A Curse Might Be A Blessing

by DC_Fitzpatrick

Summary

Severus Snape survived Nagini's attack. He will have to overcome his past sorrows and regrets, especially since it seems that some sort of connection has developed between him and his most unlikely savior...

Notes

Let's give this a try...
My first attempt in this fandom. Please be nice :)

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Rating: Explicit
Archive Warning: Choose Not To Use Archive Warnings, Graphic Depictions Of Violence
Category: F/M
Fandom: Harry Potter - J. K. Rowling
Relationship: Hermione Granger/Severus Snape, Hermione Granger/Ron Weasley, Harry Potter/Ginny Weasley, Minor or Background Relationship(s)
Character: Severus Snape, Hermione Granger, Harry Potter, Ginny Weasley, Ron Weasley, Draco Malfoy, Minerva McGonagall, Luna Lovegood, Rubeus Hagrid, Neville Longbottom, Poppy Pomfrey, Portrait Albus Dumbledore, Kreacher (Harry Potter), Original Female Character(s), Various Characters, Irma Pince, Winky (Harry Potter), Mrs Granger (Harry Potter), Mr Granger (Harry Potter)
Series: Part 1 of A Curse Might Be A Blessing
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Know that I have only read the books and watched the movies twice in my life and they are pretty much mixed in my head, so there might be elements from both. And my memory is shit, so if I get some detail, spell, etc wrong, please forgive me.
Though this first chapter is kind of dark, the story isn't really...
I hope you enjoy, and if not, I can always erase this and pretend it never happened. Hahaha.

Oh yes, and of course, anything you recognize from somewhere else is not of my creation.
Chapter 1

Hermione stood with Ginny, Ron and Mr. and Mrs. Weasley over Fred’s, Tonks’ and Lupin’s dead bodies. Her vision was blurred with tears that would not stop falling. But there was work to do, she remembered dutifully. So their deaths would not be in vain and would not go unpunished. He Who Must Not Be Named had given them until midnight to collect and bury their dead, but while others did this, it could mean the perfect opportunity to finish their work. Voldemort could be with his defenses down, they could strike, kill the snake… All they needed was a plan. He might expect Harry alone to go to him and surrender, so they could find a way to… Harry!

She looked around and he was nowhere to be seen. Could he have gone give himself up to Voldemort? No. No! She could still catch him if she ran. Could he be so thick? After all they’d been through, after everyone that had sacrificed themselves… he would just hand himself over. She thought again of the dead before her, along with the ones she did not know if were well or not… and Professor Snape. The image of his shaking boot, him lying on the floor of the Shriecking Shack, looking so vulnerable and approachable as she had never in all these years seen him before… Even after all he had done, he did not deserve to die like that. No one did. And the image of the silver liquid running down his eyes and ears came back to her. “Take it” he had told Harry. His last thoughts and memories. That is where Harry probably was! Seeing what they were, if they could help. At least that is where he should be. Why would Snape hand over his thoughts like that in his final moments if not to help them?

She left Ron to his mourning with his family. They didn’t even notice when she stepped away from them, and that was a good thing. When she had reached the foot of the marble staircase, she began to run like she had never run before, until the headmaster’s office appeared in her sight. That is where the pensive used to be, where during the previous year Harry had delved into various memories with Dumbledore, memories which had stitched the path they were to follow, that they had followed all this year. But she did not know the password. Harry had always said Dumbledore’s passwords were names of sweets he enjoyed… What would Snape use as password? Unforgivable curses? If only this was still Dumbledore’s office, things might be so much easier… But he was just one more that had perished in this mess of a world.

“Oh, Dumbledore!” She cried in grief as she remembered seeing his twisted body lying at the bottom of the astronomy tower. And suddenly the gargoyle opened to reveal a spiral staircase.

She stepped up thinking that was a very unusual password for Snape to use. But this was not the time to dwell on such things. She needed to find Harry, figure out their next move.

The door to the office opened and she rushed in, but there was no one to be found. Not even the old headmasters in their portraits. All gone. The room completely empty. It would have been so good to find Dumbledore there, have him answer all the questions she had… though it was a bit late for that, they’d managed to answer them all themselves, though with great difficulty and risking their lives countless times.

She saw the pensive on the desk. So Harry had been there. He had to have been. She must just have missed him. If she ran with all her might, she might still catch him in the Great Hall. That is what she needed to do. But the pensive. It was calling to her. What would Snape have wanted Harry to see? She approached it and could still see images swirling inside it. Harry had left them there, Snape’s final thoughts. She was oh so very curious as to what could have happened, why would he have betrayed Dumbledore like that, who trusted him so much. Why would such a grave, closed off, bitter man leave his final thoughts to Harry, whom he seemed to hate so much. But now was not the
time. No! She needed to find Harry. She ran to the door. Although… a quick look might tell her exactly where Harry had gone.

She walked back from the door a few steps, back to the pensive and looked down. With a deep breath, she plunged herself forward into it.

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He sat on the floor of a run-down house, amidst overturned furniture and scattered belongings, rocking her lifeless body in his arms while tears flowed wildly down his cheeks. He held her as he has wished to all his life, but she was not alive and reciprocating his touch, his love, as he intended it to have been. In a corner of the room, a baby cried in its crib, and he cried uncontrollably as well, almost as loud as the baby, calling out her name. The pain… there was nothing like it. No Crucius could cause such pain. The scene evaporated as if it were mist.

He was now angry, so angry. He had once again been humiliated at school, bullied in front of many onlookers who stood by laughing at him, and he yelled with all his might at his attacker. She came to his defense, and he, ungrateful little bastard as he was, in his rage fuelled display, insulted her. He regretted it instantly, but it was too late. Her eyes looked at him as they never had before. His heart broke as she turned to leave, insulting him in turn. He and his untactful and strange ways could not seem to express what he truly felt inside, what he wanted to say. And it was all ruined.

Now he lay on the grass beside her. Leaves swirled in the sky above them as they laughed together. He felt something very strange to him. It might be what others called joy or happiness. If only he could hear her laughter every day, until his dying breath.

“Sev,” she called. He still looked at the swirling leaves. The sky above was so inviting and irresistible. Its call was stronger. “Sev.” Her voice was muffled and far away. He turned to face her and saw her beautiful green eyes piercing his. She smiled and suddenly her voice was clear as day. “Wake up.”

He came to with a gasp. Breathing was not a painless feat. He coughed and the taste of blood came to his mouth before it actually spilled out of him. “Fuck,” he said, gurgling. Speaking was painful as well. His hand still held his neck and was soaked in blood, as was his frock coat, as he lay on the floor of the Shrieking Shack. Every gasp for air made him lose more blood. His wand, he needed his wand. It was fallen in front of him, but thank Merlin it was intact. Without stopping what little pressure he could apply on his neck, he reached for his wand. When he touched it, he murmured the spells he knew that could heal his gashing wound. As long as he had his wand on him, it would work. He hoped.

“Fuck,” he managed to utter once again when the wound was slightly more closed. The spell was not working as well as he had hoped, but at least he wasn’t losing as much blood and he had managed to make some of it return to flow in his veins. That fucking snake. He wished to have the pleasure of tearing it in two with his bare hands. But he had to go make sure Potter got the message, that all this hell hadn’t been in vain. The Dark Lord had to be killed. Why was that fucking snake under protective charms? How could Dumbledore have known it more than a year ago? Why didn’t he share his bloody findings? Wasn’t that what a fucking spy was for? So bloody infuriating, that manipulative prick. He started to bleed again, and so he murmured the incantations once more. If only he could know that Potter had done what was asked of him, that he had seen his memories and gotten Dumbledore’s final message, then he could give into death. To see Lily again. Would he see her again? But he had to die either way, it was all he could do to pay for his mistakes. A death for a death. You disgust me he remembered Dumbledore saying to him.
He needed to get out of there, but without help and with his wounds not healing properly, he wouldn’t manage well. At least the potions he had taken daily to prevent any kind of set back he could think of seemed to have worked against the snake’s venom. He wasn’t a fool to walk amongst Death Eaters and the Dark Lord himself while being a spy, a traitor who could be found out at any moment and not take some measure of precaution. No.

After repeating the incantation under his breath like a mantra, the wound stopped bleeding again. Though he had a feeling it wouldn’t remain that way for long. He listened closely and it seemed he was alone in the Shack. He dared not waste his breath or what little strength he had on revealing charms. He wouldn’t be able to fight any enemies any way. Especially since he had so many. He couldn’t very well walk out the front door, since he couldn’t meet anyone in the fragile state he was in. Both sides would want to kill him now. He would have to try and crawl his way out through the passage way that led to the Whomping Willow.

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Hermione fell back to the floor in tears. Harry was a horcrux as well, one You-Know-Who had not intended to create. He had to die. She couldn’t believe it. She looked at the clock on the wall amidst the empty headmaster portraits and saw there was only twenty minutes left of the time Voldemort had given them for Harry to give himself up. He was probably already in the forest, and there was nothing she could do. He had to die. She sobbed harder. She then remembered all the rest she had seen, all that Professor Snape had been through, and the fact his body was lying abandoned in the Shrieking Shack. He deserved so much more than that, that horrible ending. She could not save Harry or convince him not to give himself up, not after all they had been through to ensure all the horcruxes were destroyed and Voldemort could be killed. But she could go and retrieve Snape’s body, keep it with those of theirs who had also perished in this war. Ensure that he has a proper burial and all knew who he really was. She could do at least that. He deserved at least that.

With tears still tracking down her face, she ran out of the headmaster’s office. She had little time, or else she could be met by Death Eaters on her way back. She ran through the hallways and down the staircases and reached a back wall of the castle that had been demolished due to the attacks it had suffered. She could see the Whomping Willow from there. And on she ran. Going through the front door would only mean she would have to stop and give explanations to those gathered at the main entrance and the Great Hall, and she had no time or the will to do that. She had a mission and she had to focus on it as to not be overwhelmed by grief and despair.

The grounds were dark, calm, quiet. All the bodies had been removed from it and it seemed even the Whomping Willow understood the graveness of the situation, because it moved rather feebly when she approached it. For good measure, she waved her wand, that had been clutched tightly in her hand this whole walk, and a stick was lifted to float through the air and be stuck in the hole which rendered the ancient tree immobile. She slid down the hole in between its roots, into the tunnel that led to the Shrieking Shack, the tunnel from where they saw the horrible scene of Snape’s death. “Lumos,” she whispered.

On Hermione walked, until she heard shuffling on the floor beyond. She stopped dead in her tracks. Could they have left a Death Eater behind patrolling the tunnel? Did they know about the tunnel?

She raised her wand so the light could shine wider in front of her and saw a shadow. With a flick of her wand, her silent spell unarmed her opponent. She knew this because she heard the thud of a wand falling to the ground and an angry grunt. Hermione ran forward, so she could see who she
was facing.

“Professor Snape?!?”

With one hand clutched to his throat, which was bleeding yet again and the other trying to reach his wand, he tried to speak, but blood trickled down his lips.

Hermione rushed forward to him and removed his hand from his throat, trying a number of spells she knew to close his wound. None worked for too long. She held his throat herself, trying to stop the bleeding, desperate as his eyes grew wider with despair as well.

“What do I do??” She cried. “How do I stop it?” Tears began to fall down her cheeks. She could not believe she was going to watch him die all over again. There must be something she could do. She had to remember. She studied so much, read so much, she could not fail now. Dittany!! Would the dittany help? She had to let go of his throat to summon it from inside her beaded bag.

He ceased trying to reach his wand and managed to grab hers instead. He needed a wand to produce half decent magic in his state.

At first she did not understand what he intended to do. But as he held her wand, still in her hand, and his neck, murmuring something, like in a chant or song, she felt the bleeding subside under her palms. Her bloody, desperate hands reached for his wand and handed it to him as well as hers. She watched as some color returned to his face – not that he had ever had much color – and as some of the blood got sucked back into his body. He could breathe again. He took away his hand and the wound was relatively clean, but not too closed.

“Dark magic, Miss Granger” he said in the little husky voice he had. “Not so easily healed. It will open again soon.” He handed her wand back to her.

And all of a sudden a look of surprise filled her face, as if she had remembered something. She waved her wand and produced bandages, which she proceeded to wrap around his neck.

He was too weak and tired to fight her, though he did not like the thought of someone, a nosy student no less, touching him so much. Too much physical contact. He became annoyed rather quickly. “It’s no use, Miss Granger.”

“Yes it is! It’ll… help, at least!” She continued wrapping as he looked at her with an arched eyebrow, as if asking for an explanation. “When Mr. Weasley was attacked by Nagini, the healer at St. Mungo’s said the wound only kept closed while it was bandaged. It’s what they did until they found a way to close the wounds…” She finished her job and wiped sweat from her forehead, which smeared his blood across her face.

“I can’t… I can’t remember what they did to finally heal him, but I think this should help, until we find someone who can really help you.”

“Thank you,” he heard himself say and was a bit surprised with himself. She was taken aback. It was really strange to hear those words coming from Professor Snape.

The Granger girl seemed to really care that he lived. How touching. At least someone did, if not even he did very much. Then it hit him, why was she there helping him? Why had she come back? Why did she not leave him to die, if she thought he was a Death Eater, an enemy?

“We should go. We don’t have much time. I think… I think it would be better to place a charm on you. I don’t think I can carry you. Is that ok, sir?”
Oh the indignity of it. Being floated around by the little Gryffindor princess. But what fucking choice did he have? He couldn’t even carry himself, not at the needed pace. “Fine,” he rolled his eyes. His voice was still really low and raspy.

She waved her wand. “Mobilicorpus,” and lifted him to float beside her.

“How… very nice of you,” he said sarcastically. “And what, might I ask, made you feel this surge of kindness towards a Death Eater in the middle of a war?” His tone was cold and ironic, as she had remembered it from his classes. Talking was so fucking painful, but he needed to know this.

“I…” he would absolutely hate that she had seen his inner most thoughts and memories. She knew it. The fear of a schoolgirl filled her as it hadn’t in a while. It was as if she was back in his classroom, in the dungeons, in a potions class.

“You… what, Miss Granger?” Even in his frail state he could still be very intimidating. He folded his arms across his chest.

“I saw your memories in the pensive, sir,” she said slouching and blushing, looking only forward and not daring to meet his eye.

“I see… those were meant for Potter’s eyes only. Who else did he bloody share them with?”

“Oh no, don’t blame Harry. I went after him and couldn’t find him, but the pensive was there and I… thought it might help me find out where he had gone. I’m really sorry.”

“Sticking your nose in other people’s business just as Potter. You have learned a great deal from him I see,” he said in anger. She didn’t quite understand what he meant. “And where is Mr. Potter?” He finished.

Hermione began to cry again. “He’s probably in the forbidden forest. You Know Who gave him until midnight to turn himself in.” She sniffed and wiped her nose, smearing more of his blood on her face.

“Miss Granger,” his voice was softer now, “you know then that…”

“He’s another horcrux, yes. So he has to die.”

They had reached the Whomping Willow. She was about to peak out and see if it was safe to go to the castle with him levitating beside her when he asked

“What do you mean another horcrux?”

She froze. Harry was adamant on not telling anyone else. Dumbledore hadn’t told Snape? But he deserved to know. He risked his life and had been, maybe still was, at death’s door for Dumbledore’s cause. He hadn’t told him? After everything he had done, Dumbledore couldn’t even trust him with that? No, of course not. Voldemort could find out and ruin his stupid, precious plan. What difference could it make if Dumbledore intended for him to die anyway, it seemed? Hadn’t he kept all his secrets? All the things he knew… and he managed to keep it all hidden from Voldemort. But she could tell him. There would be no harm now.

She looked back at him. He seemed very impatient about being hovered along the way. And
now his eyebrow rose yet again, in need of an explanation. Hermione’s voice dropped to a whisper, lower than what it had been so far.

“He created six horcruxes. Intentionally. Dumbledore told Harry to hunt them down and destroy them. That’s what we’ve been doing this year. That’s… why we needed the Sword of Gryffindor. To destroy them.” It was odd. Trusting Severus Snape like that. It felt right, to some part of her, but another part felt scared to do so.

