

Felix Felicis

by phoenix

Severus has always known that being a double agent was dangerous. Moreso now that Albus is gone and everyone thinks he's truly loyal to the Dark Lord. But he remains Dumbledore's man. All he needs is a little luck.

Felix Felicis

Chapter 1 of 1

Severus has always known that being a double agent was dangerous. Moreso now that Albus is gone and everyone thinks he's truly loyal to the Dark Lord. But he remains Dumbledore's man. All he needs is a little luck.

A/N: While I love the Harry Potter books overall, I disagree with a few of JKR's choices on who lives and who doesn't. This is my take on what happens to Severus on the day of the Final Battle. As such, there are some passages of dialog that I have taken from the Deathly Hallows and reworked to be from Severus' POV. Some of her original descriptions remain as well, but this story is largely my writing. I hope you enjoy.

Many thanks to my beta, beaweasley2 for helping bring this story to life.

Disclaimer: Harry Potter, the universe and the characters all belong to JKR, and I'm merely borrowing for a little fun. No profit is being made.

As he did every morning, Severus Snape, Headmaster of Hogwarts, dressed and patted the pocket of his robes, ensuring his vial of Felix Felicis was there. The vial would provide him sixteen hours of liquid luck. While he was not sure that would be long enough to ensure his survival through the battle, he knew that to take any more at one time would be toxic. And sixteen hours should provide him enough time to at least complete his last task for Dumbledore. He had no doubt that he would one day need it, that his years of playing both sides would one day bring him to ruin if he was not prepared. And he had not survived this long by not being prepared.

Never before had he used the potion, aware of the possible consequences of using it for the wrong reasons or too often. But he had a feeling that he would need it during the final battle between the Dark Lord and Harry Potter. In his previous meetings with the Dark Lord, he was growing more and more convinced that it was vital for Potter succeed. The Dark Lord's many long years of non-corporeal exile had completely unbalanced him.

What the Dark Lord had planned for the wizarding and subsequently the Muggle world would only lead to disaster, as was already happening. Chaos and fear were the rule of the day. Even though very few of the other Death Eaters seemed to see it, Severus could tell that what was happening was slowly destroying the fabric of wizarding Britain. Even purebloods were not safe from the Dark Lord's anger. If this kept up, there would be nothing left for the Dark Lord to rule. Severus had no illusion that his Master would allow Fenrir Greyback or any of the other werewolves a position of importance. It was most likely that once Fenrir and his ilk had outlived their usefulness, they would be eliminated. Severus knew the Dark Lord would not hesitate to kill any of his followers if he saw them as a threat to his new world order.

As had happened since Dumbledore's death, Severus was acting alone, no one was aware of his true motives. He had spent the last year playing the role of the Dark Lord's faithful servant, a loyal disciple, and no one questioned his motives since that fateful night on the Astronomy Tower. Minerva felt betrayed, though she was bright enough not to act on those feelings, instead doing what little she could to protect the students.

Once again, he hoped that this would not be the day he needed the potion, but he knew that day was drawing nearer when he would have to drink it. Potter now had what he thought was all the information he needed to finish off the Dark Lord. It was only a matter of time. But Severus knew he still needed to deliver to Potter one last bit of

information before the deed could be done, and to do that one last task, the last promise to a dying old man, he'd need luck on his side.

Severus grabbed his left forearm as he felt the Dark Mark burn. Alecto Carrow had called the Dark Lord. That could only mean one thing Potter was in the castle. He had known it would only be a matter of time until that had happened, but he had hoped that Potter would use his invisibility cloak to avoid detection. Clearly that had not happened.

He was about to leave his office to investigate when he remembered the potion. Pulling the vial of Felix Felicis out of his pocket, he admired the swirl of gold for a few moments. He pondered whether or not to take the potion since it would only last sixteen hours. He reasoned that even Alecto was not dense enough to have summoned the Dark Lord unless Potter truly was here. In that case, there would be a battle, hopefully the final battle, and Severus would need all the luck he could get to complete his mission since Potter believed Severus to be the enemy. He could only hope the sixteen hours would last long enough to see him through what was ahead.

