

Shattered

by Dreamy_Dragon

Incurring the Dark Lord's wrath has terrible consequences.

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Chapter 1 of 1

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Thanks and praise to my lovely betas Anogete and Dacian Goddess.

"Lucius, my slippery friend, you have failed me ... again," Voldemort hissed in a soft voice, quickly ripping the mask from the blond wizard's face.

They were standing in what had once been the premises of a prospering factory. Now it was nothing more than a dirty stretch of concrete in front of yet another abandoned red-brick building, its windows gaping black holes with a few leftover shards of broken glass. For Voldemort and his followers, this desolate, forlorn place had distinctive advantages, as the Aurors wouldn't think to look for them in a rundown industrial area, and no Muggle would dare to come here at night. Somehow the general air of hopeless depression and decay agreed well with the Death Eaters. The Dark Lord was standing in front of Lucius Malfoy, smiling deceptively at him while his loyal followers were gathered around them, all hooded and masked.

Lucius obediently bowed his head. "Forgive me, my Lord, I..."

"No, no, no," Voldemort interrupted him. "After all your mistakes, I was generous enough to give you yet another chance, but you did not prove worthy of my trust." He slowly started to circle around Lucius. "Let us briefly recall your betrayals to me. First, when I seemed to be gone, you never searched for me, conveniently believing the rumours that I was dead. Then you managed to get my beloved diary destroyed the cherished memories of my school days that I had entrusted you to keep. You claimed to adhere to the old ways, yet when my most loyal servant sent up the Dark Mark at the Quidditch World Cup, you ran like a filthy Mudblood. And I? In my utter benevolence I still believed you to be a true follower of mine."

Voldemort looked around to make sure that everyone was listening attentively. "So I trusted you with another task, an important one. I asked you to retrieve the prophecy for me the one thing that truly mattered, that I had wanted for these many years. And you? Failed again, tricked by mere children; and worse, you let yourself and my friends be captured. But perhaps you were glad to hide like a coward in Azkaban where you thought my fury couldn't reach you?" He continued to slowly circle around Lucius, who stood very still, listening and at the same time trying to come up with something that could possibly pacify the Dark Lord.

"But you knew that I was not a lenient master. Hence you fled after you escaped from Azkaban. Yes, I know all about that. At the time being I had no use for you, so I let you believe you had successfully managed to deceive me. But I do not take kindly to betrayal."

Lucius tried to think quickly to find a way to wriggle out of this. Bowing his head again, he said, "Yes, my Lord. I am sorry."

"I will show you what the price for disobeying me is; but first let us continue recounting the history of your deceptions." The air around them seemed to be constantly getting

darker and colder as Voldemort continued. "Finally, my true and loyal Bellatrix managed to track you down and convinced you to come back as I had a task I wished you to perform for me."

Lucius remembered well. After his escape from Azkaban he had thought it prudent to remove himself to France for a while where he had funds available. He had planned to wait until the anger of Voldemort had abated or, that possibility occurring to him for the first time, until their side had lost the war. He had been very careful not to use any of his wizard contacts, as he didn't know who was a supporter of the Dark Lord. He hadn't been able to blend in well with the Muggle world either. Besides, moving among Muggles always made him want to take a good long bath afterwards.

Still, he had managed to pick up some bits and pieces about what was happening in Britain. Apparently, the Aurors had been quite successful in tracking down and arresting a significant number of Death Eaters. Judging by the reports about an ever-growing number of devastating incidents, the war was spreading to the Muggle world. It seemed that Voldemort was becoming increasingly reckless, even desperate. When Lucius had remembered the Dark Lord's relentless fury about the destruction of the diary, he had suddenly recalled the old legend about Horcruxes his father had once told him about. Putting this together with Voldemort's claim to immortality, he had gathered what was happening. He had counted on being able to use this knowledge to his advantage.

Exile made him feel lonely; Draco had been in hiding Merlin-knew-where, and Narcissa couldn't slip away either as her every movement was closely monitored by her sister. Despite what many people thought of him, Lucius was devoted to his wife and son.

A month later, his sister-in-law had turned up at his doorstep. She had convinced him to return to rejoin the Death Eaters. At the time that had seemed to be his best option. The Dark Lord had welcomed him back into his circle, and he had again been privy to his plans, but Voldemort had wanted proof of his loyalty.

"Whatever you wish, my Lord," Lucius had readily replied.

The Dark Lord had smiled in what counted as pleasantly with him. "Very well, Lucius, my friend. I will entrust you once again with an important task."

Lucius had bowed. "I am honoured, my Lord."

"Kill the Mudblood Granger!"

Lucius had blanched at that request, his pale skin becoming even whiter. Granger was very close to Harry Potter and was, as was well known, one of the best-protected witches in Britain. The Order considered her a prime target, not only because of her friendship to the supposed saviour of the wizarding world but also because she was one of the brightest, most powerful witches in a long time, despite the fact that she was Muggle-born. It stood to reason that the Dark Lord was setting him up for failure. Playing for time, Lucius had briefly swallowed and nodded. "Very well, my Lord; consider it done."

He snapped back from his memory when Voldemort continued. "And again, you didn't succeed. Not only does the Mudblood still live, but two of my loyal followers were captured whereas you escaped. So you have failed me again... Lucius, I am disappointed."

Voldemort raised his wand. "*Crucio!*"

Overwhelming pain shot through Lucius, making him feel as if he were being skinned alive and his every bone was being crushed to dust. He couldn't help screaming until the pain finally stopped, and he lay trembling on the cold, dirty stone floor while the merciless laughter of the Death Eaters rang through the night.

