

Retribution

by Keppiehed

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Chapter 1 of 1

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Disclaimer: This all belongs to J.K. Rowling.

Prompts: a magical artifact in an unexpected place

A/N: Winner of Mod's Choice award at SnapeLDWS.

"Mum? What's this?"

"Severus! Put it down." Eileen grabbed the offending item from her son's hand and shoved it back in the drawer. "I needed a wooden spoon. Never mind; I'll find one myself."

"But what is it?" The boy's eyes stayed on the drawer. "It looked like a—"

"It's not." Eileen cut him off, the fear in her voice enough to warn him off the subject. She had the same look in her eyes that she wore when Father was around. He was still curious, but he nodded and dropped his gaze.

"You're a good boy," she whispered. "It's for the best."

Severus waited until the sounds behind the bedroom door stopped. His father had come home drunk tonight, but he'd fallen asleep early. Sometimes he shouted half the night. Those were the bad times, and Severus hated the next morning. His Mum tried to hide her face, but there was no concealing the purple that bloomed on her cheeks. Severus felt the anger simmer in his veins, but the ice of fear always doused his rage. *What if his father hit him like that?* He had, in the past, but never that hard. Severus hated himself for his cowardice, but his Mum wanted to shield him from the same fate, and Severus let himself believe one day he would stop it. He would protect her. Today was just not that day.

Severus knew it was safe once the silence fell. He sneaked into the kitchen and went for the drawer. The stick was where his mother had left it, and Severus plucked it from amongst the spatulas and tongs. He could tell it was no ordinary utensil. It radiated a certain... glow. It fairly vibrated in his grasp. He could sense it, and he wanted to examine it again.

"You couldn't leave it alone, could you?"

Severus jumped at the sound of his mother's voice. He was caught. "I'm—"

"No, it's fine. I suppose you're curious. It's a wand, Severus. You shall have your own next year. I keep mine close at hand, even though I cannot use it. It brings me

comfort. I know you'll do great things with yours. You'll leave here and make me so proud. You already do." She had tears in her eyes, but Severus didn't think it was from the cut on her lip.

"I will, Mum. I will be a great wizard." He narrowed his eyes.

"Just be a good man, that's all I ask," His mum turned. "And maybe you'll get out of here and never come back."

"I'll always come back for you!" Severus said. He watched his mother shuffle away. Severus felt the thrill of magic in his hand, and he wondered if there was a way to make people pay. The seed of darkness uncurled in his breast, and he vowed to make retribution the first subject he studied at Hogwarts.