“Six?” He shuddered at the thought. What that creature was capable of… funny that something could still surprise him. “And you destroyed them all? You do realize he won’t die unless…”

“We got all but one.” She bit her lip in frustration.

“What is it? Where is it? It needs to be destroyed.”

“It’s the snake.” She looked at her feet as she shuffled them.

“Of course,” he snorted. So Dumbledore could send him to die but could tell him this, trust him with this? He was next to that fucking snake every day, he could have found a way to end it. And to send fucking children on such a task!! The man really had no scruples. He must have kept them in the dark as well, full of riddles and what not. His blood began to boil in anger. “Put me down, Miss Granger. I have to kill that fucking thing.”

She was still in shock of hearing him say “thank you,” she gasped as she heard him say “fuck”. She did NOT want to witness Severus Snape so angry he lost control like that.

“Have I offended you, Miss Granger?” He rolled his eyes. “Let me go kill that damned thing so your friend does not die in vain.”

“No, you can’t. You are in no shape… he’ll kill you! Again.”

“I don’t care, as long as I get the snake first. If he wins I die anyway. If he loses, I’ll be sent to Azkaban.”

“You won’t go to Azkaban. I can explain everything…”

“No one else,” his tone was frosty cold again, “and I do mean no one, Miss Granger, must know of my motivations.”

“But…”

“No one.” He looked murderous.

“Fine. I can explain and leave out some parts. I’m sure Dumbledore’s portrait can be helpful too,” Snape snorted. “But you can’t fight. I’ll take you somewhere safe and then I’ll figure out a way to get rid of the damned snake.”

She pulled herself up through the opening at the foot of the tree and then pulled him out with a gentle movement of her wand.

“We have little time. We have to hurry.” And she ran, him bobbing along behind her, into the castle the way she had come out.

“I think I can walk now, if you don’t mind,” he hissed as they roamed the deserted halls.
She let him down, but he still needed support to be able to stand. The indignities he was suffering tonight… Still he tried to walk away from her, back outside.

“No!” She stood in front of him. “You are too weak.”

He narrowed his eyes at her. “How… dare… you tell me what to do?” He was struggling very much to stand.

“I don’t want anyone else to die today. Too many people have already. Please, let me take you to your office?” Hot tears ran down her face.

He wasn’t able to stand on his own much longer. Though he very much disliked it, he had to succumb to her wishes. He was unfit to fight. And he wouldn’t admit it to anyone, not even himself, but he was touched that she cared if he lived or died. Why? She was just nice like that. Bloody Gryffindors.

“Fine,” he sighed. And she grabbed hold of him just as he was about to collapse.

She was still crying as she dragged him down the hall to the gargoyle that guarded the headmaster’s office. “Must you do that, Miss Granger?” He hissed.

“Sorry,” she said still sniffing.

She supported him up the spiral staircase, up to the desk on which the pensive still sat. She sat him on the chair behind it. He picked up the empty phial beside the pensive and stored his memories, stowing the phial away in his cape. He then sank into the chair and closed his eyes… Only to open them seconds later with the sound of her rummaging through his cabinets.

“May I help you, Miss Granger?” He said, annoyed.

“Where do you keep your potions, sir?”

“Excuse me?”

“You’re a potions master. I very much doubt that you don’t keep potions around. There must be something there to help you not bleed out until someone can heal you properly.”

Her perseverance was astonishing. She actually thought he could have a good happy ending when this was over. She was just prolonging his suffering. Now that he knew Potter got the message and there was nothing else he could do in his state, he could die in peace.

“Where?” she asked again, impatient.

It seemed she would not let him. Fucking know-it-all. He pointed to a cabinet in the corner. She hurried to it and after a few moments she came back with a number of phials for him. He analyzed all of them and was surprised to find that all she had brought was correct, including the Blood-Replenishing potion he had kept hidden.

“Is there anything else?” She asked.

“No…” he said begrudgingly.

A sudden cool, merciless voice floated in, loud and clear as if its owner were in the room, speaking to them.

“Harry Potter is dead…” it started.
She looked at him, and he could see that all color faded from her complexion, even as his blood was still smeared all across her face.

“Tergeo,” he flicked his wand and she was clean again. “Go,” Snape said. “Kill the damned snake. And kill him.”

She ran out.
Severus Snape had been lying in that damned hospital bed for a week now. Maybe more. Time had a funny way of passing when you were utterly irritated and absolutely useless. At least he wasn’t at St. Mungo’s. Now that would have been absolutely terrible. Reporters could get into St. Mungo’s but couldn’t get into Hogwarts, and now, with all that had transpired, he would most definitely be harassed by them. Especially since everyone seemed to have learned the whole story, even aspects he did not wish to be common knowledge. He did not wish to be painted in a softer light, as a romantic hero. That would certainly affect his image, make him lose the respect – or fear – that he had from others. He could not afford to lose that, not with some Death Eaters still at large and the Ministry not being able to find them. He would definitely be targeted by the most fanatic of them. They needed to still fear him.

He had been sitting in the headmaster’s office, still wounded yet astounded that the Granger girl had been able to keep him alive, had even cared to, when he had heard footsteps outside in the corridor. It had been quite a while since the girl had left him there. Going in and out of consciousness, he had seen the sorting hat being summoned and watched idly as it flew out the window. He had heard the sounds of battle, but still had not had the strength to get up and be of use. Much later he heard the cheers and had assumed – or rather hoped – that the Dark Lord had been beaten. If he had won, Death Eaters would be roaming the skies, terrifying all. And the sun would not be coming up on such a clear day, for dementors would leave their mist in the air. Still, he felt apprehensive about the footsteps he heard approaching. He would not be a welcome sight to anyone, no matter which side had prevailed.

Minerva and Poppy walked in. Minerva was quite civil, considering hours ago she was dueling him and damn near killed him herself. Something about the way she looked at him conveyed… regret? Sorrow? They announced they were there to help him, probably on Miss Granger’s request he thought, as he tried to reach his wand, and by the way in which they looked at him, he figured they knew about the whole story.

And so he was taken to the hospital wing where he was just another face among the many who had been injured in battle. Poppy gave them all the first aid they needed, himself included – though thanks to Miss Granger it wasn’t really first aid – with the help of some healers that had come from St. Mungo’s with potion supplies. The patients with more superficial wounds were quickly discharged, and the others were slowly moved to St. Mungo’s. But he stayed behind, watching as they all left and as magical builders came and slowly repaired the damage done to the castle. He refused to be transferred to St. Mungo’s and Poppy refused to discharge him and let him go home, where he would be alone and relish in the peace and quiet he so needed.

After the first moments of panic and worry about their loved one’s health had passed, patients and family members alike could not walk by him without gawking. Most still looked at him with the usual hatred or indifference he had grown accustomed to, but now he could see pity in some of their glances. Wonderful. Just what he fucking needed. Thank Merlin the hospital wing was almost
cleared out now, except for him and four or five others.

“Here we are,” Madam Pomfrey set a tray with various potions on the table beside his bed. She picked one up and handed it to him. He looked at her, an eyebrow raised. “Take it, Severus.”

He took the phial from her hand and analyzed it with his cold stare. “What is this?”

“You know what it is, Severus! You take it every day! And you’re a potions master! It’s a Strengthening Solution.” Madame Pomfrey said, impatient.

He lifted the bottle up to the light to analyze it and was about to pick up his wand to do further inspection.

“Must we do this every day? The potion is fine, Severus. You brewed it, for Merlin’s sake!! As you did most of the potions left in this infirmary! You were a much better patient all the times you came in here unconscious.”

Snape downed the potion after scowling at her, remembering all the times Dumbledore had submitted him to Poppy’s care after punishments were handed out by the Dark Lord. She handed him another phial.

“And this?”

“I don’t have the time for this, Severus. Take the damned potion!”

“I have to make sure I am not being poisoned, Poppy,” he said coldly.

“Of all my years in this school and all the patients I have had, you are by far the most trying and impossible and likely to lead one into wanting to poison you, it is true.”

He rolled his eyes as he downed the potion.

Harry, Ginny, Hermione and Ron stood outside. Hermione had peeked through the doors several times. She felt she should visit him but was afraid to go in alone. She was trying to convince one of them to go with her.

“I’m not going in, no way,” Ron was saying.

“Stop being such a wuss, Ron! You don’t even look like you’ve fought a war in the past year,” Hermione snapped at him.

“Me? You’re the one who’s afraid to go in alone! Why do you wanna go anyway? Even if he did help us, doesn’t take away the fact that he was always a git, does it?”

“Ron!” Hermione and Ginny chided simultaneously.

“Whaa? It’s true.”

Hermione rolled her eyes and sighed, annoyed, turning her back to Ron. “Harry?” She pleaded.

“Hey, I’m all for him having visitors, you know, and I don’t hate him anymore… I actually wouldn’t mind talking to him about some things… but I think his dislike for me hasn’t changed. My visit might further deteriorate his health. He might get too agitated or something. We wouldn’t want
that, now would we?” Harry grinned.

“Maybe you should go in then,” Ron retorted.

Hermione smacked Ron’s arm. “Cowards! The pair of you!” Hermione cried in frustration.

“Come on Hermione, I’ll go with you.” Ginny took her hand. “Leave these buffoons out here.”

“Wait, you’re not serious, are you?” Ron asked.

“I’m not afraid of him. If he were going to kill me he would have done it before Easter. He certainly won’t do it now, confined to a hospital bed.” Ginny flipped her hair and pushed the door open, pulling Hermione behind her.

“Hey Headmaster. How are you feeling?” Ginny started once she saw the timid look in Hermione’s eyes.

“Miss Weasley, Miss Granger. Thought a pity visit was in order, did you?” Snape said, his impassive mask glaring at them. His voice was still husky, not restored to its former glory.

“I see you are feeling more like yourself,” Ginny smiled. Snape rolled his eyes.

He then looked at Hermione and tilted his head slightly, analyzing her very nervous and shy demeanor. “Miss Granger… I was under the impression that we had… agreed certain aspects of what you learned were not to be… divulged.” His tone was cold and cutting and his look, deadly. Only Severus Snape could be intimidating lying in a hospital bed, where he was supposed to be vulnerable.

“I… I didn’t tell anyone, Professor. I swear.”

He raised an eyebrow and held his gaze at her. It took her some deep breaths but she stood strong and did not break his gaze.

“It was Harry, Headmaster,” Ginny said matter-of-factly.

“Potter. Of course,” he scoffed. Boy Who Lived indeed. Again he came out unscathed from a confrontation with the Dark Lord. At least he hadn’t protected the boy all this time just so he could be slaughtered. Not the only surprise in this battle. When he first heard Neville Longbottom had been the one to actually kill that damned snake, he thought surely people were suffering some sort of collective hallucination. Truthfully, he had no real faith that anyone would kill the snake, but he thought that if anyone did manage it and managed to survive to tell the story, it would have been Granger. She was absolutely determined when she had left him, and wasn’t as dimwitted as the rest of the students he taught. That Longbottom had completed the task was absolute proof the world was truly upside down.

“In his defense though, he thought you were dead and it wouldn’t matter. But it’s nothing to be embarrassed of,” Ginny shrugged. Snape pinched the bridge of his nose and sighed. Before he could spout his venom at them, Ginny continued. “Listen, Headmaster, I wanted to say I’m sorry.”

“For..?” He raised an eyebrow.

“For giving you a hard time the past year when you already had so much to deal with. You know, the rebellions and the sword and all. I should have figured you were not so evil when you punished us by sending us to the forest with Hagrid instead of handing us over to the Carrows for
torture.” Ginny smiled again. Hermione was still nervous and blushing. Seeing a man like him bleeding out on her hands had a funny effect. Made him more… human.

The Weasley girl was trying to be nice. It’s funny how the members of faculty, who had known – as much as could be known at least – him and worked with him for so long did not trust him or hadn’t figured out he was on their side, nor had they apologized for anything, but Miss Weasley was here doing just that. He had now a defense only by mere chance, because he had decided in a split second to share his memories so Potter could know. If not for that, he would be rotting in Azkaban right now, or have already received the dementors’ kiss and there would be no one to say a word about it. Dumbledore in all his planning and schemes did not foresee the chance he would survive, did not truly care what happened to him. He thought he had had a sort of… friend there, after a few years. He should have known better.

He should try to be pleasant to the Weasley girl as well.

“I… am sorry to hear about your brother, Miss Weasley,” he tried, his face still expressionless as ever.

“Which one?” Both Hermione and Snape looked at Ginny, intrigued. “Well, you can mean Bill, who was mauled by Greyback, Fred, who died here in battle. Or George, who had his ear chopped off by you.”

“Ginny!” Hermione whispered while squeezing her hand.

“I know it was an accident, relax. But it did happen. Or you could be sorry I have a dimwit like Ron as a brother.”

“Ginny!!” Hermione cried out.

“What? Just because you’re dating him doesn’t make it any less true. I’ve known him longer.” Ginny smiled.

The corner of Snape’s lips curled slightly up, in an almost smile. It was etched on his face just long enough for them to catch a glimpse of it, and then he was back to his blank, almost impregnable mask.


That was when Professor McGonagall walked in.

“Ah, Minerva! Come to finish me off? Send me to Azkaban? Good, you can relieve Miss Weasley and Miss Granger here from their pity visit.”

“Nothing of the sort, Severus,” Professor McGonagall said brushing off his comments, as usual. “The Ministry officials are outside. They have already taken depositions from Mr. Potter,” Snape rolled his eyes here, “Dumbledore’s portrait,” another eye roll, along with a sigh, “and Miss Granger here.” Snape caught her eyes and they darted away as she blushed. “They were wondering if they could speak to you as well. A mere formality.”

“Must this be done right now?” Snape asked impatiently.

“Well, I strongly advise so. Kingsley has been very patient and has heeded your requests for privacy and made it so that you didn’t have to appear before the Wizengamot. He needs the evidence and depositions to take into trial.”
“Fine,” he answered as he pinched the bridge of his nose and sighed.

Hermione and Ginny started to walk away.

“I hope you feel better, Professor,” Hermione said over her shoulder.

“See you in September, Headmaster,” Ginny called out.

They walked out as the Ministry officials were coming in.
Harry and Hermione had joined Ron and Ginny and all of the Weasley clan at the Burrow for the summer. Hermione spent the rest of May and most of June doing research in every book she had left there the previous summer – and the ones she had taken on their journey with them, plus the ones she would weekly buy at Flourish and Blotts – on how to recover her parents’ memories. It was a good thing, spending all her time with her books. She was grateful that the Weasleys had taken her in since she had nowhere else to go – save her parents’ house to be all alone in what was probably now a very dusty, cold and dark house – but it was hard being there. They were all mourning Fred. She missed Fred too, but she preferred to keep her mind busy, focus on other things and try to forget and not cry all the time over things she unfortunately couldn’t change. It was just how her organized and focused mind chose to work, as to not go insane. Her parents she had a chance of saving. It was hard for her to think of them also, but the hope of succeeding kept her going. She didn’t have anyone to talk to about her suffering in the Burrow, because at least her parents were alive and well - supposedly. It would seem insensitive of her to cry about them to a family in mourning. Molly hadn’t even come out of her room for the first couple of weeks, and you could always hear her weeping that sometimes turned into wails. But then she emerged and went back to her daily routine, but more often than not she was silent and grave. You could see the sorrow in her eyes. The rest of them got on well enough, but the atmosphere in the house was just too awkward, especially since their mother was so changed. Arthur tried to make up for it, but it didn’t always work. So Hermione was glad to have her books and keep out of everyone’s way for the most part. Fortunately, towards the end of June, things were closer to being normal, whatever that was.

Once she had selected the potion she found was the most proper to help her – a mere Memory Potion would not do the trick in this case – and had studied the casting of some spells she thought couldn’t hurt to know to help her parents as well, off she was to London to buy the ingredients she would need for the potion.

Diagon Alley was livelier than the last time she had been there, during the war. The Dark Arts shops that had taken over the scenery during Voldemort’s reign were now closed and in their stead, the old friendly façades were sprouting back up. Weasleys Wizarding Wheezes took up its old corner, and the shop sign was by far the one that most caught one’s eye. She knew for a fact, since George was once again inhabiting the Burrow at his mother’s request, that the sign had been a cause of much argument between him and his new partner, Lee Jordan. It had now been magically changed to flash Weasley’s Wizard-Lee Wheezes, but she knew that it probably wouldn’t be long before it changed again.

