regardless, at the discretion of the Wizengamot, a penalty will be imposed on the wizard, up to and including that the wizard's wand may be taken and/or use of magic suspended until an agreement can be reached.

"This *cannot* be possible!" Malfoy exploded, crumpling the paper into a ball and hurling it a mere foot from Hermione's head.

"I'm afraid so, Lucius," she replied smoothly. "If you wish to verify for yourself that my request is in compliance with paragraph three, I can show you..."

"Blast it, woman, I have no doubt that your request is within permissible bounds," Lucius growled. "You've never done anything in your life that you did not first spend fifty hours researching in a library, and I don't think you would have stopped that now. That code dates back for centuries... do you mean to say that no one has ever thought to rewrite it?! There has been no known request for repayment by sexual favor in ages!"

She nodded. "I know. However, the key word there is no *known* request. Which is probably why it hasn't been revised. It hasn't been an issue. You know as well as I do, Lucius, that in the very old days, things were quite different. That goes for the muggle and wizarding world alike. There are places where laws are still on the books that say it is permissible to beat your spouse, as long as you do it on the courthouse steps." She chuckled at this, then continued. "Of course, there's no guarantee the Wizengamot would give you that punishment..."

"More to the point," Severus said wryly, "the request would be known to them as they determined the right to refuse."

"You would not let that happen," Malfoy said to Hermione. "You'd be ruined. In fact, I could go shout this out to the world right now..."

"And risk drawing attention to your family again?" Hermione asked him. "You have barely managed to get the name 'Malfoy' uttered in a somewhat respectable light. As for me being ruined... I'm within my rights, and this has been done before. Not recently, but it has. I can't legally be punished. But you could."

Lucius leaned back with a groan. How had this happened? This woman should have been put in Slytherin! "You wouldn't want Dumbledore, or anyone else, to know you want us to be your pets for a night," he snarled.

"Not particularly," she admitted. "But more to the point... neither would you."

Lucius glared at Severus, but it had no real malice towards the potions master. "So that's why you're just sitting there so calmly."

"I am not pleased by it either, Lucius," Severus said. "However, I would prefer to settle this debt quickly and quietly. If Miss Granger wants me so badly she is willing to use my debt to her for it, why should I refuse?"

"I cannot believe magic could be taken from me over this," Lucius fumed. Severus might be safe, but Lucius knew perfectly well he personally had never made any allies since his "conversion" to the Order. His motives had not been to defeat evil but to make the Dark Lord pay for killing Draco. Dumbledore had accepted it, but he hadn't liked it.

"It would be temporary, until we decided on another payment," Hermione said. "But you never know how long that might take..."

Lucius sighed. "All right, then, damn you," he snapped. "I don't really have much choice, do I?"

Hermione looked at him with gentle exasperation. "You'd have to repay me somehow. Is this so bad? I only want one night from you. One night, and a lifelong obligation will be erased."

"If you had any decency you'd demand something respectable. Like money, or a curse cast on someone," Lucius said.

Hermione laughed in delight. "You truly are a Slytherin, Lucius!"

"Miss Granger... Hermione..." Severus said quietly. "When shall this take place?"

"How about tonight?" Hermione asked.

Severus nodded. "That is acceptable for me. Lucius?" he asked, glancing at his friend.

"Fine," the other man said through clenched teeth. "Here?"

"Yes. Six o'clock, please. I want my debt's worth," Hermione smiled.

"And what, exactly, does submitting to you willingly without resistance entail?" Lucius asked.

She shrugged. "If I kiss you, you don't pull away. You kiss me back. If I tell you to bathe me, you bathe me. If I tell you to lick Severus from head to toe..."

"Enough, I understand," Lucius sighed. "And at what time will you consider the bargain fulfilled?"

"At noon tomorrow," she replied. "Since tomorrow is Saturday, I'd like to stay up late and sleep late."

"We have to sleep in a bed with you as well?" Severus asked.

"If I let you," she answered, eyes twinkling.

Lucius rose. "Very well. I accept, Miss Granger. Now, if you'll excuse me, I must go home, drink an anti-nausea potion, and lie down. I will be here at six o'clock."

Hermione nodded, watching as he headed for the door. As he reached for the doorknob she said: "Oh, and Lucius?"

"Yes?" he asked, fingers clenching the metal.

"Don't wear anything... complicated."

A look of utter disdain and disbelief was the last thing she saw as he swept out and slammed the door.

"Well!" Hermione said brightly to Severus. "That went better than I expected."

"Fortunately for you," was Severus response.

Lucius stood in front of the door.

He was not a man of hesitation or nervousness. Being a Death Eater had instilled in him a cold power. You did what needed to be done, enjoyed it (or not) revealed in the control you had, and got the hell out. He had lost that after the Dark Lord's defeat. But he'd been pardoned (the repayment of the debt owed *him*) and now he could say his name in public once again: Lucius Dracon Malfoy, free of accusations and obligations.

All but one.

He forced himself to calm. *Only one night, as she said, he reminded himself. I submitted to the Dark Lord, the most powerful, evil wizard the world has seen in a century. I can certainly submit to a mere young woman who wants to use me as her whore for the night.*

A wicked smile curved his lips. She wasn't ugly, truth be told. The scrawny bushy-haired girl she'd once been had turned into a woman with a voluptuous body and a pretty face to match. He'd told Narcissa what had taken place, and instead of having a fit over the situation, she'd laughed while he seethed.

"Well, my husband, is she foul to look at?" Narcissa had asked.

"No," he'd admitted. "She's gotten to be rather attractive."

"Then why fight it? You have to repay her this way. Give her what she wants and be done with it."

"Indeed," Lucius had murmured.

Now as he stood there, just a minute before six, his nervousness increased. He'd never been with another woman besides Narcissa. Death Eater, contrary to popular belief, did not always equal rapist. Lucius had never desired to sully himself that way. And he'd *certainly* never been with another man! He wasn't sure how "willing" he was going to be able to be on that count. He had no objection to such things: they simply held no interest for him. Well, at least it was Severus and not some young Gryffindor. That would've been unbearable. He'd just have to close his eyes and shut it out as best he could.

He heard the distant chime of a clock. It was time.

He opened the door and slipped into the room, squinting to adjust his eyes to the flickers of candlelight. Soft violin music filled the air.

"Good evening, Lucius," he heard Hermione's voice say as he closed the door. It locked on its own, and he saw a few shimmers of magical energy surge around it.

Slowly he turned. Severus sat in one of the chairs they'd occupied that morning. He was dressed in a white linen shirt and black trousers. No overcoat, no robes, no boots or socks. He was once again sipping brandy and looked perfectly at ease in contrast to the agitation Lucius had been experiencing. Hermione sat across from him, dressed in a long flowing gown of gauzy crimson silk. Like Severus, her feet were bare and she was drinking brandy.

"Your coat?" Hermione said. Slowly Lucius removed his grey tweed coat and placed it on a nearby coat rack, where it shimmered for a moment and then vanished.

"It will return at noon tomorrow," she laughed softly at his expression. "Take off your boots and socks, please."

He obeyed, then stood stiffly a few feet away from them, wary blue eyes darting back and forth after the items vanished.

She waved a hand at the third chair. "Sit down, Lucius, and have a drink."

He faltered.

"That was not a simple polite request, Lucius," Hermione smiled. "It is two minutes after six, after all."

He inclined his head, smoothly crossing to the other chair and seating himself, then taking the glass Severus offered him. Hermione's gaze flickered appraisingly over him. As she'd asked, he was dressed simply, in grey trousers and a grey linen shirt. It was a good color for him, she decided: much like black was for Severus.

"What..." Lucius began.

"Shh," Hermione said. "Just have a drink, Lucius. We'll talk in a few minutes."

Lucius glowered, but continued drinking without further comment. It was excellent brandy. Obviously, Hermione had spared no expense for this little encounter. The inn was the most expensive in Hogsmeade, and sumptuous décor of this suite was reflected in that.

He'd nearly finished his glass when she spoke.

