

Joys of Parenthood

by shalimar1981

Remus muses about the good and the sometimes not so good sides of being a parent, and how reaping the rewards may take some time.

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Chapter 1 of 1

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Disclaimer: I don't own anything you recognise. I'm just having some fun with them.

Betaed by Ladyinthecloak and lux_astraea, the best betas ever! *hugs*

Thanks to little one as always. This is for you and all us parents, who know about those little moments when you wish you had a camera, but don't.

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A parent's revenge by shalimar1981

Fatherhood was never something I expected to experience. Due to my affliction I doubted to ever find someone willing to be with me for long, never mind starting a family. The perfect imperfect woman decided I would do when I was in my mid-forties. So one could say that I'm already very set in my ways. Perhaps that is the reason that I look at fatherhood more realistically than others. Not that I'm not completely smitten with my darling daughter. But I'm acutely aware sometimes of both the joys and the very, very exhausting side of having a child.

For example, take this moment: I'm working on the research project that has been the apple of my eye for close to five years now. It seems to finally bring in results. I am in a crucial phase, my quill racing from one parchment to the next.

And our little demon decides that Daddy has had enough time to himself.

She toddles towards me (having only recently decided to start to walk, she is now very proud of how straight she toddles towards me), either mine or Hermione's Gryffindor scarf tucked precariously between head and shoulder, in a way that tells me we probably need a third such scarf very soon indeed, pacifier secure in her mouth and a book - her book - in her hand. The other hand is stretched out for me to take. In case I wouldn't get what she is about, agitated 'Ahh-AAAAHHHs' and frantic twitching accompany her request to follow her. As soon as I make a move to comply, she grabs my hand and impatiently tugs me in the direction of her room or, more precisely, the rocking chair in her room.

Anyone who knows both my wife and me would say she inherited Hermione's bossiness. But to be perfectly honest, since I, too, have sometimes been known to be, uh, persuasive, we aren't sure exactly whom she inherited that trait from. If it isn't even part of that will-forming phase all the child-rearing books talk about. Neither are we sure where her looks come from.

With light blue eyes and light blond hair, we jokingly wonder sometimes if she isn't our child at all. No trace of grey or brown can be found in her eyes and while my hair is a

light brown now liberally streaked with grey, I was never that blond as a child. I took to teasing Hermione that she should really tell Draco Malfoy about his child sometime, knowing fully well how those two detest each other. The young Malfoy would surely burst a vein were even a hint of that joking speculation to become public.

So we took to speculating about some of our relatives instead, which can be quite funny sometimes, especially when we had a bit too much wine for dinner with Cassie fast asleep in her room and we...

Well.

She already loves books like nothing else, which could be a strong indication that at least Hermione is her mother. She doesn't like books the way we do, though. Rather with a passion she only exhibits when it's time for another meal. We obtained some fairly useless and boring books only for her to gnaw on, so that our treasures at least are safe, for now in any case.

So she is tugging me into her room, for it is Story Time. I settle in the rocking chair with her in my lap, scarf and picture book comfortably arranged, ready to start reading.

I read the book to her several times from cover to cover until she finally falls asleep. Instead of putting her in her cot, I watch her for a long while. That this stubborn, head-strong, devilishly cute baby is of Hermione's and my creation is still hard to believe sometimes, even after a year and a half of having her with us.

I nod off watching her, content to stay like this with her nestled securely in my arms.

She doesn't wake up as I do at the flash of the *Silencio*ed camera her mother uses to photograph us in our sleepy splendour. Nor does she when her mother lowers the camera and starts giggling mercilessly. She *does* wake up though when I sit up and move to carry her to her bed.

Hermione at least stops laughing then, gives me a commiserating look and heads off to eat some leftover dinner.

It takes another *hour* to convince Cassie to fall back asleep.

I feel slightly less disgruntled at Hermione deserting me with this onerous task when I find her in our bed, hair messily piled on top of her head, glasses low on her nose, closing a book at my entrance with a smile. She pulls back the sheets invitingly, and I fall on the bed in exhaustion, glad that she is back.

I'm not too exhausted to demand bringing-daughter-to-bed payment in the form of lots of kisses and quite a bit more, however.

I get my revenge on Cassie almost fourteen years later, when her boyfriend of two months comes to visit her during the summer holidays, and I pull out the photo her mother made of the two of us sleeping in that rocking chair, Gryffindor scarf almost strangling her, 'The Tale of Twiggy the Bowtruckle' on my stomach, and drool leaking out of the corner of both of our mouths, making it perfectly clear that she is in fact really my daughter. No one else looks so ridiculous asleep, Sirius and James always insisted when we were still at Hogwarts.

I know that in that moment she hates me. But aside from the usual groaning and begging to have the photo destroyed and the fighting with her teasing siblings, she is covertly waiting for her boyfriend's reaction to it.

Because as she already had to learn, I don't pull out her baby-photos to humiliate her. Well, not only in any case. But also because it is a very good test. If someone is repulsed by his girlfriend's baby-photos, you can be sure he won't be around long.

I learned that lesson first-hand both with my parents, although I admit I didn't realise its purpose then, and with Hermione's parents. They pulled out the most humiliating photos you can imagine, complete with the usual photo of baby-grinning-toothily-while-being-naked-on-the-nappy-changing table. The only things I thought were how much she'd grown up since then, how cute a baby she had been, if her children would look as cute as her, too, and how soon we could start practising for making said babies again. And all that in three seconds.

After that, I was officially 'allowed' to date Hermione. Never mind that we had been dancing around getting married for some months by that point.

When said boyfriend doesn't run away nor laughs louder than the rest of us assembled, but instead gets that secret smile I know very well from my own experience, she comes to hug me that night before I go to bed. She gives me a sweet smile before it turns mischievous at the thought that both her little sister and brother are not far behind her with regard to noticing the other gender and that her mother and I possess far more incriminating photos of them than we do of her.

Fatherhood has indeed two sides to it. But to be honest, I love both of those sides, the joys and the pains as well as how to achieve being a father in the first place.

But I do lock Cassie in that night, just to be on the safe side.

End

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A/N: Well, I hope you liked this one, as it's one of two fics I'm most proud of right now.

The scene with Cassie demanding her story was actually a scene that played out between my daughter and me about a month ago, when I was not fast enough to snap a picture. So I thought, 'Why not write about it?', and there you have it.

The Tale of Twiggy the Bowtruckle' is an actual fanfic here on TPP, by Wartcap. It is very funny and unbelievably cute, so this is kind of a tribute to her comic genius as well.