Gringotts had been rebuilt, at least on the outside. She had not yet had the courage to go inside again after she had passed herself off as Bellatrix Lestrange to steal from her vault, and had left destruction in her wake. She had been asking Bill to exchange muggle money for her – from the savings account her parents had set up for her when she was only a child – whenever she needed it and he kindly consented.
Of course there were many heads turning and whispers could be heard. She was one of the Golden Trio. Some paparazzi took pictures as well, although she still couldn’t figure out what was so interesting about a girl shopping for books and herbs. But she had grown more accustomed to it now that she had been out several times. Some people would even come up to her and want to chat, and she did her best to indulge them without getting too personal.

She walked down the street, breathing in the fresh air of this bright early summer day, noticing all the new shops and reliving happy memories she had had here years ago. She came up to the Apothecary, the whole reason she was there in the first place, and walked in. She started to look around distractedly for the herbs, powders and roots she needed to brew the potion for her parents when she bumped into someone.

“So sorry” she said before she could look up from the shelves.

“Stalking me, are you, Miss Granger?”

That silky voice was so very familiar. She looked up, a bit frightened, and saw her fears were confirmed.

“Professor Snape. I… I’m glad to see you are well and healed, sir.” The scaring on his neck – what little she could see of it peaking out the collar of his frock coat – was still raw and red and angry, but at least the wound had finally closed for good.

He peered down at her from over his hooked nosed as she blushed red and fidgeted. She was always rather nervous around him because… well, who wasn’t? But ever since she had seen his memories and been drenched in his blood, she felt like she had been invasive, that seeing Severus Snape so vulnerable was like walking in on him in the shower or something, and that he did not appreciate having been seen like that. Thus the increased nervousness. She finally couldn’t take his silence and his impassive face looking down at her anymore, and not having thought of anything else to say, she turned to face the shelves once again.

“A bit early to be shopping for school supplies, isn’t it?”

She turned to face him again, trying to hide the fact that he had startled her. He certainly had been a bit more… mellow?... or polite, at least to her, after the war, not that the now two encounters they had could tell much of someone. Maybe looking death in the eyes did that to a person. Or maybe Nagini’s venom killed the evil inside him. Oh Gods, I’m spending too much time with Ron. That is definitely something he would say.

“Oh no, I’m actually trying to brew a Memory Restoration Mixture,” she said, quite pleased with herself.

He raised an eyebrow. “That is a very difficult potion to brew. Any minor mistake and the effects can be the opposite of the intended.”

“I’m aware. But I feel confident I can do it.”

He snorted. “Of course you do.”

She scowled and turned back to the shelves, picking up two other bottles of ingredients she needed. What did you think, Hermione? That he would be proud that you were going to brew such an intricate potion, or that he would take any interest in your life at all? Scoff. Yeah, right.

“May I ask why you wish to brew such an intricate potion while you should be on holiday? A well deserved rest, might I add.”
Once again he surprised her by caring enough to ask. She dug her nails into her palms to avoid her jaw from dropping in amazement that he was being relatively nice… and showing interest. She had let a bottle of ingredients drop though, and he had saved it from crashing to the floor, seemingly effortlessly, using his wand, while he rolled his eyes. *Smooth, Hermione.* “Well… what should I be doing? I love to learn new things.” She frowned, not sure why she was being difficult. Trying to get back at him, maybe?

“Hum. How very great for you. Not many people your age appreciate the importance of a good education. I’m sure your… friends haven’t picked up a book since they were last in school.” With a smirk, he continued to choose ingredients as well. How very annoying it was that everything he needed seemed to be in her vicinity and he had to be polite and couldn’t just walk away from her. *Don’t be a prick,* she saved your life. Though that was not wanted… or needed. He sighed.

Though he wasn’t very nice about it, he did have a point. She was the only one who would study and look for answers and help in books when they were out hunting the horcruxes, while Harry and Ron would just sit around and wait for a strike of luck or inspiration to hit them. She felt more at ease and smiled. “I actually need the potion for my parents. I…I changed their memories to keep them safe during the war. They… they don’t even know I exist anymore.”

She didn’t know why she had said it. What she expected exactly. It was a difficult subject for her, and it felt good to get it out of her chest. It wouldn’t hurt to get some sympathy from him. *Ha! That is delusional. Maybe some tips? No.* It was delusional to expect anything from Severus Snape. He looked at her, unfazed as usual, then turned on his heels to browse the rest of the shop. Without a word.

When she was walking up to the checkout to pay, he appeared in front of her once again, as if he had apparated there. She almost dropped her basket as she jumped back, startled.

“Miss Granger, you’ll want to crush the fossilized jobberknoll egg with the blade of a silver knife and only stir every quarter of an hour for exactly… *exactly*… one minute.”

“There is nothing about that in the instructions, though,” she blurted out.

He rolled his eyes. “Well yes, Miss Granger. Some things we only learn with practice. As much as it hurts me to admit it, books – and simply memorizing every word in them – cannot teach you *everything,*” he lingered on the last word.

She remembered the damned book that had made Harry far better at potions than her during their sixth year. Those were all Professor Snape’s notes. It couldn’t hurt to try what he was saying… even if it wasn’t following the exact instructions.

“I’ll have to write that down, or I’ll forget it, sir.” She was searching for a flat surface on which to place her herbs as he waved his hand lazily in the air and in it, a piece of parchment appeared. He handed it to her and she saw the instructions he had given and a few others in his slanted handwriting. “Thank you, Professor.”

His face remained hardened as usual. He turned and began walking away. When he was at the door, she heard him say over his shoulder “Good luck, Miss Granger.”
Hermione spent the next several days locked in the shed, which Mrs. Weasley so kindly let her use, brewing the potion, since it was dependent on the phases of the moon as well as the other hundreds of annoying details she had to pay attention to. It was an extremely delicate and tiresome process, so in the few occasions she had emerged to breathe some fresh air, she was usually too tired to do anything and would just doze off in the middle of conversations.

“Hermione!”

“Hum, what?”

“Could you keep your eyes open for more than five seconds? I’m trying to spend some time with my girlfriend.”

“Sorry Ron, I’m just so very tired.”

“I barely see you at all these past few days! I thought with you staying here we could have more time for… snogging and stuff.” Ron smiled affectedly. “But all I’ve done is sit around alone or having to watch Harry snog my sister. It’s not fair!”

“Ron, I have to do this for my parents!”

“I know… but it’s important for us to spend time together as well, you know.”

“Yes, it is.”

But ‘spending time together’ was not what Ron really had in mind. He only wanted to get into her pants. She tried talking to him but none of the subjects he brought up interested her, and none of her concerns interested him. He couldn’t focus on anything she said for more than five minutes. It seemed that now the war was over and they weren’t in any immediate danger, trying to figure some mystery out or hatch some sort of plan, they had little in common.

And what aggravated her the most was the fact he didn’t seem to understand or care how important it was for her to regain her parents’ memories. He thought that it was a simple thing and that all her studying and potion making was just her overreacting and being the “brainiac” she had always been. He thought she could just take a portkey to Australia and be done with it. He didn’t understand. It was so frustrating. I mean, even Professor Snape, in his own weird way, showed some sort of support in Diagon Alley, handing me that piece of parchment with many useful tips – more than those he had spoken about. But Ron only cared about his snogging time being cut.

She even had given into him several times, thinking maybe some snogging and some… other things would help her clear her mind and release some tension, but she only ended up more frustrated. Ron… fumbled a lot. And whenever it seemed things would be taken to another level, he would get… overexcited and it would all end before it even begun. Either that or there wouldn’t really be anything to even begin, since there were times when all that happened in the war, the death of his brother, would be weighing on his mind and that would affect his abilities in other areas.

But she was trying to keep her temper in check and remain calm. Ron was a good guy. She had fancied him for so long… They were friends, and that is a good foundation for any relationship. She was just stressed, overworked, and tired. After she had fixed up her parents, it would all be better, all would go back to normal.
The potion was finally ready after a week, thanks to Professor Snape’s tips, which cut her brewing time down and made her get it right in the first attempt. *That man is a fucking genius!* She packed her things and went to Australia. It was early July. It would be very tricky to be able to get close to her parents and convince them to take the potion. Or trick them into taking it. Hell, she would even force it down her throats, but she needed her parents back.

She hatched a plan where she would make an appointment in the little practice they had started there. Since only one of them would be needed to see her, she would charm her teeth and make them look like some horrible disgusting, never heard of disease had overtaken her mouth, and whichever one of them that was seeing her would feel the need to call the other into the room. There, in private, she would cast *a petrificus totalus* and calmly explain them everything, pouring the potion down their throats and hoping for the best, hoping that once she reversed the spell, she would have her mom and dad – or at least better part of them – back.

Her efforts were rewarded. She was able to retrieve her parents’ memories, and since she missed them so much – and they her – she spent all summer with them, traveling through Australia and learning more about the new life they had developed, about their new home. Then, they traveled across Europe, reliving old vacations and memories and then finally she brought them back home to England and stayed there with them until September 1st, much to Ron’s displeasure. Though the potion had been successful, restoring their memories fully would be a longer process, and she wished to speed it along as much as possible before she had to be back at Hogwarts.

And before she knew it, she was back on the train to the castle. Though it felt funny being there after all she had been through, it also felt familiar and comfortable at the same time.

Harry had spent most of the summer at the Burrow, but eventually he was able to convince Mrs. Weasley that he had to go to Grimmauld Place and make it livable once again. Ginny’s trips there to help him were always a great excuse for being alone with him, even though Ron was always sent along to chaperone. So it’s no wonder no one was happier to see Hermione than Ron, who could not give her a moment’s peace on the train. He was very disgruntled to learn that Hermione had been named Head Girl and none other than Draco Malfoy had been named Head Boy.

“Snape always favored that idiot. No wonder he was made Head Boy now that Snape is headmaster. Slimy git”

But once they arrived in the Great Hall, they were surprised to see it was McGonagall who sat at the headmaster’s chair, at the center of the head table.

The Ministry made an offer to Snape to stay on as headmaster, but he refused. He had had enough responsibilities in the previous year, and just wanted some peace and quiet. Fortunately, Slughorn, now that he was in no danger of being pursued by Voldemort, wished to go back to his retirement, allowing Snape to resume his position as Potions Master, leaving the way open for McGonagall to be headmistress, as Snape informed the Ministry she deserved to be. McGonagall, however, had made Snape her deputy headmaster. He did not seem too pleased about it as he escorted the first years down the Hall for the sorting ceremony.

Every other year had been allowed to move on to the next but the seventh. Since they had not had the chance to take their N.E.W.T.S, all those who wished to would have to re-do the year. This meant Harry, Ron and Hermione would have classes with Ginny now, and that classes would be rather crowded. O.W.L.S would be applied to the fifth and sixth years, exceptionally.

Ron, as ever, was irritated about going back to school. “I mean, you’d think they’d let us be Aurors straight away,” he said with a mouth full of Sheppard’s pie, which he washed down with
pumpkin juice. “We beat you-know-who, for God’s sake! But nooo, we have to take our N.E.W.T.S like some bloody commoner.”

Hermione tried to ignore the fact that this was yet another difference between them. She was exhilarated at the chance to be back, her mind racing and wondering what new things she could learn… but her boyfriend couldn’t care less about education and wanted the easy way out.

As they walked out of the Great Hall and tried to climb the steps amidst the loud chatter and the crowd, they bumped into Professor Snape, who oversaw the process of getting the students to their common rooms, as the prefects tried to organize it all.

“Sorry, Professor,” Harry said, as he was the one who had actually bumped into him.

Snape glowered at him silently for a moment before starting

“Let us hope, Potter, that you won’t be getting yourself into trouble this year.”

“I think there isn’t any more trouble for me to get into, Professor.” He grinned. “We beat them all a few months ago.”

Snape continued to look down at him from over his hooked nose.

“Being your father’s son, I’m sure you’ll find some.” And he walked away from them.

“Good night, Professor!” Harry called back to him, then turned to join Ginny and the rest, still grinning.

“Greasy git,” Ron said.

“Ron!” Hermione and Ginny scowled him.

“Whaat? You two love him now? Just because he told some sad story? Oh please.”

“It is sad. Explains a lot why he was how he was.” Hermione said.

“I think it’s romantic,” Ginny sighed.

“Hey, that’s my mother,” Harry said.

“Yes, and he loved her as he watched her marry your father and long after she died. And that is why he protected you, even while you were living proof and a daily reminder that the woman he loved, loved another man. That’s romantic. And I’m glad he did it.” Ginny beamed and wrapped her arm around Harry’s waist. “Or you might not be here with me now.”

“I think it’s creepy,” said Ron.

“You only choose to see it that way because you are an utter ass, Ron.” Ginny walked away, her hair waving behind her. Hermione rolled her eyes at Ron and followed Ginny.

“Whaa? Wha did I do?” Ron asked Harry.

Harry shrugged as they made their way through the crowd.
Chapter 5

Snape woke up with a start, gripping his wand under his pillow. Before he could act on his impulse, he realized he was back in his old room in the dungeons at Hogwarts, which was completely warded and safe. He had dreamt of a swarm of things. Dumbledore, the Dark Lord. All the awful things he was required to do. Spying, torturing and killing people. Seeing people tortured and killed. Some of those he had even enjoyed, though his deeply twisted and perverse ways, which he had developed to fit in with the only group that had ever seemingly welcomed him, had long died. Most of it was drowned in the magnitude of the sorrow he felt upon seeing Lily’s lifeless body. The rest was daily beat away throughout the long years he had to live in this blasted castle. It hadn’t been hard to develop such tastes back then. His anger and helplessness against his father fueled him; his father’s ways inspired him. Anger towards James, Sirius, the fact that Lily was growing further and further apart from him, and the sad pathetic life he led also helped.

He had also dreamt about that thrice damned snake. He touched the scar on his neck as he remembered the suffocating feeling of having been bit by that blasted reptile in that fucking bubble. Lily. He had dreamt of Lily. Her smiling face, her hand in his. Her disappointment in him. His debt had been paid, almost with his own life, but would he ever truly be free of it? Would it ever stop weighing on his shoulders?

He lit the hearth with a flick of his wand, only as a source of light. The cold and loneliness of the dungeons did not bother him much. He had grown accustomed to it. He even preferred it. He looked to his bedside table and there sat a bottle of Dreamless Sleep, untouched. That is why he had stirred in the night; he had forgotten to take it, so tired he was.

“Why the fuck am I back here?” He wondered aloud. He had no need for this job. He had some money saved from all the years he spent teaching and doing absolutely nothing else. Where the fuck would he have spent it anyway? Between being a Death Eater and Dumbledore’s pawn, he had had no time to live a life of his own. He also had the money prize from the Order of Merlin he had received coming. But he did not know how to do anything else. He was a spy. He was a Death Eater. And now neither was needed. What purpose would his life have? He had not thought of an after, he had not allowed himself to, for it was very likely he wouldn’t have survived the war. *The Granger girl should have just left me to die*. Dumbledore obviously hadn’t planned for him to live either, even with all his meticulously planned steps, nothing in the cards for Snape. He was discardable.

Though his real motives and allegiance had been revealed to the magical world, he still was not very much liked or trusted. He had no wife, no family, and no will or probability of ever having any. The only thing that was left to him, the only thing he knew and that could still make him remotely useful now was teaching. So that was what he would do, at least until he figured out what was next.

So he would have to put up with those insufferable andunteachable little brats. But the weighing on his shoulders, Lily’s memory, he couldn’t endure it much longer. The not sleeping properly unless he drowned himself in potions. He supposed he should at least count his blessings he wasn’t headmaster any longer. Half the headaches he would have were already averted.

