

A Lesson in Vengeance

by rosewood

The Potions master seeks vengeance against a true traitor.

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Chapter 1 of 1

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A/N: This story was co-written with snapeswidow for the FB Muffliato! Halloween Challenge and is dedicated to the Snapettes. We would also like to extend our most sincere thanks to Clairvoyant for taking the time to beta this little story.

The wind howled through the desolate countryside, beating its way against the cracks and crevices of the isolated ramshackle cabin. The waning moonlight shone through the copse of trees casting odd shadows along the building, and a weak light wavered bleakly through the grimy windows, concealing the horror taking place within its thin walls.

The nearly silent sound of Apparition was masked by the force of the oncoming storm, and a lean, shadowy figure felt the magic stir as he moved quickly through the unhinged gate. The industrial set of protective magical wards insured absolute privacy, and hence, much needed secrecy.

Severus Snape closed the weathered door behind him and maliciously grinned at the welcoming sight. On the musty floor lay a haggard, half-starved rat cowering in the corner of a dingy wired cage imbued with a magic-dampening charm. The sleek black cat faithfully guarding the prisoner greeted her master with its golden eyes.

"Good evening, Delilah," Severus murmured as he stroked her midnight coat. "I see you've been keeping our houseguest in line. Such diligence is deserving of a special reward."

He reached into his robe pocket, retrieved a plump brown mouse and placed it directly in front of the cage before her. He watched in amusement as the caged rat shrieked in terror while Delilah pounced upon the hapless mouse and began to shrewdly bat it across the floor.

After a moment, Severus bent down, picked up the cage and set it roughly upon an old wooden table, causing the rat to tumble about. He then walked over to a side cabinet, pulled out a bottle of Firewhisky and set it beside the cage.

"Well, Wormtail, you filthy piece of vermin, happy Halloween," Severus said. "In commemoration of that fateful night, fifteen years ago, we are going to celebrate." He conjured a crystal glass and poured himself two fingers of amber liquid, lifted it in salute and took a satisfying drink.

"While I may have given the Dark Lord the prophecy, it was you who led him to Lily's doorstep and ultimately her demise," he said, addressing the rodent. "I have spent these past many years atoning for my sins and tonight I seek retribution. This small justice will not change what has happened, and in all honesty, it is but a pittance for what you truly deserve."

He sat down at the table, lifted his trouser leg and proceeded to pull out a sharp, heavy-bladed knife from his boot.

"We're going to play a little game in which you will feature quite prominently," he said. "While it may not be as enjoyable for you as it will for me, it will be highly entertaining,

nonetheless. So, without further ado, let the games begin."

Severus began to whistle the tune, "Three Blind Mice," as he pulled the trembling rat out of the cage and placed it upon the table. He picked up the blade, raised his arm, swung it down and tossed the bloodied tail to his waiting cat.

Glancing down at Delilah who was making quick work of the tail, Severus shook his head. "Such a waste of a perfectly good potions ingredient, but I wouldn't want to contaminate any of my potions with anything that came from the likes of you, Wormtail.

"Hmmm, what to cut off next?" the Potions master asked himself as he glanced back towards the rat. Taking the knife and trailing it down the rat's body, Severus stopped as the tip reached the middle of the rat's hind legs.

"How about your family jewels, Wormtail?" Severus asked with an evil grin. "Oh, wait, you don't have any. If you did, you wouldn't have been James' and Sirius' little lackey all those years at school.

"Speaking of Sirius, how about a little revenge from him as well," Snape said as he brought the knife down to sever the now silver right front paw of the rat. Before the blow could land, a hand reached out to stop the downward movement.

Severus glanced at the owner of the hand and smiled. "Mr. Potter, I'm so glad you could join us."

"I wouldn't miss this for the world, Professor. May I?" Harry asked nodding his head towards the knife.

"You may. After all, Black was your godfather, so it's only fitting that you should seek vengeance for him."

Harry took the knife from his Potions professor and looked at Wormtail, the betrayer of his parents and the reason why his Godfather had spent 12 years in Azkaban. Harry grinned as he remembered something from the day that Peter had gained that silver hand.

"Flesh of the servant unwillingly given!" Harry nearly yelled as he brought the knife down, severing the silver appendage. It rolled off the table and onto the floor where Delilah began batting it around.

Harry then raised the knife one more time. "You betrayed my parents and let an innocent man take the blame, and in turn, you betrayed me. You betrayed the very thing it means to be a Gryffindor that night," Harry said. Bringing the knife down once more, he severed the rat's head from the rest of its body.

Peter bolted upright, his screams having woken him from the horrible nightmare. With his heart still pounding in his chest like a caged bird, he reached over to the night table to turn on the light, but his hand froze half-way to its target as a black cat jumped into his lap.

Staring in terror at the cat from his nightmare, Peter did not notice the other presence in the room until it spoke.

"Happy Halloween, Wormtail. Tonight, we're going to have some fun," the man from his nightmare said pleasantly. And as Severus reached for Peter, an evil grin split his face as he started to hum "Three Blind Mice.