As he drank the potion, he felt himself enveloped in a serene warmth. While it was not a feeling of invincibility, it was the feeling that everything was going to go his way.

Walking through the corridors, he moved surely, knowing exactly which turns to take to bring him closer to Potter. He merely had to follow his instincts, and he would find Potter. There was still information the young man needed before he faced his nemesis. He knew that if need be he could overpower the Carrows, who would surely want the glory of turning Potter over to their Master, but attacking them might be questioned. He felt a compulsion inside him say that wouldn't be a problem; he simply needed to be cautious and keep going. All was as it should be. An irrational thought, but the heady suggestion felt right it had to be the potion's effects.

As he moved through the corridors, he saw Minerva's cat Patronus. He presumed she was calling the other Heads of House to meet in her office. Hurrying through corridors and taking advantage of the castle's many shortcuts, he finally heard movement, and as stealthily as he could, he moved among the suits of armor to see if it was his quarry, though Felix told him it was.

Minerva halted, raised her wand ready to duel, and said, "Who's there?"

"It is I," Snape said as he emerged from behind the suit of armor. He did not show any fear because he knew that Felix was protecting him. While he did not see Potter, he knew the young man had to be there, probably underneath his Invisibility Cloak. At least he was not a prisoner of the Carrows; this should make his task easier.

"Where are the Carrows?" he asked quietly, hoping they had been removed from the situation. *Elsewhere*, the voice inside him said, a confident, reassuring whisper.

"Wherever you told them to be, I expect, Severus," Professor McGonagall retorted evasively.

Snape stepped nearer, and his eyes flitted over Professor McGonagall into the air around her, searching for Potter, listening for his breath or the rustling of his clothes. He was quite surprised that Felix was not letting him know where to find Potter. "I was under the impression," said Snape, "that Alecto had apprehended an intruder." The heady sense in his mind told him, *No, the boy is safe. He's here.*

"Really?" said Professor McGonagall with a feigned air. "And what gave you that impression?" she asked evasively.

Severus made a slight flexing movement of his left arm, where the Dark Mark was branded into his skin. He knew she would detect the movement and realize the answer to that question.

"Oh, but naturally," said Professor McGonagall. "You Death Eaters have your own private means of communication, I forgot."

Snape pretended not to have heard her; she was merely stalling. His eyes were still probing the air all about her, and he was moving gradually closer, with an air of hardly noticing what he was doing. "I did not know that it was your night to patrol the corridors, Minerva," he said, still trying to get information from her, but he knew that she was not as dense as the Carrows and would not be forthcoming. He was still puzzled that Felix was not revealing Potter to him. This seemed to be the perfect opportunity to provide the final piece to Albus' puzzle.

She pulled herself to her full height. "You have some objection?"

"I wonder what could have brought you out of your bed at this late hour?" He listened for the faintest sound of breathing that would indicate there was someone concealed nearby.

"I thought I heard a disturbance," said Professor McGonagall.

"Really? But all seems calm." He knew what disturbance she had heard. He looked into her eyes, hoping to draw out the truth, willing her to trust him as Albus had done, wondering why Felix did not seem to be helping him. "Have you seen Harry Potter, Minerva? Because if you have, I must insist..."

Professor McGonagall moved with a quickness one would not expect for a witch of her age. Her wand slashed through the air, and thanks to Felix he barely had time to conjure a Shield Charm. Since she had not expected him to block her spell, she was thrown off balance. She brandished her wand at a torch on the wall and it flew out of its bracket. The flames became a ring of fire that filled the corridor and flew like a lasso at Snape.

With a slash of his wand, he turned the fire into a great black serpent that McGonagall blasted to smoke, which re-formed and solidified in seconds to become a swarm of pursuing daggers. Snape avoided them only by forcing the suit of armor in front of him, and with echoing clangs the daggers sank, one after another, into its breast.

