

# Redemption on the Installment Plan - XV

*by Amita*

The warrior does not stray from the path to pick pansies.

## *Chapter 1 of 1*

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"Care for a sherry, love?"

He nodded yes as he plunked himself in an overstuffed chair.

"You look exhausted," said Pansy, "but I'm not going to dress up as a middle-aged lady again and mother you."

"That was for your disguise," said Severus.

"Oh, we're protesting, are we? Perhaps the disguise was for your benefit so that you wouldn't be tempted by my schoolgirl complexion."

"Nonsense," said Severus.

His denial was hearty enough that she pressed on. "Are you telling me you don't miss your life as a teacher when all those infatuated students wore their tightest jumpers and their shortest skirts to the class of the bad-boy professor?"

"Did they?" asked Severus.

"Are you claiming you didn't look at those young, shapely limbs as the girls crossed and uncrossed their legs for you, that you didn't revel in the occasional flash of schoolgirl knickers?"

"I'm astonished by the suggestion," said Severus.

"Do you want me to believe that all that snark was genuine, that it wasn't a cover for improper urges?" asked Pansy. "Are you saying you weren't smirking as the girls got steamier than their cauldrons when you brushed against them and made sarcastic remarks?"

"I have no idea what you're talking about," said Severus.

Pansy glowed. She had no idea his hate and anger had been so deep and genuine. No one could reform this fast, and there must be a substantial amount left. The right person could tap into it, and its release would be awesome. Motherlode.

She asked him to wait while she changed, and when she returned in her schoolgirl outfit, he leaped to his feet. She was the perfect schoolgirl. It wasn't a perverted costume with shortened skirt and tight blouse. It was modest in every way, and his heightened social consciousness from discarding most of his rage made him aware that no one was going to catch a glimpse of this innocent's undies. Well, almost innocent. She smiled as he noticed the blood red lipstick, the matching nail polish, the eye shadow, the jumper that accentuated firm mounds. She was a mature woman, determined to relive her student days but, this time, not missing any of the good parts.

"Ready to take a girl on a midnight broom ride?" she asked. "Into the spooky woods where little girls get scared? Into the darkness of our hearts? Or are you still a little boy hiding behind his snark?"

"Isn't snark and all it implies what you want?" asked Severus. "But perhaps a gracious Lord of Dark could escort a young lady for a moonlight ride." He took a deep breath. "And give her a close brush with evil to provide the necessary fillip."

Dang, she was reminding him of all the things he had given up for so long. Maybe he should have broken some codes of conduct. He regained some of his old self. "Or does milady cower at the suggestion?"

"How close a brush with evil?" she asked. "And milady does not cower."

Befitting her outfit, he guided her to the most innocuous of her family forests where the draft from their flight ruffled the leaves in the moonlight, the lovely moonlight that shone upon one solitary tree that seemed more majestic than evil.

"Is this the worst you can do?" she asked.

"It's fitting," said Severus. "The local spirit is prone to misbehavior by transgression, and you were lamenting my lack of transgression because I never peeked under your skirt."

"I was talking about the other girls," said Pansy.

"Of course," he said. "Now, as then, there is no danger if you're not a Sensitive, although I sometimes suspected you of being one because underneath your rigorously stern Slytherin outerwear, you wore pink and yellow floral prints."

"That's not true, and you're not supposed to know that," said Pansy, trying not to blush and wishing she had worn black lace instead.

Damn that man, he was smirking. Well, she would show him. She took him by the hand and led him under the branches where they sat with their backs against the tree trunk. She observed it was a full moon, and she remembered that most impromptu broom rides took place under the full moon for some reason. She thought the moon was getting larger and there must be a breeze since she could feel the grass swaying across her legs. A flower appeared in front of her that she hadn't noticed before. For a brief moment, she fantasized it was Severus getting a really good peek since she was sitting with her knees up. Then she told herself that she didn't wish it was Severus – no, emphatically no. There were two flowers, and it must be a trick of the moonlight since their pink and yellow matched her floral print. It was a trick of the moonlight because she couldn't see them anymore, unless it was the two flowers that she felt resting on her calves. Longing fueled by loneliness let her imagine it was a wizard wishing to fondle her charms. It was either the two flowers or her imagination that caressed the inside of her knees, now parted. She glanced at Severus, but that prat was as oblivious as always to the charm of the evening, not to mention the charms of a lady to whom he should be paying more attention, although not as much attention to her as whatever was insinuating its way up her legs where no wizard had ever been allowed and where she wouldn't allow Severus either and it felt too good and why wasn't he doing that even though she wouldn't let him, but she wanted more and it reminded her of those agonizing class sessions where she couldn't take her eyes off the Potions Professor and she didn't hear a word he was saying and all she could do was wiggle in her seat as the frustrating warm moist grew as it was growing now and something was trying to enter her and she shouldn't let it and she wanted it in her more than she had ever wanted anything and she was wiggling and moaning and the moon never looked so big and the world never smelled so sweet.

Severus was pulling her away from the tree.

Pansy was fighting to return to the tree. "Get off me. Redeem yourself by snarking. You can watch."

"Are you okay?" he asked.

"What'd you stop it for?" wailed Pansy.

*She's delirious*, he thought. *I shouldn't have brought her here.*

Pansy gripped Severus, straddling him and pressing her aching center against his leg. She was silently screaming, *Do me. Do me. Do me, now.*

*She doesn't know the effect she's having*, he thought as he fought down the improper thoughts flooding his brain. He admired her greatness of spirit as her thighs quivered and her face contorted with the struggle against the dark forces.

She gave a choked sob as her body twitched.

*She's broken free*, he thought. He had been worried the darkness had had its way with her, but he had pulled her away from the brink in time.

He cradled a Sensitive who was flushed and panting from her narrow escape. He held an unbelievably beautiful schoolgirl as her features became soft and she gave her hero a dreamy-eyed look.

The dreamy-eyed Pansy was tracing his face with her fingertips. They were breathing the same air. Her curves were sinuous beyond mortal ken, and her eyes were black depths flecked with red. Severus wondered if Pansy had been replaced by a hungry spirit. She flipped up her skirt, and Severus tried not to stare at a wizard's fantasy: muscular legs splayed, but meeting at a floral garment filled with inviting softness and seriously damp.

"Want to make up for lost time?" she breathed. "It's just you, me, and your snark, eager to burst out of its bonds."

A less-redeemed Severus would have taken advantage.

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