

Saving The Day

by septentrion

Severus watches Teddy as a favour for Hermione.

One-shot

Chapter 1 of 1

Severus watches Teddy as a favour for Hermione.

Written for Blue Artemis, who wanted Severus watching Teddy.

Thanks to Melusin for the thorough beta. Any remaining mistakes are mine.

Hermione gave Severus a meaningful look. "I'll thank you properly tonight. You've just saved my life. Had I known the situation was so dire at the Ministry, I wouldn't have promised Andromeda I'd watch Teddy."

Severus approved of meaningful looks and thanks given at night, so it was with great magnanimity that he gave his blessing to his wife. "Go! Your job is important, and not only for you. I think I can manage perfectly well to watch over a toddler."

"You're sure?"

"Hundreds of children passed through my care when I was working at Hogwarts. None of them ever came to any harm."

"All right." Hermione did not seem completely convinced of Severus's ability to take care of a toddler for a day. It irked him, but they did not have time to discuss it. As it was, Hermione was running late. She disappeared into the Floo without another word, leaving her husband with a two-year-old boy.

The black-clad man considered the child, who was clutching his stuffed dog close to him. His hair turned from blue to black. Damn! Did the boy mistrust him? "Come on, Teddy. You know me. You've seen me at your grandmother's house, and you've been here several times before."

Teddy did not budge. Even worse, his eyes took on a defiant glint.

Severus raised an eyebrow. "As you please." He turned on his heels and headed into his laboratory to brew the potions he sold to selected customers. It was not long before he heard the pitter-patter of small feet behind him. He did not turn around when the child entered the room. "You can stay with me while I'm working. Just don't touch anything." He hoped he had sounded menacing enough, though since everything was at Severus's waist level, he did not really fear that any accident would occur.

For the next half-hour, Severus worked in peace while the toddler amused himself by pretending to pour potions into his stuffed dog's mouth. *It might not be so bad to have a child*, Severus mused during that blessed half-hour. He soon had reason to revise his opinion.

"ere, Sirius,"—Severus snorted at the stuffed dog's name—"pleejeece."

Pleejeece? It was amazing how young children invented new words all the time. Wait. Pleejeece? As in Polyjuice? As in the cauldron of Polyjuice that was cooling down in

the far corner of the laboratory? *Shit!* Severus had completely forgotten he had put it there the previous evening. He rushed to the aforementioned corner, only to find Teddy sitting on the floor next to it, a plastic beaker in one hand and his stuffed toy in the other. A trail of mud-like bubbling potion from the top of the cauldron to the floor betrayed the little boy's mischief. With a serious expression on his face, Teddy was pouring the potion into his stuffed toy's mouth.

An inconspicuous hair of the toddler fell on the beaker's spout.

All of a sudden, the potion started to froth and turned a vivid blue. Startled, Teddy dropped the beaker and cried out. Too late. Horrified, Severus watched as the potion touched the velvety fabric of the toy. 'Sirius' would be beyond repair and Teddy inconsolable. If only that was all there was to it.

"Sirius! Sirius!" Teddy wailed. "Sorry, Teddy!" He hugged his stuffed dog with his entire toddler's might. He was so upset that his hair changed colour faster than a chameleon in the middle of a rainbow. Severus noticed then that the toy's head was changing colour too. Actually, the whole toy started changing colour. And bubbling. And growing. And...

Under Severus's incredulous eyes, Sirius the stuffed dog transformed into another Teddy Lupin, albeit a stuffed one. Seeing this, the toddler's distress knew no bounds. A high-pitched howl escaped his small throat. Several phials—thankfully empty—broke around the laboratory and shards littered the floor. Sparks flew from Teddy's fingertips, creating an in-door firework display of disturbing shapes.

Severus feared for his brewing potions, but the sparks seemed harmless since the toy did not catch fire. But what to do? Should he take the little boy into his arms and try and console him? Should he take the toy away? Wouldn't that cause another burst of spontaneous magic? Teddy answered Severus's dilemma by abruptly stopping to breathe and fainting. Severus only had time to catch him before he fell on the shards of glass. He dashed to the Floo, intending to take the boy to St Mungo's when Teddy came around with a shuddering breath.

Severus sighed with relief. His conscience would not have dealt well with the death of a child due to his negligence. With a wary wave of his wand, he extinguished all the on-going fires in his laboratory. He would resume his work on his potions later.

Meanwhile, Teddy snuggled against Severus, oddly silent. He hid his face in the man's neck, his disfigured stuffed toy still in his arms, and settled as if taking a nap. As the adrenaline drained from his body, Severus thought it might be a good idea. He was feeling exhausted himself.

"Let's go to bed," he murmured into the little boy's ear.

He climbed up the stairs, reached his bedroom, took his shoes off, and laid down on his bed—all the while holding a now sleeping Teddy in his arms. He was asleep in seconds.

When Hermione checked on her husband and Teddy an hour later—she had been really worried about leaving them alone together—she was at first surprised, then she smiled. She loved her husband, but in that moment, she adored him. The idea of motherhood took hold of her mind. All she had to do to convince— as far as blackmailing could be called convincing—Severus that her idea was sound and should be implemented at once was to produce the photo she had taken of him, fast asleep, cuddling with the Lupin cub.