He stood and walked to his chest of drawers, opening the first drawer. In there was the picture of Lily he had stolen from Grimmauld Place, and the final part of her letter to Sirius. *Love, Lily*. Her love. He had to steal it, she didn’t give it freely. Not to him. How was it that this was all he had of her when she was his whole life? And he, he meant nothing to her. He had to literally rip her
apart from James to have that piece of her he was holding. And none of it was meant for him. One
tear ran down his cheek and that was all he allowed. He shut her in her hiding place again, hoping
that would keep her away from his thoughts, but he knew it was useless.

He threw back the Dreamless Sleep on his nightstand and took one last look around his
chambers. He was safe. He lied down and flicked his wand at the fireplace once more, and
extinguished it, tucking himself under his covers.
Chapter 6

Chapter Notes

Since the last chapter is really short, you'll get another one this week. :) But don't get used to that. One per week is the norm, at least until I figure out how to end the story, so you don't catch up to me and then have to wait longer than a week for the Muses to visit me ;)

The first week of school had gone over smoothly. The time Hermione had spent apart from Ron during the summer had done them worlds of good. She had missed him and so spent all her free time with him, and the bickering had stopped. Most of the professors they were already used to had returned, so they knew what to expect. Although McGonagall was now headmistress, she had refused to give up teaching transfiguration, claiming she had not had enough time to find a suitable substitute. Snape was still strict as ever, possibly even more, and rejoiced in taking house points or handing out detentions to anyone who decided to test him even slightly, assuming that he had gone soft, even if they were Slytherins. Defense Against the Dark Arts was now taught by Agnes Gwendoline, a Ministry appointed teacher who thought that after the war and everything they had been through, the last thing the kids needed was to be more alarmed and on edge, so her classes were basically useless. Hermione had noticed it on the first week already, but refrained from saying anything, because respecting your teachers was a must. She thought McGonagall would have never hired her out of free will, and she must have been doing Kingsley Shackelbolt a favor, just until someone more suitable appeared. Kingsley probably still had more important things to take care of at the moment, and maybe had some people to appease at the Ministry. After the battle, working at Hogwarts wasn’t much of an attractive position to most witches and wizards anyway.

The second week saw a slightly more annoyed Hermione. Ron had begun obsessing about getting more intimate with her again and though she had wanted it, his incessant pushing at the most awkward moments turned her off to it. He would cut into her studying time and start kissing her and trying to seduce her with his grabby hands no matter where they were. By the lake, in the common room, in the great hall, during meals and even in the library. He was only succeeding at making her avoid him, as to not hurt his feelings.

Another habit of Ron’s that was really distracting and irritating was his constant complaining about having to be back at Hogwarts.

“I mean, I’m overage! And fought a war! Why should I be made to come back here? It’s bollocks.”

“Ron, it’s important to have an education, no matter how old you are or what you have achieved already without it. How can you not like to learn new things? Absorb knowledge?

“How can you like it so much? You’re mad!”

Thursday came and Hermione was pretty fed up, and for the first time in forever, looking forward to the weekend, not for revision or research or assignments, but for silence and solitude doing absolutely nothing, though she doubted she would get any peace if Ron was to have any say.
Their first period was Defense. Professor Gwendoline was going on about how now that You-Know-Who had been defeated, there was no cause for concern. Hermione could not take any of the nonsense any longer.

“What about all the Death Eaters that haven’t been found yet and are on the run?” Hermione cut her off without raising her hand.

“They certainly won’t show their faces around here anymore nor will they have the audacity to attack any of you. And in this class we raise our hands before we speak, Miss Granger.”

A chill went down Hermione’s spine, and probably all of her classmates’, as they remembered Dolores Umbridge and her horrible methods with those words that had just been said. Still, her hand shot up in the air, and she did not wait for permission to continue.

“You obviously stayed miles away from the war.” There was a collective gasp at Hermione’s audacity in talking to a professor like that. “Any Death Eater is absolutely capable of coming back and attacking any of us. They are awful human beings only interested in power and spreading their master’s insane ideas, and would go through lengths to do it.”

There was murmuring and nodding all around the classroom, but when some people were about to back Hermione up, Professor Gwendoline sought to gain control of her class again.

“Detention, Miss Granger. Tonight, at seven o’clock. Do not presume that because you are a Head Girl and Harry Potter’s close friend that you will receive special treatment in my class. In here you are merely a student, like anyone else.”

“That absolute cow!” Hermione sat between Ron and Ginny at lunch and could not believe she had just gotten detention. For simply speaking the truth!

“She is!” Ginny supported her friend. “Everything she spews is utter hippogriff dung.”

“Yeah! But you shouldn’t get yourself so worked up, Mione,” Ron said. “She does have a point. The war is over, we won. It’s just one less thing to study, really.”

It seemed that after Ron became confident about Hermione’s affections, he had stopped agreeing with her so often and supporting everything she said, slowly slipping back to his old annoying little self, the one that frustrated her so much. She didn’t realize it till then, but one of the things weighing on her mind and adding stress and frustration to everything she did was the fear of losing him, of failing in this relationship. She had fancied him for so long. And for a while he was the sweet heroic prince her teenage heart had hoped he would be with her. But as soon as the worries of finding and killing horcruxes, of when they were going to be attacked, of being ever ready, had faded, he had stopped being all that. She wasn’t sure if he truly had stopped or if she was the one who had changed and saw him differently now. But it was failing. She was failing. She never failed. She would have to try harder. So she refrained from retorting and sat bitterly thinking about what an awful night she would have with Professor Gwendoline in detention.

After lunch, they had Potions. As in every other class, Hermione, Ron, Harry and Ginny sat together. Hermione was over-thrilled of sitting in a class where she would actually learn something, unlike her morning was spent. But Ron sat beside her, mumbling his frustration of still having to sit through classes when he could be off starting his life already, and he was also cursing Professor Snape under his breath. His dislike for him remained unchanged or had even grown. Hermione could understand why, seeing as the man was still strict and cold and a bit of a bully, but being witness to
his memories and having him bleed half to death before her eyes – twice! – and having his blood all over her made her heart soften in regards to him. Most girls had swooned when they heard of his past, but a lot of them went back to normal once he did not show himself as the romantic and pained man they fancied him to be. They thought the icy exterior would melt with the need to be a spy and wear a mask. But she had seen it all, not heard of it. She understood the mask was not protection from Voldemort. It was protection from the world. It had been put in place long before Voldemort rose to power, not developed because of it. She respected him and all he lost, all he did, all he risked to save Harry, and her by consequence, and everyone, really. So his bitterness didn’t quite annoy or wound her any longer.

What was enraging her though was Ron’s constant mumbling and muttering beside her. She couldn’t hear a word of what the professor was saying and could not make the notes she needed to study properly later on or brew the potion he spoke of once he stopped lecturing. It was infuriating her. Why should she suffer for Ron’s lack of interest? Only because she was snogging him? She shouldn’t support his never-ending whining and hurt her education.

“Shut up!” She said, not quite as low as she had wished to, for only Ron to hear.

Professor Snape was walking past her while he lectured, his hands clasped behind his back, when he heard her. Of course he heard her, everyone was in silence. Everyone except Ron.

He turned on his heels, his cape billowing behind him as his eyes narrowed at her. His lips pursed. She could see the rage boiling in him as she looked at him horrified, realizing he thought she meant him.

“Detention, Miss Granger.” He said coldly.

“No, professor, I…” She desperately tried to explain.

“Three… days’ detention,” He hissed.

“But sir, I…”

“Does the insufferable know-it-all Gryffindor princess deem herself so superior to us mere mortals that she thinks she could teach this class better than I?”

“No, sir,” her eyes flashed with anger that she had been put in this position and that she could not even explain herself. He saw it.

“Then I suggest you be quiet, unless you wish for a week’s worth of detentions and breaking a record. You must be the first Head Girl to collect so many detentions in barely two weeks of classes.”

She fell silent and looked down at her parchment. She felt his eyes pierce her skull but did not look up, did not move. When he moved away and continued to lecture, she glanced sideways at Ron, and he understood her anger was towards him, so he sat quietly for the remainder of the class.

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She packed her bag angrily jamming everything in it and huffing at Ron. She stormed outside but he caught up.

“Whatchu angry at me for?”

“You! You won’t shut up for one second so I can listen to class! It’s your fault I got detention for the whole weekend!”

“Why do you wanna pay attention to that bat’s class anyway? You already know everything there is to know. Probably studied everything beforehand anyway. You spent all the time you were over at my house brewing that stupid potion.”

Hermione let out a growl of frustration and tuned on her heels to walk away from Ron.

“Mione!”

“Don’t speak to me, Ron.” Hermione disappeared in the crowd.

“That stupid potion? Really Ron? You are a lot thicker than I give you credit for.” Ginny had caught up with them, along with Harry.

“What?”

Ginny rolled her eyes. “Harry, would you please? I’m going after her.”

“That potion was to help her get her parents back, mate. It must have slipped your mind?” Harry said as they both watched Ginny walk away.

“Oh, bugger!”

Hermione walked the halls after dinner, still angry. She found her way to Professor Gwendoline’s office a bit early, in the hopes of getting detention over with as soon as possible. But what good would it do? She still had detention until Sunday. And with Snape of all people. Though she did not hate him, nor had she ever shared Harry and Ron’s strong dislike of him, she had always felt intimidated by him. He had a strong presence that demanded respect, and she had always given it willfully. His comments and bullying only made him more intimidating and feared, but even that time he had reduced her to tears, she had not lost respect for him.

Now she was older, she had fought a war and lived through horrors, but still he managed to instill a respectable amount of fear in her. Even more so because she felt guilty about having seen his memories without it being his wish, had gained such an understanding of him, had seen him on the brink of death and vulnerable, and she had the impression that made him even more wary of her.

As she walked down the hall lost in her thoughts, she only noticed a glimpse of a tall shadow walking towards her, but it didn’t pull her out of her train of thought. Professor Gwendoline’s office was further down the hall, she would only stop walking there.

“Miss Granger,” Snape’s voice came to her as if she had conjured it and, startled, she looked up to find him leaning over her.

“Oh, Professor, sorry, I…”

“You should be heading down to my office. You will be late for detention.”
“But I… I have detention with Professor Gwendoline today. I assumed you… you knew and I would serve detention with you starting tomorrow.”

“I have just spoken to Professor Gwendoline and she was… gracious enough to lend me her time with you. I have various matters that need attention down in the dungeons and she has no activities planned for you yet.”

“Oh. Okay.” So it would begin sooner than expected. Her awkward weekend with Professor Snape.

“Miss Granger!” He was already several steps away from her, heading to the stairs. “Are you able to keep up? Or would you rather observe the new stone walls of the castle? If so, I can have you wash them as part of your detention.”

“Sorry, sir. I’m right behind you.”

He opened the door to his office and stepped aside for her to enter. It was dark, but around the walls she could see some jars on shelves with herbs, roots and slime and animal parts swimming in liquid that glowed in the dark. He lit the sconces with a lazy wave of his hand and all the shelves and jars and phials were now visible, along with his ample desk and the chairs around it, and the pile of parchments atop the desk. He did not light the fireplace and it was rather chilly down there… but of course she could not say anything. She would power through.

He went to a door on their left and opened it. It led to the cupboard where he kept his ingredients, the very cupboard she broke into in her second year.

“You will be doing inventory. Write down what there is and how much of it.”

“Yes, sir.”

“Very well, get to it.”

“Sir?”

“Yes, Miss Granger?” He said between clenched teeth, already impatient.

“May I use magic?”

“You would be done rather quickly that way. And what fun would there be in that?” he asked sarcastically. “I could have done it using magic.”

“Right. Couldn’t hurt to ask.” She tried a smile.

He arched an eyebrow down at her and tuned back into his office.

“Professor?”

“Yes?” He let out in a bit of a bark, pinching the bridge of his nose.

“I just… I just wanted to make it clear to you that what I said in class today was not directed at you. I respect you and I would never…”

“I suppose Professor Gwendoline gave you undeserved detention as well?”
“No… I … I wasn’t trying to get out of detention, I did disrupt your class, I just don’t want you to think I would disrespect you like that. I was telling Ron to shut up so I could hear you.”

He narrowed his eyes and arched his eyebrow. She respected him. It was more than anyone had ever said to him. Everyone hated him. Feared him. Mistrusted him. Used him. And now, thanks to Potter’s big mouth, pitied him. He supposed he could be gracious enough to thank the girl. She had also saved his life. Though he did not much care to be saved, she insisted on it.

“Fine, Miss Granger.”

He turned to go to his desk and finish correcting those damn papers from the first year dimwits.

“Professor?” She was at the door of the cupboard leaning into his office.

“Miss Granger…” he sighed, “is the task at hand too difficult for you?”

“No, sir.” She smiled. A shy but unmistakably smug smile.

_The little know-it-all. What does she want now? “Then what?”_ He hissed impatiently.

“I just wanted to thank you. For the tips for the memory potion for my parents. I never did thank you properly. So thank you.”

“Get to work, Miss Granger.”

“Yes, sir.”

It was nearly eleven when Snape decided to give up on the papers. He was only getting more irritated with the students’ lack of effort and marking everything down. He looked up and saw the cupboard door open, the sconces lit. The girl was still in there. Fuck, he forgot.

“Miss Granger.”

“Yes, professor?” She stuck her head out.

“You are dismissed for the evening. I expect you back tomorrow at the same time.”

“Yes, sir.” Her hair appeared to be wilder than it was when she got there.

She was pulling her schoolbag over her shoulders and reached for the doorknob.

“Did it work, Miss Granger?”

“Sorry?”

“The potion, for your parents. Did it work?”

“Yes sir, wonderfully. They still need to relive some things so some memories return, but they are doing well. They remember me, which was the point, really. Thank you again, sir.”

“It was your merit, Miss Granger. My advices would do you no good if you had no talent in brewing.”

Was Snape saying she was smart? Talented? That was a first. A compliment from Snape. She smiled. She would take it. She proceeded to opening the door.
“Miss Granger.”

“Sir?”

“I never properly thanked you for saving my life.”

_Wow._ Something was truly amiss with the world if Snape was giving out compliments and gratitude.

“I… I didn’t do much. You were the one who knew the spells and… I just… it was nothing.”

“Thank you, Miss Granger, you may go now.”

And so she did, before she did or said something to irritate him.
Chapter 7

She got to the Gryffindor common room and before she gave the Fat Lady the password, she exhaled. Ron and Harry would probably be up waiting for her, and she so did not want to chat. Ron would still be begging for forgiveness and she wanted him to suffer a bit longer. She didn’t quite miss him yet.

“Are you just going to stand there and watch me sleep or are you giving a password in the foreseeable future?” The Fat Lady asked impatiently.

“Leo Animo,” and the portrait swung open.

As she climbed into the common room, she was relieved to find that only Ginny was still up.

“Where are the boys?” Hermione asked half-heartedly.

“They gave up on their homework and went to bed. They can’t do anything properly without your help, you know.”

“And you didn’t help them?”

“No. I’m not as kind as you.” Ginny smiled and put her quill to parchment to finish whatever sentence she’d been writing.

Hermione sank in a chair beside her and opened her schoolbag. Luckily she had been doing homework in between classes and during meals, so she wouldn’t have to stay up too long.

“So how was it?” Ginny asked. “What did that Gwendoline cow made you do? She looks like she would have a quill like Umbridge’s.”

Hermione laughed. “She does, doesn’t she? But she wouldn’t get away with it now. No, she passed me on to Professor Snape.”

“And you’re alive? I swear the man has a way of making us forget he wasn’t actually fighting for You-Know-Who. He looked absolutely murderous when he heard you telling him to shut it.”

“I did NOT tell him to shut it! Your brother was the one that was directed at.”

“I know. He should shut it every once in a while. But what did Snape make you do?”

“Inventory of his ingredients.”

“That’s not so bad!”

“No, it was OK actually.”

“I thought he was going to make you scrub the floors with a shrunken sponge by the way he was looking at you.”

Hermione snorted. “I’ve got detention until Sunday with him. Let’s hope he doesn’t get crazy ideas like yours.”
Friday went by quickly. She had finally forgiven Ron and he was the most perfect gentleman all day. He was very quiet, carried her bags and books, and when he did speak, he only said sweet things. But seven o’clock came before she knew it and she was heading down to the dungeons.