He was not trying to hurt her, only detain her until he could find Potter, but she was clearly trying to kill him. Thankfully, Felix had honed his reflexes so that he was able to easily fend off her attacks.

"Minerva!" said a squeaky voice, and Snape saw Professors Flitwick and Sprout sprinting up the corridor toward them in their nightclothes, with the enormous Professor Slughorn panting along at the rear. *Of all the rotten luck, so close...* But the voice in his head simply said, *Patience.*

He was outnumbered and knew his chance to reveal the final bit of information from Dumbledore to Potter was gone. Felix told him that it was time to leave, that he had accomplished what he had to, although that made no sense to him, but was somehow obviously correct, and now needed to join the Death Eaters outside the gates.

"No!" squealed Flitwick, raising his wand. "You'll do no more murder at Hogwarts!" Flitwick's spell hit the suit of armor behind which Severus had taken shelter. With a clatter it came to life and encircled Severus in a crushing embrace.

Severus reached down deep within himself and formulated a nonverbal Blasting Hex as he struggled free of the crushing arms and sent the armor flying back toward his attackers, knowing it would provide enough diversion to give him time to escape. He would have to find a way to capture Potter during the battle that was sure to ensue. He would have to trust that Felix would help him achieve this goal. He hurtled through a classroom door and through the window, knowing that death would not befall him, that Felix was protecting him. As he fell into the darkness, he cast the Flying Charm and took flight across the grounds, to where the other Death Eaters would be assembling. In the distance he could hear McGonagall cry, "Coward! COWARD!"

Those words pained him more than any other. He was the furthest thing from a coward there was, yet that was all anyone ever seemed to think about him. The amount of fortitude it had taken to remain a double agent for so long was incalculable. He knew in his heart that none of them would ever understand. When this was over, they might have an inkling, but they would never understand.

Loyal Death Eaters were gathering all around him, drawn by the pull of the Dark Mark still floating over the castle. They waited outside the main gate, waited for word from their Master on what they were supposed to do. Severus knew that they would be sent in to capture Potter and the kill as many as they could. After all, those who would

oppose Voldemort were not welcome in his new order. His brethren were growing anxious, but he felt only calm this was where he needed to be.

As he looked toward the castle, he could only hope that a way for the younger students to escape could be found. As he worried for his young charges, he felt a sense of calm reassurance. While there were only two known accessible passages off the grounds, he had the feeling that there was another, unknown passage that would lead the students to safety. There were those among the Dark Lord's minions who would not hesitate to kill a child, even one who was not resisting.

Bellatrix approached him. "Where are they? Where is Potter?" she demanded, clearly referring to the Carrows who had activated the signal.

"Still in the castle. Captured, I presume if they are not here," he replied snidely. "As to Potter, I presume he is also in the castle, though I did not see him." Once again, he felt Felix reassure him that he would find Potter when the time was right.

"And why are you here?" she sneered.

He turned to look at her, his face an impassive mask. "With the Carrows captured, I was on my own in the castle, outnumbered. I knew the Dark Lord would have need of my services to broach the school defenses, and rather than sacrifice myself for no reason, I chose to come here to lead the attack." He did not want her examining his motives too closely, and Felix told him this last remark would divert her attention. He returned his attention to the castle.

She scoffed. "You think he would let you lead the attack? You are nothing to him."

"I am everything to him," Severus replied, not even bothering to face her. "There is a reason I was named Headmaster and not you. Only I could perform this most important job for him."

Thankfully he was saved from further conversation by the arrival of their Master.

After the Dark Lord made his announcement, he gestured for Severus to join him. Severus moved purposefully before his Master and bowed his head in respect. "How may I serve you, my Lord?"

"I see that the Carrows have failed," he said, the disapproval clear in his voice.

"Yes, my lord, it would seem so. McGonagall was able to thwart them, though I was not able to ascertain the details. She was somehow drawn to Potter and was able to rescue him from their grasp. She then summoned the other Heads of House. Lacking the Carrows support, I knew that I would be of most use by your side where I can assist in breaking through the protections they are placing upon the castle. It has secrets that as Headmaster only I know." He hoped that this sounded plausible, though out of the corner of his eye, he could see Bellatrix mouthing 'coward'.

