

# An Even Trade

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**Pairings:** Harry/Lucius

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**Spoilers:** n/a

**Warnings:** AU, slash, crack, OOC-ness, character death

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**Summary:** Very loosely based on Rapunzel, featuring Harry, Lucius, Voldemort, and a few others.

**Notes:** This didn't turn out at all like I expected.

Lucius was very annoyed. He had been journeying for days and he was tired. Nights had been spent, not in comfort, but in horrible makeshift facilities, and all because his son was too damn lazy to seek out a wife so he could carry on the line. Not even word that a beautiful princess (or at least a virgin of noble birth) was being held captive, just waiting to be rescued, had stirred his indolent son to action.

Which brought him to the present, having just woken up after a night spent sleeping on the cold, hard ground beneath a tarp stretched over branches. Lucius groaned as he stretched, trying to work out the kinks and aches through sheer willpower. Thankfully he had almost arrived at his destination; just a few more hours should see him at the tower where the lady allegedly was held.

He could rescue her (after assuring himself that she would, in fact, marry his son) and spirit her away, preferably before the evil man holding her against her will noticed. And by the time he did, Lucius and the girl should be far enough away as to evade capture.

He went through a shivery wash in the nearby stream, cursing his son under his breath the entire time, then got dressed in a fresh set of clothing and saddled up his horse. His supplies were packed up and loaded, and Lucius set off once more. Some time later his objective was in sight, though he was slightly disconcerted to realize that it was a very tall tower, as he was not exactly fond of heights.

Still, he was a man on a mission, and he would not back down from a challenge. His horse was tied to a branch in a copse and Lucius settled in to spy out the land for a time. He was heartened when the evil man emerged from the bottom of the tower and called out commandingly, "Don't speak to any strangers!"

And then he left, off down a lane leading toward the sea.

Lucius waited ten minutes before he decided to act, then swiftly strode to the tower and tried the door; it was locked. Unfortunately, as an aristocrat, lock picking was not one of his skills. He backed away and circled around until he was facing a window at the top and cried, "Ho the tower! Fair maiden, answer, for I have come to rescue you!"

It sounded faintly ridiculous even to his own ears, but that couldn't be helped. He waited, and was about to repeat his call, when a very exasperated voice called back, "I am not bloody female!"

Lucius blinked, and then a second time as a head popped out the window. The voice belonged to a lad of unparalleled beauty (or so he thought, as it was difficult to tell at such a distance) with long hair like midnight.

"Hang on," the boy called, then disappeared. Several minutes later the door at the base of the tower opened and out he stepped.

Lucius was given to wishing it was not undignified to gape, or drool, or otherwise show his base appreciation for the ravishing creature standing before him. The boy's eyes were like emeralds, his skin like porcelain. His lips were a sweet peachy-pink that begged to be kissed, and his hair was a waterfall of shining black.

"I'm a stranger," Lucius said rather inanely.

The boy arched a brow and snorted. "Uh huh. So I'm not supposed to be talking to you. But d'you know, you're like . . . the fifth person this month to come looking to rescue the fair maiden, and I'm sick of it. Every last one of you people show up, all ready to be helpful, then leave in a huff once you realize I'm not a girl."

Lucius furrowed his brow. "Then why are you wearing a dress?"

The boy clutched at his hair and made a noise of deep frustration. "It's a set of robes, you uneducated peasant! Both men and women wear them in my country, okay?"

His eyes grew wide at the insult; Lucius drew himself up to his full height and lifted his chin. "I happen to be a landed noble."

The boy eyed him appraisingly, then nodded. "Well, all right. You dress like one, I suppose."

"May I know your name? I am Lucius Malfoy, Lord of Wiltshire."

The boy looked rather taken aback by that. "You . . . want to know my name? Why are you even sticking around?"

