

No Vengeance for the Strong

by *linlawless*

Is revenge ever justified? The violence warning is for implied (non-graphic) violence toward a child. Written in response to a prompt from TeaOli.

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Chapter 1 of 1

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A/N: Thanks to TeaOli for a challenging prompt, and to karelia for the quick beta.

Original Prompt: "You know why I stopped it, and it wasn't because I wanted to."

"*Expelliarmus!*" Thank Merlin he had arrived in time, Severus thought, catching Hermione's wand even as he cast Incarcerous with his own.

"Give me my wand, damn it! He's not suffering! He needs to *suffer!*" Hermione made a grab for her wand, which Severus held out of her reach. "Why did you stop me? I need to make him pay!"

"No, Hermione, this isn't you! Leave it to the authorities!" He looked at the pathetic man, now bound and gagged, who had soiled himself in his fear of what Hermione had been about to do to him.

"But he—"

"It doesn't matter. This isn't you."

"How can you say that? Of course it matters! He hurt my baby!"

"I know that; I know he did," Severus said in his most soothing tone. "And he *will* suffer – he *will* pay. But not like this. Rose needs you. What will she do if you wind up in Azkaban?"

"Ron will be there. Molly. You. She doesn't need me – she needs to know he's suffered even more than—"

"You don't believe that," Severus interrupted, trying to pull her into his arms.

"Yes, I do!" Hermione was sobbing openly now, even as she resisted his embrace. "How will she ever recover if he doesn't suffer?"

"She needs her mum – the one she's known all her life. The one who's always believed in justice under the law – not revenge outside the law."

"You don't understand. She's my *baby*."

Severus ignored the pang that caused, reminding himself that she didn't mean it – that she was striking out at him in her grief and her fear for her daughter. "I love her, too, Hermione. You know I do. But giving up every principle you've ever had for a moment of revenge won't solve this – it won't change anything. It won't help her heal."

She seemed to deflate suddenly, collapsing into his arms as she finally recognized the truth. "How do I help her, Severus?" she whispered brokenly. "I can't even help *myself* with this. It's too big – too much. I can't handle it."

"You don't have to do it alone. I'm here. You lean on me, and together, we all support her. That's how it works. You're the one who taught me that, remember?" He held her for several minutes longer. "Now, why don't you go on back to the hospital, and I'll wait here for the Aurors?"

"All right," Hermione said, sniffing. "Don't be long."

"I won't. Go on." He handed her wand back to her and nudged her toward the door.

He waited until he heard the crack of her Disapparition before he turned back to the man on the floor. "Now," he asked in a conversational tone that was chilling in its very neutrality, "I believe we have unfinished business. *No one* harms my family or upsets my wife. I expect you'll never forget that again."

Pulling an untraceable wand from his robes, he raised it and said in a deadly tone, *Crucio!*"