She knocked on Professor Snape’s door well aware she was ten minutes late and would probably get a scolding for it. As she heard his voice call “enter,” she braced herself for what was to come.

“Good evening, Miss Granger.”

“Hello, Professor.”

“You may go to the cupboard and continue the work you started yesterday,” he said from behind his desk. Several pieces of parchment still required his attention.

That’s it? Hadn’t he noticed she was late? She should just go on with her work then, and not make him aware of anything. But she couldn’t. It was stronger than her. She felt like she had done something awfully wrong and had to say it.

“I’m sorry I’m late, sir.”

“Hmmmm” was all he said as his quill angrily marked the essay bellow it.

She went into the cupboard and all was as she had left it. She was afraid he would have moved things around, maybe because he needed something or maybe on purpose, and she would lose her place and have to start over. But no. As it was, she would probably finish early.

And that she did. It was only nine thirty when she emerged from the cupboard, several lists in hand. He was still bent over his grading and she did not want to disturb, so she thought she would examine his shelves until he noticed her there. She looked around at all the goo and animal organs and bits in jars. Some bottles contained potions she had already studied and even brewed herself, so she could recognize what they were, but most made her wonder what it was or what they were for, and what potions could be brewed with such ingredients.

Among all these jars, there was a shelf which was filled top to bottom with books. She ran her eyes over them and found that they were very interesting subjects. Many of these books could not be easily found in the library, or in shops for that matter. She reached out to touch the spine of one which caught her attention but snapped her hand back immediately when she heard his voice and remembered where she was.

“May I help you, Miss Granger?” His tone was icy. He was looking up at her, his brow furrowed and his lips pursed.

“I’m sorry sir. I… I finished the task you set me.” She came closer to the desk.

“Finished?” The line between his eyebrows deepened. “All of it? Inventory of all the ingredients?”

“Yes, sir.” She placed her lists on his desk and pushed them forward. He noticed her ink-stained fingers. “I took the liberty of listing the ingredients alphabetically, in order of storage and also by which are most used in each year sir, according to your syllabus. At least what I could remember of it.” She finished on a humble note but of course she remembered it. She remembered everything she had ever read.

He raised an eyebrow as he took the parchments. He glanced over them and looked up at her.
“Did I ask you to do this?” He hissed.

“No sir. I just thought it could be helpful.” She had started out the conversation confident, but now her shoulders slumped a bit at his tone.

“Always the overachiever, I see,” he snorted.

He saw disappointment and sadness flash in her eyes. Why did he do that? Always feel the need to keep people at bay. Because they always hated him and pushed him away anyway, that’s why. Better if he was the one to keep them away. Less disappointment. But the girl had been helpful. And organized. If he put any other student to do such a task, they would take twice as long and break half his jars. He shouldn’t treat her like that. She saved his life. Insisted upon it, even when he himself did not care whether he lived or died. Death, in fact, had seemed easier. But the girl cared in some capacity. Respected him.

“Very well, Miss Granger. Thank you. This will prove helpful indeed.”

A bit of cheer returned to her eyes and she stood taller.

“You are dismissed for the evening.”

“Thank you, sir.”

“Tomorrow, same time.”

“Yes sir.”

Saturday morning was quick to go by. As it was a nice day out, they sat under the beech tree by the lake with their schoolwork. After lunch, Ginny and Harry disappeared, leaving her and Ron with some time alone of their own. As ever, he tried to take their relationship to the next level, and she could not reason anymore as to why they shouldn’t. Her parents were fine, at home, safe, and were aware of her existence. That was one less worry on her mind. The entirety of Ron’s mourning family was not around to make her feel like it was wrong somehow, and Ron himself seemed to be better. It didn’t seem like he just wanted to do this to have a relief from grief anymore. Yet, as he kissed her and fumbled awkwardly at her jeans as they lay in his four-poster, curtains drawn shut, all the wards and silencing charms she could think of in place and the certainty that beyond the curtains the room was empty and would most likely remain like that for the rest of the afternoon, she could not feel enticed by him or certain that she wanted this to go on, that she wanted to give him this part of her. She had given him everything else she had. For years she gave him her intelligence, helping with his schoolwork, helping with all the trouble he and Harry got themselves into, saving their lives countless times in the year they spent hunting horcruxes, offering her insights and helping them with all that Dumbledore hadn’t laid out, hadn’t explained. All hoping to get his attention, to earn his notice, his admiration. And she did. And now she had it, and all was fine with the world and she could finally just enjoy herself and be happy, his admiration and love did not seem to fit. It seemed less important. It seemed as if she had given him everything and there was nothing left to give. Nothing that was only hers, nothing that didn’t have either him or Harry in it.

And she longed for the release, she did. Something to tear her mind away completely from everything she had lived through and untighten her muscles which seemed perpetually clenched. She never really had romantic fantasies about giving herself to the one she would marry and be forever with, but being with Ron would be quite poetic. Be his first and he hers. She already knew him, truly, for years. No fears, just trust. But she couldn’t seem to bring herself to want it bad enough.
Maybe if she focused, like she did with her studies.

Focus. She turned to him and focused. Her lips on his. Respond to his caresses. His touch did begin to make her feel... something. But it wasn’t what she had imagined it would be. Focus. Indicate to him what you want. But what did she want? She didn’t quite know herself. He had been grinding his dick on her leg. It was hard, she could feel it through her jeans and his. She wanted that. That excitement. How could he feel it, be that hard when she barely did anything? She reached down to unbutton his pants and he came all over his jeans and hers. And instead of the sweet release she wanted, she only added frustration to her always speeding mind.

“Mione, I’m sorry…”

“It’s fine, Ron,” she said as she took her wand and cast a cleansing spell on them. She registered, for the first time, how annoying it was to be called Mione.

“I didn’t…” he was already sleepy, lying next to her.

“I should go get ready for detention anyway.”

He was asleep. The bastard got his release, however clumsily it came, and just slept. Fuck her, right? Who cares what she needed. She got up and unwarded the bed. She stormed to the girls’ dormitory and the common room was, thank Merlin and the beautiful day, empty. She needed to change, to get his smell off of her, to not be so irritated.

It was still early, but she had nothing else to do, so she headed for the dungeons, taking extra time to appreciate the newly rebuilt walls and passageways of the castle. Still, it was only six thirty when she arrived at Professor Snape’s door. She decided to knock anyway. Maybe he would dismiss her earlier, but if he kept her longer it wouldn’t be so awful. He left her in silence and gave her work, which distracted her mind and was a hell of a lot better than having to hear Harry and Ron – and Ginny! – talk about quidditch. Try-outs were on Monday and it was all she heard of, so she would just sit around and pretend to understand what the hell they were talking about. Plus, she didn’t really wish to look at Ron today anymore.

Snape did not call to enter, but came to the door himself. He looked annoyed at first, his brow furrowed, that deep line etched in between his eyes, his lips pursed. But the moment he laid eyes on her, his face was back to the impassive mask it was most of the time. A memory of him covered in his own blood, a bit of fear in his eyes, flashed in her mind. She remembered that he was human. That he cried when Lily Potter died, cried like a child, as she had seen in the pensive, and she felt no fear of his sharpness.

“You are early, Miss Granger,” he said looking over his hooked nose.

“Yes. I can wait out here, professor, I don’t mind. I thought I’d make up for being late yesterday.”

He pinched the bridge of his nose and sighed. “Yes, very well then.” He stepped aside to admit her into the room.

Today he led her into his classroom, which was connected to his office through the cupboard. The tables where the students worked were littered with cauldrons.

“These need attention. Especially the First Years” he said as he rolled his eyes. “I trust I don’t need to tell you to be thorough.”

“Of course I will be, sir.”
He glided into the cupboard, to pass to his office. He stopped at the door and said without looking back

“And you may use magic, Miss Granger.”

Wow. Not the first time Snape was kind to her, in whatever way he knew how to be. He complimented her efforts in brewing the potion for her parents and then her lists of his stores. And now he let her use magic in detention.

With the use of magic, the cauldrons were tended to rather quickly, even though all of the students’ cauldrons – and perhaps some of his own – seemed to be in the pile. She finished before nine and stepped back into his office. He was not there. She’d have to wait. It was cold, as usual. She looked over his books again and could not help but to pull one out this time, since he was not there to stop her. The one that called her attention the most was one on healing potions. It had absolutely everything. From swelling to deep cuts and internal injuries. It would have been so useful last year. Or maybe not, as she would not have the time or the ingredients to brew potions for them.

She sat at his desk and flipped through the pages, absolutely mesmerized. There were potions to treat magical injuries as well as natural ones, diseases muggles had, animal stings and bites – magical and non-magical – and more. It took her a while to realize he was standing behind her.

“Professor! I’m sorry, I didn’t…”

“One should not touch what is not their property, Miss Granger,” he said coldly. But he didn’t look mad. Well, he looked mad, but not murderous.

“I’m sorry, I was waiting for you and I… It was stronger than me,” she said ashamed.

He smirked. He knew very well the pull that books could have. He himself would read through the night as a teenager, before he had so many... obligations. And he was pleased to find that he now had the time again to lose himself in books.

“You have finished your task?”

“Yes, sir.”

“Can you try not to… excel at everything, Miss Granger? What will I have you do tomorrow?” He said a bit annoyed.

She blushed at his veiled compliment.

“You are dismissed,” he said as he sat on his chair, across from her.

But she did not wish to go. She wanted to read that book. And she was sure she would not find it in the library. He wouldn’t let her sit here and read beside him but… what if…

“Professor? May I… Would it… I…”

“Spit it out, Miss Granger.”

“Could I borrow your book, sir? This book.” She tapped the one she had been looking through.

He arched an eyebrow.

“Are you in need of help, Miss Granger?”
“Oh no, no, sir.”

“Are any of your... friends?” He lingered on the last word as if it had a bitter taste. “Any potions you may need can be obtained with Madam Pomfrey in the infirmary.”

“No... I just... I want to read it. I like to study. And I never found a book like this one before... so... comprehensive.”

“Yes, it is quite.”

“So... may I?”

He looked at her with narrow eyes before he exhaled and relaxed his features, seemingly giving up on trying to scare her away. It was very demanding, trying to be nice and yet maintain a distance from a girl you owed your life to, however meager it was. A girl that had looked into the pits of your soul and still respected you, did not find you weak or pitiable or a monster. At least it seemed that way.

“If I were to lend it to you, when could I expect it back?”

“Huummm... tomorrow?”

“Tomorrow? You would read it all by tomorrow?” It was considerable in size, the book. She analyzed the book, seeming to weigh it, measure its length, the size of the print.

“Yes, sir.”

“Wouldn’t you rather be outside and run amok with Potter and Weasley? Do you not have anything better to do with your Sunday?”

She shrugged. “I can read outside.”

He snorted and held back a snigger. It was mere instants in which an almost smile was marked on his face, before the expressionless mask was put in place again, but she noticed it. Then she thought she rather enjoyed the idea of making him laugh. She would like to see what that would look like. She wondered if he ever did laugh, would there be witnesses?

“And you would take good care of it? I wish to get it back as it is being handed to you.”

“I would take better care than you. You make notes on the margins and fold the pages...I’ve never done that to a book.” She didn’t think as she said it to whom she was saying this. It just seemed amusing that someone who did that to books would ask her to take good care of one. What other harm, short of ripping it apart, could be done to a tome? She looked up and saw his narrowing eyes on her, his pursed lips and immediately regretted what she had said.

“I’m sorry, sir, I didn’t mean to... I just...” She sighed. “No damage would be done to your book while it was under my care, I assure you.”

He stood up and made his way around the table. He leaned on it next to the chair where she sat and folded his arms in front of him. He looked down at her from over his hooked nose, and she was sure she had cocked it up. He was going to lend it before, she thought, but now he was just going to be unpleasant and send her running from there.

“And tell me, Miss Granger... will you not steal ingredients from my stocks and go brew
yourself a potion in the girls’ lavatory?”

He had leaned down a bit to look her in the eye, and as she jerked her head up in surprise at his words, her face was mere inches from his. She felt her flesh prickle, but wasn’t sure it was fear. He smelled of parchment and herbs and something peppery and she enjoyed it. It even soothed her. He raised an eyebrow.

“Well?”

“I… you… you know about that?”

“Boomslang skin and horn of bicorn go missing from my stocks and then a month later you show up in the infirmary with cat fur and a tail. Yes, I knew.” He was standing straight again. “If I could have proven it, you would be serving detention to this day.”

She blushed and slumped in her chair.

He picked up the book and held it to her. “Tomorrow, at six.”

“Yes, sir.” She grabbed the book smiling. As she got up and straightened herself to walk to the door, his book in hand, she heard him ask

“Do enlighten me, Miss Granger, on why you felt the need to brew polyjuice in your second year? That has always… made me curious. Surely you had no desire to become a cat.”

“No.” She was hugging the book and looking at the floor. She blushed furiously, her cheeks almost bright enough to light the room. She took a deep breath to let it all out at once. It was so stupid, looking back at it now.

“Harry felt that Draco could be the heir of Slytherin, so I brewed polyjuice to disguise ourselves as Slytherins so he would open up to us and confess.”

Snape snorted. “And the cat comes in where?”

“I failed to observe that Millicent Bulstrode had a cat.”

“I see.”

She did not look up. She didn’t want to see the sneer as he mocked her.

“It is still impressive that you brewed it correctly at such a young age. Have a good evening, Miss Granger.”

She looked up, not quite understanding. He didn’t mock her. He complimented her. He wouldn’t… punish her?

“Please be so kind as to leave, Miss Granger, so I can retire for the night,” he said, annoyed.

“Oh right, sorry. Thank you for the book, professor.”
On the next morning, Snape went to breakfast relatively late for his daily routine, but it was Sunday and he wasn’t going to interrupt the first decent night of sleep he had had in ages for nothing. He was halfway up to the Great Hall when he thought he should have had a house elf bring him something in his quarters, as to avoid the mass of students who woke up late on weekends. But it wasn’t so late, and the Great Hall would probably still be relatively empty, since the students were lazy wastes of oxygen. So he continued on his way.

As he had suspected, not many students were there, and only a few of his colleagues, who cheerily bade him good morning. He only responded with a nod. Did the bastards think he had forgotten how they mocked him behind his back last term? What else would he expect from dimwitted fools who weren’t smart enough to recognize that he was protecting them and their charges as best he could from a murdering megalomaniac and his demented followers? Granted that the Carrows were able to inflict some pain, but he was only one man. It was a lot to bear. He could only split himself into so many characters to do all that was asked of him. And no matter how powerful a wizard he was, he could not be several places at once, to oversee all that needed to be overseen. He did what he could and was barely acknowledged for it. Yes, he had received fancy titles. War hero. Order of Merlin, first class. He had been acquitted of any crimes, and Merlin knows he had committed them, even if against his will. But what good did all that do if the people who had lived and worked with him daily for the previous 20 years could not trust him, did not know him? He supposed he should take comfort in the fact that it probably meant he did his job superbly well. But he couldn’t. And now they expected him to consort with them and bid them good morning as if nothing had happened. Treacherous snakes. Without so much as an apology from them. He was only here to buy some time, figure out what he could do next, do with his freedom. Imposing his presence among them and making them slightly uncomfortable was an added bonus. And he supposed that he owed Minerva the favor until she found a suitable potion’s master. She was the only one who formally apologized and testified in his behalf in the Wizengamot.

As he sipped his tea and poked the eggs that had appeared on his plate, he observed, among the few scattered students on the house tables that Miss Granger sat alone, his book propped up on a jar of pumpkin juice, as she read it and absentlly bit her toast. He remembered with amusement as she sat in his office and accused him of taking poor care of his books because he made notes in them, but there she sat, risking a jar of juice spilling on it. Nothing that a quick charm could not fix, but still, careless. She seemed absolutely enraptured by the book and did not notice when the Weasley boy came behind her to snoop. Whatever possessed him to lend a book to a student? It was not of her concern, not in the syllabus. She should not be preoccupied with such a thing. Now everyone would think he freely lent out books and that he had grown soft. Or worse, would harass him to ask some sort of favor themselves. That imbecile Weasley would recognize his handwriting and being the temperamental baboon he is, would certainly unleash rumors throughout the castle.

