

Saving Lucius

by sunny33

Lucius has lost his way after Narcissa left him. There is only one person who can bring him back.

Prologue

Chapter 1 of 6

Lucius has lost his way after Narcissa left him. There is only one person who can bring him back.

A/N: They belong to JKR. Not me, alas.

Prologue: *June 2005*

It was the little things that gave him away. The few blond hairs escaping from the otherwise immaculate coiffure, the tiny wrinkle in the cuff of his pristine white shirt, the cane lying forgotten in the corner of his office. Wearing the same robes twice in one week, opening the front door of the Manor himself, and allowing a little black spot to infest his precious roses were all obvious clues to the degree of Lucius Malfoy's distress.

Obvious, that is, if one had been observing the man for the last thirty years.

Severus Snape listened to the gossip gleefully passed from ear to ear around Diagon Alley and the Ministry. Leaves of flippant comments and laughter blowing through offices, speculation tossed around tea urns: rumours and lies all.

"Malfoy is such a cold bastard. No wonder his wife left him."

"Couldn't have happened to a more deserving wizard."

"I heard she'd only stayed with him because of Draco."

"He doesn't seem to care. Still poncing around in his designer robes, throwing Galleons around as if they were Knuts."

"Maybe he's not the man he thinks he is. I read somewhere the biggest cause of marriage break-ups was unsatisfying sex."

After Narcissa had left three months earlier, Lucius had continued life as before, behaving as if her departure from his life was a mere inconvenience. Even Severus, upon enquiring as to the state of his well-being, was told, "I am fine. Narcissa's decision was hers to make, and I shall not stand in her way. I do not need a woman making demands of my time and attention."

So Severus watched and waited, ready to pick up the pieces when Lucius finally succumbed to the overwhelming grief the little things revealed. It was only a matter of time and patience. And to a man who had experienced unrequited love and desire for thirty years, a few months was neither trial nor hardship.

A/N: This was written for the 2013 Lucius Big Bang on LiveJournal, using a prompt karelia gave me some time ago. Thanks to linlawless who did the beta work.

And yes, it does have short chapters. All the better to torment you with.

Chapter One

Chapter 2 of 6

The kitchen elves get uppity, and Lucius has a moment.

Disclaimer: They aren't mine. They are far too needy!

Chapter One: *August 2005*

"Dinner is *served*, Master." The head kitchen-elf, as imperious as his mistress, somehow managed to look down his long nose at the two wizards standing either side of the fireplace, brandy glasses in hand.

"Yes, yes, so Kippy said. We'll be along in a just a moment."

With a sniff of disapproval, the elf disappeared.

"You'd better watch out, Lucius; you might find your best robes shortened an inch or two." Severus Snape downed his glass and preceded his friend out of the room.

"They've become quite uppity since she left. She... Well, I didn't have a lot to do with the kitchen-elves before. Cissy dealt with all the household management." Lucius pulled out his chair and sat at the head of the long, almost empty table, every gleaming piece of silver, each perfectly polished glass screaming in protest against the absence of the Manor's mistress. "This," he waved his hand around the table, "this is not my doing. They just..." He shrugged as the first course was delivered by a straight-backed Kippy.

"Warm pickled beetroot and heirloom tomato salad, Master."

Lucius nodded. "Thank you, Kippy."

Further conversation returned to the safer topics of Severus's newest assistant at Hogwarts, one Hermione Weasley.

"So, how are you managing with the delightful Madam Weasley?"

Snape sighed. "As I told Minerva before she foisted the witch upon me, she's undoubtedly talented, intelligent, and resourceful, but she just... won't... shut... up!"

"Chatty wench?"

"Overbearingly so. Always reciting journals and text books, but never stopping for one moment to *think*! She could be brilliant if she'd simply have the confidence to use her own brain instead of the outdated musings of others."

"Sounds like you're developing a soft spot for her."

Severus barely managed not to choke on his mouthful of beetroot. "Hardly. She's not my type. And, in case you hadn't noticed, she's married – and probably breeding another generation of red-headed terrors, if her sickly appearance and refusal to eat in the mornings is any indication."