"You both know what this is about, so I don't see the need to be coy or mince words. Neither of you will be injured or harmed during this. I'm not interested in beating you or sticking rings through your nipples."

Lucius thought he would faint. Severus looked stunned.

Hermione continued as though she hadn't seen the looks on their faces. "So. Let's get started, shall we?" She took their silence as consent. "Very good. Severus, on that table over there is a silver tray. Bring it here and sit it down on the floor near the brandy. Lucius, in the top drawer of that small dresser you'll find a green glass jar."

The two men moved to obey her. Hermione drew out her wand and transfigured the chair she had sat in, turning it into a plush crimson banqueting couch. She stretched out on it with a sigh as they returned. She waved her wand again, and their chairs turned into large black velvet cushions. Severus and Lucius stood beside her, waiting.

"Severus, move a cushion next to the top end of the couch and sit down. Lucius, do the same, but sit at my feet."

Lucius obeyed a second after Severus, looking as though he very much wanted to protest sitting on the floor at her feet, even if it was on a cushion. But he said nothing, knowing that he had to accede to everything she wanted to fulfill the blasted debt.

The tray contained dark chocolate truffles. Severus smirked. So the lioness was a closet

sensualist, was she? He'd suspected as much. He watched Lucius open the jar. The soft scent of orchids and lotus blossoms filled his sensitive nostrils. He inhaled sharply. Musk, amber... he knew what this was, though it was obvious that Lucius had no clue. Hermione was clever, indeed.

"Lucius, use the cream to massage my feet," Hermione said. "Severus, I'd like to taste those truffles."

Lucius sighed. Well, he'd done worse things. He dipped two long, slender fingers into the jar. The cream was not greasy, surprisingly, and it did smell fantastic. He rubbed it slightly between his hands and began massaging her feet.

"Mm," Hermione sighed. "Wonderful, Lucius." She opened her mouth as Severus brought a truffle to her lips, taking it from his elegant, powerful fingers with her lips and tongue. "Delicious," she murmured once she'd consumed it. "Another."

After the second truffle, Hermione's eyes got a wicked look in them. "Lucius looks thirsty and hungry, Severus. Why don't you attend to him?"

"I'm fine, thank you," Lucius said quickly, a bit harshly, but Hermione only laughed.

"Now, now, Lucius. That's not very sporting of you."

His eyes flared, but he made no protest as Severus came close to him. Severus held Lucius' glass to his lips, and Lucius drank. Then he brought a truffle to his wide, thin mouth. Lucius took a breath, then allowed Severus to feed him the delicacy.

"Outstanding," Hermione whispered. "Continue, both of you."

Severus' eyes glinted in amusement. Lucius continued stroking Hermione's feet, kneading and working the smooth flesh, as Severus alternated feeding him truffles with drinks of brandy. Severus watched the way his jaw muscles worked, and how his slender throat convulsed as he swallowed and drank. It was actually quite erotic. There was a slight flush to Lucius' pale face as Severus continued catering to him.

When all but four truffles were gone, Hermione motioned for Severus to return to his place by her upper body. "Can't neglect the potions master," she said teasingly, and proceeded to feed him the remaining truffles. Severus closed his eyes as she did, retreating into himself to fully absorb the flavor and texture of the chocolate. Hermione followed each one with a drink of brandy, and the contrast between the flavors was as intoxicating as the drink itself. He felt warmth creeping through him but made no attempt to resist it. Tonight was out of his hands. Unlike Lucius, Severus had learned the pleasures that could come from surrender long ago. He hadn't indulged in those pleasures much, but it would make this night easier if he abandoned himself to them.

His eyes fluttered open as he felt Hermione leaning close to him. "You have some truffle on your mouth," she said softly. And she took his face in her hands, tongue darting out to the corner of his lips. She delicately licked the truffle away, grinning as she felt him tremble. It seemed that she'd found one of his weak spots. She licked again, and Severus couldn't suppress the quiet moan that broke from him.

"Very good, Severus," Hermione purred. "Don't fight your reactions. I want to hear every gasp, every cry you're going to make tonight." Her gaze drifted to the man at her feet, whose rubbing of her feet had slowed, then stilled, as the exchange with Severus took place. "That goes for you, too, Lucius. And I don't remember telling you to stop."

"If I must feign pleasure for your benefit, I shall do as you require," Lucius said, resuming his task.

"I think that's enough for now," Hermione said after a moment. "Lucius, stand up. You, too, Severus."

When both of them were on their feet, Hermione studied Lucius. "It is my hope that your pleasure, and your responses, will be genuine."

Lucius snorted. "I promised willing submission, not a miracle."

Severus chuckled. "You should be warned, Hermione, that Lucius is very stubborn. Even more than you, perhaps."

"Perhaps," she replied with a grin. "We shall see."

Silence descended between them, the music being the only sound. After a moment Lucius found he couldn't stand it, the quiet and her smirk. "Well?" he asked. "Now what?"

Hermione rose, and began walking around the two men, slowly, like a predator circling prey. "I must say, it's nice to see both of you without so many layers. And grey is a lovely color for you, Lucius."

"Thank you," he said tightly.

"But I think the time has come to begin this drama in earnest, don't you?"

Lucius swallowed. Severus looked curious. She smiled radiantly at them as she returned to the couch, arms folded behind her head, looking at them with that gleam in her eyes again.

"Undress each other."

Severus and Lucius stared at her. Severus opened his mouth, but closed it quickly when he saw a warning flash in her eyes. To refuse her anything was to void their agreement, so he nodded. Lucius was looking at anything except Severus and Hermione, face pale again. His hands shook for a few seconds before he forced them to stillness.

"Lucius, do Severus first," she commanded.

A muscle twitched in his face, but he turned to the dark-haired man beside him. As if they belonged to someone else, Lucius watched his hands move up to the buttons of Severus' shirt.

"Nice and slow," Hermione directed. "Put on a good show for me."

"I have no... acting experience in this," Lucius hissed.

She only laughed. "It's just taking off clothes. Pretend he's a woman. The principle is the same."

Lucius shot her a dirty look, but slipped his fingers to the buttons, opening them slowly one by one until the shirt was undone. He then brushed his hands over Severus' shoulders, sliding the shirt off him until it fell in a heap on the floor and disappeared. He forced his hands to the trousers, unfastening them as Hermione watched with growing desire. He hesitated once this was done, unable to tear his eyes away from Severus's face. He was afraid to look anywhere else. It wasn't safe.

Hermione sighed. "Would you like for me to cast Imperio on you? Would you feel better if you were truly being forced?"

Lucius considered, fingers still resting on the top of Severus' trousers. "No," he said at length. "I made this choice. I am not trying to disobey you, Hermione. It is just... difficult."

She nodded, pleased that he'd used her first name. "I understand. Take your time."

He began to slip the trousers off Severus. "You're awfully polite for a dominatrix," Lucius commented to help take his mind off the fact that he was stripping one of his oldest friends.

Hermione laughed again. "I don't want to be a commanding bitch about this. Despite what you might think, I want to make it as enjoyable as possible for you both."

"How considerate of you," Severus murmured, watching Lucius through half-closed eyes as his trousers fell. He stepped out of them, now dressed only in emerald green silk boxers.

Lucius chuckled despite himself. "Still a Slytherin underneath it all, I see."

Severus quirked an eyebrow. "You mean you *don't* wear our house colors under your clothes?"

Lucius blushed deeply, glaring at Severus. "I don't believe that's a subject that needs to be discussed right now, old friend."

"Of course," Severus said apologetically.

"I'm waiting, Lucius," Hermione drawled in a sultry voice.

"What happened to 'take your time,' hmm?" Lucius asked.

"My idea of taking your time is different from yours," Hermione answered. In truth, she didn't know how much longer she could hold out on seeing him take the final barrier away and expose everything Severus had to offer to her eager eyes.

"As you wish, madam," Lucius said shortly. He hooked his thumbs into the waist of Severus' boxers and, after a final second of dawdling, peeled them down and off. He straightened quickly, watching as the garment disappeared like the shirt and trousers had done, suddenly finding the nightstand the most fascinating thing he'd ever seen.