"Verily. And since you have asked I will explain. Yes, I did come here with an eye toward rescuing a fair maiden, simply for the purpose of finding a girl of good birth for my son to marry, he being an insufferably lazy child who might not lift a finger even in his own defense."

The boy interrupted him with a laugh. "And you expected him to perk up long enough to sire an heir?"

Lucius smirked. "One could hope. At any rate, this is obviously not to be. I am, however, quite captivated by you, and would not only like to know your name, and why you are even here, but also how it is that you can leave the tower and have not yet escaped."

"Oh." The boy nibbled on his lower lip (something that made Lucius wish to do it for him) and gestured toward the tower door. "Would you like to come in? There's bread baked fresh this morning, and butter and cheese. I could make some tea."

Lucius hesitated, wondering if it was some sort of bizarre trap, then nodded, and allowed himself to be ushered inside. He gazed around curiously after taking a seat on a plush sofa.

The room was rather homey, actually, decorated in shades of green and blue, with shelf upon shelf along one wall supporting a scholar's dream in books and scrolls.

The boy sat down across from him after deftly sliding a tray onto the low table, then set about pouring for them. "My name is Harry," he said as he passed over a cup. "The man holding me is named Voldemort. I think he did actually intend to capture a girl, but got me." Harry aimed a quirky smile at him.

"Why have you not left?"

"He's placed enchantments. Normally I stay at the top of the tower, but I can actually go outside, as you saw. It's pretty boring here, but at least there's plenty to read." Harry shrugged and reached for a round of bread, then split it open and buttered it before layering in some cheese. "You haven't told me why you care, though."

"Ah, well, you see. . . ." He shifted a bit, not quite certain how to express himself. "As I said, I find myself quite captivated by you."

"But I'm a boy."

"Yes, and I happen to prefer my own gender," he said bluntly, then reached for a bread round of his own to fix up.

Harry blinked at him a few times and had a bite of his little sandwich. He chewed thoughtfully for a bit, swallowed, then said, "Oh. But . . . you've a son?"

"I do, sired on a woman I was made to marry by my father. I quite detest her, actually. If I could be rid of her, I would."

Harry tilted his head to the side and stared at him unnervingly. "And you . . . like me?" he asked, then licked his lips.

"Well, I don't know that yet, do I," he replied. "But you are a feast for my eyes, and I rather like how feisty you are. I would bet you are quite intelligent, and that in itself is attractive."

"Um, okay. I am, actually, not that Voldemort captured me for that."

"If you're not what he wanted, then why does he keep you here?"

Harry shrugged helplessly. "Habit? I'd really like to leave, but I don't think he'll let me go without an equivalent exchange."

Lucius arched a brow, already scheming. His son could find his own damn wife, and if that meant him living and dying a bachelor, so be it. "Perhaps he'll be open to a trade, then. That is, if you would like to go with me?"

“Go with you,” Harry repeated, almost questioningly.

“Yes. Why, exactly, did this Voldemort person kidnap you?”

Harry had a sip of his tea before saying, “Something about regaining his lost youth. I regret to say I wasn’t really paying attention at the time.”

He pondered that for a minute. “And do you know if that required a virgin female?” he asked, then ate more of his bread and cheese. He was surprised when Harry blushed.

“Well, I’m not sure, but I don’t think so. The virgin part, I mean. Why? Do you have something in mind?”

“Of a certainty. Now, this may sound heartless, but I should like to be rid of my wife. Perhaps Voldemort would take her in exchange for you?”

Harry shot him a suspicious look. “Okay. And what happens to me? How do I know you won’t try to trade me off later on?”

Lucius chuckled. “Believe me, I would never consider that as an option.”

“Oh, right, because you prefer boys.” Harry eyed him as he ate the last of his bread.

“I get the feeling you have no idea why that might be the case.”

The boy shook his head and finished off his tea. “No, I don’t.”

“And are you a virgin?”

Harry blushed again and nodded, then got up to clear away the tray. “I’ve been here for several years, you see.”