"Too bad. A good tumble would do you the world of good." Lucius frowned for a moment. "Come to think of it, I can't remember ever seeing you with a woman. Just what *is* your type?"

"Not what you'd expect, my friend."

"Do enlighten me."

Severus was saved by the arrival of Kippy with the main course. "Asparagus and chanterelle risotto with spinach and feta salad, Master."

Lucius's sigh was subtle, but spoke volumes to a man attuned to his every nuance.

"Narcissa became vegetarian a few years ago, didn't she?"

Spearing a mushroom with his fork, Lucius nodded.

"And, as far as I know, you've never chosen to follow her dietary restrictions, yet every time I have dined here with you since she left, the house-elves have served vegetarian food." Severus tasted his risotto before continuing. "Delicious vegetarian food, but the distinct lack of meat is not your style, Lucius."

"I'd kill for a decent Beef Wellington. Or a nice piece of salmon. Even a simple pork chop..."

"Lucius."

"A lovely rare steak, dripping in garlic butter..."

"Lucius."

"Just a little bacon with my eggs in the morning..."

"Lucius!" Severus rapped his friend across the knuckles with his fork.

"I apologise. I was a little... distracted."

"You're the master here. If you want meat, just order the damned house-elves to prepare it."

"You don't understand, Severus. Narcissa took on all the kitchen-elves. They call me 'master' out of courtesy, but only answer to her." He grimaced as he recalled the final explosive row with his wife. "She left strict instructions for them to provide only vegetarian meals until advised otherwise. It appears she hasn't forgiven me yet."

"*She* left you, Lucius. I can't imagine what she would have to forgive you for. Besides, restaurants serve perfectly decent meals. You *are* permitted to leave the Manor, you know."

Lucius had rarely left his home since Narcissa had rediscovered her long-lost libido with a somewhat younger, wealthier wizard two months earlier. In retrospect, calling her a frigid bitch when she had first announced their marriage was over had not been one of his wiser decisions.

"It's not that simple, Severus. My reputation is in tatters, my credibility non-existent... Dammit, a man has his pride."

Refusing to discuss the matter further, Lucius called Kippy to remove their plates and declined dessert, opting to return to the brandy bottle waiting in the library.

Lucius startled out of his reverie when Severus laid a hand on his shoulder. Over all the years they had been friends, the younger man had rarely volunteered such intimacy, and the warmth of his touch melted the last of his reserve.

"She never really loved me." Lucius spoke to the fire, not turning to face his companion, who remained silent. "She didn't hate me either. I could have understood that. Some sort of passion, at least. It was the indifference I couldn't bear." His head drooped, but he did not move away from Severus's comforting hand.

"I know what you're thinking. It didn't stop us making l—no... fucking. We fucked. She enjoyed that, I suppose; it was hard to tell. You know, Severus, every time, I thought, perhaps... perhaps she'll close her eyes and cry my name. Just once. I read all I could about lovemaking techniques. Tried everything to shatter her control. Yes, she took pleasure from my touch, but not from my mind, Sev, not from my heart."

Lucius poured another drink from the decanter on the mantelpiece. As Severus lifted his hand to reach for his abandoned glass, Lucius suddenly reached up and clasped it in his own.

"Warm. Cissy's hands were so cold." He studied Severus's hand intently, brushing his fingertips over the back and along the long fingers as if he had forgotten the hand was attached.

Without warning, Lucius tossed his drink down his throat and left the room, leaving his friend staring after him, clenching and unclenching the hand Lucius had held.

The next morning nothing had changed, but nothing remained the same.

A/N: This was written for the Lucius Big Bang in response to a prompt from karelia. Thanks to linlawless who did the beta work.

Chapter Two

Chapter 3 of 6

Severus and Draco have a little chat.

Disclaimer: They aren't mine, alas.

Chapter Two

"How is he?" Draco reclined in the chair by the fire, his relaxed demeanour belied by the incessant tapping of his fingers on the leather arm. After having wine and dined his godfather, he had finally broached the reason for the meeting.

"Much the same. He continues his daily routine as if nothing is amiss." Severus was reluctant to share the revelations of the night in the library, especially to Lucius and Narcissa's son.

"But you worry about him, don't you?"

"Is it that obvious?"