"Come here, Severus," Hermione beckoned.

He moved to her side, fluidly and with alacrity, apparently not bothered by his nudity. Lucius found himself resenting the other man's easy acceptance of their situation.

Maybe, he thought, Severus was so flattered that a smart, attractive woman wanted to shag him that he didn't really *want* to struggle against it. After all, it wasn't like he'd really gotten any sex in the past twenty years. A few muggles a long time ago when he'd first become a Death Eater. After that, Severus had confined his revel activities to other things just as Lucius had. Unless you counted the slatterns Severus paid from time to time, the man did without.

Hermione was hungry, but not for food. Her chocolate eyes traveled down Severus' body leisurely, taking in the hairless chest, slender shoulders and waist, and long pale legs. He had a dancer's build, and he moved with the same grace. Her gaze lingered on his cock, long but not too thick, nestled in a thatch of black curls. She wanted to bury her face in those curls and inhale his scent so badly she trembled at the thought. But there was unfinished business to attend to first.

She contented herself for the moment with running a small, strong hand down his body, stopping just short of his organ. Her fingertips encountered a tiny mole on the right side of his triangle of hair, and she leaned over, grasping his hip with one hand while she pressed a light kiss to it. She felt him jerk reflexively and then he was motionless.

"I believe it is Lucius' turn to be undressed, Severus," Hermione said with a smile.

"As you wish," Severus replied, mimicking Lucius' earlier words. He moved back to his onetime close friend and mentor. Lucius had turned an even whiter shade of pale. Severus paused, hands on Lucius' shoulders. "Are you all right?" he murmured.

"Yes," Lucius answered. He closed his eyes. "Get on with it, Severus."

Severus considered him for a moment, then went to work on Lucius' shirt buttons. Lucius stood still as a statue while Severus carried out his task. When the shirt was unbuttoned, Severus studied the other man's body. His chest was pale and hairless as well, but his shoulders were wider and he was a bit more muscular. Severus glanced at Hermione, who was watching the proceedings with lustful eyes, and made an elaborate gesture out of taking the shirt off and dropping it. He started for the buttons on the pants when he heard her say:

"On your knees in front of him to do it."

He stared at her, and she stared right back, challenge written in her features. He almost laughed aloud. Did she think that just because Lucius was struggling to deal with this it meant that Severus couldn't play her game? Oh, no. That was wrong. His eyes never leaving hers, he sank to his knees, bringing his hands to Lucius' hips with agonizing slowness. His fingers teased their way around Lucius' stomach.

"What the blazes are you doing?" Lucius bit out, eyes still closed.

"Really, Lucius," Severus whispered. "Hermione asked for a show. I am giving her what she wants. You must try to relax. Being defensive will only make it worse."

Lucius nodded, and Severus' fingers unfastened the trousers, sliding them down. He moved back up to do the same with Lucius' underwear... only to see that Lucius wasn't wearing any and he was getting an eyeful of a very thick, dark cock resting against a tangle of blond hair.

Hermione burst into laughter at Severus' expression. "Well, Lucius, thank you for heeding my instructions to keep things simple, though I've never thought of underwear as being complicated." Severus smirked as he took the trousers off with a flourish, leaving Lucius naked before them as his clothes vanished.

"I didn't know you'd want a striptease show," Lucius retorted, opening his eyes, embarrassment forgotten in the face of her amusement.

"What, did you think I'd have you two rip off your clothes and mine and just have at me?" Hermione asked.

"I didn't expect you to want to draw it out, no," Lucius answered.

"Hermione is very methodical," Severus said, still on his knees but looking at her as he spoke. "I could have told you she would want to explore many different possibilities

during this encounter."

"Then why didn't you?" Lucius snapped.

"You ran off rather quickly earlier today," Severus replied casually. "I didn't want to disturb you as you recovered from your nausea."

"You were my friend, Severus," Lucius growled.

"As enjoyable as this banter is, gentlemen, I'd like to continue," Hermione told them. "Come here. Both of you."

When they came close, Hermione studied them. In many ways, they were a contrast. One dark, one fair: one open, one closed. It was the latter part that concerned her. Severus was not going to be a problem. She'd known he would do as she asked without any genuine difficulties. Lucius, however, was different. She understood why he didn't want to do this, and why he'd agreed to in spite of his wishes. There were things she yearned to do and see, but she had to gentle him first. Ease him into it in stages. With this in mind, a plan took shape.

"Lucius, I am feeling generous," she said. "Therefore, I will give you a choice of what happens first. Would you like to lie down with me here, or would you rather watch while Severus lies with me?"

"I have to choose between participating or watching?" Lucius asked in dismay.

"To start with. Before this hour has ended, you will do both. I am simply offering you the option of which you want to happen first." Hermione suppressed a giggle at the look on his face.

"Why didn't you offer Severus first choice instead of me?" Lucius questioned, eyes narrowing.

"Because he was wearing boxers," she replied.

"So I win the prize, eh? Why don't you offer me some pomegranate seeds while you're at it?" Lucius asked sarcastically.

"Don't make me revoke my decision," Hermione said sharply.

"Fine," Lucius sighed. "I knew you'd decide to jump into sex."

Hermione blinked. "Who said anything about sex? That's not until later."

"Ah, you want *foreplay*," Lucius said.

"Are *you* going to be this irksome, Severus?" Hermione asked with a grin.

"Not unless you provoke me into it," Severus responded with a faint smile. Truth be told, he didn't want to do anything with Lucius yet. Not until Lucius had settled down a bit and was, at the least, able to relax. Severus had no objections to Hermione using him for her enjoyment in the meantime. Just the opposite. Severus looked at her, her face flushed, eyes lit, the silken gown clinging to her body, and knew that there was no desire in him to do anything but yield to whatever she might ask of him. He knew that she would not be selfish with pleasure: that when she'd said she hoped they would enjoy this night as well, she had meant it.

The sound of Lucius coughing brought him out of his musings. Hermione looked at Lucius expectantly. "Well?" she asked. "What do you chose, Lucius?"

"I choose... to watch first," he said.

She nodded. She'd expected that. He wanted to know what he'd have to do before he did it. Having him watch her with Severus didn't bother her in the least. The idea of those cool blue eyes following their lips and hands and limbs made her already hard nipples tighten to the point of being painful. Her body ached and her hands longed to touch and explore.

"Then have a seat," she told him, lifting her arms up. "Severus?"

Severus went to her as Lucius moved a cushion to one side a few feet away and sat down. Though Lucius hadn't participated in revel rapes, he'd witnessed a few at the Dark Lord's bidding. This had been before Lucius had convinced the Dark Lord that Death Eaters should not taint themselves by raping muggle women. Perhaps remembering his own muggle father rejecting his mother, the Dark Lord had agreed. But this was different. This wasn't a forced intimacy he was about to watch. He knew this woman and this man. And every time he saw them after this for the rest of his life, they would be bound by this secret. Oh, well, he sighed to himself. He had come this far. He wasn't about to back out now.

Hermione smiled at Severus as he settled down against her. He was pliant in her arms as she pulled him onto his back and rested her body against his. She cupped his face in her hands and kissed him, tenderly, slowly, tangling her fingers in his ebony hair. His lips parted beneath hers and his tongue moved to twine with her own. His arms wrapped around her back with no prompting from her, and he shivered at the feel of her cool silk whispering against his bare flesh. Her hips pressed into his, and she deepened the kiss, which made his cock harden against her thigh. Instead of trying to move back, he ground his body against hers so she would feel his arousal.

Hermione gasped softly, drowning in sensations she hadn't known existed before Severus. The heat from his body was incredible. The more she touched him, the more she wanted him. She was so preoccupied with her hunger for him she didn't hear the faint sound that emanated from Lucius' direction.

