

# Ready

*by Delayed Poet*

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*Chapter 1 of 1*

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\* \* \*

"Whoever said size doesn't matter has obviously never been pregnant!" Hermione groaned as she tried to pull her jumper over the large swell at her midriff.

Severus hummed a sound of agreement, his head bent over a stack of essays he was merrily marking with red ink.

"I just bought this jumper two weeks ago. It should fit." Hermione sighed.

Severus finally looked up from his marking.

He smirked at the jumper bundled just below her breasts, emphasizing her belly. Standing, he walked to her and pulled the jumper back over her head, tossing it aside.

"I'm not ready, Severus."

\* \* \*

Severus held her hand as she pushed. Well, it was actually more that he'd offered his hand to be held, and she'd decided to attempt to squeeze the life out of it.

"One more large push on the count of three. You're doing great," the Mediwitch said in a voice that was entirely too chipper.

Hermione shook her head back and forth adamantly. Tears were streaming down her cheeks, leaving a glistening trail.

"I'm not ready for this, Severus!" she cried.

Severus placed a gentle kiss against her forehead. "You can do this, Hermione," he whispered softly in her ear.

\* \* \*

The Mediwitch cleaned his son and took down his measurements before moving to hand him to Hermione. He watched the tears pour from her eyes before she burrowed

her face in the pillow.

"I'm not ready," she said, her voice thick with emotion.

So instead, the Mediwitch placed him in Severus's arms. He felt something lodge in his throat as his fingers moved across the thick tuft of black hair atop his son's head.

*Whoever said size matters has obviously never held a newborn child before,* he thought.

Hermione's sobs soon quieted, and Severus thought exhaustion must have overtaken her.

\* \* \*

Even though they lived in Hogsmeade, they still took Sebastian to Platform 9 ¾ to take the Hogwarts Express.

Hermione watched her son climb onto the train and waved good bye, even though he couldn't see her.

She turned to Severus and hid her face in his chest while his hand moved in gentle circles on her back.

"I'm not ready for him to go," she said into his chest.

"Mummy!" Serena Snape tugged on Hermione's sleeve. "Are you okay?"

Hermione pulled reluctantly away from Severus and pulled her daughter up into her arms. "Yes, love, I'm okay. Let's go home."

\* \* \*

Hermione frowned at the young woman sitting across from her. It didn't matter that she had known the girl from before she'd been born; she wasn't good enough for Sebastian.

She glanced at Severus and nearly giggled at the disgruntled look on his face.

"... And Lizzy wants a summer wedding, so we'll have to send out invitations before too long."

After Sebastian and Lizzy left, Hermione turned to glare at Severus.

"I am *not* ready for him to get married," she said firmly.

"Don't worry, we still have Serena's future wedding to look forward to."

Severus smirked. Hermione fumed.

\* \* \*

Severus sat beside Hermione's bed. His hands were wrinkled, and the color had faded from them, turning them a pasty gray.

He stroked his wife's white hair, still thick and long even after all these years, and watched as her life slipped away.

Her eyes opened with obvious effort, and she worked her mouth open a few times before speaking.

"I'm not ready to leave you, Severus," she said softly.

"Don't worry, love, I've made the Divortium Vitalis. I will join you soon."

Her eyes widened slightly, and it looked as though she would argue.

"I'm ready, Hermione. Trust me."

\* \* \*

Serena and Sebastian stood together at their parents' funeral.

"Mum and Dad always told us that life won't always be easy; that there will be many times when we won't be ready for what it hands us," Serena said, a charm allowing her voice to carry across the rather large crowd.

"I remember Mum telling me that every major event in her life seemed to happen when she was the least prepared for it," Sebastian spoke clearly.

"But they were strong, and even though they weren't always ready, they survived."

Sebastian raised a glass and drank to his parents' memory.

\*END\*

**Author's Notes:** Please excuse my poor usage of Latin. The potion Severus mentions roughly translates as 'parting life' and is, essentially, a suicide potion. This was written in response to the "Size Matters" challenge at GrangerSnape100 on LiveJournal. Much love and many thanks to the wonderful Gelsey for being the wonderful beta that she is!