Miss Granger noticed him quickly enough, and snapped the book shut. He kissed her good morning and before anyone could blink, was already with his mouth full, chewing rather crassly. There was absolutely no need to eat quite as much as he did, nor quite as quickly, as if the food was going to be vanished in seconds. He reached out his dirty paws to touch the book, but Miss Granger slapped it away. Snape smirked. At least the girl had word. She said she would not breathe a word of it to anyone and wouldn’t let harm come to his book, and she was true to it, even with her… lover. Potter and the Weasley girl arrived and Miss Granger slid the book to her side, on the bench. Certainly no one would talk of books now, not in present company.

The sight of Potter and his girlfriend was always disturbing. It reminded him so much of Potter senior
and Lily. And all the pain he felt when he saw the girl he loved with his nemesis, his bully. Of all the men she could have scorned him with… But he was more used to it now. The Weasley girl was but a shadow of what Lily had been, the auburn hair being the only jarring similarity. And his love for Lily… well, it had become more of a sense of duty over the years. That he owed her for what he caused. How could he still love someone he hadn’t seen in almost two decades? She was only a memory, the only happy one he had, though it was tainted with sadness as well, thanks to him, of course, and his stupid decisions and his awkward ways. But he still thought he would not be able to feel so strongly for any other woman again. Even if he did by some miracle, it would only be to be hurt once more.

And Potter… he need not worry about or watch Potter any longer. His job was done. There was no more immediate danger. He only wished that his conscious felt like the debt could be paid without his own death. It was tormenting to live like this, with no purpose, no idea of what you are meant to do now. Most of his life had been dictated. He should have died. Pay death with death. Damn the Granger girl for having found him. Damn himself for not having died when he should have. He should have just laid there and waited for his blood to leave his body.

His morning thoughts were interrupted when Minerva sat next to him.

“Severus, I would like a word with you.”

“Good morning, Minerva. Care for some tea?” He said with irony.

“Yes, yes, good morning. I wasn’t aware you were so keen on pleasantries.”

“Well I usually do enjoy some conversation before being asked for something on a Sunday morning.” He arched his eyebrow as he sipped his tea. He looked straight forward, always with his terrorizing gaze towards the students.

“Severus, I would like for you to go see me in my office this afternoon,” she said, ignoring his dry sarcastic tone.

“May I ask what this is about?”

“Headmistress duties. And you, being the only former headmaster who doesn’t have a painting on my wall to annoy me every waking minute, and as my deputy headmaster, I would like very much for you to help me with some details, review the files you kept, that sort of business.”

“I assure you, should I have a painting in that office I would never be found in it.”

“Can you come?”

“The correct question is will I come.”

“Severus! Stop being infuriating.”

He sighed as he put his tea down. “If it’s all the same to you, Minerva, I would rather not step foot in that office again. I have heard Dumbledore’s voice far too many times in my lifetime.”

“He asks about you, you know.”

“I’m very well, no thanks to him.”

“What he did was despicable, yes, but he did testify in your defense at the Wizengamot. Don’t be so harsh.”
“The least he could do, really.”

“Severus, I will tell him to leave.”

“I do not trust him to. If you could, I would rather you go to my office. But if I absolutely have to, I will see you in your office at around... shall we say four o’clock... headmistress?” He lingered on the last word.

“Don’t take that tone with me, Severus. We are friends, there is no need for that.”

“Are we now?”

“Yes, though you make it very hard for people to be. I will see you in your office at four then.”

“All right.”

“Thank you, Severus.”

“Thank you.”

When Minerva left, his eyes drifted back to the Gryffindor table. Potter and the Weasleys chatted away merrily, but Granger was nowhere to be found.

Hermione knocked on Snape’s door at six o’clock sharp. He opened it, angrily, and when he saw it was her, his features went back to their usual impassiveness.

“Miss Granger. Is it six already?” He backed out of the doorway so she could enter. Professor McGonagall was seated at the chair Hermione had occupied the previous evening, stacks of parchment on the desk and a tea tray on one end.

“Headmistress, I forgot I had detention to oversee today,” Snape said as he closed the door. “Would you give me a moment while I set Miss Granger on her task? Then we can get right back to where we were.” His tone was indifferent, if not bored completely.

“That’s fine, Severus. We’ve done enough for today. If you will go over what we talked about, we’ll talk again tomorrow.” McGonagall rose from the chair and vanished the tea tray.

“Certainly, headmistress.” Snape was now behind his desk, leaving Professor McGonagall between himself and Hermione.

Professor McGonagall waved her wand broadly and most of the parchments on the desk were stacked neatly in the air, floating beside her. Then they fell gently in her arms and she held them close to her chest. She looked sternly at Hermione.

“Miss Granger. Getting detentions? And so early in term? Being a Head Girl? What has happened to you?”

Hermione shifted uncomfortably on her feet and looked embarrassed, her cheeks flushed.

“It seems Miss Granger has grown into quite the savant during the war and dispenses any further education. So she found it fitting to tell me to, and I quote, ‘shut up’ during my lecture, as she seemingly has no use for the absurdities I seem to spew in class.” Snape folded his arms across his chest and arched an eyebrow.
“Miss Granger! What on earth possessed you? I could never think you could do such a thing! I am very disappointed in you.”

Hermione slumped her shoulders. How mortifying, to be called out by the headmistress. But she had explained to Professor Snape and had apologized. Had he not believed her? But it was all true. Did he think she was lying to him? She looked up at him and he was looking straight at her, his lips twisted into a smirk, while professor McGonagall had her back to him and stared her down. The bastard was toying with her, enjoying this. She widened her stare at him as if asking why he had done that and his smirk even broke into a small smile for half a second. Bastard.

“It was a misunderstanding, Professor. It won’t happen again.”

“I should hope so, Miss Granger. I should hope so.” She turned to the fireplace. “Severus, would it hurt you to light this thing every once in a while? I, or other professors might need to speak to you through the floo.”

“Precisely why it is not lit,” he retorted.

She huffed. “I guess I’ll walk to my office then.” She opened the door and left, closing it behind her.

“Why did you do that?” Hermione asked exasperated. “I explained what happened, Professor!”

“Yes well… I deserve to have some fun, do I not, Miss Granger?” He smirked.

“Your book, sir.” Hermione handed over the book she had been clutching since she had walked in, her brow furrowed. She was angry, but could not say anything and risk losing house points or getting another detention.

“Don’t think I did not notice that cheek, Miss Granger. Five points from Gryffindor.” He took the book from her hands as she sighed in frustration.

He placed the book on the table. He ran his hands over it and the book levitated and snapped open, its pages blowing through while his hands were still over it. After about half a minute, the book snapped shut and fell to the desk.

“Everything seems to be in order,” he said, and he waved his hand, sending the book flying to the shelf, to lay in the spot it had been taken from.

“Of course it is. I take good care of books. If there is one thing I do well, it is that.”

Snape snorted. One thing. Bloody know-it-all takes pride in doing everything well.

“And now,” he said as he took a seat, “since you so annoyingly completed every task I set you before the estimated time and you did it with no faults,” Hermione smiled, proud of herself. Snape rolled his eyes when he saw this, “it was necessary for me to think of something else for you to do today. However, the headmistress unexpectedly had need of me, which left me no time – or patience for that matter – to think on your new activity. So… I guess you are dismissed from detention today, Miss Granger.”

Hermione turned to the door.

“Miss Granger.”

“Yes?” She turned back to face her potions professor.
“I did not say you were dismissed from this office.”

She looked at him, puzzled.

“We can’t have people thinking I’ve gone soft now, can we? You will sit down and wait. You can leave within the hour.”

She sat down as he started going over the stack of papers Professor McGonagall had left. So she was just supposed to sit here and watch him read? He would certainly be annoyed with her before long. Perhaps she could get another book to read. Or…

“Professor?”

“Yes, you may pick out a book to read while you wait,” he said without looking up from his work.

“Thank you, that would be great,” had he read her mind? “but I was wondering…”

“Yes?” He looked up, annoyed already.

“I… I made a few notes about the book you lent me… I was wondering if I could… pick your brains, so to speak, about a few of your notes on the book?”

He pinched the bridge of his nose. Why had he lent her the blasted book?

“I’m in the middle of something here, Miss Granger.”

“Yes, well, if you give me some direction I can maybe help you with that, so you can finish faster?” She smiled nervously. He would certainly bark at her now from the look on his face. Why couldn’t she ever bite back her thirst for knowledge? And to ask it to be quenched by him of all people.

“Very well, what doubts do you have?” He sighed.

She was surprised at his relenting, but wasted no time overthinking it. She pulled from her denim pockets a piece of parchment that fit in the palm of her hand. From her back pocket she pulled her wand and with a tap, the parchment grew into several large ones, all filled with her tiny handwriting.

Snape snorted. “I see this will take a while.”

She smiled as she set her notes down on his desk and pulled a rather battered quill from her pocket.

She began her inquiries, and contrary to what he thought would happen, she did not question his changes and additions to the book in a forbidding tone, she just was genuinely curious as to how he came to such results and how certain changes he made improved the brewing process or the potion itself, since he had not made any notes on that on some instances. It seemed the little chit did in fact respect him and was not mocking him or his notes, his work.

He began to notice how organized she was with her notes, hard-working and curious, in taking note of every little question and all his answers. And she didn’t even have to study any of these potions for her N.E.W.T.s. This is what she did in her spare time. She was indeed very intelligent and dedicated. Hungry for knowledge. Of course he had noticed before, but his… dislike of the Potter boy and his duties as a spy hindered him from praising it. He must not be seen giving special attention to a Gryffindor and a consort of Potter’s. And of course his hardened ways did not help. He did not think he was so bad and rude in his first year teaching. He didn’t even have the strength to, constantly worrying about Lily, being a double agent, risking his own life… and then the pain of
losing her, it took him over. But kids were cruel, as they were when he was one, and said awful things about him they thought he did not hear. He was never the best looking of wizards, nor the less awkward, but to have it thrown in your face daily was… So he finally learned what he should have while he was in school. Strike before being stricken. Make them fear you, if respect could not be earned. And if they did talk about you, well then, at least they would have reason to.

She took notes chewing her bottom lip. That was… cute. Blotches of ink covered her cheeks and fingertips. Maybe if she had been in school with him they would have been friends. Little bookworms together in the library. Then he wouldn’t be so lonely, and his life would have gone in a different direction. No. She was a Gryffindor, all righteous and proud, and he would still have been the same little awkward boy who never knew how to treat people properly. Who had never been shown love to know how to give it properly. She would drift away from him, he would say something wrong, and history would repeat itself, leaving him where he was today anyway. His fate was sealed long before he could learn how to control it. It was no use to wish otherwise.

He had wanted more tea, and had made him some. He was obliged to offer her a cup as well. She took it, but looked at him in awe. As if it was something unthinkable, for him to offer her a drink without it being poisoned. He snorted. She took the opportunity to comment on how cold it was down there and ask if it was possible to perhaps light the fire a bit. He rolled his eyes, but gave in to her request.

It was nearly eight o’clock and still they sat there, talking away about his changes to the potions, Hermione increasingly surprised at how he seemed to relax and become nicer as time went by and he felt more comfortable, not threatened, in her presence. His brow unfurrowed, the straight line that marked it not visible, his lips not pursed, more full and pink, and very few sharp words coming through them. There was even some comments that could pass for praise. All teachers praised her, they had always, even in muggle school, but he was one that she could never get praise from. He could even pass as charming when he wasn’t so closed up and angry all the time.

McGonagall’s face popped up in the grate.

“Severus!” There was an urgent tone in her voice. “There is a rogue Death Eater on the grounds! Come quickly, and ward every entrance you pass through.”

He sprang up and headed to the door.

“Stay here,” he said to her harshly as he saw she was standing and gripping her wand, waiting to follow him.

“But I want to fight. I can help.”

“STAY HERE, you foolish girl.” And with a whirl of his robes he turned and walked out the door, slamming it shut behind him. She of course tried to go after him, but the door was locked and warded and no spell she knew worked on it. She couldn’t even leave through his classroom, for the door to the cupboard was also impregnable. She was left there for nearly half an hour, rage pumping in her chest.

When he finally walked back in, she could not help herself.

“You locked me in here?!” She demanded. “I am NOT a child, you know.” She was beside herself.

“Well apparently you are, since you cannot follow a simple order. If you know it was locked, you tried to get out, against my express orders to stay here.” He said it with cold, contained anger.
“I could have helped! I am not defenseless.”

“Like it or not, Miss Granger, you are still a student and I your teacher. It is my job to protect you, you are under my responsibility. I will not allow you to go out to fight and apprehend a demented follower of a dead psychopath alongside the teachers of this school. You have family and friends who would hold me accountable if anything happened to you, not to mention my colleagues who I might remind you, already have a long history of not trusting me. Me, no one would miss.”

He lost control. That could not happen. It never had before. He could not say such things, he did not need to justify himself to a student. What was happening to him?

She opened her mouth to retort, but he cut her off.

“Twenty points from Gryffindor for yelling at a professor and disobeying a direct order,” he said coldly.

No one would miss him. Hermione felt bad for the man. Did he actually believe that to be true? Was it true? Though awkwardly and briefly, she had grown to know another side of him this evening. She didn’t have any deep fondness for him, but she wouldn’t want him to die. She wouldn’t have saved him if she did. She wanted to tell him that she would miss him, but that would be very awkward and out of place. Very Luna of her. Luna would definitely do it. She wished Luna was here now.

“Now go. I don’t want Potter and Weasley banging down my door, thinking I handed you over to the Death Eater.”

She took her notes and left.
It was Tuesday evening. Hermione sat alone in the library, trying to study while silent tears were clouding her eyes. Ron’s harsh words played over and over in her head.

“You don’t ever want to talk, Ron! Only when it’s about quidditch or some other stupid thing only you care about. You never listen to what I have to say!” She had argued, trying to justify her decision of taking a break from their relationship, which he was not taking well.

“It’s not my fault everything you say sounds like a boring lecture!”

“You only care about getting in my pants, and when I let you near it, you can’t even finish the job!” She had cried in turn, angry at his hurtfulness.

“Of course not. You are so frigid, you’ll have trouble finding a man who ever does. You’ll be lucky if anyone else even offers! I mean, really, look at you. The only thing you’ve got going for you are your brains and frankly that gets tiring really quickly.”

To think she had dated such a creep. Defended him, was even his friend! He obviously had never been her friend. No friend would say such things. No half decent man would. She should have ended things with him months ago. She shouldn’t even have started it.

What infuriated her the most was that she had let him play her insecurities, and now she was bothered by his words. Things a complete asshole said. But what if they were true? She had always been insecure about her looks, and she tried to make up for it with her wits, but it didn’t seem to work. She admitted she was bossy and very high-strung, but she wished she could find someone who understood her. She wasn’t like that because she wanted to be. It was stronger than her. The anxiety, the need to control everything and have it be perfect and according to plan. It just came out, especially when she was stressed. And he had said she was frigid. She never really did feel anything extraordinary with his attempts to entice her. And even on her own, with the curtains of her four-poster drawn shut, try as she might, she couldn’t seem to get anywhere, no matter what she fantasized about. She couldn’t get past the anxiety and the thought she was doing something wrong. She had only recently gathered the courage to even try. It never was a priority or a need for her before. Ron was probably right. She would die alone and untouched. Better than to have been touched by an imbecile like him.

She looked at her watch and was frightened at the time. Since the Death Eater who was on the grounds Sunday evening managed to escape, a new curfew had been imposed for the students’ safety, and even seventh years had to comply. There would be teachers patrolling the halls and she was cutting it close. She couldn’t risk getting any more detention. She tried to pull herself together but knew her eyes were still puffy and red. Worse thing was, she had no one to talk to. She couldn’t tell Ginny what happened, Ron was her brother. And even if she did want to tell Harry, Ron had probably gotten to him first and made up whatever nonsense he would. She would have to head straight to the girl’s dormitory when she got to the common room.