Rather than watching Severus, the Dark Lord was staring up at the castle with a maniacal glee, clearly believing his goal was within sight. "Indeed. The castle has many secrets. Some that not even you know," the Dark Lord replied as he caressed Nagini, who was draped over his shoulders.

Severus was sure the castle had secrets that neither of them knew, and he hoped those would save it from utter destruction.

Voldemort spent the hour he had given Potter directing his most trusted lieutenants on what they were to do, reminding everyone that Potter was to be brought to him alive. Mulciber was sent to bring the giants, and a team was assigned to see what sort of creatures could be found in the Forbidden Forest. Severus knew that at a minimum there were Acromantula that could be driven out of the forest. The Centaurs would most definitely not join as they preferred predicting the future to participating in the now, but there were any number of odd creatures that had taken residence in the forest over the years.

Once the battle began, Severus was counting on Felix providing him the ability to find Potter before any of the others, to tell Potter that he himself had become a Horcrux. Of course, finding the young man and actually having a conversation with him were two entirely different things, but with Felix on his side, Severus knew that he would succeed.

As midnight drew nearer, Severus was once again called to the Dark Lord's side. He knew that it was time to bring down the protections, and he told his Master which counter-spells would be needed. As Headmaster, Severus had been provided with the knowledge of what protected the castle, which had been one of the reasons for his appointment. The Dark Lord had known that it would take a powerful and intelligent wizard to divine a way to defeat those protections. It pained Severus to give the information to his Master that would destroy the one place where he had truly felt at home, but he knew it had to be done. Felix told him that Hogwarts had to fall.

When the hour was up and Potter had not emerged, Severus and the Dark Lord used their magic to break through the protections and bring down the gate. As Severus and the others entered the school grounds, he noticed his Master was not joining them, but instead was leading a defeated looking Lucius Malfoy towards the Shrieking Shack. Severus knew that the fate that awaited him if he were discovered as the traitor he truly was, was far worse than his old friend's. While Lucius may have been stripped of his wand and had his home invaded, he was at least alive and had some semblance of freedom, especially since his lack of wand had prevented him from participating in any attacks.

Once ensconced in the battle, Felix directed his actions, telling him where to go. He fired spell after spell, all missing the children and Order members, yet deftly thwarting and subduing the Death Eaters, vampires and werewolves in the castle while he deflected or dodged every spell cast his way. To anyone who saw, he'd seem like a warrior fighting bravely and yet, he never felt any real danger. He could see members of the Order of the Phoenix leading groups on the grounds, groups that unfortunately included some of the older students. He also saw some Death Eaters in pursuit. Felix told him to save the students, and he ran from his hiding place and hexed the Death Eaters, his actions noted by only those on the Order's side as the Death Eaters all fell. But Felix told him to move on.

He had no idea how long the battle had been raging, but bodies littered the ground. Which were dead and which merely wounded was something he did not have the time to stop and determine. He did his best to avoid looking in the faces. It was easier to remain detached if you did not know who had fallen. Oddly Felix still had not provided him the insight to find Potter. While surviving the night was one of his goals, his primary goal had been to find Potter, deliver Dumbledore's final message and help the young man complete his task. The voice he recognized now as Felix's simply said, *Have patience. He will come. Do what you have to in order to protect the students.*

Suddenly, he saw Lucius' white-blond hair ducking and dodging through the battle. He wondered what on earth the unarmed wizard was doing in the thick of the battle. Then he realized that Lucius was trying to get to him, Felix said to go to him. Falling back from the battle, he made his way towards his friend.

As they ducked behind a rock section of the battlement and a large uprooted tree, Lucius said, "The Dark Lord commands you to join him in the Shrieking Shack."