As he'd been ordered to do, Lucius had been watching their lustful exchange. At first, he was disquieted. He was no voyeur, and the idea of observing *anyone* made him distressed. But after a while, something else made its presence known to him, something that alarmed and confused him. He was beginning to be aroused. He was mortified. Not wanting them to know, he drew his knees up and wrapped his arms around them, resting his chin on his knees, trying to calm his traitorous body.

Hermione took Severus' hands and put them on her breasts, Severus began caressing them, kneading them, his thumbs brushing over her nipples. She moaned, feeling the dampness between her legs, wondering if she could continue prolonging the sweet torment. Finally she could take no more and moved down his body, kissing, licking and nipping as she went, until she arrived at those soft, dark curls that framed his cock.

Now she yielded to the urge she'd had earlier: she grasped his hips and brushed her face against his pubic hair. She inhaled him deeply, moaning. He was musky and sweet, intoxicating her with the scents of his skin and his arousal. She continued nuzzling him, occasionally nibbling gently on his skin, or tugging at strands of his hair with her mouth. Severus sighed, fingers tangling in her hair, massaging her scalp. Merlin, where had she learned these things? The intensity of her ardor was nothing he would have expected from her, the Know-It-All Gryffindor, the "brain" of the Golden Trio. And here she was, turning him into putty. Not that he was complaining. He'd forgotten how good it could feel to touch and be touched until Hermione had reminded him.

He was startled from his relaxed bliss when he felt her tongue on his cock. She licked slowly up one side and down the other, and Severus felt a tingle spread from the base of his spine through the rest of his body, flooding him with the waters of pleasure. After another minute or so of this, she brought her mouth to the fleshy head, noting with pride that his cock had turned a lovely deep shade of purplish-red and was quite hard. Some part of her mind was giggling. She turned Snape on. Even better than that was knowing that he wanted to be turn on. By her. Little Miss Bossy Gryffindor had the Big Bad Head of Slytherin writhing beneath her. She loved it!

She deliberately shied from giving him what she knew he wanted, licking and teasing until Severus couldn't stand it any more. He whimpered, arching his hips up, caressing her face and looking into her eyes, letting her see the need in his.

"Please," he murmured. Lucius drew a swift, incredulous breath.

Hermione smiled... and plunged her mouth down on his cock. He gasped and arched again, unable to stop himself as she circled the base with her fingers and got down to serious business. She stopped just short of making him come, and he groaned in protest.

"Easy, Severus," Hermione whispered, moving back up his body to take his lips in one last kiss. "We have all night ahead of us."

He nodded, pressing a lingering kiss to her cheek before stretching with a comfortable sigh. Hermione turned her attention to the fair-haired imp sitting on the cushion.

Lucius knew that he must look as white as snow, or as red as a ruby. He couldn't tell whether the conflicting emotions he was experiencing had drained him of color or given him a furious flush. He felt hot and cold, numb and sensitive. The sight of Hermione sucking on Severus' cock as though she wanted to devour him had unsettled and stimulated him. It made him wonder what that smart mouth felt like, which had been immediately followed by both berating himself for the thought, and the sinking realization that he was about to find out.

Sure enough, at a tiny gesture from Hermione, Severus got up and she beckoned to him. "Come, Lucius."

Again he was torn, knowing he had to comply but not wanting to move, because they would know that he was aroused: helplessly, humiliatingly aroused. Severus looked at him, eyebrows raised, lips curled in a grin. Lucius' nostrils flared. So, was his old friend mocking him? Did he think that he couldn't handle it, that he was going to falter where Severus had persevered? Malfoy pride surged in his blood. He'd be damned if he'd let Severus best him.

He rose, swiftly and gracefully, and didn't move over to Hermione so much as slither, his movements as smooth as Severus' had been earlier. Hermione admired the way his shoulders tapered down to his waist, how his cock was thick where Severus' was long, and the hint of blue fire that now sparked in his eyes. Only one thing was wrong...

"Your hair," she told Lucius quietly. "Undo it."

He paused, looking at her thoughtfully. He sat down on the couch and slowly reached his hands behind his head, releasing the bit of black leather that kept his hair in a ponytail. He shook out the thick, silvery-blond mane proudly, and Hermione purred her appreciation as the long strands settled down his back and framed his refined features. The hair tie disappeared just as his clothes had, and Hermione lifted a hand, cupping the back of Lucius' neck and urging him to lie beneath her. Although he did not move eagerly, he did not hesitate.

Hermione lay on her side next to him, upper body twisted so she could lean over him. Lucius stared into her eyes, seeing the gold flecks in their cinnamon depths, seeing the tiny smattering of freckles across her nose. Her mouth was curved into a smile as her hands stroked his hair back from his face. Her tenderness unnerved him. She could be brutal if she chose: why was she so gentle with them? Gentleness confused Lucius. He wasn't used to bestowing it, save on Narcissa, or having it bestowed upon him. It was as though she truly wanted him to find some pleasure from her touch.

Her fingers wound into his hair, as they had done to Severus, and she descended upon his mouth, her lips softly nibbling along his. She persisted in this for what seemed an eternity to Lucius, licking and nipping but nothing more, until he could no longer bear the anticipation. "For Nimue's sake, *kiss* me already!" he growled against her mouth.

"I thought you'd never ask," she laughed... and did.

Hermione did not kiss like Narcissa. But her lips were soft and full, and there was no small amount of skill there. Lucius gazed for a final second into her enigmatic eyes before closing his own. His lips parted under the warm persistence of her tongue. A pleasant haze settled over his thoughts, calming his anxiety. He felt soothed and sleepy,

almost as though it was a dream. As the kiss continued, he dimly became aware that his hands were on her back and that the little moans he was hearing were coming from him. Panic washed over him. This shouldn't be happening! He should not be so accommodating, so filled with wanting!

He tried to move, but his body had decided it liked being where it was and refused to cooperate. Lucius moaned again, despair and entreaty evident in the sound. Hermione moved back and he opened his eyes to stare blankly at her, breathing ragged.

"It's all right, Lucius," she murmured quietly, reassuringly. "You don't have to fight it. I own you right now. No one else will ever know this happened: no one will know you felt pleasure from it."

"I'll know," he retorted weakly.

Severus laughed, the rich, throaty sound sending shivers through Hermione. "I told you Lucius is stubborn," he reminded her. He looked at Lucius. "And I warned you that she is stubborn as well. One of you is going to have to yield on this matter."

"I don't yield," Lucius answered indignantly.

"You will tonight," Hermione chuckled, and resumed kissing and caressing him.

He wanted to resist her. But reason and desire were making it quite difficult for Lucius. He belonged to her this night. He'd promised willing capitulation to whatever she wanted. And apparently, she wanted to see him aroused, because she was putting a hell of a lot of effort into accomplishing it. Perhaps Severus was right. It would be simpler just to relax, unfold his mind in fantasies, and do what she wanted. He returned her kiss, hands sliding up and down her body in the silk gown.

"Yes, Lucius," she murmured encouragement against his mouth before trailing her lips down his neck. She took her time with him, tearing down his reserve and building a temple of delight in which she worshipped the tentative responsiveness he began to exhibit.

Severus watched all this with glittering eyes and thundering heart. It had taken no small amount of work on Hermione's part, along with a few subtle manipulations on his, but Lucius finally seemed to be enjoying himself and not merely conceding. Of course, if Hermione did what he believed she would, Lucius hadn't faced his biggest trial yet. It was less difficult to coax Lucius into accepting pleasure from Hermione: she was a woman. No, the true challenge was yet to come. However, knowing both of them as he did, Severus' money was on Hermione. *And myself*, he thought with a smile.

A sharp hiss from Lucius refocused Severus' attention to the pair on the couch. Oh, yes. Hermione had moved down to that wide shaft of Lucius' and was preparing to feast. Just remembering how that wet hot mouth had felt on his own cock made Severus harden instantly. Not that he'd had far to go: watching their kissing and touching had made him partially erect already. His right hand drifted down without conscious thought, and he grasped himself tightly, stroking up and down in slow, precise movements. His hand mirrored Hermione's mouth: slow, fast, hard, gentle. He gasped for air: it suddenly seemed that there was not enough oxygen for him to breathe. His blood boiled with heat and his body screamed for him to finish what Hermione and he had started. But he didn't allow himself release. He wanted to save that for later.