Madame Pince was walking over, but before she could say anything, Hermione was already on her feet, schoolbag on her back, clutching a few books, heading for the door. She walked through the halls watching the floor, trying to hold back the tears that kept pricking her eyes. She bumped
into a tall, dark figure and caught the smell of herbs, parchment and that peppery note before she looked up from his chest and saw it was Professor Snape. *Fuck. He’s gonna give detention again.*

“Excuse me, Professor. I’m sorry. I wasn’t looking where I was going.”

“Ob-viously.”

Forgetting her eyes were red and her face all puffy, she let him look straight into her eyes. Despite the narrow, angry gaze, the dark pools that were his eyes were actually quite soothing.

“Miss Granger, curfew…”

She snapped out of her daze. This was Snape for Merlin’s sake. He was going to give her detention or make some snide remark that would only make her feel worse.

“Right, sorry. I’m going straight to the common room. I just lost track of time in the library.” She started hurriedly walking away.

“Miss Granger…” his silky voice caught up with her. She couldn’t pretend she had not heard him. *Damn. So close.*

“Professor?” She looked back.

He had the funny urge to ask her if she was alright. She had obviously been crying. Was he worried about her? Why? Because he spent a couple of hours with her badgering him in his office? *Because she respects you. Because she saved your life, you ass.*

“I trust you will find your way to your common room alone? And not some other place to break curfew?”

“I swear it.”

“Do hurry, Miss Granger. You have 5 minutes. If you do not reach your common room, I will find you and you will lose all your house points.”

She hurried away before she lost control of herself and more tears fell.

Hermione slept badly. When she arrived at the girls’ dormitory, Ginny was waiting for her. She insisted they talk, that she was certain Ron had been an absolute ass as usual, but she wanted to know what had happened. Hermione really needed to vent, but she couldn’t do that with Ron’s sister. It was too embarrassing. So she just cried more in Ginny’s arms until the other girls, who she didn’t really know except for Pavarti, went up to bed. Then she pulled the curtains on the four-poster and stared at the crimson cloth for what seemed like hours before falling into a very light sleep.

One of the many of what seemed like endless classes she had on Wednesday was one period of Potions. In every class, she used to sit with Ron, and she had been dodging him all day, looking for a seat that was as far away as possible from him. Because of that, she had been now sitting alone in the back of classes (because at the beginning of term, she had harassed Ron, Harry and Ginny into taking the seats in front of the classes with her), and she was now able to focus, though not as well as she usually did. But in Potions, the only other available seat was at a table with Draco Malfoy. Though a table in the dungeon could sit four quite comfortably, with their cauldrons and ingredients and other materials, Draco sat alone. Ever since the war, no one really talked to him anymore. Most of the Slytherins had some relative that was a Death Eater, and they had considered the Malfoys as
traitors. Many of the Slytherins hadn’t even come back to school, as a matter of fact. And Draco had never had friends from the other houses even before the war. McGonagall had probably given him the Head Boy position to help him in some way, so he could have some measure of respect. Lucius was in Azkaban and he would remain there for 5 years, a very low price to pay for all he had done. But since he had defected towards the end and testified in the Wizengamot along with Draco and his mother against every single Death Eater he knew, they gave him a good deal. In the end, Lucius had agreed – forced by Narcissa – to go to Azkaban for more time than what was meant for him so that Draco and his mother could be spared. They claimed they were only thrown into Voldemort’s organization due to Lucius anyway.

So Draco kept to himself and did his schoolwork alone and in quiet, and the only teacher who still seemed to cut him some slack – though not much, since he was no longer forced to – was Snape. But even in Snape’s class, he kept his head down. Hermione thought it would be better to sit with him than to swallow her pride and go sit next to Ron. She would never be able to concentrate.

She arrived before Draco and took a seat, leaving two seats between where Malfoy usually sat and herself. But when he arrived, he sat next to her.

“Did you lose your way to the popular kids’ table, Granger?” he asked with a sneer.

“Shut up, Draco. You can just pretend I’m not here,” she said, crossing her arms over her chest tightly.

“But I enjoy a little conversation with my schoolwork,” he grinned. “Tell me, what brings you back here to the loser’s lounge? Must be something really serious for Potter and his gang to disown their princess.”

“Silence!” Snape billowed in. Thank Merlin. She wouldn’t have to hear Draco anymore.

“Today we will be brewing an all-comprising anti venom. Most stings that can kill you can be treated… at least in a first moment… with this potion. It is a very difficult potion to brew, so there will be no need for talking. As you can see on the board,” he flicked his wand lazily at the blackboard and the instructions appeared on it, “you will need to handle acromantula venom. You will find it in the cupboard. There is only one small phial with a few drops for each of you, as it is… very difficult to come by. If you are not careful with it, you will get no marks on the assignment.”

Hermione waited so she could be the last one to retrieve the ingredient from the cupboard, as not to bump into Ron on her way there. When he passed by her table, he had anger in his eyes, and he fixed his gaze on her. As if she had done something wrong, something to hurt him! How dare he!

Snape noticed Miss Granger was sitting away from her usual place. So it was a lover’s spat. That is why she had been crying yesterday. Interesting. Weasley had always had a temperament. He must have said something asinine that made her finally see what an imbecile he really was. Why do you care? Fucking chit messing with your head. Must be some twisted form of Stockholm syndrome, just because she saved you. You didn’t even want to be saved. He supposed it was just the idea that someone had cared that soothed him somehow.

Hermione was paralyzed with anger. And hurt. Fucking bastard. After everything, HE is angry at ME? Draco placed the acromantula venom in front of her. She looked up at him, startled.

“Oh, uhm, thanks.”

“What did Weasley do?” He whispered to her as he began to work.
“What?”

“I saw the looks you exchanged. Not so lovey dovey.”

“None of your business.”

“Well, sorry then. I thought you’d want to talk to someone, the way you look. You can’t very well talk to your friends.” He sneered. “They’re his friends as well. But Weasley bashing, that I can do.” He grinned.

_He has the nerve to be angry at me!_ She chopped angrily and worked with little focus. She heard something crack but didn’t feel anything until she saw her herbs drenched in blood. She looked at the palm of her hand, a shard of glass was stuck in it and blood flowed steadily out of the wound. It did not hurt. She looked at it, transfixed. What had caused that? The phial. The phial with the venom. She broke it. And now she wouldn’t have a mark. Yes, yes. That seemed fitting for such a wonderful week so far.

Suddenly a large, strong hand took hers in it. It was soft, yet it held hers firmly. It felt good. She looked up and her eyes met dark deep ones piercing into hers. Soothing. _Professor Snape_. He pulled the shard of glass out of her palm and blood gushed out in more volume. Still holding her hand in his, his other swiped over the wound as he murmured an incantation. The wound closed neatly, leaving a vivid pink line. His finger grazed the scar, analyzing his work, but it felt to her like a caress. The hairs on the back of her neck stood on end. He let go of her hand.

“Care to explain, Miss Granger?”

“I… I…”

“It was my fault, Professor. I was cracking jokes and it must have broken her focus,” Malfoy said. “She can have my phial of venom.”

Snape arched an eyebrow. Hermione looked at Draco, aghast.

“That is not true, it was my fault, I wasn’t paying attention.”

Snape pinched the bridge of his nose. “Fine. Since both of you are distracted today, it seems, you will work… together. I suggest you play nicely. Whatever mark you get will be equally divided between you.” With a swirl, Snape turned and headed for the front of the class.

“Why did you do that?” Hermione asked in a whisper.

Draco shrugged. “I wanted to help. I know how much grades mean to you, Granger. I’ve got money, name and looks to fall back on,” he smirked.

“Well thanks,” she was able to convey a half smile.

“Don’t mention it.”

She reached for the phial of acromantula venom.

“No, no, I think I’ll handle this one. You can chop some more herbs, no blood this time.”

She smiled and pulled her wand to clean her working space, then set to work.

“Are you sure you don’t want to talk? Clear your head? So you don’t fuck up our potion.”
Hermione stopped chopping and sighed. “If you breathe a word of this to anyone, I will hex you back into a ferret.”

“I don’t doubt it. I’m not going to mess with you. If you haven’t noticed, I’ve got no one to back me up anymore, and you have the whole of the wizarding world behind you. I do not want to be on your bad side, Granger.”

Hermione sighed again.

“I broke up with Ron. And he, being the ass that he is, said horrible, unwarranted things.”

“Like…?”

“Like I wouldn’t find anyone else willing to… date me because I’m such a boring, frigid bitch.”

Malfoy snorted. “What, he thinks he’ll be on the cover of Teen Witch as the sexiest wizard alive?”

Hermione smiled as she kept working.

“Do you want me to hex him? I can.”

“No! I would not forgo that pleasure.”

They both suppressed laughter.

“Is something… the matter?” Snape was next to their table analyzing their work. Damn the man moved lightly and rapidly.

“No, sir.” They responded in unison.

He arched his eyebrow and observed as they worked silently now, chopping the ingredients. Then Malfoy lit the cauldron and started stirring as Hermione cleaned up their work station.
Chapter 10

Chapter Notes

Hello folks!

This is where I begin to take liberties with legilimency.

Thanks for the comments and kudos. They are always welcome!

See the end of the chapter for more notes.

She woke up on Thursday feeling slightly better and thought it was extremely weird to have Draco Malfoy to thank for that. She really needed someone to talk to, more than she thought or cared to acknowledge, and Draco was helpful, but she needed to vent some more. She certainly couldn’t call Draco a friend just because of one conversation and wouldn’t go back to him with this, even though the little bastard was nice to her, actually nice, and didn’t tell a soul anything she had said, as she had requested. She didn’t know Malfoys had that in them. Maybe it was just Lucius’ influence that made Draco so insufferable, the constant need to impress and please daddy, and not a genetic flaw.

But what she really wanted was a girl to talk to. Guys don’t understand, not wholly, the need to trash talk about the bastard that was foul to you. Her options were slim either way, cause she very much doubted she could talk to Luna about this, that she would understand or support her sadness and especially her rage towards Ron. She would just try to see a silver lining, say something Lunish about forgiveness or something other and move on. And Ginny… she was Ron’s sister. She couldn’t say what she wanted to say about Ron to his sister. Especially about her being frigid and no man ever wanting her. She had tried, yet again, the previous night to give herself pleasure not only to prove Ron fucking wrong, but also to release some tension, sleep better maybe. It was stressful and tiring, being the know-it-all, bossy and what not. She didn’t enjoy it, it just came out. She had always been like that, wound up. Add to that the nightmares and worries from the war she hadn’t really shaken off for good… it was awful. She had tried, but her racing mind along with the shame and guilt she had always felt about masturbation did not allow her to get anywhere. Damn her parents and the religious beliefs they instilled in her.

So off she went to breakfast, her anger silently festering inside her. She hadn’t even remembered her birthday was tomorrow, not until Harry and Ginny joined her on the table.

“Was there anything you wanted to do tomorrow evening?” Ginny asked reluctantly.


“Cause it’s your birthday, remember? Turning nineteen! And Ron, that petty little…”

“Ginny, be nice! He’s your brother,” Harry cut in. “And he’s hurting.”

“Well he is being petty. Bastard. Anyway, he’s been trying to keep us from doing anything with you. Cause he doesn’t want to be alone and blah blah blah,” Ginny continued, with a mopey imitation of Ron. “He won’t get off our backs. So fucking clingy. I almost regret dating one of his friends.”
“Hey!” Harry said.

“I’m sorry, babe. But we haven’t had a moment’s peace since Hermione wised up and dumped his ass.” Hermione smirked. So whatever Ron had said about her, Ginny had not believed. Good. “It’s been too long since we’ve…” Ginny continued.

“Hey!” Hermione intervened. “I don’t need to hear that. It’s Harry. He’s like my brother. I can’t even… urgh.” Definitely, definitely cannot talk to Ginny about it.

Ginny laughed. “Ok, whatever. But what do you think about a party in the common room? We can even sneak Luna in. I learned a couple of things from Fred and George.”

Hermione smiled, a bit of sadness filling her heart as she remembered Fred. “Thanks, but just a quiet evening with you guys is fine.”

“I don’t know if the giant douche will let…”

Ron walked up and tapped Harry on the shoulder. “Could I see you over here for a second?” he asked, deliberatively not looking at Hermione at all, and then he walked away to take a seat further down the table, his shoulders slumped as he scowled.

Harry grinned at the girls. “Sorry Hermione. Let me know what you guys decide, Ok?” and he went over to join Ron.

“See? Fucking nightmare. Is there any chance you will patch things up with him? So this nightmare will end?”

“Ginny, I know he is your brother, but he was an absolute ass to me. There is no way I am going to crawl to him to make things right, not even as a friend,” Hermione said, not able to restrain much of her anger.

“I figured. I always knew he was an ass. I even warned you. I knew this was his doing. Do you need to talk? I’m here for you.”

“It would be weird, he’s your brother.”

“Yeah, but I know he’s an ass. I won’t mind at all.”

“Still…”

“Yeah, Ok.” There was a brief moment of silence before Ginny blurted “I really need to get laid, Hermione.”

“Ginny!”

“I know, it’s Harry, but get over it. I need help, an idea to get Ron away from Harry! I mean, he was always around before, but there were some openings… but now… it’s ALL the time! ALLTHETIME! I even hexed his broom to see if he wouldn’t make the quidditch team, so I could have at least those moments of peace, but the fucker made it anyway. And that was before you guys even broke up. I can’t take this any longer. I need alone time with Harry. I haven’t even snogged him all week! Between Ron and classes, this stupid curfew and being in fucking Hogwarts Maximum Security, I can’t… I think I might have to kill Ron.”

Hermione laughed. “Calm down! I’ll tell you what, if you can persuade him to leave you guys alone tomorrow night, you can go off with Harry instead of hanging with me. My gift to you.”
“But it’s YOUR birthday.”

“Never mind that. We’ll catch up later.”

“Thank you Hermione!” Ginny kissed her cheek. “I owe you. I love you. Thank you.” She kissed her cheek again.

“All right, all right,” Hermione said laughing. “We better go. We have Defense Against the Dark Arts now.”

“Ugh!” Ginny let out. “Fucking waste of time is what that is. I should cut class and go make out with Harry right now.”

****

Professor Gwendoline had given her detention again. That bitch! All Hermione had done was answer her question. Perhaps a little more briskly than she should have, but it wasn’t her fault the woman was a complete idiot. And she would have to spend the evening with her. Doing God knows whatever boring task she would find for her.

She caught herself wishing Professor Snape would need her to scrub cauldrons again, or whatever. It would be better than sitting with Gwendoline. At least Professor Snape was not stupid. He was quite intelligent, actually. She could learn from him at least. He was an ass sometimes, but she began to overlook that after she saw his memories. He had some reason to be bitter, but he wasn’t all that bad really. She remembered Sunday evening, how much she had learned from him. And he had been very pleasant. His guard had lowered. She didn’t think he had even realized he had let it down. A flash came to her, interrupting her innocent thoughts. His hand holding hers, his finger caressing her bloody, wounded palm, his piercing eyes looking into hers. The little hairs on her neck standing on end. She looked at her palm, the pink scar still there from yesterday. Maybe if she got detention with him, she could find another book he could lend her. One on healing wounds as quick as he did. Without dittany. Impressive. But he did make many spells up. Maybe she wouldn’t find a book on that, maybe it was his spell. Anyway, fat chance of her detention being with him tonight. Gwendoline would want to make her suffer since she missed out last week.

“Granger! We meet again.” Draco’s voice cut her thoughts off. “Is this to be your regular seat in potions now?”

“I think so. You got a problem with that?” She asked defiantly.

“None. Geez, Granger, don’t be so aggressive. I was just asking a question.”

“Sorry.” Hermione did feel bad, he hadn’t done anything wrong. “I’m just…”

“Yeah, I know.” He looked at the table up front where Ron sat and sneered. “I was thinking, Granger, you need to get a new boyfriend very quickly so he can eat his words,” Draco whispered. “I’m not doing anything, you know.”

“Are you insane?” Hermione looked at him horrified.

“I meant for pretending, just so he could go crazy. I have a bonus, being the enemy and stuff. But it’s nice to know how you really feel about me, Granger.”
"I’m sorry. It is a good idea. He would be extremely angry.” She couldn’t help but smile. “But if he found out it was an act… I would be ridiculed.”