Severus knew better than to ask why Lucius wouldn't know. Besides, Felix told him it was a good idea to see why the Dark Lord wanted to see him. He placed his hand on Lucius' shoulder in a reassuring manner and nodded, leaving his friend to cower in his position of relative safety, hoping that Lucius would somehow survive the battle. He looked back once to see Lucius trying to be as inconspicuous as possible, wondering if this would be the last time he would see his friend, but Felix provided him no guidance.

Since Felix told him he should not go through the tunnel from the Whomping Willow due to the amount of fighting in the area, he skirted the battle and made his way to the Shrieking Shack through the village.

On the way, he was forced to deal with more than one errant hex, a few purposefully sent his way and two giants creating a path of destruction with no regard to who was on what side. Naturally he was safe since Felix was helping him find his way through the battle. A group of Acromantula saw him coming and scuttled off in another direction before he could send a hex their way, as a large boulder rolled by, tossed by a giant somewhere behind him.

When he arrived at the Shrieking Shack, he found the door no longer boarded up and entered, feeling a strange sense of calm that this was where he was supposed to be. Upon entering the main room on the ground floor, he bowed reverently. "My Lord, you sent for me?" he asked deferentially, sparing a quick glance for Nagini ensconced in her magical cage. Felix told him not to worry about the snake.

"How goes the battle?" the Dark Lord asked as he glanced out the window from a chair that had been dragged across the floor, which had been unboarded to provide a view of the action. While the Dark Lord could not see the entire battle from here, he surely had other ways of knowing what was happening.

While Severus had been participating in the battle, doing everything he could, he had not necessarily been acting in the way the Dark Lord would have approved of him acting. He'd defended those he was supposed to kill and attacked those he was supposed to aid. Still he'd helped in the breaching of the castle, allowing the enemy in, and the Death Eaters, whose numbers were greater, were driving the defenders back. "We are advancing quickly, my Lord, their resistance is crumbling ..."

"... and it is doing so without your help," said the Dark Lord in his high, clear voice.

Severus stilled, feeling a fleeting sense of dread as he wondered what the Dark Lord had seen, but Felix reassured him all was well.

"Skilled wizard though you are, Severus, I do not think you will make much difference now. We are almost there... almost," he said longingly.

"Let me find the boy. Let me bring you Potter. I know I can find him, my Lord. Please." Severus had one last task to complete for his true master, to do that he needed to find Potter, needed to have a fleeting moment alone with the young man. Strangely Felix was not telling him to be somewhere else, but he knew that he had to find Potter before the young man faced the Dark Lord. However, Felix insisted things were as they should be. It was all coming together as it should.

The Dark Lord stood up. "I have a problem, Severus," he said softly as he turned his attention from the window.

"My Lord?" asked Snape. Other than Potter not having been delivered, he had no idea what the Dark Lord meant, but he did not like that tone of voice. Felix told him not to worry, but that tone of voice compelled worry under normal circumstances.

The Dark Lord raised the Elder Wand, holding it as delicately and precisely as a conductor's baton. "Why doesn't it work for me, Severus?" he asked pointedly.

"My-my Lord?" said Snape blankly. "I do not understand. You... you have performed extraordinary magic with that wand."

"No," said the Dark Lord. "I have performed my usual magic. I am extraordinary, but this wand... no. It has not revealed the wonders it has promised. I feel no difference between this wand and the one I procured from Ollivander all those years ago." The Dark Lord's tone was musing, calm. "No difference," he said again.

Severus did not reply. He was trying to determine his best course of action. Felix was doing nothing more than telling him he was at the place where he needed to be.

The Dark Lord started to move around the room. "I have thought long and hard, Severus." He paused momentarily. "Do you know why I have called you back from the battle?"

While Severus did not know exactly, he had a suspicion. This was why he had taken Felix Felicis. His gaze was drawn to Nagini coiling in her enchanted cage. "No, my Lord, but I beg you will let me return. Let me find Potter." He had to find Potter. He had to give him the last bit of information as Albus had commanded. Why was Felix not leading him down that path while at the same time compelling him to ask to find Potter?