Voldemort said quietly, "Get up; we are not done yet."

Lucius shakily managed to get to his feet, leaning against an old brick wall for support.

Voldemort smiled. Turning to one of his followers, he said, "Bring me his wand." The hooded and masked man complied readily, while the Dark Lord looked on, daring the blond wizard to resist.

Then the snake-like man hissed, "Now, my friends, move aside and let him see."

The Death Eaters slowly opened a gap in the circle, and Lucius saw a white bundle lying in front of another old brick wall. He tried to make out what it was. Full of horrified anticipation, he realised that it was a body. A naked, completely still body with white blond hair very much like his own. Voldemort raised his wand and, against his will, Lucius felt himself walking over to where it lay.

"Have a closer look," Voldemort commanded and moved his wand again, forcing Lucius to bend over. And then he saw what used to be his son. There wasn't much left of him, as every bone in his body seemed to have been broken. Dried blood was smeared all over him, his once handsome face contorted in a mask of horror and pain. Voldemort had come to stand behind Lucius, whispering audibly into his ear. "I do hope you like what you see; I have only just begun." He raised his wand once more and said, "*Crucio!*"

Again Lucius fell to the dirty stone floor screaming with pain. Only this time it almost seemed like a relief, as he wasn't forced to see Draco's body anymore. When his senses slowly returned, he found himself on the floor next to the corpse. Most of the Death Eaters were once more laughing at his agony. Voldemort, too, smiled and moved his wand on Draco's father again, forcing him to stand up and face inward into the circle. Then he touched the Dark mark on his forearm, and two more Death Eaters Apparated into the yard, holding a woman between them. She looked terrified. When Lucius recognised his wife, he started forward, but Voldemort shook his head. "No. *Petrificus Totalus!*"

Lucius found himself completely paralysed, unable to move a single muscle, and all he could do was to watch helplessly when Voldemort turned to Narcissa. "Now, let's give our new guest a proper welcome."

With that, he flicked his wand once more, and she was completely naked, screaming with terror. Lucius, contained under the full Body-Bind, thought desperately *No, no, please no, not that!*

Narcissa's eyes had focused on him, recognising him, pleading for help. One of the Death Eaters walked over to the Dark Lord and whispered something in his ear, making him chuckle. "Why, Severus, you are right, of course; we wouldn't want to sully ourselves with a failure's whore. There are other ways of entertainment."

Voldemort nodded to the two men who held Narcissa, and they released their grip on her. When she started to run, he quickly moved his wand again, and she flew up into the air. Voldemort gleefully turned her round and round exposing her to the circle of onlookers in every possible way. When he had amused himself and his followers enough, he let her crash heavily on the hard cold stone floor. She cried out as she made impact with it. Lucius wanted nothing more than to help her, yet he couldn't move.

Voldemort was watching him carefully and said, "You are a family man, aren't you? Being family, she pays for your mistakes."

Lucius had never wanted to kill anyone so much, but still contained under the spell, he could do nothing but glare back.

"Ah, well, we wouldn't want to stop now," Voldemort continued.

He raised his wand again. "*Crucio!*"

Narcissa screamed with pain.

It seemed to go on for hours as Voldemort made sure that every one of the Death Eaters took their turn to cast the torture curse on Lucius's wife. Some seemed to enjoy it more than others. The one the Dark Lord had identified as Snape didn't. He only flicked his wand over her briefly and then stepped quickly back again.

Lucius, still held by the full Body-Bind, had gone from helpless fury to raging pain and was now numb and sick from being forced to watch the horrible spectacle, unable to help Narcissa.

Finally, when her screams had become desperate sobs, Voldemort obviously became bored. He stepped over to her and raised his wand again. *Avada Kedavra!*"

A green bolt of lightning shot toward the woman who lay in a crumpled heap on the floor, and suddenly there was complete silence.

Voldemort waved his wand, casting *Morsmordre*. The symbol of the Dark Mark shot into the night air. He turned to his Death Eaters again. "Good night, my friends."

One by one, they Disapparated. Before he left, Voldemort raised his wand once more, moving it over Narcissa's dead body. *Incendio!*" Then he too, vanished.

Lucius stood there, forced to watch helplessly as the corpse of his wife burned to a pile of ashes. When the Petrificus Totalus spell finally wore off, he collapsed on the floor and cradled Draco's mangled body in his arms, totally numb, unable to feel or think anything.

He didn't know how long he had been sitting there when a swift noise informed him that someone had just Apparated into the yard, probably to finish Voldemort's work and kill him. He didn't care.

When a hand carefully touched his shoulder, he flinched and looked up into the face of Severus Snape. "Come on. You can't stay here."

Lucius shook his head, "No, Narcissa..., Draco..."

"They are dead. There is nothing you can do for them," Snape said softly. "Come; we have to go, the Aurors could be here any minute. Do you feel up to Side-Along-Apparating with me?"

Lucius again shook his head. "No, I can't go, my family..."

"I know; I am sorry. But you can't stay here."

It took Snape several more attempts to convince Lucius to leave with him. At last he managed to get him to his feet. "Come, now."

"Draco...", Lucius said in a strangled voice and still refused to let go of his son.

"We can't take the body; the Dark Lord has put a tracking spell on it. He isn't done with you."

"No..."

"We have to leave. Now." Snape was almost dragging the other man with him.

Lucius was too tired to fight anymore, and they Apparated from the courtyard. Only a pile of ashes and the mangled corpse of a young man remained in the dark, cold night.

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