

Touch

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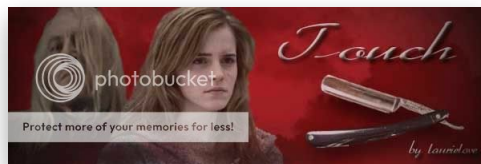
Chapter 1 of 1

When Hermione is brought as a prisoner to Malfoy Manor, a broken man finds tender comfort in the unusual task she is ordered to perform.

This story was inspired by Jason Isaacs' portrayal of Lucius in *Deathly Hallows Part One*. I knew it would not be long before I wrote something for this wretched, but still remarkably sexual man. I will write a much longer fic at some point, but in the meantime, here we are.

It happens just before Hermione is taken off to be tortured by Bellatrix in *Deathly Hallows*.

Although this is not written in the first person, it is entirely from Lucius' point of view. It is his impressions and needs alone we focus on. I think I may well write a 'sister story' from Hermione's pov soon. I have not included it under 'erotica' as there is nothing explicitly sexual happening here, but, as you will see, it is still, I hope, very sensual and erotic. I hope also that it is canon and character compliant. It is simply a moment between two fragile people after which JKR's story may carry on.



Lucius' eyes cast heavily over the slim figure of the girl standing in the hall.

Bellatrix had ordered Narcissa to take the other prisoners down to the cellar, and now the four of them stood in the vastness of the nearly barren room, staring, almost surprised to find themselves there: his sister-in-law, his son, himself and the Mudblood.

The fog of alcohol had started to wear off and he brought his tumbler back to his lips to retrieve the comfort of numbness. The glass was empty. He hissed out a curse. His wand had been taken, his magic rendered negligible through humiliation and exhaustion; he could not even refill it.

"Well isn't this cosy!?" Bellatrix's putrid slur filled the otherwise silent air.

She paced carefully over to the Mudblood, circling her slowly, never taking her eyes from her. The girl stood remarkably poised before her scrutiny, the rapid rise and fall of her breasts the only betrayal of her fear.

"Don't worry, my beauty," hissed Bellatrix. "You may have been separated from your playmates, but I've got plenty to keep you occupied. Oh yes, plenty indeed."

The girl held her head up and her eyes fell at that moment upon Lucius.

Bellatrix followed her stare. "What? Him?" she sneered. "What are you thinking, Mudblood? Not the man he used to be, is he?" The girl dropped her gaze and her head.

Bellatrix crossed behind her suddenly and gripped her chin in dirty hands, pulling it up again. "Look at him! Look! What do you see? That's what you get for letting the Dark Lord down. Foolish Lucius. Foolish pathetic man. He's lost it all, you see. Lost it. He used to be such a fine figure of a man, don't you think? Do you remember? *Do you?*"

She was clearly expecting a response.

"Answer me, Mudblood!"

The girl tried to shake her head but Bellatrix's grip was too tight. She muttered the faintest word instead. "No."

Bellatrix laughed. "Oh, I think you do. All the women do. *Lucius Malfoy*. Used to be so desirable so lusted after by all. Look at him now. A wreck. Even his wife doesn't want him anymore."

Lucius stood. He stood and heard her words and took them. They did not hurt as they had before. He was too tired to care.

"I know!!! I have a marvellous idea!" Bellatrix spun away from the girl suddenly, making her sway. "You shall tidy him up! I'm sick of looking at him in the state he's in! You can tidy him up for me he needs a shave - you will shave him! Come! Come!"

Grabbing the girl's wrist so hard Lucius saw a flinch of pain cross her face, Bellatrix dragged her over to the middle of the room.

"Stand there! Don't move!"

With a wave of her wand, a plain wooden chair appeared in the middle of the huge space.

"Come here, dearest brother-in-law!" Not taking her eyes from the girl, she called over her shoulder to Lucius. At first, he did not move, but when the witch spun to him, pointing her wand between his eyes, he dragged himself across, not giving her the satisfaction of actually cursing him.

"Sit!"

Lucius drew himself up, not moving, staring her down, pulling in sharp breaths through his flared nostrils.

"*SIT!*" She screamed her command so loudly his eardrums pounded.

Gripping the back of the chair hard, he picked it up and slammed it down with a crack before forcing himself onto the hard seat.

Immediately his hands were pulled behind him and bound with thick strong rope. His feet also were tied to the chair legs. He struggled; he muttered freeing spells. It was futile. Bellatrix had bound him completely and magically.

"Demented bitch!" he hissed towards her, his eyes frozen in their hatred.