"You sound like Lucius. Neither of you understands Potter as I do. He does not need finding. Potter will come to me. I know his weakness, you see, his one great flaw. He will hate watching the others struck down around him, knowing that it is for him that it happens. He will want to stop it at any cost. He will come," the Dark Lord said confidently.

"But my Lord, he might be killed accidentally by one other than yourself..." Severus spoke the words Felix compelled him to say, drawing a disjointed conversation out of his Master. For what reason, he could not say. A part of him thought that he was failing in his mission, but Felix continued to let him know this was precisely where he should be, that this was the conversation he should be having even though he had no idea how this would make it possible for him to deliver his message to Potter.

"My instructions to my Death Eaters have been perfectly clear. Capture Potter. Kill his friends the more, the better but do not kill him. But it is of you that I wished to speak, Severus, not Harry Potter. You have been very valuable to me. Very valuable."

Yes, he had been so valuable; he had been trusted with important task after important task. He hoped to be given one more. "My Lord knows I seek only to serve him. But, let me go and find the boy, my Lord. Let me bring him to you. I know I can..." Severus knew that to say these words would be to draw the Dark Lord's ire, but Felix compelled him to continue the argument for being allowed to find Potter.

"I have told you, no!" the Dark Lord barked angrily as he spun on Snape, his cloak swishing behind him. "My concern at the moment, Severus, is what will happen when I finally meet the boy!"

"My Lord, there can be no question, surely...?" He was now certain the Dark Lord had surmised that he would not be the master of the Elder Wand until its current master was defeated, and Severus was strangely at peace with this revelation.

"But there is a question, Severus. There is." the Dark Lord halted, and he slid the Elder Wand through his white fingers, staring at Severus. "Why did both the wands I have used fail when directed at Harry Potter?"

"I cannot answer that, my Lord." Felix told him that it was good that he should sound nervous; it would feed the Dark Lord's ego. Not that it relieved his own unease.

"Can't you?" the Dark Lord growled. "My wand of yew did everything of which I asked it, Severus, except to kill Harry Potter. Twice it failed. Ollivander told me under torture of the twin cores, told me to take another's wand. I did so, but Lucius' wand shattered upon meeting Potter's."

"I have no explanation, my Lord." At least no explanation he wanted to share with his Master. Severus was not looking at the Dark Lord now. His dark eyes were fixed upon the coiling serpent in its protective sphere. One of the final two Horcruxes was hanging there, waiting to be destroyed, but he knew that he did not have the means to kill the snake and destroy the bit of soul residing within it. Besides Felix told him that was not his purpose.

"I sought a third wand, Severus. The Elder Wand, the Wand of Destiny, the Deathstick. I took it from its previous master. I took it from the grave of Albus Dumbledore."

And now Severus looked at the Dark Lord, the color had drained from his face as he knew he was about to receive his death sentence. "My Lord, let me go to the boy..." He knew it was futile asking. He still felt an eerie sense of calm, but he did begin to wonder if the Dark Lord was stronger than Felix Felicis.

"All this long night, when I am on the brink of victory, I have sat here," said the Dark Lord, his voice barely louder than a whisper, "wondering, wondering, why the Elder Wand refuses to be what it ought to be, refuses to perform as legend says it must perform for its rightful owner... and I think I have the answer."

Severus did not speak.

"Perhaps you already know it? You are a clever man, after all, Severus. You have been a good and faithful servant, and I regret what must happen."

"My Lord..." He could save himself, but Felix compelled him to remain, to stay. This was his destiny, his fate. The boy would come, and he'd fulfill his vow: *Patience. Persevere.*

"The Elder Wand cannot serve me properly, Severus, because I am not its true master. The Elder Wand belongs to the wizard who killed its last owner. You killed Albus Dumbledore. While you live, Severus, the Elder Wand cannot be truly mine."

"My Lord!" Snape protested, raising his wand, not striking because Felix stayed his hand.