"Severus, I've known you all my life, and at least half that time I've been aware of how you feel about my father." Draco smirked as Severus spluttered into his drink, his cool façade sundered by a mere few words.

"You knew?" Denial was clearly fruitless.

"Of course I knew. You were the two men I looked up to all my life. I spent most of my youth observing your interactions. Of course, I was at Hogwarts by the time I began to understand a man could love another man in *that* way." He grinned. "Was quite a revelation, I can tell you."

"Who else?"

"No-one, I would imagine. Your secret is safe, Severus." Draco raised his glass in a silent toast.

Severus slumped back in his chair, his carefully cultivated mask of serenity crumpled into despair. "I don't know how to help him, Draco. He's withdrawn into a place I cannot reach. I'm not sure moving into the Manor was such a good idea."

"Nonsense. If it weren't for you, he wouldn't speak to anyone other than for necessary business meetings. And he delegates most of those to me. Our clients are becoming unsettled, and if anything, his absence is cementing the rumours. He needs to snap out of it."

Severus shook his head. "If only it were that simple. His entire sense of self-esteem has revolved around your mother and his reputation. To lose both of those in one fell blow has hurt him badly."

"Perhaps you should get him drunk and shag him senseless. Maybe then he'd realise someone appreciates him." Draco picked a piece of imaginary lint off his spotless cuff while he waited for his companion to breathe.

"As delightful as that idea might be, I doubt he would appreciate waking up the morning after with a sore, slippery arse and a hangover from hell." This time it was Draco who spat port over his lap while Severus sported the smirk.

"Severus! Do you mind? There's only so much detail about your fantasies I need to know." Recovering rapidly, Draco added, "Besides, I always imagined Father as the top."

"As your godfather, I should probably be concerned you have any opinion at all on your father's sexual preferences; however, under the circumstances, I shall take it under advisement in the unlikely event such information may become useful."

Draco finished his drink and stood, offering his hand to Severus in farewell. "Well, good luck. If anyone can get through to him, it's you. He thinks far more highly of you than you realise."

"What did my son want? Trying to poke his wand in where it's not wanted, I suspect." Lucius affected a nonchalant glance over the rim of his glass.

"He worries about his father. I had no idea that was considered a criminal offence nowadays. Besides, it was an excellent lunch." Severus cast a disparaging eye over the black bean, feta, and tomato filo pie which had been set in front of him. "A nice piece of fillet steak. Rare. With oysters." Saying no more, he picked up his knife and fork.

"Oysters? Steak?" Lucius groaned. "I'm in hell. Or purgatory. Or whatever those Muggle religions call it."

"Your choice, Lucius. Any time you want to dine out, I'll be delighted to accompany you." He inclined his head towards his friend. "Of course, you're paying."

"That could be considered a date, Severus. They'll have even more to gossip about." Lucius missed the rising stain in Severus's cheeks as he turned to the waiting house-elf to request more wine.

"Draco did not appear concerned when he paid for lunch today. If your theory is correct, the entire membership of Pilliwickle's now considers me his ageing doxy. His taste in men may be execrable, but I cannot fault his choice of establishment."

Kippy had removed their main course dishes and replaced them with dessert, a delicate concoction of roasted nectarine, champagne mousse, and raspberry and honey sauce on a pistachio crumble base.

"At least the house-elves haven't forgone their perfect desserts yet. Narcissa had been suggesting healthy, raw fruit slices with unsweetened yoghurt before she left." Lucius shuddered, then sighed in ecstasy as his spoon delivered a portion of heaven to his lips.

"I'd keep that quiet if I were you. They might get ideas."

Both men cast furtive glances at the door and concentrated on the plates before them. They were scraping the last of the sauce off the plates when a familiar, imperious voice demanded their attention.

"Lucius! Lucius! Where are you?"

"Fuck, it's Narcissa! Don't let her see the remains of dessert!" Lucius shooed Kippy out of the door to the kitchen with the evidence. Turning towards the other door, he called, "We're in here, Cissy!"

"Oh, there you are. A little late for dinner, isn't it? And I see Severus is *still* here."

Lucius lifted his chin and raised an eyebrow in his best sneer. "To what do we owe the pleasure of your company this evening, Madam?"

