

Hunger

by HogwartsHoney

Severus hunts down Death Eaters with unforeseen results.

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Chapter 1 of 1

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Warnings: character death, a little gore, dark.

A/N: The storyline and ideas expressed in this work of fiction are not my own, but have been loosely modified from an original piece by Trinidadian journalist Kevin Baldeosingh. This is written as homage to that work with full knowledge of and permission by the original author. Thanks to janeaverage, charmed310 and snapeophile for giving this their kindest attention.

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Severus didn't know who'd drawn wands first, and it really didn't matter, because it wasn't the magic that was killing him, it was the bullets fired by Muggle police that had taken him down. He'd just had magic enough and time enough to Disapparate, but his destination was no better than the scene of the crime; worse, in fact, because now he was completely alone.

It was only now, as he lay quietly in the dark forest, that Severus remembered his life as a child. The pain had dulled somewhat, feeling more like hunger than like the death he knew was coming. He could heal himself, he knew, if he'd had his wand, but it had broken beneath his body as he'd fallen. Wandless magic was possible, and ordinarily he was powerful enough, but the blood that drained from his body faster than he'd thought possible left him weak, cold, shivering.

Hunger. He'd felt that often enough growing up, but even then, he'd never *thought* of himself as a child. At ten, he wanted to be older, at twelve, he strove to be an adult, and at fifteen, he longed for his seventeenth birthday, when he would finally become a man, able to make his own decisions and live his own life away from the poverty and hunger.

Seventeen had brought its own set of worries, but the educated and well-spoken man had assured him that his future was guaranteed. There would be no wanting for anything for people like *him*; "purebloods like him" would be taken care of in the new world that the man was attempting to create.

Pureblood.

Pure blood.

The blood pumped out of his body with stunning efficiency, quietly weakening him, but he was only thankful that the cutting pain had stopped.

He'd been weak, careless, and too intent on stopping Alecto and Lucius – the two remaining Death Eaters who knew his secret. Amycus had been easy enough to remove, but the other two had turned on him, combining their powers with the darkest of Dark Magic, all the worse for being in Muggle London. Of course the police were alerted to the event; blinding flashes of light in a semi-residential area were always acted upon swiftly, and he had drawn upon the darkness within him to cast the Killing Curse, first on Alecto and then Lucius. He would have been successful had the police not arrived, firing a volley of heat into his gut, and he stumbled backwards, feeling the strange

fluttering of his robes and the impact to his belly that seemed to drive the wind out of him. He only just managed to get away, Apparating loudly, not caring that his disappearance would raise questions without answers, and as he appeared in the dark woods, he felt the hard ground hit him as he fell.

He couldn't breathe properly, and there were knives – sharp, cruel, twisted knives that sliced him everywhere, cutting through his gut and chest, and he barely managed to rise up enough to look down at his body, only to see his insides slither out of the gaping wound, steaming slightly in the chill night air, slick and dark with his blood. He closed his eyes. It was better not to see.

The pain had receded until it felt like hunger, and that was the constant in his life, his young life, before Hogwarts. His father, always abusive: and his mother, always searching for ways not to be abused. He had hidden whenever the shouting started, which usually was in the late afternoon, and there wouldn't be any dinner that night. He would be hungry throughout the night and into the morning, when the sight of his mother's face would make him cringe, puffy and still covered with bruises and blood.

Blood.

Pure blood.

The Dark Lord had believed in blood, that pure was best, that only the purest were deserving of life. Perhaps then it was as well that he died tonight with his half-pure blood pumping out into the earth, draining his magic and his life, taking with it all his failures, adding this one to the long list.

'Albus, I'm sorry I couldn't protect him,' he gasped, tasting the metallic tang of blood in his mouth and wondering just how it got there, but then, blood was everywhere. He knew that the former Headmaster had sacrificed his life to save Potter, to ensure that the boy was at least given a chance to defeat the Darkness, and Severus had sworn on his own life to protect their saviour. Again, his failure tasted bitter in his mouth, or perhaps that was just the blood.

It was difficult to think properly, and he was only filled with regret that the great battle would go on without him; that he wouldn't get to see the day when good triumphed over evil, but as the darkness slowly enveloped him and his brain detached from his life, he surrendered to the emptiness and the hunger passed.

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