He withdrew his hand just as Hermione stopped sucking Lucius. The blond haired man moaned as she slid back up his body, holding him close. "Merlin, what a little vixen you are," Lucius panted.

"So I've been told," she replied with a sultry smile. She sat up, giving Lucius one last kiss before she stood. "I don't know about either of you, but I'm ready for a drink," she announced. "Severus... why don't you keep the dragon company on the couch while I pour us all some brandy?"

Severus inclined his head, moving to sit beside the other man. Lucius tensed and jerked away slightly, which brought a snicker from Severus. "I don't bite, Lucius."

"I think I'll be the judge of that," Lucius rejoined.

"No fighting, you two," Hermione admonished. Inside she was grinning from ear to ear. "Lucius, make nice with Severus."

"And what, pray tell, does 'making nice' involve?" Lucius asked dryly.

"Oh, I don't know," Hermione said airily. "I'm sure I'll think of something. You can start by not acting like being near him will burn you alive."

"If anything, I should be afraid of being burned by *you*," Severus added. "You are a dragon, after all." He smiled at Lucius, who merely snorted.

Hermione handed them both drinks, and they murmured thanks. She rested on what she was now mentally referring to as the "spectator seat," and watched her two captives to debt imbibe. Gods, they were so beautiful! A perfect contrast, day and night. Was it any wonder she was soaking wet with desire? She'd taken so much pleasure from both of them, though the pleasures were very different.

With Severus, her pleasure had come from his surrender. Unconditional, uninhibited, given freely and without hesitation. That he was so willing to put himself in her hands touched her in ways she couldn't define or explain yet, even to herself. He was everything she'd imagined he could be in a situation like this. With Lucius, the gratification had come from his resistance. In truth, he could have fulfilled her demands without any satisfaction on his part, but that wasn't what she wanted. He had been struggling against her the entire time, and it had only strengthened her resolve. When he had finally begun to succumb to her, it was a sweet triumph.

Now his edginess was back a bit. Well, she would just have to work on it, she realized,

though in truth it would have much more to do with Severus' skills than hers for the next part.

As if he was reading her thoughts, Lucius said: "So, Hermione. The night is still quite young."

"Yes, it is," she smiled.

"And what is next on your list for us to do?" Severus asked.

Her smile deepened. She rose and took their empty glasses, sitting them back on the table with her own. Then she sat back down on the cushion, looking at them with an expression bordering on affection.

"I believe I know how you can make amends to Severus, Lucius," she said wickedly. "I think you should give him a kiss of apology."

"A what?" Lucius stammered, paling a bit again.

"Fine," Severus sighed.

"What?" Lucius spluttered. "Did you just say 'fine,' Severus?"

"It's good to know this little escapade hasn't affected your hearing," Severus said. He laughed at Lucius' expression of dismay. "Oh, by all the gods, Lucius, what am I supposed to say? 'No, Hermione, I'm backing out of our agreement over a kiss?' Really, now. I thought we were older than that."

"That doesn't mean you have to seem happy about it," Lucius sniffed.

"I wasn't aware that saying 'fine' constituted ecstasy on my part," Severus droned.

"So you *don't* want me to kiss you? Perhaps I'm not good enough to kiss the great Severus Snape?" Lucius asked.

"As I've never been kissed by you, Lucius, I could not tell you whether or not you're good enough," Severus answered smugly.

"Yes, well, since Hermione has asked me to, perhaps we can test that," Lucius retorted. Indignation welled up in him, pushing away everything else, and without preamble or gentleness he grasped Severus' face in his hands and lowered his mouth to his.

Hermione clamped her hands over her mouth to keep from erupting in laughter. This had to be the most bizarre, most hilarious pre-kiss discussion she'd ever heard in her life!

Her laughter quickly faded, however, as she watched the two men kiss. Oh, *gods*. Why had no one ever told her how staggeringly erotic this was! It was almost better than reading *Hogwarts: a History*! Or maybe, she gulped as Lucius growled and Severus growled back, it *was* better...

Neither of them were touching except for their joined mouths. Yet they seemed tied together by a current of emotion. She continued to look at them, drinking it in with a fierce pleasure that made her ache to touch herself. Her fingers were actually creeping down to do that when Lucius pulled away, face flushed, to look at her arrogantly.

"Well? Was that satisfactory, Hermione?"

"Worked for me," she breathed, almost having an orgasm just from the glazed expression in Severus' eyes as he panted.

Lucius inclined his head, turning to study his friend. "Why, Severus. You seem a bit out of sorts," he said mischievously. "Are you all right?"

"Yes, but you're not going to be after a stunt like that," Severus informed him with a nasty smile.

"Whatever do you mean?" Lucius asked. "I was merely following Hermione's order. Oh, my," he continued, making a show of peering closely at Severus. "You're all hot and bothered. Could it be that you *enjoyed* that little episode?"

Severus folded his hands and contemplated the question. "It was... adequate."

Hermione didn't know the last time she'd seen a Malfoy look so insulted.

"Adequate? Adequate? I think your reaction belied that it was merely 'adequate,' Severus," Lucius thundered.

"You seemed rather disconcerted yourself, Lucius," Severus shot back. "Can it be that kissing me wasn't the fate worse than death you thought it would be?"

"Boys, boys!" Hermione said loudly. They turned to face her. "Yes, thank you for remembering that I am here. Severus: it got you hot. Don't try to deny it. Lucius: you didn't seem disgusted by it." They sat silently, like children being chastised by their mother, while she continued. "However, you'll both have plenty of opportunity to show each other up in short order." Her gaze was flame and steel. "Gentlemen, to the bed. I want action, and I want it now."

Severus nodded, rising and standing by the couch. To his credit, Lucius didn't flinch, though it was obvious he was hesitant again. He rose a few seconds later, and they followed Hermione into the bedroom.

Lucius blinked when he saw the bed. Whatever he'd been expecting, it wasn't this. A huge four-poster in dark cherry wood, with dark purple sheets and pillowcases. It was tasteful and elegant... and seemed to scream sex. He took several deep breaths.

Hermione moved beside the bed. She looked at Severus, then Lucius, as she slowly removed her dress and let it fall in a silken puddle at her feet. It vanished a second later, and she placed her wand on the bedside table before she slipped into the bed, stretching out in the middle and staring at them in amusement. "Are you waiting for a formal invitation?" she teased them.

Severus laid down on her right side, and Lucius moved to her left. She lifted a hand on either side, stroking and caressing them, watching the expressions that crossed their faces. Then she slipped a hand to the back of each one's neck, pulling Severus towards her breasts and Lucius towards her lips.

Severus was quick to respond to her urging, bending his dark head over her right breast, cupping it in one hand as he brought his mouth to her taut, aching nipple. He suckled gently, teasingly, drawing the nipple up firmly between his lips and flicking his tongue over it repeatedly. Hermione sighed, pleasure emanating from her in waves as she feasted on Lucius' mouth. She tugged on Lucius' lower lip, drawing it into her mouth and sucking on it while continuing to stroke his hair. He moaned softly under her simple but erotic ministrations, feeling the languor stealing back over him. Damn, but her kiss was enthralling!

They continued like this for a while before Hermione tugged Lucius' face away from hers and eased Severus up from her breasts. She was flushed and panting, her voice a husky whisper as she said: "switch."

Severus slid up her body, welcoming her mouth as it found his. Hermione sighed again. Severus tasted of brandy and clover honey, and his lips returned her teasing with enthusiasm. Although kissing Lucius had been pleasant, she preferred the wild abandon of Severus' full sweet lips to the smoky hesitation of Lucius'.

However... there was certainly something to be said for that smoky mouth on her breasts! Hermione writhed beneath the two men as Lucius played her breasts like a virtuoso, relentless in his performance, layering kisses with nibbles and licks, blowing warm breath onto her nipples and then quickly sucking it away until her nipples were painful again and she thought she would scream. Hermione shook like a leaf from the ministrations of the two skilled tongues and mouths, and knew if she didn't get some release soon she'd go mad.