"I've come to collect Nuppy. I need her in my kitchen."

"But..."

"No buts, Lucius. I brought her here from my sister's kitchen; I have every right to take her to mine. I'm sure you'll manage without her. Merlin knows there are plenty of other house-elves in this place." With that, Narcissa swept off to the kitchen to find her elf.

"But... but..."

Severus placed a soothing hand on his friend's arm. "Don't let her high-handed ways bother you, Lucius. You *do* have plenty of other elves."

"You don't understand, Severus, Nuppy is the dessert elf!"

"Then do something, man!"

Half an hour later, the two wizards sat in the library, nursing their brandy glasses and the final bottle of 200-year-old goblin spirit.

"Did you have to let her take the rest of the brandy as well?"

"It was an anniversary present from her uncle. I could hardly deny her."

"Did she really call you a—"

"Please, Severus, it was bad enough hearing it from her lips. Just... don't." Lucius sighed. "She really hated being married to me that much?"

Severus felt his jaw tighten as he watched Lucius's self-esteem sink even lower. "Dammit, Luc, don't take such stock of her opinion. You're an attractive, intelligent, charismatic wizard any discerning witch would be proud to call hers. Narcissa is trying to justify leaving you by casting aspersions on your sexual prowess and desirability, but she has no idea how others see you."

Lucius shook his head and left the room, taking his brandy to the solitude of his bedchamber.

"She has no idea how I see you," Severus whispered to the closed door.

Chapter Three

Chapter 4 of 6

Lucius experiments.

Disclaimer: They belong to JKR, not me.

Chapter Three

"Master Professor Snape, we is needing your help!" Severus had dropped the *Daily Prophet* and drawn his wand before he recalled he was sitting in the breakfast room at Malfoy Manor awaiting the presence of its lord and master.

"What is it, Kippy?"

"Is the master, sir. He will not leave his bed. He told Kippy he was staying there all day long. Please, Master Professor Snape, he is having a *schedule!*"

"Perhaps he is unwell. Have you sent for a Healer?"

"No, sir. Master is not being sick. Master is being... lazy!" With that, the elf squealed and started banging his head against the table edge. "Bad Kippy! Must be punished for speaking so about Master." Kippy wailed his distress as he thumped the table.

Severus seized the house-elf's head and held him still. "Cease that infernal racket, elf! Go back to the kitchen or wherever it is you need to go, and I will attend to your master."

"What's this I hear about you lazing around in bed all day?" Severus strode into the master's bedchamber without knocking and threw open the curtains. He turned to find Lucius stretched out on the bed, clearly nude, with a sheet barely covering his groin. His hair was tangled, and the shadows under his eyes told of a sleepless night, but Lucius refused to acknowledge any distress remaining from the previous evening.

"Maybe I fancied a day in bend wanking myself silly. You should try it sometime, Sev, would do you the world of good. You need a little loosening up." Lucius slipped his hand under the sheet, clearly stroking himself beneath the thin covering.

Severus, eyes riveted to where the material had begun to lift, smothered a gasp behind a bored expression. "Suit yourself. I can wait. Your ten o'clock appointment may be a little less forgiving, however."

"Fuck him. Or her. I don't bloody care." Lucius met Severus's eyes and deliberately dragged the sheet lower, exposing his fully developed arousal and the hand working it. "Watch if you must. Perhaps you'll enjoy it?"

Severus spun on his heel, but not before Lucius had noticed his flush. "Don't be ridiculous, Lucius. I shall be in the breakfast room when you've finished entertaining yourself." He stalked out, stopping only after the door had closed behind him to lean heavily against it and take a deep, ragged breath. He brushed a hand over his own straining crotch and resolutely returned downstairs. Knowing Lucius's outrageous behaviour was merely his way of disguising his distress did not mitigate the delectable images now painted in his imagination to torture him for the rest of the day.

Appearing downstairs half an hour later, showered and dressed to impress, Lucius joined Severus at the breakfast table.

"I must offer my apologies, my friend. My behaviour upstairs was reprehensible. I was... well, I was not myself."