With another wave of her wand a small wooden table appeared beside them. On it was a small pot containing a basin of water, shaving soap, a shaving brush, a leather strop and the glinting blade of a cut-throat razor.

Bellatrix crossed back to the girl, leaning into her with a grin. "Ever done this before, deary?"

"Yes."

Bellatrix's eyes widened in alarm. "What!?"

The girl drew herself up tall again. "My father liked a proper shave. I used to shave him often this way."

The older witch sneered. "Well, you'd better get on with it then. I want it perfect. I want the cleanest, smoothest shave you have ever given anyone. If I am not entirely satisfied ... you will be - dead."

She moved back to Lucius. "There we are, heart of mine ... bound, then shaved by a Mudblood ... what an honour for you. Such dizzying heights you have reached, Lucius." She leaned in, breathing her rancid breath into his ear. He flinched away. "Don't struggle now. That blade is very sharp, very sharp indeed. We wouldn't want any unfortunate accidents, would we? We shall leave you alone - Mudblood and Pureblood a fascinating combination! Come, Draco!" And with that she marched across to his son, who had been standing, a look of horror on his face, a few feet apart, grabbed his wrist and pulled him out of the room with her, slamming the door behind her.

For a moment there was silence and stillness. Lucius sat immobile, his breathing heavy, looking up at the woman before him.

"Do it then!" His words shot through the air to her.

They seemed to jolt her to her senses and she looked briefly across at the table. Then with a faint sigh she took a step towards him. He was staring straight ahead, his breathing heavy, his arms locked tight behind him.

Hermione could not look at him. "I have to ... I have to strop the blade first hone it."

She attached the long length of leather to a hook in the table and pulled it tight, drawing the blade along it several times. The thick swish of the metal upon the tanned hide was oddly satisfying.

The woman stopped and held up the blade, inspecting it carefully, running her thumb lightly across it. "That should be fine."

Lucius' features flickered. *It would only take one swift sweep of her hand ...*

But the girl replaced the blade on the table and moved behind him around the back of the chair.

There was another pause. Lucius fixed his eyes determinedly ahead. He heard the faint rustle of her clothing as she moved.

Her fingers made contact with his chin.

He pulled in a breath of surprise. They were soft and warm, so gentle, so tender as to be almost imagined in their touch.

He inhaled again, the instinctive reaction pulling his head away from the tactile hold she had on him for a moment. Her fingers followed him, not allowing him to draw away. He let them guide him back, and found his breath and his mind settling and calming.

His wife had not touched him like this for a long time. No one had touched him like this for as long as he could remember.

Touch.

So different from the touch of Azkaban: touch which invaded and ripped and scarred. He had believed he would want no more *Never again*. Never again the violation of human contact; the desecration of his personal space, of the sanctuary of his soul.

But this touch did not draw from him the revulsion he had anticipated. Her hands guided his head back, the warm indentation of her palms angling it so that his eyes had to follow, casting up to the ceiling, her lengthy hair falling in his line of sight.

She released her hold. Immediately he noticed the absence of her touch. The cold air crept over his skin again and he longed to have her cupping his chin once more.

He tilted his head down a little, not deliberately, simply out of natural inclination. The constriction on his wrists and ankles was frustrating and he compensated by moving the only part of his body he could.

"You must stay like that. Don't move."

Her voice was not insistent, but carried the same gentle coaxing as her fingers. It surprised yet assured him equally. He brought his head back to the position she had placed it in before.

He waited.

Hermione moved to the side and lathered the shaving soap with the brush, coating it liberally.

Then with a short suck of breath she could not quite conceal, she moved before him. Her eyes focussed on his chin, concertedly, deliberately, trying not to meet the grey of his irises.

She brought the brush to the dark bristles which covered his jaw and rubbed, lightly at first, but growing in confidence. His head swayed, rocked a little as she applied the soap.

The regular circular strokes of the brush soothed him just as her fingers had done earlier. He allowed his eyes to close *He was trusting her*.

It had been so long since he could contemplate trusting anyone. *How could he now trust her?* But he did.

"There."

She moved back again and studied him, her head cocked a little, looking over his jaw and face to ensure she had covered him completely.

It was only then that her eyes flicked up to his and they met. But almost instantly she pulled them away again and crossed back to the small table.

Lucius felt rather than saw her hesitate. He knew the sharp blade lay innocuously enough before her. It almost dared her to take it in her hands.

For a time the woman before him stood between him and the table, motionless, her back turned.