"Stop!" she cried hoarsely, tearing her mouth from Severus'.

Both men immediately obeyed, looking at her in apprehension. She shook her head quickly. "More," she explained. "I need more."

"More... what?" Lucius asked, and Hermione could've sworn he was teasing her.

"Watch it, Lucius," she grinned. She scooted down and leaned forward. "Lucius, sit behind me. Severus, move down."

Severus smirked, but did as she requested. Lucius moved behind her. "Spread your legs out on either side of me," Hermione directed, nodding as he did. He leaned back against the wall, and she leaned back on him, pressing her back against his chest, spreading her legs out with his. She looked at Severus, sitting cross-legged near the foot of the bed, watching her settle against Lucius with smoldering eyes.

"And what does madam want me to do?" Severus inquired innocently.

"Madam wants to see what else you can do with that tongue," Hermione purred.

His expression held the faintest flicker of amusement before he slid onto his stomach and moved his face between her legs. Hermione brought Lucius' hands to her breasts. "Touch me," she said huskily.

He cupped the soft globes in his hands, thumbs lazily brushing her nipples, smirking as she gasped. He continued to caress her, kneading her breasts firmly, lifting them up from her body and massaging in slow circles. Hermione jerked against him and Lucius smirked again. *Never let it be said that a Malfoy doesn't know how to please* he thought in satisfaction.

Of course, arousing as Lucius' touch was, Severus' actions were driving her even more mad. *Where in the hell did he learn to lick a cunt like this?* Hermione wondered deliriously. He started by planting tiny kisses along her nether lips, then switched to flicking his tongue lightly along them. When Hermione's hips bucked, he laughed and grasped them tightly, gently but firmly holding her to the bed. Then he started torturing her in earnest.

Hermione knew why Severus was really a Slytherin. It wasn't his craftiness, or his ruthlessness, or the cruelty he used to exhibit in such measure at school. No, Severus Snape was a Slytherin because he had the tongue of a serpent. That same tongue that used to lash at her so sarcastically at Hogwarts was possessing every crevice of her cunt, claiming her ecstasy with every flick. He swiped it up and down her clit, alternating the tempo and pressure, until Hermione was ready to scream again. But he didn't stop there. Using two fingers to gently hold her cunt lips open, he curled his tongue and slipped it inside her, further than she would have thought a tongue could go, eliciting a harsh moan from her. He stroked her mercilessly, plunging that serpentine muscle in and out, until Hermione felt her entire body on the verge of convulsing. Her breath came in shallow gasps, and she was so close to orgasm she could taste it. "Don't stop!" she ordered, one hand clutching at the back of his head while she turned and sealed her mouth against Lucius' neck.

Severus wanted to laugh. He had no intentions of letting up on her. He could feel her muscles working and knew she was on the verge. It still amazed him that Hermione, who'd seemed so proper and reserved at school, was a closet hedonist. Severus reveled in the knowledge that her appetites seemed to be a match for his. This was turning out to be everything he'd hoped it would be.

"Faster!" Hermione commanded, lips still pressed near Lucius' throat. "Lucius, move your thumbs back to... oh, yes... YES!"

Her first orgasm burst through her, and she rode it out recklessly, grinding her cunt against Severus' tongue, sucking hard on Lucius' neck. Her sudden violent sucking brought forth a startled moan from him. Merlin's beard, what was the temptress doing? Did she know this was one of his weaknesses, or was it just an instinctive reaction on her part? Whatever the case, his body was responding to it.

Severus did not let up until Hermione had three more orgasms, and would have kept going even then were it not for her pulling away from Lucius and gasping: "Stop! Morgana's sake, Severus! Let me breathe!"

He pressed a kiss to her cunt and another on her inner thigh before raising his head. Black eyes never leaving hers, his tongue crept out to slowly lick the fluids of her climaxes from his face. Hermione swallowed hard, heart beating wildly as she watched, thinking that it was one of the most erotic sights she'd ever seen. As reality returned to her she became aware of his nefarious smile... and Lucius' cock hard as a diamond pressing into her back.

"Yes, Severus, before she puts a hole in my neck!" Lucius said, breathing heavily.

Hermione giggled, slumping back in Lucius' arms as Severus moved to lie beside them. "Sorry, Lucius," she said contritely, eyes wide as she saw the huge purplish red mark on his neck. "I got a little excited there..."

"A little?" both men asked in unison.

"Ok, a lot," she responded, with a grin. "How could I not with what you two were doing?"

"How indeed," Lucius said.

"Getting conceited there, Lucius?" Hermione asked.

"Merely stating an observed fact, Hermione," he replied.

"Hmm," she responded. "Well, Severus, I certainly think that you deserve something for that amazing demonstration of your oral prowess. So I'll let you choose something next."

The wicked smile returned. "Why, thank you, Hermione. In that case, I think I'd like the opportunity to pay my dear friend Lucius back for what he did earlier." His eyes met Lucius' as he added with false sweetness: "and then some."

"What do you mean, 'and then some,' Severus?" Lucius questioned.

Severus leaned over and whispered in Hermione's ear. She nodded enthusiastically and reached over the bed to pick up her wand, turning to face Lucius and moving to his side.

"Severus," Lucius warned.

"Do stop fretting, Lucius," Hermione said gently.

"I simply want to know..." Lucius began. Black silk ropes suddenly twined around his wrists and ankles, tying him spread-eagled on his back to the bed.

"...What you're doing," he finished, voice wavering as he saw his predicament.

"I believe you have your answer," Severus informed him with a smile.

"Hermione..." Lucius frowned slightly, pulling against his bonds. "What is the meaning of this?"

"Exercising the rights of our agreement," she said smoothly.

"I never..."

"Ah, yes you did, Lucius," she said. "There were no clauses in that arrangement. But I did specify that neither of you would be harmed, and I meant it."

"Then why are you confining me?" Lucius demanded. "I have made no attempt to renege, nor have I refused to do anything you've asked of me."

"I know that," she said soothingly. "That isn't why I tied you up, Lucius."

"Then why...?"

"You'll have to ask your old friend here," she said, indicating Severus. "It was his idea."

Lucius' eyes narrowed to icy slits. "Explain this, Severus."

"I should think it would be self-explanatory," Severus replied archly.

"Well it isn't," Lucius snapped.

"Are you afraid of me, Lucius?" Severus asked quietly.

"No," Lucius said, chin raised and jaw set. "But you know perfectly well that men aren't my cup of tea."

"Indeed," Severus answered easily. "However, all circumstances considered... you will be drinking tea tonight."

"Hermione," Lucius said, his tone slightly pleading.

She shrugged. "I did grant him the boon, Lucius. And honestly... I'll enjoy it."

"Which is more than I can say for myself," Lucius sighed. "Well, Severus," he continued, "since you know I can't refuse, why bind me? I might not like it, but I will accept it. There's no need to restrain me. I'm not going to resist."

"It is not your resistance that concerns me, Lucius, but your pleasure," Severus responded.

"My pleasure?" Lucius asked, rolling his eyes. "And what pleasure would that be?"

"The pleasure that you are capable of feeling... under the right circumstances," Severus told him softly.

"Which are?"

"Having the freedom to let yourself go." Severus watched as Hermione began trailing a hand lightly over Lucius' arms. Lucius scowled, but didn't try to shrug her away.

Lucius arched an eyebrow. "Your idea of freeing me is to hold me down? That's an odd notion, Severus."

"Is it?" Severus murmured. "You aren't responsible. You aren't in control. Capitulation is really quite empowering, Lucius. That is what I want to make you realize."

Hermione's hands traveled to Lucius' chest, fingers making idle circles around his nipples before trailing her nails lightly down to his stomach. He inhaled sharply, looking at her, blue eyes dark with his conflicting emotions.

"We can go further if you want," she told him. "I can use a blindfold, or give you a potion to unwind you."