Severus nodded, shoulders stiff and avoiding eye contact. "Nothing to forgive, Lucius. I should have knocked." He poured himself some tea and drained half the cup without pause. "I must go. I have a great deal of work to catch up on today."

"Will you be back for dinner?"

Despite his intention to allow some distance between them, Severus succumbed to the desperation in Lucius's question and nodded again before leaving him to finish his breakfast alone.

Many hours later, sitting alone at his desk in the dungeon of Hogwarts, lists of ingredients for the next year's classes long abandoned to fruitless fantasies of pale skin and intimate caresses, Severus let his head drop into his hands and rubbed at his eyes. "Gods, Draco, I don't know if I'll survive this."

Back at the Manor, Lucius sat in his own office, shuffling parchments from one pile to another. His cheeks reddened as he recalled how he had displayed himself, erect and wanton, before his best friend, but somewhere inside his brain, the memory of the other man's curious reaction had piqued his interest.

If the conversation that night at dinner was a little stilted, neither man emerged from his contemplation enough to notice. Even the platter of fresh fruit and unsweetened yoghurt laid out for dessert failed to rouse them from their innermost thoughts.

A week later Lucius's second-best brandy was the chosen method of oblivion for the two morose wizards sprawled on the leather sofa in the drawing room. The change of venue had done little to inspire enlightenment for either man despite a somewhat inspired rant earlier in the evening from Lucius on the fickleness of women in general.

Severus was staring at the bottom of his glass, wondering who had drunk all his brandy, when he felt a hand on his knee. He frowned for a moment, then looked up at Lucius, who had moved a fraction closer.

"Whassa matter, Luc?"

"You know, Sev, you're my bes' friend. Always have been. Even when I was foolish enough to believe Voldo... Vodlo... Volli... that evil git, you stood by me and saved me in the end. I'd be in a cold, damp cell now if you hadn't..." Lucius wiped a suspiciously damp spot from the corner of one eye and moved even closer.

"I wish I fancied men. I'd shag you in a heartbeat." He grinned and slid his hand further up Severus's thigh, dangerously close to where a tell-tale thickening had developed despite the half bottle of brandy. "What about a snog then, see what it's like? Never know until you try."

Severus tried in vain to move away, but the arm of the sofa prevented his escape. Shaking his head, he found his lips captured by Lucius's mouth, and before he knew it an inquisitive tongue was thoroughly exploring his mouth. Hints of coffee and brandy and the unique taste of Lucius himself was an intoxicant far more potent than alcohol. With a sigh of inevitability, Severus relinquished his hard-won control and returned the kiss, threading his hands through the blond's silken hair as he drew him closer.

As the last vestiges of Severus's restraint collapsed, Lucius pulled back, eyes wide and lips swollen. He watched the younger man visibly struggle to regain his composure, cheeks flushed and expression, for once, unmasked.

Severus brushed Lucius's enquiring hands away and stood abruptly. "Satisfied?" His voice was hard, but with a broken edge to it Lucius could almost touch. Stalking stiffly

to the door, Severus left the room without looking back.

If he had, he would have seen his friend sitting motionless, fingers touching his lips in wonder.

A/N: This was written for the 2012 Lucius Big Bang. Thanks to karelia for the prompt and linlawless for the beta work.

Chapter Four

Chapter 5 of 6

Lucius does a little more research with a not-so-reluctant assistant.

Disclaimer: I don't own them, but I'll take full responsibility for anything naughty they do.

Chapter Four

Drinking brandy to excess was never a good idea. Doing so with no stock of Hangover Potion available was utter folly. Clutching the edges of his silk robe together in lieu of the belt he couldn't find, Lucius managed to negotiate the stairs to find his favourite Potions master.

"Please tell me you have some in your room. I'm dying here!" Lucius sank onto the chair beside his impeccably dressed guest, barely managing to maintain the grip on his robe.

Severus looked up from his breakfast of kippers on toast and paused a moment to admire the long, well-muscled legs displayed to their advantage in the short bathrobe. A robe that was dangerously close to gaping wide open as its wearer leaned back in the chair and whined.

"Please, Severus. I know you must have some."

Shaking his head, Severus reached into his pocket and deposited a small vial on the table in front of his friend. "Down the hatch. All at once – you know you hate the taste."