He did not move his head, but his eyes looked on her. He noticed the rise and fall of her back as her breathing deepened.

Then almost impulsively, she reached down and picked up the blade, turning to him. She held it furtively, low beside her, almost as if wanting to conceal it.

His eyes darkened as he studied her, his nostrils flaring, his tongue unknowingly dampening his lips briefly. His chest rose and fell heavily before her.

Keeping her head down, she moved behind him, silent, graceful, gazelle-like.

He swallowed. He could hear her breathing now, so still was the air around them. And more. He could feel it. He could feel each deep and regular fall of air upon his forehead as it escaped her body.

And then her fingers again, on that same place he could feel her breath: soft, almost caressing, on his temple. Her hand stretched and her thumb reached higher up his skull, parting the unkempt strands of his hair. She tilted his head back a little more.

From the corner of his eye he caught the flash of steel. He flinched a memory. The woman paused. He swallowed, his Adam's apple lurching along the exposed line of his neck. Then he settled. Only when his breathing had steadied did she bring the blade towards him once again.

She brought it to rest low down on his neck, the angle acute.

Had she the nerve? She must not tremble, she must not hesitate.

The woman pulled the razor up along his bristle-roughened skin. The soft rasping scratch as the blade sliced through the dark hairs filled his ears in time with the cooling smoothness left behind.

He released a sigh, surprised to hear it audibly between them. It caused her to lock eyes with him again. But almost immediately she darted them away and returned to her task.

The blade returned to the open flesh of his neck, and each time the scratching crinkle was accompanied by the coolness of air and the warmth of her fingers aiding her accuracy.

He was in her hands. He was utterly vulnerable.

Vulnerability. Vulnerability and fragility.

It was something that now defined him, that had possessed him this past year. He had always feared it; he had resisted until resistance became too exhausting.

But now his vulnerability before this woman somehow soothed and comforted him, embalmed him. Here he could be laid bare without fear of judgement. This woman, as broken as he: a fugitive, despised. She would not judge. Her opinion was of no consequence. Not because of her blood status; that seemed irrelevant now. The futility of it at this moment nearly made him laugh aloud. As he followed her eyes directing her hand to drag the sharpness along his skin, he saw in them the same fragility he himself felt. But deeper within lay an indisputable strength, a strength which staggered him.

And now, to be here, vulnerable and exposed before her, his neck bared under her blade, he felt not fear, not the fear which had rendered him impotent before the Dark Lord, but peace.

For the first time that he could remember, he was at peace. She could do what she wanted with him.

He let his head fall back and awaited her.

The woman continued to draw the fine steel along his neck.

How easy it would have been. How convenient. How satisfying, surely? Did she not despise him? Her predicament was such that one more crime would do little to

exacerbate it. Would it not be right and proper, a thrill even, to cut the throat of her enemy; the man who branded her Mudblood, the man who had instilled in his son the values which had hounded and beaten her down throughout her adolescence?

But still he did not fear. Still, he rejoiced in her touch: those gentle, guiding hands, almost innocent in their suppleness; the pliancy of her fingertips, tilting, pushing, stroking. Then the cool blade would follow, up from the dark line of stubble at the base of his neck, up, the sharpness cleansing in its smooth brilliance.

Each time, every moment she reached that point, that throbbing vein pulsing fast and furious, pushing his blood desperately round his broken body, she would pause. He heard his life force pounding hard in his head. She could end it. She could end it now.

When she paused, her breathing deepened, and he caught her sweet, honeyed breath falling fast upon him. His mouth opened, sucking in air, drawing with it her smell, so sensuous amidst the sterile atmosphere that now pervaded his house. He craved her smell. She could do what she wanted, but to have that scent upon his tongue at that point, after the sensual deprivation he had experienced nothing else mattered.

But always the razor would continue its progress and her fingers would touch and guide once again.

Caressing.

It felt like a caress to him. She was so careful, so deliberate yet coaxing as she moved and inclined his head. He let her, lost in her healing touch.

Healing.

She was focussing on his face now, her hands never leaving him.

Her brows were furrowed a little and formed a slight crease between her eyebrows. He studied it. It fascinated him.

When was the last time somebody had been so focussed on him, had concentrated so hard on him alone? He could not recall a time, not even with his wife. And since Azkaban, he would not have expected or asked it of her.

Now this woman lavished on him her attention, her deliberation, her skill and commitment.

She moved in front of him and her eyes flicked briefly to his. They were the deepest brown, flecked with green, a dark black frame around the irises. They contained a depth so beyond what he had been expecting it startled him. And in that moment he knew she saw him, naked and open. He flinched backwards.