"It cannot be any other way," said the Dark Lord. "I must master the wand, Severus. Master the wand, and I master Potter at last." The Dark Lord swiped the air with the Elder Wand. It did nothing to Severus, who for a split second thought he had been reprieved, that Felix had saved him, but then the Dark Lord's intention became clear. The snake's cage was rolling through the air, and before Severus could do anything more than yell, it had encased him, head and shoulders, and the Dark Lord spoke in Parseltongue, a hissing order that could mean only one thing, that had meant only one thing before. *Kill*.

Severus gave a blood curdling scream as Nagini's fangs pierced his neck. He instinctively tried to push the cage off himself, but he knew that it was too late. His knees gave way, and he fell to the floor. He had failed. Felix had failed him, but how he did not know. It should have been impossible for Felix to fail. Everything would be in vain. Potter would never know that he was the final, unknown Horcrux. Yet for some reason, he did not feel that all had been lost.

"I regret it," said the Dark Lord coldly before turning away to leave the shack. He pointed the Elder Wand at the starry cage holding the snake, which drifted upward, off Severus, who fell sideways onto the floor, blood gushing from the wounds in his neck. The Dark Lord swept from the room without a backward glance, and the great serpent floated after him in its huge protective sphere.

Severus waited for what was next. Felix had not saved him from being bitten by the great serpent. He wondered if it would be the poison or the blood loss that would kill him first. He could feel his foot twitching. He knew that he should try to stem the flow of blood from the wound, but his fingers were ineffective the wound was too great. He could feel the life ebbing out of him with each beat of his heart. But despite everything, he still felt that this was where he should be, that Felix was still with him.

Suddenly, he saw Potter materialize in front of him, emerging from beneath his Invisibility Cloak. He had one chance to fulfill Dumbledore's orders. Perhaps this was the best Felix could offer. He tried to call the young man to him, but his voice was not working. Potter seemed to understand and came and bent over him. Severus seized the front of Potter's robes and pulled him close. A terrible rasping, gurgling noise issued from Severus' throat, "Take... it... Take... it..." He willed his memories to the surface, pulling on every last ounce of his magic to expel them without the use of his wand. He could feel them leaving, doing as they were bidden. Felix had provided him a way to deliver the message and told him which memories he would need to give the young man for the message to be believed. He saw the shock and then realization from Potter as the young man watched the memories emerge.

A flask, conjured from thin air, was thrust into Potter's shaking hands by Granger. Potter lifted the silvery substance into it with his wand. When the flask was full to the brim, Severus could feel the life draining from him with the blood leaving the gash in his neck. His grip on Harry's robes slackened. "Look... at... me..." he whispered. He wanted Lily's eyes to be the last thing he saw before he died. Finally, he felt his strength leave him completely, and his hand fell to the floor as his vision faded to black.

He was musing how peaceful death was when he heard an otherworldly sound. It was a comforting sound. At first he thought it was whoever was coming to escort him to the next realm, but then he felt again. He felt pain momentarily, but then it began to vanish. The sound had stopped. His vision started coming back to him, the black slowly turning to grey. But there was more than grey, there was also fiery red and gold. "Fawkes?" his voice rasped in realization.

As his vision returned, so did his strength. He sat and placed his hand on his throat where Nagini had bitten him, but the skin was smooth. He was positive that it was absolutely unblemished. Turning to Fawkes, he said, "Thank you." Felix had not failed him.

The phoenix bowed to him and then flapped its wings, hovering above him. Severus knew that he was meant to take the bird's tail, because Felix told him to. Where Fawkes would take him, he did not know. All he knew was that his work here was through, that he had nothing more to contribute to the battle. He had delivered Dumbledore's final message to Potter. He took hold of the phoenix's tail and was gone in a flash of flame.

TBC?

A/N: Once again, many thanks to beasweasley2, who helped me realize that Felix needed to be more of a character in this story, rather than just a potion. I also hope you enjoyed my take on how Severus might have survived.

Also, there are ideas floating around for at least one more chapter, but the muses aren't convinced there needs to be more to the story than this. So if you want to see what became of Severus, the muses will need a little encouraging.