Lucius forgot his robe as he grappled with the stopper and swallowed the bitter liquid. He held his head with both hands and closed his eyes until it ceased throbbing. Looking up, he found Severus staring transfixed at his exposed crotch.

"Did I really snog you last night, Sev, or was that a dream?"

"More like a bloody nightmare." Severus had yet to look away from what was developing into an impressive erection as he watched. "I don't know what you were thinking, but I suggest you find a woman to expend all this excessive energy on. Experimentation is one thing, but I'm not inclined to be your test subject for more advanced research. And for Merlin's sake, put some clothes on!"

Lucius flipped his robe over his lap as his penis twitched at the suggestion of research and all it could entail. Standing with dignity, he made his way back upstairs for a shower and a little stress relief.

The atmosphere at dinner had become decidedly awkward by the time Lucius led the skimpily clad blonde he had brought home away to his bedroom, having found conversation somewhat inhibited by the less than stellar capacity for intelligent thought possessed by the young lady. However, her plunging neckline displayed other assets he felt to be adequate to his needs for the evening.

Severus's parting smirk faded into a bitter scowl as he watched the pair leave the room. Draining his glass, he headed for the library to immerse himself into the distraction of the latest Potions research.

Thirty minutes later, he was still staring at the unopened journal when the door opened and the flustered and once again nearly naked master of the Manor walked in.

"Finished already?" Severus managed a jaunty tone.

Lucius leaned over the back of Severus's chair and let out a heavy sigh. "Didn't start."

"What do you mean, you didn't start? It looked like you'd started before you'd even left the room."

"Nothing happened. Not a bloody twitch. I had more action in my trousers the night I snogged you. She's gone." Lucius's brow creased as he processed an idea. "I don't suppose..." Grey eyes met horrified black as Severus stood and tossed the journal aside.

"Are you serious?"

"Yes." Lucius moved around to stand before Severus. "Yes, I am. I have to know it still works. That I haven't lost it altogether. That she's wrong!" He stepped closer, invading Severus's personal space. Bringing his hands up to the other man's face, he closed the distance until only a breath separated their lips.

Severus watched as if from a distance as his head moved outside of his conscious volition, closing the gap between them and once again claiming Lucius's mouth. All thought fled as his long-suppressed libido surged into dominance. His hands could no more refrain from tangling in the already mussed blond tresses than his hips could withstand the urge to thrust against the loose silk of his friend's robe. It was only when he felt a nudge against his straining trousers he glanced down to find Lucius's eager erection jabbing at his crotch through a wide gap in the now half-open garment. Groaning his submission to desire, he reached down and took Lucius in his hand.

It was magnificent. The softest silk sheathing rigid steel, warm and moist and oh-so-responsive. He slid his hand along the length.

Once.

Twice.

"Oh, gods, Severus. Please!"

Severus hesitated. "Are you sure?"

"Just do it, for fuck's sake! Make me feel again!" Lucius shrugged off his robe and stood naked and pleading, his cock still firmly clasped in another man's hand.

Without another word, Severus repossessed Lucius's mouth and released the hunger he had held back for an eternity. Stroking the hard flesh in his hand, he trailed kisses over the other man's neck and shoulder, finally finding the sensitive nubs below. Flicking with the tip of his tongue in tandem with his increasingly rapid hand movements, Severus worshipped the man he loved. Within moments, hot jets of fluid coated his hand and trousers as Lucius cried out his completion. Sinking to his knees, the blond rested his head against Severus's thighs as his breathing returned to normal.

Eyes moist, Severus struggled not to rub his painfully erect penis against the layers of cloth between it and Lucius's face. Lucius, however, was aware of the hard ridge nudging his nose. Not looking up, he slowly released Severus's buttons and drew his trousers down over his hips, followed by his boxers to reveal the flushed, moist-tipped evidence of his friend's response. With only a brief hesitation, Lucius swiped his tongue over the tip and, encouraged by Severus's gasp, engulfed him in his mouth. Any lack of expertise was more than compensated for with his enthusiasm as he licked and sucked and kissed a cock for the first time in his life.

