

It Was Beautiful

by *tiddlywinks*

Snape gets what he wants from the end of the war.

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Chapter 1 of 1

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A/N: The characters displayed in this story are not mine and do not belong to me. No profit is being made from this story. Now that I am done, I will Obliviate and put them back where I found them!

Many thanks to my beta, Deeble. She's a good woman with a comma, and is very practised at deleting my ellipses. Thanks also to Liz, for taking the time to give me her opinion.

Given how much everyone else seemed to define her by it, it was no surprise that Snape obsessed over her hair. That it was attached to a comely and bright young witch half his age was simply an additional detail.

He wanted to sleep with her.

Oh, for the love of a thousand virgins and their prudish grandmothers! He knew that was how his colleagues and her friends would see it, but he meant more than that.

He did want to fuck her too, of course, but what he really craved was to bury his face in that bushy mane while he slept. There would be the beguiling scent of lavender or rosemary or oranges... He had never gotten close enough to know exactly what, but he imagined it would be something sweet that would do for him what Dreamless Sleep had never yet managed. And there, wrapped in cinnamon (or coconut, or clover), Severus Snape, the most hated professor in the history of Hogwarts, would be able to rest.

It was to that image that his mind wandered during difficult days (who was he kidding? The final battle was creeping closer and all days were difficult), and it was only those thoughts, along with occasional brushes with *her* through Order business, that sustained him.

Eventually the prophecy came to pass. Snape, a closet dramatic, had always imagined a theatrical showdown at Hogwarts or the Riddle Mansion or some other such place loaded with history and significance. However, circumstances dictated that the battle would instead be on a misbegotten moor where the only thing that drifted further than the screams was sticky, clinging fog. Something, somewhere, burned. The ground was slippery. Figures ran and stumbled, chased and fell, illuminated only by hex and curse.

Victory, as it turns out, is muddy.

Literally. By the time his Dark Mark had burned from his arm, Snape's impeccable robes were smeared with all kinds of muck; buttons were missing and most of one sleeve had been burnt away. Groggily he wondered—*absolutely nothing* because the battle was over and they'd WON and he was up and pushing on because if she hadn't made it, there would be no point and every direction looked the same and he cursed like a sailor as he went down into the mud again (fucking Lucius Malfoy had got in his way

for years and even now as a mutilated corpse he was still fucking finding ways to trip him up), but it didn't even matter, he was getting closer, he had to be.

Eventually he found her; hours or minutes later, he couldn't tell. The lonely search had felt even longer than the battle, which had been hot and fizzing and quick the way that only adrenalin can be. She was in a state similar to his: battered, torn, filthy but still standing on a field that had claimed too many. Victory was muddy and only the worms would truly win.

Trembling with emotion they flung their arms around each other, limbs and souls akimbo. Finally –*finally!*– he buried his nose into her silky tangle and inhaled the first true breath of freedom he'd had in twenty years.

It had taken the end of a war for him to allow himself to get close enough, but now he knew the answer to the question that had plagued him. Her hair smelled like smoke, like blood, like sweat and death and pain. In another minute it would smell like the tears that were already working their way loose.

It was beautiful.

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