

Deadly Consequences

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Sequel to Ayerf's "Deadly Truth."

Infirmary

Chapter 1 of 1

Sequel to Ayerf's "Deadly Truth."

During the auction, oh so long ago, Ayerf generously bought a dabble/ficlet from me. The prompt she gave was to write a sequel to her drabble series, "Deadly Truth" (<http://www.thepetulantpoetess.com/viewstory.php?sid=6995>). It's taken a while, but here is a brief look at what happens next.

Severus sat mostly hidden in the dark shadows of the infirmary at Miss –*Hermione's* bedside. Only his restless fingers, a hair's breadth away from her hand, were revealed by the moonlight. Only his fingers' twitching restlessness revealed his inner turmoil as he sat gazing at the young witch lost in dreamless sleep.

He didn't want to hope. It was uncomfortable thinking there might actually be a chance for him to be loved – to be happy – when he knew from experience that wasn't his lot in life. But his (aborted) name on her lips, her eyes looking into his with warmth... Hope was there now, disregarding his comfort at every turn and distracting him from his duty.

He was still aware of his surroundings, though. He felt the boy enter even before he heard his careless shuffle.

"Haven't you done enough harm tonight, Weasley?" he asked wearily. He hoped Weasley wasn't intelligent enough to understand how finding him here would shift the power balance in the boy's favor.

"What are *you* doing here?" was Weasley's inane response, giving Severus hope that the boy had, indeed, missed the obvious.

Snape turned to look at him. Weasley looked haggard, but he also looked sincerely curious and confused. Snape didn't bother to answer; he turned back to look at Miss – *Hermione*.

She looked like a ghost in the moonlight. The poison had robbed her cheeks of their usual ruddy glow, and the moonlight bleached away the rest of her fair skin color. His fingers twitched again, wanting to hold her hand, make sure she was still corporeal. Warm. Alive. That he wasn't being foolish to hope.

Weasley moved closer. "Is she going to be all right?" he asked. Snape heard the remorse, but it didn't help soften his feelings toward the boy. It accomplished the reverse. He didn't suffer fools.

"No thanks to you."

He felt Weasley stiffen in anger, then slump in acceptance.

"Are you going to kill me?"

Severus thought about that for a moment. Finally he admitted, perhaps a little more ruefully than was wise, "No."

Weasley sat down on the foot of Miss – Hermione's bed. Snape suppressed the urge to hex the brat.

"Why?"

Surprised, Severus looked at Weasley again. The boy was watching him, his eyes wide but not innocent. No. No more innocence for little Ronald.

"Because it would be imprudent."

That seemed to annoy the boy until a thought occurred, and his mouth twisted into an ugly smile.

"Afraid Dumbledore would have you Kissed?"

Severus snorted.

"Hardly. I am quite confident the headmaster needs me more than Potter needs you. And that's assuming Potter will have anything to do with you after he learns about tonight's incident."

Weasley flinched. Snape smirked and rose, his restless fingers lingering next to her hand for a moment longer than prudent while he cast a last look at his reason to hope. "No," he said, keeping his voice hard. "It would be imprudent because it is not my place to seek revenge." He shifted his gaze back to the boy and noticed a slight disturbance against the far wall. Someone was in the room with them, and if he had to guess, it was probably Potter. He returned his eyes to the boy's and broadened his smirk into an evil grin.

"That honor belongs to Hermione."

Weasley paled as all the implications of the statement hit him.

"Sleep well," he muttered into Weasley's ear as he slipped back into the shadows, away from her bed.