Lucius felt a great deal like leering, but maintained a calm expression. “And how long before your captor returns, hm?”

“Um, an hour or so. He walks over to the village once per week to buy supplies. That’s why I didn’t think it was such a big deal to invite you in. So long as I clean up he shouldn’t know I had a guest.”

“I see. Harry, were I able to make a trade, I would take you away to be with me, to be mine. And if you wish, I will show you just exactly how pleasurable that life could be.”

Rather than blush again, Harry frowned and planted his hands on his hips. “I’m not some floozy, you know. I might be bored and lonely, but that doesn’t mean I’ll just let the first guy to actually pay attention to me tumble me for a good time.”

Lucius laughed and got to his feet so he could deliver his cup after knocking back the remainder. "If I were suddenly lacking a wife, Harry, I could marry you, and we could live happily ever after."

The boy accepted the cup, still frowning, and said, "That's fine, except that I have no guarantee that Voldemort will let me go, and by then I'd have lost my virginity, something I can't ever get back."

Lucius laughed softly and stepped very close, pinning Harry against the counter and placing a hand to either side of him. "Believe me, I could show you without losing you that precious commodity. I could make you weep with pleasure, Harry, and ache in sweet anticipation of the moment I could."

The boy's cheeks tinted a delicate pink, causing Lucius to smirk and push a knee between Harry's legs (as much as was possible considering the boy's attire) before bending slightly to whisper against his lips, "I give my solemn vow as a noble of the realm."

He figured he had won that argument when Harry kissed him tentatively. Lucius surged forward, so to speak, and ran his tongue over those sweet lips, pleased when they parted to allow him entrance; the boy tasted like tea with a hint of sharp cheddar. Lucius set that impression aside and explored, languorously moving his tongue to slide against Harry's teasingly, coaxing the boy to respond, which he did, unsure but with growing confidence.

Several glorious minutes went by before Lucius pulled away, his nostrils flaring as he took in the sight in front of him. Harry's eyes were half closed and hazy, his lips wetly inviting; the boy looked debauched, and all they had done was kiss.

"I think I liked that," Harry whispered. "Does it get better?"

"Much better," Lucius said huskily.

"Uh." Harry shook his head carefully. "I need to clean up, put things away. If you want more bread and cheese, get it now?"

Lucius retreated with good grace, releasing his prey from gentle confinement, and did indeed fix himself another round of bread. As he ate he investigated the shelves, and was startled some minutes later to feel a brief touch on his arm. He turned to see Harry gazing up at him with an uncertain expression. "What is it?"

"You . . . really mean it?" Harry asked, twiddling his fingers together nervously. "You'd try to free me, and wouldn't abandon me?"

That made him wonder if the boy, for all his feisty exterior, was rather lacking in self confidence. And no wonder, should that be the case, given that everyone walked away the

moment they knew of his gender, as though he wasn't worth anyone's time. "My solemn vow as a noble of the realm," he swore.

Harry smiled very faintly. "What about your son?"

"He can get up off his lazy ass and find a wife through his own efforts. Otherwise, I suppose he'll just have to remain alone and unmarried. I've decided that he should act his age, and I should not be catering to his faults simply because it would be nice for the line to continue."

"Oh, okay." Harry glanced at one of the walls and grimaced. "We've only got about an hour before Voldemort gets back."

"We can do whatever you like. If you simply wish to sit and talk, so be it," he said.

Harry gave him a true smile and nodded, and that is exactly what they did for the next half hour or so, with Lucius somewhat in disbelief at his good fortune. The boy had a brilliant mind of beautiful depth; he had not let it lie fallow while in captivity. Eventually, though, Harry grew nervous and restless, so Lucius rose and said, "I will wait outside now. I hope to be able to persuade Voldemort to my offer. Try to have faith."

