

Tenacity's Reward

by Alison

A little Marauder-era fic where Severus gets some of his own back on James Potter.
About time, I thought.

One-shot

Chapter 1 of 1

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Disclaimer: The characters in this Marauder-era fanfic are not mine; they belong to J.K. Rowling. I'm just borrowing them for no profit. I'll make sure to get them home in time for their tea.

Tenacity's Reward

Alison Venugoban

Horace Slughorn yawned. Potion Theory on Monday afternoon was not his favourite time of the week. His habit of staying up late the previous night, combined with a heavy lunch right before this class, always made him sleepy. And Theory did not require him to roam the classroom watching warily to make sure that none of his fifth years blew up their cauldrons. Instead, his students were all at their desks, scratching away industriously with their quills on the various uses of dragon blood, bone and scale. The quiet hum of concentration permeated the room. As a result, it was all Slughorn could do to keep his eyes open as he sat at his desk.

Severus watched his teacher from behind a curtain of black hair. It would not be long, he knew. Slughorn usually left the classroom around now for a crafty kip in the adjoining storeroom. As he watched the man's eyelids droop, Severus thought, "*This time!* This time it will work."

He'd practiced the spell every afternoon and late into the night for the past month and could now do it non-verbally with the lightest of touches: one finger only needed to actually touch his wand. He'd experimented and found it worked satisfactorily so far on various dorm-mates pets: one rat, one cat, a raven (messier than expected) and even on the monstrosously big guinea pig that the gamekeeper kept as a pet in the pumpkin patch. Severus smirked: that had been scary; Hagrid's guinea pig could take your arm off if you weren't careful...

The hardest part had been to rid the spell of what Severus thought of as its "vapour trail". All spells left some sort of marker in the air showing in which direction they'd started out: a flash of light, or a slight whoosh of displaced air as it travelled towards a target, or a wavering smoky line etched for a second like the trace of a child's sparkler, any of those tell-tales often gave the game away as to the spell-caster. It had taken Severus a great deal of time and effort to modify the spell so that it showed no sign. Severus had even managed to make it impervious to "Finite Incantatem". It was a time-deactivated spell that would take several hours to wear off.

Ever the perfectionist, Severus had tested the spell on himself to make sure that it worked on humans. Of course, he'd waited until all his Slytherin dorm-mates had left for the Quidditch match that weekend. Once alone, he'd gone into the bathroom, quickly stripped naked, hung his clothes neatly on the hook behind the door, and sat on the toilet before attempting the spell. It had worked spectacularly.

And now he was ready. He'd dreamed about using this spell, this wonderful, secret spell that he'd found when he'd gone to visit Lucius Malfoy over the Christmas holidays. Malfoy Manor had a most informative library, a comprehensive collection of spells - ancient, modern, lethal and non-lethal. Severus had always enjoyed the Malfoy library. This particular spell he'd found in an old moth-eaten volume of joke spells, and he'd seen the possibilities for adapting it straight away. It was simply perfect. And now

Severus was finally ready to actually use it on his intended victim. His intense study and tenacity would pay off.

"*This time*," he thought once again, keeping his face straight but feeling a warm glow in his stomach. A way to get back at that smug, smirking ape James Potter or Sirius Black! All the petty spells that pair had used on Severus over the years, the countless little humiliations Severus had been forced to swallow. Time for a little pay-back.

Slughorn got to his feet, stifling yet another yawn. "Well, class, if there are no questions, I'll go into the storeroom and do a little ... cataloguing of the supplies." He wagged his finger at them humorously. "And no slacking just because I'm out of the room! I will hear if there's any noise; remember I'm only next door. I'll be back in a few minutes..."

Severus smiled to himself. Honestly, Sluggy was pure gold; you could set your watch by him. He'd be in dreamland as soon as he'd cast a cushioning charm on the store-room floor and lay down. And he usually didn't come back until woken by the bell announcing the end of class.

As the door closed behind their teacher, the class relaxed, putting down quills, pushing back chairs, wandering over to talk to friends. The somnolent after-lunch lull disappeared as the classroom filled with chatter. Severus quickly arranged himself in readiness. His wand was already lying along the desk and had been since the beginning of this class, covered with a spare roll of blank parchment. Severus's hand was lying on top of the desk, apparently casually, his fingertips covered by the same parchment. Nobody could possibly suspect that he was armed, the tip of his index finger touching the handle of his hidden wand.

He kept his eyes down, apparently scanning the lines of his closely written essay, looking for all the world like the only student in the classroom still bothering to work. It was difficult not to count the seconds before somebody would call him on it.

