

Sometimes Three Isn't A Crowd

by Pearle

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Chapter 1 of 1

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Disclaimer: The characters, settings, etc., of the Harry Potter series are not mine; they belong to J.K. Rowling and Co. I promise to return them when I am through. Well, most of them anyway.

~~~~~ Sometimes Three Isn't A Crowd ~~~~~

It had started before the war ended. He wasn't sure why he allowed it to continue. That wasn't true, he knew why it continued. Hermione. He never did understand why she'd married him. What if she decided *he* was the better man? No matter how many times she told him she loved him, no matter how many times she assured him it was his intellect that kept her spell bound, no matter how many times she moaned and came at his touch, he was reminded of her past relationship with *him* and left to wonder if it was truly over.

He found it amazing Lucius had been so taken with her. Opposites attracting, he supposed. It was largely with Hermione's help that Lucius had been persuaded to switch sides only weeks before the final battle. Never mind that it had been Albus and he who had been protecting Potter so the brat could finish off the Dark Lord. It was Lucius who provided the time, date, and location of the Dark Lord's final attack. It was Lucius who was lauded as a hero, regardless of the fact that he had been suspect of being the next Dark Lord right up until the eleventh hour when he declared his allegiance to the light by providing the Order with the critical information it needed.

It wasn't often, but every few weeks she seemed to disappear for a few hours, only to turn up later with the same story every time. She had been shopping, alone, in Muggle London, and lost track of the time.

It was not as if he kept track of her every movement. She didn't check in with him every time she left the castle. Her job at the Ministry kept her late plenty of nights, but he could always reach her. He could always find her or someone that knew where she was. Out shopping with her mother, a dinner with the 'girls', meeting Potter or his sidekick for lunch. Someone, a spouse or a friend, somewhere usually knew where she was if he was looking for her. Except the times she seemed to disappear.

She never smelled of him or sex as she had those few times he'd ran into her at No. 12 Grimmauld Place, neither one of them mentioning the 'relationship' between Hermione and Lucius by tact agreement. He and Hermione hadn't been a couple then. They had formed a working relationship, and by some stretch of the unimaginable, a friendship, while being confined to close quarters, creating the potion that shored up Potter's power.

He knew of her liaisons with Lucius. She often briefed the Order on whatever information she could glean from their conversations. His sense of smell was highly developed. He could smell Lucius on her some nights. It was that simple. Lucius rarely talked about his growing attraction for her, choosing to talk to Severus about the possibility that the Dark Lord could be wrong. That it might be time for them both to take a long hard look at what was right and what was wrong.

There was no question Hermione helped to sway Lucius' mind. Narcissa's death at the hands of her sister, Bellatrix, only spurred his fury. It was Hermione who directed its path. Lucius seemed to change after that. They all did. The Dark Lord was gone. The war was finally over. Whatever 'relationship' she and Lucius seemed to have was over. Severus found himself taken with the young witch. And to his shock, she seemed to return his interest. They started to see one another despite his growing concern she might still be harboring feelings for Lucius.

Lucius played the part of war hero and grieving widower to the hilt, a different young witch on his arm each night. He always thought that was the reason Hermione turned to him. Jealousy. Her jealousy over the other witches Lucius was seeing. Hoping to make him jealous with Severus, as if he could be a threat to Lucius in that area.

It surprised both of them when he kissed her one night and ignited a passion deep within her. They had only been 'dating' a short time, both still worried about giving up their growing friendship for a relationship that might not work out. They made love on their fourth 'date'. It had been warm and passionate and like no other coupling he had ever experienced.

This was a warm, willing woman, not the paid whores of Knockturn Alley, not the Death Eaters wives, whores in their own right, not any of the women he had bedded in the past with the hopes of acquiring some small scrap of information for the Order. This was an intelligent, desirable woman who wanted him as much as he wanted her.

He had watched her eyes glaze over with lust as he thrust forward the first time he took her. His hardened cock fully sheathed in her welcoming heat. She had clawed at his back, whimpering and moaning, pulling at his arse as he drove in and out of her body. Their flesh slick with sweat as they climbed toward their mutual release. She had arched her back, her sex tightening around his cock. She came, moaning, the words unintelligible as she thrashed back and forth, her muscles gripping him in the tightness of her channel, milking the come from his balls. He saw stars as he poured his hot seed into her.

He had managed to fall to the side, trying not to crush her with his upper body. They lay together for several long minutes; their harsh breathing the only sound in the suddenly still room. Wordlessly Hermione turned to him. She nuzzled contentedly into his side before dropping off into a light doze, one leg thrown possessively over his. He knew he wouldn't ask her about her relationship with Lucius, whatever had been he didn't want to know. Afraid it still might not be over yet. He would take what she would give him, no questions asked.

They continued on. Six months into their relationship he asked her to marry him. She said yes. It had been a quiet ceremony and they were happy. They were married three months the first time he noticed her disappearance.

She came home with her now standard excuse about losing track of time. But her movements were different, more...sensual. She rubbed up against him. Her hands slowly stroking up the insides of his thighs, stopping to gently cup and massage his balls. His breathing was ragged. The quill in his hand long forgotten as it lay where it had fallen after slipping from his fingers, red ink dripping onto the stack of essays he had been attempting to grade.