That only made the boy more nervous, but he nodded, and ushered Lucius out quietly. He could hear the bolts slide home as Harry secured the door, a sound he found somewhat depressing. And then he waited, rehearsing in his mind what he would say in his most winning and convincing manner.

Footsteps pulled him from his thoughts and Lucius looked toward the sound to see a man approaching, this time getting a good look. He supposed he could understand why Voldemort wished to regain his lost youth given his appearance. The man's skin was almost grey, his frame frail and fragile, and he lacked hair on his head. His eyes, however, were fiercely alive.

Voldemort stopped dead on seeing him and scowled. "Who are you to dare my demesne?"

"Good sir, I have come to you with an offer. I pray you will hear me out."

Voldemort cast a suspicious look toward the tower, then snapped his attention back to Lucius. "What sort of offer?"

"I wish to bargain for the young man," he said smoothly. "In return for him I will offer a woman of unparalleled beauty."

"And you think I have a boy in there why?" Voldemort said, the frown he bore deepening into something rather hideously frightening.

"Why, the tales from the lips of those who have come here seeking a fair maiden, only to leave when they realized their mistake. I, however, would be pleased to trade, having caught a

glimpse of the young man. Would you like to see a picture of the woman in question?" Lucius could only hope that disabused the notion that Harry had actually spoken to a stranger.

"Fine," Voldemort snarled. "Let's see this picture, then."

For once, Lucius was overjoyed that his wife had certain habits. Generally speaking, it irritated him beyond measure that she insisted on packing for him whenever he took a trip, and always included a portrait of herself in case her visage would give him heart. Or something like that. He produced the picture and closed half the distance between them, then paused, waiting for some sort of response.

Voldemort gestured impatiently so Lucius approached, holding the picture out. As Voldemort was looking it over he said, "She is just entering her prime, good sir."

"Who might she be?" the man said almost absently.

"My wife."

Voldemort's head snapped up. "And why, exactly, do you wish to trade her off? Have you any idea what I want one for?"

Lucius shook his head. "I don't particularly care. I was forced to marry her, after all, and my interests lie elsewhere. As it is, she has a bit of a gambling problem, and I tire of tracking down the family silver every time she pawns it for coin to buy into yet another game, which she invariably loses."

Voldemort arched a brow, then smirked. "How mercenary of you. At least you have the good manners to actually bargain with me, rather than attempting like every other damn fool to climb the tower or break down my door. If I hear one more imbecile calling out for some chit named Rapunzel. . . ."

He smiled agreeably. "That would be most vexing."

Voldemort snorted and snatched the picture out of his hand. "She's almost better than a virgin for what I have in mind. Of course. . . ."

Lucius pursed his lips, hoping that the man wasn't going to balk.

Voldemort eyed him appraisingly, then said, "Two of them. This one, and a virgin. You bring me that and I'll release the boy to you. Then I won't have to go looking on my own."

Lucius heaved an internal sigh; he had only just decided not to find a girl for his son, and he was about to find one for a complete stranger instead. "All right. Will red hair be acceptable, or would you prefer something else?"

“Yes. So long as she’s young, virginal, and pretty, I don’t care what colour her hair is.”  
Voldemort paused, scowled, then said, “I suppose I’ll have to let you inside long enough for us to write up an agreement. Come along.”

A week later Lucius was back on his own lands, and striding into his home. The first thing he did was gain his rooms and strip down, desperate for a real bath followed by a real meal. The next morning he tracked down Narcissa and regaled her with a completely fictitious tale of a holiday spot she must visit with him, or suffer the disgrace of knowing that all her friends (though he called them vultures in the privacy of his mind) would have been there ahead of her.

She fled to begin packing, not about to be outdone by anyone, and they set off the next morning. Along the way Lucius stopped long enough to pick up young Ginevra Weasley, a girl from a poor family that held a small portion of his land for farming. And, given that they had so many children, the girl was let go on the promise of a suitable match, though not without a great deal of tears on the mother’s part.