Lucius shook his head. "I don't want darkness or drugs." He looked hard at Severus. "This is not something I would deliberately choose, Severus: you do realize that, don't you?"

"I do," Severus admitted. "I only want you to try and get enjoyment from it."

"I have no choice, now do I?" Lucius laughed, but there was no humor in it.

"There are always choices, Lucius," Severus said in that same quiet voice. It was a tone someone would use when training an animal: gentling it, getting it used to the speaker, soothing the uneasiness. "You have the choice between tolerance or openness, to be passive or active. The decision is yours. I only intend to be a guide. You will decide whether you wish to make the journey."

"You should have taught literature instead of potions," Hermione smiled. "You have quite a way with words." Her hands were still wandering Lucius' body, tenderly stroking him, working diligently to ease the transition that was about to take place. His erection had gone down somewhat, but he wasn't completely soft again.

Severus snorted. "Reading potions essays are bad enough." He glanced at Lucius, seeing that he was at least calm if not receptive. Well, he had to start somewhere, and this was better than Lucius ranting and struggling.

Hermione moved to the foot of the bed, and Severus turned to Lucius, who was watching him guardedly. "I never suspected you would enjoy being with a man, old friend," Lucius said.

"We've never exactly had a sit-down about sex," Severus said, brushing Lucius' hair back from his face as Hermione had earlier.

"True. If I had known this night would happen, rest assured I would have been asking you questions a long time ago," Lucius said dryly, and Hermione laughed.

Severus considered Lucius. "A simple start is usually best," Severus said. His hand moved from Lucius' hair to rest against his cheek. He inclined his head towards Lucius. "I'm going to kiss you," Severus murmured.

"Thank you for the warning," Lucius replied tartly.

Severus chuckled. "Close your eyes."

"Is that an order?" Lucius asked.

"No. A suggestion. Keep them open if you like."

"What I would like is not to be in this position. But since I am..."

"But since you are," Severus echoed softly... and kissed him.

Lucius did close his eyes. He found it was too much for him to keep them open. When Severus' lips first touched his, he wanted to pull back, run away. But there was nowhere for him to run to, and no way for him to run even if there was. He was trapped, he was bound... there wasn't anything for it. So he was still.

It was... odd, being kissed by a man. Granted, he had kissed Severus not too long ago this night, but that had been different. That kiss was fueled by righteous indignation and he'd been more focused on his pride than anything else. This kiss was unlike the earlier one. Were *all* men's lips like this? Lucius found himself wondering. Perhaps it was not the lips so much as the kiss itself. It was firm but not rough, aggressive but not violent. Very different from a woman's. Not bad, exactly... just different.

While Lucius was processing this information, Severus increased the pressure of his lips slightly, using his tongue to tease the corners of Lucius' mouth. Lucius gasped, and Severus slid his tongue inside. Lucius gasped again and tried in a moment of alarm to move, but Severus wasn't having that. He eased his mouth back just far enough to murmur: "Ah, ah, Lucius."

Lucius trembled. How could Severus expect him to remain completely calm about this? Lucius had not felt so helpless in a long time, caught in a web that he had deliberately allowed himself to be ensnared in. *And what can I do about it? he asked himself. Nothing. I am naked and powerless. Severus is going to have me, and there's nothing I can do to stop it except beg. I will not beg. I am a Malfoy.*

Severus had resumed kissing him, leisurely and affectionately. Lucius fought back a sob. Severus was not trying to force a response from him: his mouth was a caress, not a violation. More tenderness, more confusion. Why did these two not just take what they wanted from him? Why were they trying to give him satisfaction, cajole him into desire?

He felt Severus' hand on his chest, stroking him, lightly rubbing his nipples with cool firm fingertips until Lucius shivered from the stimulation and his body reacted, nipples hardening with no thought or conscious decision on his part. His trembling increased. He knew Severus felt it, because Severus whispered words of reassurance to him in a voice softer than rain, all the time caressing him until Lucius thought he would go insane from the conflicting emotions.

He started to cry out that he couldn't stand it, that he wanted them to coerce him, but the words stuck in his throat as he felt Hermione move up to lie at his side, resting a hand on his shoulder, pressing a kiss to his cheek.

Something broke inside Lucius at that moment. Somewhere in his mind, something that had been held by a slender thread snapped and sent him spinning. And in the vertigo that accompanied that descent, he understood what Severus had said...or thought he did...and the realization itself was enough to astonish him. He was safe here. No one wanted to harm him, cause him pain, see him suffer. This wasn't being done to debase him, or to be lorded over him. It was desire, an expression of wanting him for nothing other than himself. Here, in this moment, it didn't matter. If his body awakened to Hermione's kiss, or Severus' touch, it was neither right nor wrong. It simply was.

An unfamiliar tranquility came over him. He relaxed, and his shaking stopped. His tongue stole out to taste Severus. The brandy was there, and something sweet and rich. *Just like honey*, Lucius realized, and almost smiled as he responded to the kiss, at peace with his choice.

Severus felt Lucius' surrender and was delighted. He'd suspected Lucius was capable of it, provided he could be taken beyond the barriers of fear and preconceived ideas. They continued for some time, Severus giving, Lucius taking, and Severus taking from the knowledge that Lucius was receiving. At one point, Severus glanced at Hermione to make sure that she was pleased as well: and his hand on Lucius' cock stopped mid-stroke when he saw Hermione touching Lucius' neck with one hand and her cunt with the other. His pause caused Lucius to open his eyes, and both men stared at Hermione, fingers flying over her clit like a violin bow, only for her to realize that they had ceased their activities and were watching *her*.

"Did I *tell* you to stop?" she asked sternly.

Severus grinned a cat-who-caught-the-canary grin, and continued make Lucius squirm beneath him. Lucius kept watching Hermione, and she made no objection. When she came, he moaned almost as loud as she did.

When he heard her cries, Severus stopped again, watching her as well. When she was finished, face pink, breathing hard, he was struck by how beautiful she looked like this. The uninhibited expression of her pleasure made his already aching cock want to explode. He looked into her eyes, asking a silent question. She nodded, and reached over to give Lucius a long, deep kiss. Then she picked up her wand and released his bonds.

Lucius seemed to understand that this meant something even more significant was about to happen. He sat up, rubbing at his wrists absent-mindedly, more as a reflex than anything else. Severus took Lucius' wrists one at a time in his hands, kissing the faint marks left by the silk ropes. Hermione breathed hard as she saw this, then called quietly: "*Accio jar.*"

The green jar flew through the air into her hand. She looked at Severus, who smiled faintly at her before lying down beside Lucius and spreading his legs. As Lucius watched, Hermione moved over and began rubbing the cream on Severus' cock, then her fingers slipped lower, carefully tracing his hole before gently and slowly inserting a finger. Once he was tolerant of that, she lubricated another finger and slid it in. By the time she was done, she had three fingers inside him, carefully massaging and stretching him. Severus was flushed, his eyes half-closed and filled with lust, and Hermione wanted him so bad she could taste it. She withdrew from his body, cast a charm, then lay down beside him, spreading her own legs as she handed him the jar.

Lucius, all earlier reticence gone, watched as Severus massaged the cream into Hermione's lips and cunt. It was an arousing sight, her skin slick and glistening, the lips like a tiny dark flower waiting to bloom. His already hard cock tightened further as Severus finished his ministrations and gave Hermione a soft kiss. They looked at Lucius, and he returned their gazes, uncertain of what exactly was coming next until Severus moved close to him and once again smeared the fragrant balm onto his hand, this time wrapping it around Lucius' cock. Lucius closed his eyes as his erection was massaged with the slick substance. He knew what they wanted, and the thought did not alarm or repel him. He had made peace: with this night, with them, and most importantly, with himself. The hand stilled, then moved. Severus sat the jar on the nightstand while Hermione adjusted the pillows. The three of them looked at each other.