She licked and sucked his ear lobe, trailing hot kisses along his neck before moving between his legs. She freed his aching member, her fingers tracing patterns into the throbbing flesh of his penis from base to tip and back again before taking his entire length into the hot, wet cavern of her mouth. He had been afraid to speak. Afraid to break the spell this enchantress had woven around them.

She rose slowly, moving to straddle his hips. He was shocked to discover she wore nothing under her skirt. She moved over his engorged member and impaled herself on his length, gravity helping her to take his entire length on the first stroke. The wool of her skirt rubbed against the sensitive skin of his exposed balls and only served to stoke the fire in his veins. He thrust heavily into her body as she wantonly rode his erection, crying out with the force of her orgasm when she came. He soon followed, unable to hold back after her earlier teasing.

He began to notice this little scenario occurred every six weeks or so. It had been going on now for eight months, she would disappear for a few hours and then returned that evening to attack him with an unbearable lust. It was always the same. She would disappear and return with the excuse she had been shopping, alone. He was afraid to ask, afraid to question her to closely lest he lose her for all time.

The were times he hadn't realized she's been missing, to busy with a detention or forced to address some problem or other within his house or the castle. It was after they had fucked, there was no other polite way to refer to it. It was sex for the pure purpose of release only, there was little tenderness in either of their movement at those times. He would realize she had not come straight home after work and once again, she would tell him she had been shopping alone in Muggle London.

He knew he never should have let it go on this long. He knew he should have confronted her with his suspicions right from the very beginning. He should have demanded to know where she had been, to know what she had been doing, and with whom. He should have forced her to admit she was lying. Forced her to confess her deception, her disregard for the wedding vows she took. But he was too afraid of what she might tell him. Of the choice she might make if her treachery had been exposed.

He couldn't take it anymore. It would have to end, one way or another. He had decided to follow her the next time she disappeared if he could just figure out when that would be. Silently he watched and waited.

He had sensed a tension in her lately that his was loathed to admit could only be anticipation. He watched for signs, what - he didn't know, but he thought he would be able to recognize some sign, some change in her, when he saw it.

Sure enough, that morning at breakfast, her eyes had been too bright, her speech too hurried. She assured him twice over that she loved him, but he noted the care she took in dressing for work that day, the green silk knickers and matching bra she wore under her 'better' dress robes.

He had been standing outside the Ministry for the last hour. He was taking no chances, using an invisibility spell in addition to the invisibility cloak he wore. Tonight he would know for sure. His gut clenched as he thought of his wife in another man's arms.

What would he do if he worst fears were confirmed? Kill Lucius? He knew he couldn't bear losing Hermione. Regardless of her deception, he still loved her. Perhaps if Lucius was gone, they could be happy again. He came to attention as he watched Hermione leave the building.

Crossing over the street, he followed a short distance behind his wife. He had been a spy for more than half his life and was well practiced in the art of tracking someone without their knowledge. He was surprised when she stopped into a small shop to purchase some skin lotion she normally used. He recognized the shape and colour of

the bottle even at this distance.

She stopped again a few doors further up to purchase a few sticky buns for tomorrow's breakfast. Her pace quickened as she reached the corner and turned left out of his view. He lengthened his stride in an effort to keep up. Could he have been wrong? Could the pressures of work and marriage, marriage to him in particular, be getting to her? Did she just need an evening to herself every so often, with no one to answer to?

Her third stop was a small dress shop. Severus watched through the window as she paid the clerk before shrinking and pocketing the package she was handed. He vowed to sit and talk to her tonight. To really listen and do whatever was in his power to make her happy. To make sure she never regretted her decision to marry him.

His gut clenched when she turned yet another corner and stopped before a faded wood door, its paint peeling away with years of disrepair. He watched her take the brooch from her lapel, the pin transforming itself into a gold key as it lay on her open palm. He could barely breathe as he watched her unlock the door and cross over the threshold.

His mind moved to autopilot, still not believing what he now knew to be true. He caught the edge of the door before it closed and silently slipped into the deserted foyer. He had felt the tingle of magic when he touched the wood. Someone had warded the door against intrusion. It was a spell he recognized from his Death Eater days. There could be only one reason she was here. He could no longer deny his wife's infidelity. Or the identity of the man she had to be trysting with.

Moving forward with extreme caution, he silently cast a spell in front of each doorway. It was a tribute to his own determination that his hands did not shake. There would be time for emotion later, he only knew he could not turn and walk away. The wood threw off an orange light on the fifth doorway he came to. It stood to reason Lucius would use the corresponding charm on this doorway, too. It took but a minute to disarm the wards without attracting Lucius' attention and punch a small hole in the silencing charm.

He stood in the dingy hallway, his wife on the other side of the door with a man he once considered his friend. With the help of an amplification charm, he was able to hear their conversation as if he were standing in the room.