On arrival at the tower Lucius noted that his wife seemed quite perplexed. “Lucius, darling, *this* is the ‘must visit’ holiday spot? Whatever were you thinking?”

“Don’t fret,” he said soothingly. “We’re not quite there yet, but I know the owner of this tower will give us lodging for the night. Surely you would wish a proper bed and bath?”

Narcissa rolled her eyes expressively and nodded. “It’s been absolutely frightful, this traveling. I don’t know how you can stand it.”

He smiled and ushered both ladies toward the door, then knocked in the prearranged pattern. A minute or so later he could hear the bolts slide back, and the door opened to reveal Harry, whose face lit up on seeing Lucius again.

Ginevra squeaked and whispered, “Is he the one?”

“No, my child. But don’t fret.” To Harry he said, “It is a pleasure to see you again. May we come in?”

“Please,” Harry said as he stepped back to allow entry.

Lucius gestured for the ladies to precede him, then entered himself, surreptitiously brushing his hand against Harry’s as he did so. “Ah, good sir,” he said to Voldemort.

But Voldemort wasn’t paying attention to him; he was busy sizing up Narcissa and Ginevra. He nodded after a minute. “Harry, show the ladies where they can refresh themselves and rest before dinner.”

“Yes, sir,” Harry said respectfully, then turned to the women. “If you would please follow me?”

The moment they were out of hearing range Voldemort said, “They’ll do. The redhead looks perfect, actually. Once the blond is out of the way, she’ll be putty in my hands.”

Lucius refrained from doing or saying anything that might sour the deal. “I am pleased to hear that.”

“Right, anyway. Once those two ladies are safely unconscious after a judicious draft of sleeping potion, I’ll release the enchantments that prevent Harry from leaving, and you two can be on your merry way.”

Lucius bowed. About the only reason he was not nervous about the deal was the contract they had worked out and signed. It was not mere paper and ink, so he had no particular concern that he might end up drugged himself, or that Narcissa would somehow live beyond the night, or two at best.

Dinner rolled around, proving that Harry was an excellent cook. It made Lucius wonder if Ginevra could possibly take the boy’s place in that respect, but he decided it really wasn’t his concern. The meal itself was marred by Narcissa’s frequent use of the word ‘quaint’ with respect to the tower, as though she could not quite get over her surroundings. And when she wasn’t going on about that, she was talking about their supposed upcoming holiday spot, despite the fact that she had no idea where it was or what it looked like.

Lucius was so very glad when both ladies slumped unconscious over the table. He was so glad that he volunteered to carry them each, Ginevra to a bedroom, and Narcissa to an odd little room actually under the tower. And after that Voldemort performed a little ceremony, opened the front door, and shooed them both out. A second later the door slammed shut, the bolts sliding home with a thunk, and he and Harry were left standing there in the deepening twilight.

“He didn’t even let me pack!” Harry complained.

There was another thunk, and the door opened long enough for a rucksack to sail out and hit the ground. The door was slammed shut again and locked. Harry blinked and called out, “Thank you,” crouched down to pick up his things, then groaned.

Lucius gallantly said, “Allow me,” and relieved his soon-to-be spouse of the burden, then nearly groaned himself at the weight. But that wouldn’t do, so he stifled it, and slipped a hand over to rest at the small of Harry’s back and begin guiding him toward the horses.

“How will you know when. . . ?”

Lucius waited until they were in the copse to hold up his left hand, palm facing himself. He fingered the ring he wore with his thumb and said, “When this dissolves.” The rucksack was loaded onto the horse Ginevra had been using, and Lucius turned back to his soon-to-be spouse. “Harry, have you ever ridden before?”

Harry fidgeted and shook his head, casting nervous looks at the three beasts.

“Do not fret. You shall ride with me. Though if you become adventuresome, you can try to ride by yourself, all right?”

Harry nodded, then glanced down at his attire and frowned.