Suddenly, Severus pulled back. "Stop, I'm going to—" Warm, sticky ejaculate coated Lucius's face as Severus lost all control. Looking down, he grimaced in self-disgust. "Gods, I'm sorry. I should have stopped you earlier."

Lucius grinned, a comical look with streaks of semen on his cheeks and chin. "Always wondered what that would be like."

Severus groaned and hid his face in his hands. "Research, I suppose?"

Rising to his feet, Lucius offered his hand. "I believe any further study should be done in the privacy of my bedroom. I suspect there are other activities we could assess? That is, if you don't object?"

"Be careful what you wish for, Lucius. I've waited too long to spare your blushes now," Severus growled as he headed up the stairs.

"Waited too long? For what?"

Later, as he lay on the bed feeling uncomfortably but deliciously filled by dark thrusting wizard, Lucius laughed for the first time in a year.

"Lucius, I'm balls-deep in your arse, and you find it amusing?" Nevertheless, Severus did not miss a beat.

"I finally realised what's been missing all these years."

"Pray tell, at least some time before Christmas, man. I can't hold back much... arrgh... longer."

"Passion, Severus. Passion." With that, Lucius thrust up in counterpoint, creating an agony and ecstasy of exquisite friction sending both men over the edge into incoherence.

Many moments later, Severus turned his head to the wizard lying sprawled and sated beside him.

"Fuck, Lucius, that was some research."

"Consider me fucked. Your turn next time."

"With pleasure."

A/N: This was written for the 2012 Lucius Big Bang on LiveJournal. Many thanks to karelia for the inspiration and linlawless for the beta.

Chapter Five

Chapter 6 of 6

Lucius has returned to his old self, but is something missing?

Disclaimer: They belong to JKR, and I'm about to clean them up and send them back. I hope they keep their mouths shut about what they've been up to!

Chapter Five

Lying in bed alone, Severus couldn't resist rolling to one side and inhaling the faint scent of Lucius's aftershave remaining on the pillow. The man himself had risen early to prepare for an important meeting in Diagon Alley with a prospective investor. Six weeks after discovering the waiting arms of his best friend, Lucius was back in full form: confident, arrogant, and powerful.

While the sex was incredible, full of heat and passion and even playfulness, it had been the knowledge he was desirable that had lifted Lucius out of his depression. Once again impeccably groomed, his bearing told all who observed he was a man not to be trifled with. He had even packed all the kitchen elves off to Narcissa. Lucius had found new house-elves, elves who had never heard of vegetarianism. Elves who cooked juicy, rare fillet steaks, succulent pork chops, and sizzling, crispy bacon.

And yet Severus could not suppress a sigh. Having the man he had desired for years in his bed should have been sufficient, but Severus wanted more.

For Lucius had never spoken of love.

Passion, lust, physical fulfilment. The blond spoke heated words of desire in the wee small hours and shouted his triumph in the broad light of day, but he had never revealed his heart.

And of all things, Lucius's heart was what Severus had longed for the most. A bitter kernel of suspicion tugged in his chest and was growing larger every day. Did Lucius merely want him for physical pleasure?

"You're very quiet this evening, Severus."

Severus glanced over at the man reclining on the bed. Lucius took every opportunity to remove his clothes and was gloriously naked and aroused, idly stroking himself as he watched his lover preparing for bed. Unable to conceal his response as he dropped his underwear, Severus simply shrugged away Lucius's concern, distracting him sufficiently with his lips, tongue, and long, supple fingers to avoid further questions.

Hours later, in the shadows of the night, Severus trailed a finger along skin still warmed with passion and watched Lucius sleep as he whispered the words he dared not while the man was awake. Spooning against Lucius's back, Severus missed the curve of a smile and the grey eyes which flickered open at his words.

"Good morning."

Severus opened his eyes to find Lucius still beside him, head propped up on one hand and an undefinable expression softening his features. "Good morning."

"It is." Lucius did not offer further explanation before capturing Severus's face between his hands and gazing into his eyes, baring his soul to the darker man's scrutiny. After long moments, he closed his eyes and the distance between them to initiate a kiss unlike any they had shared before. Gone was the fire and passion, replaced with tenderness as gentle as any woman's caress.