"You're late, my pet. Still trying to fight it? When will you realize you only hurt yourself?" Lucius' smooth voice flowed over him. His nails cutting into his palms as his fists clenched in rage.

"What do you get out of this? I don't want you. I love my husband." Hermione's voice cracked with anguish.

"Oh, but you do enjoy yourself. I can feel how wet you are. I can smell your desire. And not only do I get to fuck your sweet little pussy, I get to fuck Potter and Severus every time I have you. Now, get into the bedroom and take your clothes off. This topic is starting to bore me."

"That's not desire, that's the spell."

"Enough, must you bring this up every time we're together? Undress. Now!"

Their voices faded as they moved into the next room. He was beginning to see things in a new light. Lucius must have cast a powerful geas on Hermione to ensure she didn't change her mind and send him back to Azkaban at the end of the war. It was before they had ever taken an interest in each other. It could be the only explanation for the conversation he had just heard. She was compelled to meet him. Most likely Lucius had woven a spell of secrecy into it, ensuring she would not turn to him for help. She had sold her soul so the Wizarding world could go free and he never knew it. She carried the mark on her soul just as surely as the Dark Lord had marked him.

An odd sense of relief flooded through him. Even in the grips of the geas she had proclaimed her love for him. She was compelled to act against her will by a very powerful spell, one he suspected could easily result in her death were she to try to resist its pull. He needed to proceed carefully if he was to help her.

The first step was to let her know he knew. To ease the guilt she must have been feeling. This was not her choice. She had no more will to disregard the geas than if Lucius had cast the Imperius Curse upon her. Lucius. His vision clouded as he regarded the man he once considered his closest friend. He would find a way to break the geas. There had to be a way. Lucius would not have allowed himself to be bound to Hermione without an escape. He just had to find it.

Then he would kill him.

Slowly. He would take great pleasure in watching him die, inch by inch.

Severus let himself into the flat. He would never let Hermione meet with Lucius alone again. They would share this terrible burden together, until such time as he could discover a way to end it. Until then...

He stood silently in the sitting room, trying to discern what was going on in the bedroom by the sounds he heard. He allowed the invisibility cloak to fall to the side. A plan formulating in his mind as he quietly removed his clothing. When he was totally nude he pulled the cloak over himself once again, casting a Stealth Charm before moving toward the bedroom.

Hermione stiffened as he bit and laved her turgid nipple, his fingers tracing a fiery pattern as he moved to cup her mound.

"Relax. Let me pleasure you." Lucius' head dipped lower, tasting her essence.

Her last thought, before giving herself over to him, was the striking contrast between her husband and this man. His blond hair shining white in the half-light.

Severus felt his stomach tighten. It was one thing to understand his wife was caught in the clutches of a powerful geas. It was another to see Lucius lying between her legs, feasting at her sex as if he didn't have a care in the world. He steeled his will; he would do nothing to endanger Hermione, no matter how much it tore at his heart to watch his wife with another man.

There had been a time, during their Death Eater days, when it had been common for them to share women, to pass them back and forth without a second thought. He had come along way from that life. He was not the same man he had been back then.

Severus dropped his invisibly cloak and moved next to Hermione on the bed. It was time he joined their little party.

"Severus?" Hermione thought she might have been hallucinating. She had felt the bed dip with his weight. She could feel the heat of his body as he settled his long frame against her side. She could even smell his scent, so uniquely his.

"Nice of you to join us." Lucius smiled at his old friend, acknowledging his nod. He was not sure what Severus was up to, but he had never been one to ignore the pleasure of the flesh.

Severus moved closer, one hand gently caressing her breast as he whispered in her ear. "Shhh, I understand. We will talk later."

Hermione turned grateful eyes on him as he moved to possess her mouth. He felt her stiffen as Lucius mounted her body; holding himself tightly as another man rode his wife, as Lucius took what was meant to be his alone. His vision blurred red as Lucius came. His movement bringing Hermione to climax with him, something Severus knew had to be a result of the geas, too.

She had always been loud and vocal during their lovemaking. Given to noisy moans and at times ribald language, quite different from the woman he watched whimpering and moaning quietly beside him. She seemed to be nothing more than a warm receptacle of his seed, a shell of who she was. Not a willing partner, just a lifeless husk of her real self.

Lucius slid off her body to land in a heap on the other side of the bed. Severus pulled Hermione to him, shifting her to her side, forcing her to meet his eyes. He hoped she understood, while it killed him to see her with Lucius, he knew she had no say in the matter. He wrapped his arms around her, kissing her with all the love he felt. He felt a single tear as it slid down her cheek. She returned his kiss with a fervor he didn't think she was capable of at the moment.

He slid under her as he pulled her on top of him, gently settling her on his throbbing cock. He allowed her to set the pace. He would not share her with anyone. Lucius may not have understood it, but he knew Hermione did. They locked eyes as she rode him. She was warm and willing and moved with a surety he knew would turn wild later, when they were alone. Her eyes glazed as she came, her breath coming in harsh pants. She collapsed on top of him before rolling to lie between the two men.

"Just like old times, my friend. I'm glad you could join us."

He found a renewed purpose in life. He would find a way to end this abomination.

And then Lucius would die. Slowly, by his hand.

~~~~ Finis ~~~~

Pearle - July 6th, 2005