“Sidesaddle,” Lucius pronounced.

Two days later they were resting at a nameless stream when Lucius felt a shock run up his hand. He watched in fascination as the symbol of his wretched binding dissolved into motes of sparkling dust, then smiled broadly. “I’m free,” he breathed.

Harry touched his arm in a fleeting gesture. “But, not for long if you really do intend to marry me.”

Lucius continued to smile even as he said, “Which I will do after you give me leave to do so. The past two days have only proven sound my initial reaction to you, and I firmly believe we will do well with each other.”

Harry’s face lit up with another happy smile. “I had wondered, as you’ve not touched me aside from the necessary, and the occasional kiss.”

Lucius realized that he ought to explain his reasoning, so as to alleviate his soon-to-be spouse’s confusion. “While traveling is not the best time. I could not do proper justice to showing you how much I desire you, and how pleasurable our joining will be. Once we are back at my manor and we have both had the chance for a proper bath and a decent meal. . . .”

That just made Harry’s smile happier, if possible. “I give you leave, Lucius.”

The third day saw them back on Lucius’s land, so he brought them through a village long enough to solicit the services of a priest. That man performed the ceremony at his lord’s behest, and wisely declined to ask any impertinent questions after having ascertained that Lucius was no longer married.

And finally, on the fifth day, Lucius and Harry rode up to his manor and dismounted. Lucius was very pleased that his spouse did not startle when he snapped his fingers to summon a house-elf, then instructed it with regard to the horses and their belongings. He could only suppose that Harry’s people also used the little creatures as servants, or he had at least read about them.

That out of the way, Lucius guided Harry into the house, then stopped. His son was gliding slowly through the front hall, presumably headed for his favorite parlor where he would sprawl on a chaise lounge and read while eating chocolates.

Then Draco stopped and turned to face them, paused, then shuffled forward at a fast clip. Lucius damn near fainted from shock; he could not remember the last time his son had moved so quickly for any reason.

“Father,” Draco greeted him perfunctorily, then turned his gaze on Harry and let out a low whistle better suited to a commoner. “Is this her? My bride? She’s gorgeous.”

Lucius hadn’t even formulated a response when Harry scowled, snarled, and shouted, “I am not a bloody female!”

Draco blinked a few times and stumbled back, nearly tripping over his own feet. “Eh, what?”

Lucius released a sigh of exaggerated patience. “Son, allow me to introduce my new spouse, Harry. Harry, I’m sure you’ll be overjoyed to make the acquaintance of my son Draco.”

“Charmed,” Harry said, his tone dripping with something other than pleasure.

Draco blinked a few more times and adopted a rather thoughtful look. “What happened to mother? I could have sworn she was still alive and kicking a week or so ago.”

“Alas, it was a great tragedy, son. Her gambling debts finally caught up with her. Someone she owed heavily was not inclined to take a winsome smile as payment, nor were they willing to wait for her to pawn the family silver, again.”

“Oh, I see,” Draco said in a vaguely astonished tone. “That’s just terrible. I think I need to go have a lie down now.” He drifted away at that, disappearing through a doorway off to the side.

Harry shot him a look of faint incredulity, then shook his head.

“Come, Harry, I will show you the master suite. I’m sure you would love to soak for a while in a hot bath.”

At dinner, during dessert, he delivered an ultimatum. “Draco, son, I’ve had it.”

“What do you mean, father?”

“Six months, Draco. Either you find yourself a bride within six months, or I shall disinherit you. I will no longer tolerate you lazing about enjoying the fruits of my labor with the expectation that it will all become yours someday without you ever once lifting a finger. And do not think to test me, son, lest you find out my will leaves everything to charity.”

Draco’s eyes went wide. “You’d leave everything to the Weasley family?”

That was not what he'd meant, but it sufficed. "Perhaps. Do you really wish to find out? If so, continue on as you've been. Otherwise, I suggest you find a bride and get on with siring an heir. At least then you'd have contributed to this family in some fashion."