She sucked in a breath, and he flinched again. She almost caught the blade upon his flesh and turned her eyes away.

"Careful."

Again, that voice. *Soft.*

But if she did see all he was, it did not matter. With her he could reveal all. She would finish and move on. Or she would kill him. Either way, it did not matter. In the here and now, he was at peace in her hands.

"I must do ..."

She cupped both her palms on either side of his head and tilted again. Then she brought the blade to his upper lip and drew it down over the darkening moustache which had formed, that exquisite faint scratching sound reaching his ears again. She did either side of the philtrum and then pulled back, drawing her own top lip over her teeth, stretching the skin tight to indicate what she wanted him to mimic.

She knew she looked silly and a faint exhaled laugh rose from her.

He wanted to join her. He wanted to laugh along with her. But he had forgotten how. And he did not want to spoil her solitary beauty.

He pulled his top lip over his teeth and she brought the blade gently under his nose, that little crease on her forehead forming again as she concentrated. He wanted to touch it.

With a careful move, she tickled the blade down to the dip in his top lip before lifting it off with lilted grace.

The woman pulled back with a sigh, standing straight before him. He watched as she replaced the blade on the table and reached for the basin of water. She washed the soap off gently and patted it dry. Taking a corner of the towel, she dabbed it carefully into the corners of his mouth. He could feel the insistence of her forefinger prodding against his lips. It frustrated him that it was sheathed in the loop of cotton. She stepped back, putting the towel down, and studied him, almost apologetically now.

"There. Let me see."

Her head moved, thick hair tumbling down as she inclined it from side to side to study her work.

"I missed a little ..." She stepped in again, and this time without the towel, reached up to wipe a remnant of soap from his cheek. She smoothed it away but did not remove her thumb.

"Let me check."

Caress. Soft, gentle, healing.

Those warm, firm fingers were on him again. She was feeling him, running her hands over the smooth skin she had exposed. She acted deliberately now, boldly even, enjoying the sensation as much as he. And then those dark brown eyes moved to his.

He held her gaze. He could do nothing else.

And still her fingertips fluttered over his skin, sometimes a feather-light touch, sometimes firm and questing, feeling for any stray follicles.

She did not stop. She had covered every inch of his face, surely. But she did not stop. And her eyes were locked into his.

A weight pressed down on Lucius' chest, constricting.

And then her thumb brushed the corner of his lips, inadvertently, unwittingly.

She paused.

He opened his lips to her, just a little, the faintest parting.

The little crease appeared between her brows again. He sighed out upon her thumb.

She moved it. She drew it over his bottom lip, rubbing along the tender skin, her warm touch the focus of his senses.

Still their eyes did not part.

And then he felt her thumb moving into his mouth. She nudged it in, the merest amount, into the dark damp secrecy within. Her nail came against a tooth. He opened more. She pushed it in again.

He wanted to taste her. He wanted to complete the soft balm of senses she was reinforcing in his soul, comforting him with. She wanted to give it to him. He knew it.

He darted the tip of his tongue out and it touched the pillowed flesh of her thumb.

She pushed it in further; he pressed his tongue harder upon her.

Lucius was at that moment so overcome with such sheer, giving beauty that his eyelids fluttered shut and his breath was released in a long, slow sigh.

The door was flung back and a figure entered.

"You should have finished by now, Mudblood! Let me see!"

The dark spidery form of Bellatrix Lestrange skittered across to them.

Lucius' eyes darted open as Hermione's hand was pulled swiftly away from its wet cocoon.

Desolation immediately swept through him.

Bellatrix was at them. Her claw-like hand pushed Hermione so hard and sharp that she stumbled to the ground with a cry. Bellatrix peered over Lucius, a feral sneer distorting her features.

"That will do! I expected to find him with his throat cut. You disappoint me, Mudblood. I give you a golden opportunity to prove your worth and you bottle it!" Her words morphed into a sick cackle of hysteria, turning the stomachs of the two of them.

"Get up, bitch! Up! Up up up!!" Bellatrix screeched her order while pulling the girl roughly to her feet.

And so it ended.

As Hermione was dragged out past Lucius she looked into him, briefly, a mere moment of connection, brown to grey, and then she was gone.

Lucius remained unmoving, bound and shaven, a dark solitary shape, staring into the vast hollow emptiness of what had been his home.

Let me know any thoughts. I will update 'Out of the Depths' very soon, have no fear. x