No words were spoken. They weren't needed. They shifted positions on the bed as one being: Severus in the middle, Hermione on his right, Lucius on his left, Severus turning his back to Lucius, Hermione facing Severus. Lucius curled an arm around Severus' chest, fingers of his other hand opening Severus to his cock. His movements were unhurried and careful as he entered inch by inch, letting Severus adjust to him. When Lucius finally slid all the way inside Severus, it felt like heaven. When Severus in turn slid his cock into Hermione, it felt like home.

They moved against each other slowly, knowing there was no need to rush, no desire to rush. Hands caressed, arms entwined, tongues brushed and mouths sighed. They were not so much a triangle as a circle: there was no separation point, no beginning and no end. No converging lines, no sharp turns. It was just Lucius and Severus and

Hermione, a bed and the tides of passion: washing over them only to recede and begin anew with every whimper, every touch.

They ceased to become people in those immeasurable moments. They were clouds, they were stars: they were heaven and earth and everything in between and beyond. Time ceased to tick: it flowed, it was liquid silver, it was sunlight and rain and morning fog. They belonged only to each other and wanted nothing else. When Hermione came, sobbing for air, the force of her climax started a chain reaction in the two men, a series of tremors that shook their foundations and detonated an explosion of blinding proportions. Moans flew like mortar, fingers scrambled for purchase on damp flesh to prevent falling in the wake of the microcosm's collapse. Severus and Lucius came within seconds of each other, hoarse cries co-mingling in an ecstatic symphony.

When they were still and spent, Severus turned to give Lucius a kiss, then turned back to give Hermione one as well. Hermione reached over him to claim Lucius' mouth in one final, devoted embrace for the night, then reached down and drew the covers up over the three of them. The moonlight drifted across them, bathing them in her silence and silver, keeping their secrets, and gazing down as one by one they fell asleep, each wearing a smile, remembering their offerings, and their gifts.

Hermione awoke the next morning to an empty bed. She could hear Severus and Lucius talking in low voices in the sitting room, and she slipped out of bed, wincing from sore muscles, but the discomfort brought a smile to her face.

They were standing near the window, which was closed and the curtains drawn. Lucius' back was to her, arms crossed over his chest, but the gesture was casual, not angry. Severus stood in the same pose, leaning against the wall, head tilted slightly to the side as he listened to whatever Lucius was saying. When he saw Hermione he smiled, and Lucius turned, a ghost of a smile gracing his own features.

"You boys appear to be up to no good," Hermione teased. "You're supposed to wait for me for that."

Severus shook his head. "We are behaving, madam, but we're rather hungry. Even slaves are fed, you know."

Hermione laughed. In a few minutes she transfigured a table and chairs, and, looking at her watch, informed them that she'd arranged to have breakfast appearing in, oh, another five minutes. With that, she went to the bathroom. When she returned they were waiting for her. She started to put a muffin on her plate, but was stopped by Severus putting a hand on hers. She looked at him questioningly.

"Allow us," he murmured.

Hermione was started, but nodded. Lucius filled her plate with a muffin and fruit while Severus poured tea. "Thank you," she said when they were done. Only when she took her first bite did they get their own food and tea and begin to eat.

They ate in silence, but it was companionable, not uneasy. When they finished, Hermione smiled at them. "It's ten o'clock."

"Two hours remaining for us to be yours," Lucius said. "How would you spend the time?"

"A shower, I think," she answered playfully.

"All three of us?" Severus asked.

"It's a very large shower now," Hermione giggled. "Come on, then."

They followed her into the bathroom, where they discovered that she had indeed changed the shower. It now filled half the room and the bottom was covered with white plastic mats.

"What are those?" Lucius asked, curious.

"A muggle invention," Hermione told him. "So you don't slip in the tub. Very handy."

"Any particular reason why we might need those?" Severus inquired mischievously.

"Several particular reasons," she smirked. "Get in."

The shower was a blur of heat, in more ways than one. By the time they were finished, each of them had come: Hermione watching Severus and Lucius masturbate each other at the end. She brushed wet hair back and kissed each of them, gliding out of the bath while they spent a moment recovering. When they had dried off and emerged into the bedroom, they saw their clothes...clean and pressed...on the bed, and heard Hermione rustling about in the sitting room.

When they joined her, she was standing by the window as they had been earlier, wearing a long dark green dress, arms folded in front of her, looking out through the now open curtains into the streets below. It was just another day in Hogsmeade, Hermione mused. Shops were opening, people were walking about: some with a partner, some alone. Children were running, the sun was shining, and all was right in the wizarding world. All was right for *her*, too, she realized with a smile.

"Hermione?"

She looked at them. Lucius had voiced the question, watching her with those pale blue eyes. She knew that those eyes would never look at her the same way again, and it was not a bad thing. Seeing her in that different light was the true gift he'd given her.

She looked at Severus next, whose dark eyes could show so much but betray so little. Severus...

No. Not yet.

"You can go now," Hermione told them quietly. "You're free. Your papers are on the table." She waved her hand at the two envelopes.

"Letting us loose with time still left to you?" Severus asked.

"Time off for good behavior and all," she grinned.

Lucius picked up the envelope with his name on it and slid it into his coat. He stepped back to stand between Hermione and Severus, regarding them thoughtfully.

"It's an odd thing," he said at length. "I don't know whether I should be grateful to both of you, or try to kill you." He smiled to take the edge off his words.

"I would advise gratitude," Severus informed him wryly. "Otherwise, we might all end up next to each other in Azkaban, and I know how you would hate that."

"Right as usual, my friend," Lucius replied. "Come with me to the manor? We can regale Narcissa with stories of our servitude to Hermione."

"Hermione and I have some business to attend to," Severus told him. "However, I shall certainly stop by one evening this week."

Lucius nodded. "I see," he replied, and Hermione was sure that there was another meaning to his words. "As you wish. Well, Severus. Hermione. May you be in good health and good spirits when next we meet."

Hermione smiled. "Thank you, Lucius. For everything."

Lucius studied her for a moment, then reached for her hand, lifted it to his lips, and kissed it. He then turned to Severus and ran two fingers from Severus' temple to his jaw,

looking at him fondly. He strode to the door, turned to look at them one last time, and was gone.

Hermione sighed, turning to look out the window once more. She didn't move when Severus wrapped his arms around her waist, except to lean her head on his shoulder. "Well? Are you satisfied?" she asked.

"Very much so. Your debt to me is paid," he replied.

"It had better be," she grumbled. "Honestly, I know you're sneaky, but using my debt to you for this..."

"Lucius would not have accepted this anywhere near as well coming from me; you know that," Severus answered, kissing the side of her neck gently. "It had to be someone else's idea. Besides, it gave you a way of repaying me that we both enjoyed. And by me taking the choice out of your hands, your conscience can be unladen."

"And what of your conscience, my darling?" Hermione questioned mockingly.

Severus shrugged. "I have no particular qualms about what I did. It was perfectly legal, no one was harmed, and as I said, we all benefited from it."

"That's true," Hermione admitted. "Still... don't ever think that I'm going to play poker with you, you insufferable man! I'll end up owing you everything I own!"

He smiled, kissing her cheek. She made a face at him. "There is the matter of the debt you owe me, Severus."

"What? Being my lover is not enough compensation for you?" he asked.

"You know that I'm happy with you, so don't even say that," she said. "But you know that today is when we begin your repayment to me. I'd like to get started."

He looked at her affectionately. "You are fortunate that you are so intelligent and skilled at potions. Otherwise, debt or no, I would have refused to take you as my apprentice."

"You could have refused anyway, if you'd wanted," Hermione reminded him.

"And be told by the likes of Albus and Harry Potter that I should "reconsider my decision?" I think not, my dear."

Hermione giggled. "It *is* fortunate for me that the Wizengamot is composed of so many of my dearest Gryffindor friends."

"Hmph," Severus grumbled. "Well, my little apprentice, I think our first order of business should be a trip to Diagon Alley for potions supplies. Perhaps some lunch..."

"What about some afternoon delight?" Hermione purred, turning in his arms and playing with his hair.

"I think we can work that into our schedule," he chuckled... and they claimed each other's mouth in a kiss.

~fin