"Oh dear," was his son's response, along with a put upon sigh.

Up in their room Harry said to him, "I should like another bath, Lucius, as I still feel achy. How do I summon those cute little creatures? Just snap my fingers?" He did so, then pouted when nothing happened.

Lucius swiftly reached out to capture Harry's hand and draw it upward so he could place a kiss on those slender fingers. "Yes, my sweet, but they do not yet know to heed your call. I shall correct that in just a moment. Do you not have them in your land?"

Harry blushed faintly at the endearment. "We do, but I always had human servants and attendants."

How . . . strange. "Why is that?"

"Um, well. . . ." Harry fidgeted cutely before saying, "I suppose I neglected to mention that I'm royalty?"

He could feel his brows skittering up toward his hairline. "I see. Harry, my sweet, am I going to be entertaining a set of angry parents soon once they realize I've married you without their permission?"

Harry shook his head. "Mum and dad have several children, of which I'm the youngest. And I was taken years ago, so they probably gave up hope of ever seeing me again."

Lucius kissed Harry's fingers again and nodded, then released him and snapped his fingers. To the house-elf that appeared he said, "This is my new spouse. You and the others will obey and serve him, is that understood?"

The elf bobbed its head vigorously and performed a little bow for Harry. "We is knowing master's name?"

Harry crouched down and smiled. "I'm Harry. Would you do me a favor?"

The elf nodded enthusiastically.

"I should like to take a bath. Could you prepare one for me, please?"

The elf clapped its hands together as though delighted, nodded, and scurried off toward the bathroom. It was back out in a heartbeat with a toothy smile. "Master's bath is being ready," it said, then popped out.

“Allow me,” Lucius said, “to join you?”

Harry blushed again. “Okay,” he said faintly.

Lucius’s mouth watered in anticipation once he got a look at his gloriously naked spouse, but he contained himself and handed Harry into the tub, then stripped off his own clothing so he could join him. He slid in behind Harry, pulling the young man up against him, then sighed in pleasure. “When you’ve had enough of soaking we’ll get ready for bed, all right?”

They had been there for a good ten minutes, Lucius idly stroking one of Harry’s arms, when Harry shifted restlessly and said, “Lucius, now that we’re starting our life together, there’s something I probably ought to tell you.”

“Hm?” he said lazily. “I trust it’s nothing bad.”

“Well, I don’t know. I don’t think so, but. . . .” Harry twisted around and gave him an anxious look, so Lucius smiled at him encouragingly, which prompted, “I’m . . . not exactly human, you see.”

His brows threatened to skitter into his hairline again. “I see. What does that mean, Harry?”

“Well, there’s a very good reason I didn’t want to lose my virginity,” Harry said as he faced forward again. “I can . . . bear children.”

Lucius went stock still; it was like a dream come true, and his mind kept stuttering over that one sentence on repeat. An anxiety-laden voice calling his name snapped him back to reality. “That,” he said, “is wonderful. It’s brilliant! Oh, Harry, we could have a family together.” Then he paused, uncertain. “That is, if you wanted one?”

Harry twisted around again, this time completely, kneeling between Lucius’s legs and heedless of the way the water splashed about. “You mean it?”

“My solemn vow as a noble of the realm,” Lucius affirmed.

Harry leaned in to kiss him fiercely, then pulled back quickly. “I never told Voldemort. I was afraid he might. . . .”

“I understand, and I think that was a wise decision. Let’s finish our soak, Harry, and then I will make you mine.”

A quirky smile crossed Harry’s lips. “Literally.”

Lucius arched a brow.

“We bond, you see. Once you make love to me I’ll be yours forever.”

Lucius's cock twitched at the thought, though which thought he wasn't sure. Certainly he wished to show his spouse the delights of bedsport, but a part of him was singing at the idea of a lifelong mate. "And I'll be yours?"