Long after Lucius had left for his office, Severus lay alone and thoughtful, hope swelling in his chest and a future unfolding in which he could finally imagine happiness.

"Kippy!"

"Yes, Master Professor Snape?"

"Have you seen your master yet?" Severus glanced at the window, where the darkening skies declared the lateness of the hour, well past dinnertime. Lucius should have been home two hours earlier.

"The master has not summoned Kippy, sir."

"Thank you. That will be all."

Worry and self-doubt furrowed Severus's brow as he poured a generous tot of brandy, forsaking the wine he had been drinking for something a little more fortifying.

The grandfather clock in the dining room had chimed ten o'clock when Severus was woken from a light doze by the slam of the front door and the distinctive click of Lucius's expensively shod heels on the marble tiles.

"Severus! Where are... There you are." The blond had tossed his robes over a chair and had a drink half poured before Severus was fully awake. "Merlin, what a day! You would not believe the problems I've had with the Minister about our new project."

"Why did you not send an owl?" The words were out before his sleep-drugged brain was in control of his tongue.

"The man has no vis... An owl? Why?" Lucius blinked as if seeing Severus for the first time. "What's wrong, Sev? Have you been drinking?"

Severus remained silent, his expression unreadable as he stood and left the room.

Lucius was still staring at the door when Kippy entered.

"Is master requiring dinner?"

"No, thank you, Kippy." As the house elf turned to leave, Lucius added, "Do you know why Master Severus was... not himself?"

Kippy's ears drooped as he replied. "Master Professor Snape was worried, sir."

"Worried?"

"Yes, master. You is usually home by six."

"Why should he... Oh, fuck!" Ignoring the bewildered elf, Lucius ran out of the room and up the stairs to his bedroom.

"Severus!" Finding his room empty, Lucius hurried to Severus's room. The room Severus had not used for six weeks. Finding the door closed, he paused, suddenly unsure of his welcome. After knocking twice, the door opened abruptly.

"Yes?" Severus was shirtless, his trousers unfastened and riding low on his hips. He had never looked so enticing.

"Please talk to me. What in Merlin's name have I done wrong?"

Severus stood in the doorway, preventing Lucius's entry to the room. "Perhaps you should look at my face rather than my crotch, Lucius." His trousers had slipped lower, revealing the lack of underwear beneath and the arousal his words denied.

Dragging his eyes up to meet Severus's, Lucius was startled at the pain revealed within. "I can't help it. I want you so much."

"Is that all I am to you? A quick fuck? Stress relief until you find another woman you can perform for?" Severus stepped out of his trousers and stood aside, gesturing towards the bed. "Very well, you might as well get on with it. How would you like it tonight, Lucius? Top or bottom? I'm here to please." His body was pale even in the candlelight, erection standing proud despite the bitterness of his words.

Lucius followed him into the room, closing the door firmly behind him. He shook his head and reached out, cupping Severus's face in his hand. "Do you really believe that's all you are to me, Sev? A warm body? Physical release? I thought you understood this morning."

Taking the other man's hand in his, he placed it on his chest to reveal the rapid thump beneath. "This is where you belong, Severus, where you've always belonged. I failed to realise it for too many years in my obsession with Cissy. But you were always there, always by my side when I needed you, even when I did not deserve you. This," moving Severus's hand down his body to find the erection straining the fabric of his trousers, he continued, "This was unexpected. Gloriously so. My desire for you took me by surprise; the intensity of the passion between us has me dumbfounded." He gasped as Severus gripped his hardened flesh and began to stroke through the fabric. "But this... gods, Sev... this is... fuck, stop, I can't think... don't stop... Merlin, I love you, you stubborn git!"

Severus smirked as he reached for his wand with his other hand and dispensed with Lucius's best trousers and everything else he was wearing. "Then, next time you're going to be late, send an owl, you pillock! Now, kiss me and tell me you love me again."

Just before Lucius's lips met his lover's he found the words once more. And after he collapsed on the bed ten minutes later.

And softly, tenderly in the moonlight many, many hours later as he lay in the arms of the man who had saved him.

A/N: This was written for the 2012 Lucius Big Bang on LiveJournal. My thanks to karelia and linlawless. They're awesome!