Predictably, it was Potter. Severus heard him talking to his cohort Black and resisted the urge to glance in their direction. Let them try something of their own accord; he wanted witnesses to be able to say that he'd done nothing to provoke Potter or Black.

Severus heard the ominous pause in their apparently casual conversation, then Potter's voice, raised slightly to ensure that it carried to all the corners of the room: "Hey, Padfoot, I guess *we're* being real lazy. Look who's showing us up by still working hard."

"That figures," Black's voice sneered. "Trust Snivellus to be a greasy little swot."

Now Severus raised his eyes. The rest of the students had gone quiet and were watching to see what the two Gryffindors were about to do. Some were apprehensive, some amused, some even angry, but few wanted to chance incurring Potter and Black's malice.

James Potter strolled over to Severus's desk, an expression of innocence on his face that convinced nobody. "Let's see what you've written, Snively. Ooh, what a lot. If it's any good, maybe I can put my name on it and hand it in to Sluggy." He snatched up the essay and wafted it into the air with a casual flick of his wand, sending it sailing to Black's desk. "Hey, Pads, take a look at that and tell me if it's a good essay."

Black raised his own wand and incinerated it mid-air. Blackened and charred specks floated to the floor. "Whoops, sorry Prongs, it was too greasy it caught fire." He pushed his chair back and stood up. "Now, how about we do the same thing to Snively's hair?"

This was the moment. Potter was standing right in the line of Severus's hidden wand. Severus narrowed his eyes and concentrated hard on the non-verbal spell: "*Urinator Continuous*".

The expression on Potter's face was beautiful to behold. His eyes widened as the spell hit and a look of disbelief followed by panic flooded it. This was not the only thing that flooded. A dark wet patch appeared on his clothes, spreading and becoming bigger. A strong smell of urine began to permeate the air as liquid streamed down his legs, soaked his socks and shoes, and overflowed. James stared in utter disbelief at the growing yellow puddle on the floor.

Severus lifted his eyebrows in mock concern. "Anything I can get you Potter? A roll of toilet paper, perhaps?"

The Slytherin side of the room erupted with laughter. Black hurried over to help his friend, casting a suspicious glance at Severus as he did so. But he could see that he had his hands on the desk, empty. No wand in evidence.

"Come on Jamey," he hissed, trying to side-step the puddle of urine and getting splattered with it instead. "Oh, shit!"

"No, it's not!" yelled one Slytherin, doubling up with laughter.

"Want a potty, Potter?" another student called out. "Or a really big nappy?"

"Shut it, you!" Black snarled, raising his wand, but unable to focus enough to both cast a spell and avoid the urine which seemed to have increased in both volume and force.

Potter's robes were now liberally soaked. "*Finite Incantatum!*" He yelled, then tried again as nothing happened to lessen the flow. "*Finite Incantatum*, dammit!"

Lupin rushed over with Pettigrew. "Let's get him to the toilets," he muttered urgently to Black.

The four of them ran for the door, James Potter squelching along with a despairing look on his face. Severus heard his plaintive voice as he exited the room: "*Make it stop, Moony! I can't stop peeing!*"

Severus couldn't keep the smirk off his face. The spell had worked even better than he'd dreamed!

"Sev? What did you do?"

Severus turned to see Lily Evans standing with a group of her Gryffindor friends across the room. She was becoming increasingly distant towards him lately, which was why he hadn't let her in on his secret.

"Me?" He raised his hands from the desk, plainly showing everybody in the room that he held no wand. "I didn't do anything. Did you hear me say anything?"

She narrowed her eyes, clearly sceptical but unable to work out how he'd managed it. "Hmm."

She took her wand from her pocket and began to vanish the urine puddles off the floor, stopping after the first one and gazing at her classmates challengingly. "Well? If we don't clean this up, Sluggy will take off points and give us all detention!"

A few of the Gryffindors reluctantly joined her, but the Slytherins were still too full of mirth.

"You've got to be kidding, Evans," Mulciber said with a nasty grin. "It's not our fault that Potty wets himself. I'm not cleaning up after him."

"Perhaps we should re-name him Spot!" Avery smirked.

Severus smiled thinly. There was another bonus, though nobody else knew it yet. Before class had begun, Severus had gone past every bathroom on this floor and used a time spell on it, locking each door for three hours. Potter would have to leave a trail of his puddles up the stairs, across the entrance foyer, and through the Great Hall before they finally came to an unlocked toilet...