"Yes."

He made a command decision. "I think our soak is done," he said, then pushed himself up, bringing Harry to his feet as well. A towel was hooked off a nearby rack and used to pat his spouse down, then himself, and Lucius tossed it aside before leading Harry back to the bedroom.

He pushed Harry down gently and climbed onto the bed, slithering up along Harry's side so he could kiss him, intent on reducing his spouse to speechless need and desire with his tongue and his wandering hands, and leave absolutely no room for shyness or embarrassment.

Ten minutes later Harry was rubbing up against him wantonly, and moaning softly into his mouth, so Lucius shifted to begin kissing his spouse's jaw, wending his way toward and along Harry's neck, and further down, eventually having shifted so that he could comfortably attend to Harry's achingly erect penis.

Never in his life had he known such joy as the moment he engulfed his spouse's cock and began to fellate him. Even the newness of the situation did nothing to deter him, Lucius resolving to learn as he went. And at that, it was new to Harry, as well, and Harry was too busy moaning out his pleasure to be concerned about a flawless technique.

Lucius began to prepare his spouse at the same time, but very gently as he had not yet secured himself any lubricant, and Harry arched up off the bed with a deep moan, thrusting his cock more deeply into Lucius's willing mouth. Harry came shortly after, frantically jerking his hips and calling his name raggedly.

And once Harry calmed Lucius crawled back up that lithe body to capture his mouth, one hand snaking out to yank open the drawer of the bedside table and scrabble around for the jar he had placed there earlier. It was a testament to his coordination that he was able to dislodge the lid and dip his fingers within.

He continued to kiss his new love as he reached back down to further prepare Harry, almost desperate in his desire to sink himself and claim the lovely creature for all eternity. But the absolute last thing he wanted was for Harry to feel any measure of pain, so he firmly reined in his need.

It was when Harry was nearly riding four of his fingers that Lucius pulled away and turned the boy onto his side, then fit himself in behind. He pressed the head of his cock against Harry's anus and began to nudge forward, punctuating his movements by feasting on the boy's neck. One hand slid down to capture Harry's arm, guiding it to hook around his spouse's topmost leg and hold it aloft.

“That’s it, my sweet, just like that,” he whispered, and smiled fiercely when Harry moaned loudly. He resumed his feast, thrusting harder into the body of his spouse, and reached around to begin stroking Harry’s cock again, coaxing him toward a second orgasm, hopefully to coincide with his own.

And it did.

To his surprise (as much as he could feel under the circumstances) a bright white light erupted as they both lost themselves in the ultimate bliss.

Several minutes later Lucius had his breathing back under control, and his heart had stopped pounding fit to burst from his chest. Harry was snug against him, wrapped within the circle of his arms. “That was. . . .”

“I could feel it,” Harry whispered.

“Hm?”

“I’m pregnant, Lucius,” whispered Harry. “And we’re bonded. You’re mine now, and I’m yours.”

Lucius carefully turned Harry in his arms and kissed him gently. “A silly question, perhaps, but did I adequately show you, my sweet?”

Harry grinned broadly and nodded.

A few weeks later Draco died. It was ironic, really, given that it was the first time in years that his son had stirred himself to activity. Draco had decided to go riding, possibly with the idea of eventually galloping off in search of a bride, and had been thrown when the horse was startled by a bird breaking cover. He snapped his neck on landing, dying instantly.

And Harry had eyed him with some suspicion that day.

“I swear to you, my sweet, I had nothing to do with it. My solemn vow as a noble of the realm,” Lucius hastened to assure Harry. He supposed the implicit accusation was only natural; he had, after all, arranged for the death of his wife.

Harry’s gaze softened. “I believe you.”

Lucius felt relief at that and smiled, drawing Harry in for a kiss, but it stuck with him for years after that his love seemed ever so slightly . . . smug.