

To Hope

by *BulletTimeScully*

"To hope is to risk pain."

My response to the Possessive!Snape Challenge at grangersnape100 at LJ.

One

Chapter 1 of 1

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Disclaimer: Nothing recognizable is mine. No money is made from this story.

Thank you to Toblass, my wonderful Beta. Without you, nothing is possible!

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Lightning flashed across the angry sky as the tempest raged across the barren moor. Heavy sheets of icy rain beat down upon what little foliage there was before adding to the standing water that covered most of the uneven, muddy ground. Small crevices – just deep enough to break the leg of either man or beast – littered the landscape, and only the most sure-footed traveler hoped to make it across unscathed.

It was a desolate place, lonely and forsaken, so the sight of a man traipsing through the maelstrom would have been exceedingly curious, had there been anyone there to notice.

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The rain lashed down, icy needles stinging the man's bare face and plastering his dark, lank hair to his skull. It had long ago soaked through the wool of his robes, chilling him to his very core even as his blood raced with adrenaline.

What the fuck had he done?

He remembered fire and smoke, words muttered in an unfamiliar language, the glint of a wickedly curved blade, and then... this.

Struggling towards safety through the mire, his cover blown, and the enemy at his back, Severus realized something...

Tonight had been beyond monstrous, and he... *he* was no monster.

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He looked down at the pale face of the woman in his arms.

Hermione's body was limp and practically lifeless, but he could feel it trembling involuntarily with the cold.

Had he not acted, she would have been killed... sacrificed... along with the child growing in her womb.

For what reason Severus was not aware, but whatever dark purpose the ritualistic death of her and the infant would have served, it was no doubt senseless and barbaric.

He snorted, knowing that he would join them in death if they were found.

And for the first time, Severus Snape feared death.

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Suddenly, the life inside Hermione's swollen abdomen stirred – Severus felt it moving even through the thick, sodden wool of his robes. He faltered for a moment at the quickening, coming to a halt as a wave of terror washed over him. He prayed to anyone that would listen that she wouldn't go into labor before he could get them all to safety.

As he stood in the downpour, he shook with exhaustion and terror... terror that he would feel the child move again, terror that he wouldn't.

And for a man like him, *being afraid* was what he feared most.

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"Enough!" he hissed to himself, shaking his head to regain his composure.

He mustn't forget the real and terrible danger they were in. Even now, they were being hunted. Even now, the devil's minions were searching the countryside for the rogue Death Eater and the young woman in his arms.

Even now, they had only outsmarted Death momentarily. It was coming for them as sure as the sun would rise on the morrow: if they lived to see it, that is.

Severus shook his head once more, his expression determined.

No... he thought. *No... they will live. We will live...*

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As Severus tightened his grip on Hermione – even though his hands and arms had long ago gone numb from the cold and the strain – a niggling voice at the back of the mind asked him what the purpose of this endeavor was. What was the reason he had saved the life of this girl and her child?

He banished the voice from his thoughts. Fuck Dumbledore and his goddamned "greater good." There was no way in Hell Severus was going to let Hermione die.

Not when there was a chance...

... a chance that the child she carried was his.

~TBC

A/N: This will be the first of three in a short drabble series. Look for the others in the near future. Thanks so much for reading!