Draco shrugged. “I wouldn’t mind doing it for real either.” He grinned.

“Shut up!” Hermione pushed him, smiling.

“Silence!” They heard as Snape walked in to start the class. She felt a strange tug in her stomach as he hurried past them, his robes billowing about him. *His fingers caressing her palm.* Her hairs stood on end again.

****

She sat down for dinner and Harry sat beside her. Ron was nowhere to be seen, miraculously.

“Is there anyway, Hermione, that you would get back together with Ron? He’s been unbearable lately. But he misses you. He’s just too proud to admit it.”

“I would rather let the giant squid sodomize me with its tentacles.”

“Eww, Hermione! I was about to eat.”

Hermione shrugged as she stirred her food with her fork.

“What happened anyway?” Harry asked more seriously.

“What did he tell you happened?”

“Not much.” Harry brought his voice down to a whisper. “I didn’t really believe him. But I try to be supportive. You know… I hope you don’t hate me for spending more time with him than you. He seems to need it more. To be… sadder.”

“What. Did. He. Say?” Hermione was getting angry again.

“Stupid stuff. Like you abused him and called him stupid and… you know, I don’t really feel comfortable with this…”

“Uuuuurgh” Hermione let out in frustration, but before she could continue, Draco’s voice came from behind.

“Granger.”

She turned to face him and Harry turned as well.

“What do you want, Malfoy? Leave her alone.” Harry was gripping his wand in his pocket.

“Calm down, Potter. Are you the only one allowed to talk to her? Is she your property?” He sneered.

“She is my friend! And…” he trembled in anger.
“HARRY. It’s Ok,” Hermione cut in.

“If you’re such a good friend of hers, you shouldn’t have allowed your pet weasel to be so foul to her, should you? I wouldn’t even be talking to him if I were you.”

Harry had no response to that and only looked at Hermione, slightly hurt.

“What is it, Draco?” Hermione asked.

“Snape seems to think I’m an owl,” he said irritated, “and he told me to tell you your detention is with him tonight. In his classroom. Seven o’clock. Don’t be late.” Draco did an impression of Snape’s stare over his nose and his stern face, along with the silky, punctuated voice when he gave the information. Though he didn’t quite get the voice right.

Hermione laughed, partly due to Draco’s impression, partly because her secret bizarre wish had come true. “All right, Draco. Thanks.”

Once Draco was gone, Harry turned to her. “So he knows what happened? Why won’t you tell me?”

Hermione was slightly irritated again. Ron, that asshole, said she was abusive to him?

“It’s weird, Harry. You’re his friend. And you date his sister. His mother thinks of you as her son. I don’t want to put you in any position… just leave it be, it’s no big deal.”

She got up from the table and walked away as Ron was approaching

*****

Hermione knocked on the door to the potions classroom. She was now so pissed at Ron that relief for not having to spend the evening with Professor Gwendoline and whatever it was that thinking of Snape made her feel the last few days was completely forgotten.

“Enter” she heard and she barged in, forgetting who it was that was waiting for her on the other side and his sunny disposition. She was quickly reminded though, as he looked at her disapprovingly, his brow furrowed, his eyes narrowed. She softened her manners as she approached him. There were several cauldrons spread neatly on a few of the long tables the students sat at. It looked like she would be scrubbing cauldrons again after all.

“Detention again, Miss Granger? I wonder why you were even appointed Head Girl. Not setting a very good example… are we? I guess it pays to be the headmistress’ favorite and the Gryffindor golden girl.”

Her cheeks burned red in anger. Not so much at his comment, but all the events of the day were too much, boiling inside her. She could not keep her feelings in check.

“Not my fault Professor Gwendoline is an ignorant cow,” she let out as she sat across from him, crossing her arms and staring angrily into the distance.

“Language, Miss Granger. Ten points from Gryffindor.”

He could have… he should have taken more points from her. But he too disliked Agnes.
Though he could not show it and agree with a student, his lips curled slightly upward for a fraction of a second before his face fell back into its usual impassiveness.

“I thought… you respected your professors.” He snorted.

“I do. But she has no business being a professor. Not a Defense one anyway. I bet she couldn’t even name an Unforgivable curse, the daft cow.”

Snape couldn’t help himself. His lips curled once again, and as quickly as it had come, it went away.

“Ten points from Gryffindor. I’d advise you to repress your… feelings before you lose all your house points, Miss Granger.”

“You should be the Defense teacher,” she said, and immediately noticed his expression changed into one of… anger? Offense? Did he think she was insinuating he was a dark wizard still? Oh fuck, Hermione. “I didn’t mean…” She was now nervous, slightly agitated, trying to right her wrong. “It’s just because you know so much. I liked your classes in my sixth year. I learned a lot. What you taught probably saved my life the following year.” She looked down at the table. Her anger was now completely forgotten and she only felt nervous to have his eyes piercing her skull.

“Well fortunately, Miss Granger, you are not the one who decides that, are you?” He barked. She looked up at him again, shyly, and he took a deep breath, calming himself. The girl didn’t mean harm, he could see it in her eyes. And she had paid him a compliment. “I have… seen enough of the Dark Arts for a lifetime,” he said more calmly, though not warmly. His cold controlled voice was back.

After several moments of silence and of her torn between staring at the table and looking up at him, his voice reached her ears.

“I have to brew various potions in relatively large quantities to refill the hospital wing’s stores.” She looked at him attentively now. “They have been depleted, as you can imagine.” She nodded.

“Though I am not of the habit of brewing accompanied by anyone, since you are here and I have to give you some task, you will be aiding me.” Her eyes shined. She would be brewing with Severus Snape. She had never seen him at work before. Just think of all the knowledge she could absorb from him.

“You have read the book I have on these potions and made extensive notes. I suppose you will not ruin most of these. And you are not as dimwitted as most students.” She looked down at her lap and smiled quickly so he wouldn’t see. That from Severus Snape was a compliment and she would take it. She had spent six years trying to squeeze a compliment from him, the only teacher that refused to acknowledge her intelligence. “You will follow my orders precisely. If you have any doubts, however small or stupid, you will ask. I would rather answer stupid questions than have a batch of potion ruined. Do you understand?”

“Yes, sir.”

“Good. Now show me your hands.”

She looked at him questioningly but he just stared at her, his eyes piercing hers, waiting for his order to be followed. She placed her hands on the table, palms facing down. He took her right hand and turned it in his. Again, goose prickles ran all over her body. The pink scar was still there in the middle of her palm. She had been so angry all day she hadn’t even realized how much it bothered her, physically thick when she closed her hand into a fist. It was like having to hold something you never had wanted to pick up. He waved his hand, the one not holding hers, in the direction of the open door to his office, and a phial came rushing to his hand. He let go of her to uncork it and she
had to bite back a moan of disapproval. His touch was… nice. His hands strong, but surprisingly soft. *You want him holding your hand?* *Why?* But she did. She missed his hand on hers in the brief moments it took for him to uncork the phial. But it was soon back. He dipped his long digit into the bottle and as he held her hand with one of his, the index finger of his other hand stroked her palm, her scar, spreading some of the oily potion on it. *Gods, this feels good.* She tingled all over. But he soon let go and with a wave of his hand banished the potion back into his office. His wandless abilities were impressive, as were his non-verbal spells.

“*Uhm, thank you. I should have been to Madame Pomfrey yesterday, but I… forgot.*” Her voice was slightly weak and she had to clear her throat. She wanted to reach for his hand again. *What the hell is wrong with you, Hermione? You’re probably just needy because of the break up, that’s all. Yeah. That’s it.*

“You would have wasted your time. There was nothing else Madame Pomfrey could have done for you. She does not… possess that particular concoction.” She looked at her hand and could see the scar was already slightly thinner. “Leave it. Put these gloves on so you don’t contaminate anything with a foreign potion.” He placed some dragon skin gloves in front of her. She pulled them on thinking they would be too big if they were his. Had she known she would have brought hers from her trunk. But as she put them on, they adjusted to her hands comfortably. He must have charmed them to do so beforehand.

“Now, to work. You will start by chopping these for the Blood-Replenishing Potion. As instructed in my notes in the book you read. Do you remember?”

“Yes, sir. Of course.”

He snorted. “Of course. Then begin.”

She began to work as he had asked as he was silently crushing another ingredient for some other potion. After a moment, she started

“Professor?”

“A question already, Miss Granger? And here I thought the task I assigned you was simple enough.” He smirked.

“I do have a question, but not about the work.” She rolled her eyes. She was lucky he hadn’t looked up from his work.

“What is it then?”

“Did you request me from Professor Gwendoline’s service?” She regretted asking it as soon as she started. Of course he hadn’t. Even if he had, he would not admit to it and would just be rude and make some snide remark now. Why then, was she wishing he had asked for her in some obscure corner of her mind?

*Hermione, get a grip.*

He snorted. “No. I very much like to work alone, Miss Granger. It seems Professor Gwendoline is… not at all fond of you and does not wish to spend her evenings with you, though she believes you do deserve the detentions. Since I am deputy headmaster, the… privilege,” he said it mockingly, “befell on me when she asked to have someone else take over your punishment.”

“Fucking cow,” Hermione mumbled.

“What’s that, Miss Granger?” Snape stopped what he was doing and stared at her.
“Nothing, sir.” She recommenced her chopping.

He was accustomed to working alone and thought this would be absolutely atrocious and that he would have to double check everything she did and end up working twice as much. He thought he would have to answer abysmal questions. But he could not deny that it was rather pleasant to have some company. And she was intelligent. That she was. How he could have forgotten their discussion on Sunday evening, the notes she had made, the interesting questions she had posed.

She was very methodical, organized, and systematic and worked efficiently, much like him. She barely had questions and did everything surprisingly well. She handled some ingredients with some difficulty, which made her slower than him, but he did have years of practice and experience, so her relative slowness was perfectly acceptable. It was actually soothing to watch her work. If all students were smart or at least focused and dedicated as she was, perhaps teaching wouldn’t be so insufferable. He looked up at her and sniggered at the way her hair was absolutely wild, made worse by the fumes that surrounded them. She worked opposite him on the table but not directly across from him. She had stopped trying to rearrange her hair 10 minutes ago. Now, as he watched, she let go of the knife she had held, pulled off the gloves he lent her, and pulled her bushy hair back, twisting it into a messy bun atop her head. She then pulled out her wand from her robes and stuck it through her hair before she pulled the gloves back on and dumped whatever she was cutting up into the cauldron and began to stir. He smiled. And he noticed now that she certainly had… grown. She was an attractive little witch.

When he interrupted his thoughts to focus on what he was doing, he did not hear the silence he had hoped for.

… fucking idiot. How could I ever have fancied such a loathsome human being? After all the things, the awful things he said to me, he lies and says I was the one who was awful to him. No Hermione, do not cry, you will not shed another tear for Ronald Weasley, especially not in detention with Professor Snape. For Merlin’s sake...

He could hear her thoughts? How was that possible? He wasn’t even making eye contact with her or trying to use legilimency on her. She must be feeling extremely vulnerable due to the situation, but also safe here for her thoughts to float around like this. And very overwhelmed. Or maybe she was just naturally too open and untrained? But all the idiots running around these halls were untrained in occulmency and it never had been so effortless to see anything in their minds. This was a rather interesting development. It was certainly her extreme emotions mingled with the fact she did not feel threatened that opened her thoughts to him so.

… saying I will never find anyone else willing to date me. To sleep with me. Who does that? Calling me frigid. It's not my fault he was Mr. zippy and never actually got to fuck me or make me feel anything. Asshole. Although... you never felt anything by yourself either, Hermione. Maybe he’s right and...

Merlin have mercy, he had heard more than he ever wished to learn about a student. He could also sense her insecurities, anxiety and sadness. She would make a fucking atrocious spy. Lucky she never had to be one, she would have died immediately. Who the fuck was this unguarded with their thoughts? He did not wish to, he COULD NOT hear more.

“Miss Granger!”
She jumped at the sound of his voice calling her attention. “Are you trying to ruin that potion on purpose?”

“Sir?”

“You are supposed to stir it only 20 times and let it simmer. I believe you have done more.” He made it up, he had to take her out of her head somehow. It didn’t matter how much she stirred, she just had to let it simmer.

She dropped the stirring rod immediately.

“Sorry, professor, I didn’t…”

He walked over to her cauldron and verified that the potion was fine. She was terrified of having ruined it all. He looked at her and his piercing black gaze, instead of making her more terrified actually soothed her.

“The potion is fine, Miss Granger. Lucky for you. But do focus more on the next one and forget Mr. Weasley.”

Her eyes widened. “Sir, were you…”

“… reading your mind? No.” *Fuck.* “I am merely observant and have more than half a brain, thankfully. You crying in hallways and choosing to sit with Draco Malfoy in my class and break up the Golden trio… or is it a quartet? … tells me you have had a little lover’s spat.” He smirked. “And your lack of focus must be due to it. Simple.” *Fucking idiot, how could you have let that slip? So fucking careless.*

Hermione’s cheeks burned red. Snape turned away and walked to the other table to check on the potion he had left simmering there. She still stood frozen in place, probably awaiting instructions now that he had interrupted her work. *Always needing reassurance.* He rolled his eyes.

“Whatever that imbecile said to you, put it out of your mind. Get back to work and focus. You were doing well.”

He saw her body relax from the back as she moved to the other cauldron that was under her care and commenced dicing slugs.

“You know, Draco isn’t so bad,” he heard her say.

“Yes, I know. Especially now he’s gotten away from Lucius’ claws and freed himself from his abysmal influence.” He snorted. He shouldn’t be so open with a student.

Hermione heard it and smiled to herself as she diced.

It was nearly ten o’clock when he declared they had worked enough for the night. He walked to the potions she had made and analyzed them, looking down over his nose. He then unbuttoned his sleeves and pulled them up a bit, grabbing a phial and dipping it into the potion, taking a sample to analyze better. On his left wrist she could see part of his faded dark mark. But it wasn’t just faded, as she had seen Draco’s. It had a scar exactly over its outline. She stared at it while he held the phial against the light.

“It isn’t polite to stare, Miss Granger.”

She jumped, startled. “I’m sorry. I… May I ask what happened?”
He sighed. “No. It’s just a scar, Miss Granger. One more for the collection.”

She stared at him with sadness in her eyes. For him. How much he must have suffered.

He was analyzing her third and final potion, and put the bottle down to pinch his nose. It was very annoying to be looked at with what looked like pity, but at the same time it made him feel good that someone cared.

“These are good, Miss Granger. Thirty points to Gryffindor. You are dismissed.”

She smiled proudly as she pulled off the gloves. The palm of her hand was unmarked, as if she had never cut it. She was so caught up in the potions and her thoughts she hadn’t realized that strange sensation in her palm was gone.

“This potion is brilliant!” She said holding her hand up. “Are you making this for Madam Pomfrey? I don’t remember reading about it anywhere, not even in your book.”

“No, and you wouldn’t have. It is of my creation.” He was still finishing up a potion.

Her jaw dropped in awe. Then a thought occurred to her. “Why haven’t you used it on your…”

“It doesn’t work on Dark Magic so easily. Or if the wound isn’t healed immediately.” He kept stirring the potion and looking down at it.

“I’m sorry… I didn’t heal your neck properly or… or get someone to do it quickly enough.”

“You did not set a snake on me to kill me, a snake filled with dark magic, might I add. You saved me. And you worry too much. It’s just a scar, Miss Granger, one of many. I don’t mind them anymore.” Lies. It made people look at him more. People looking at him felt invasive.

She still stood there, he could feel her eyes on him.

“You are dismissed, Miss Granger. I thought I’d said that.”

“Are you… are you brewing again tomorrow, sir?” She asked shyly, shifting her feet.

He sighed heavily. “Why do you wish to know?”

“Can I come again?”

“Don’t you have anything better to do with a Friday night, Miss Granger?” He sneered mockingly. He could use the help. And he would enjoy the company, though he hated to admit.

“I would like to learn more from you. Practice more of what I read. It is true, I was a bit distracted today. That won’t happen tomorrow, if you allow me to help.” Plus, it’s better than being alone on my birthday locked in the common room.

“I cannot recruit students to be my personal assistants.”

“Call it detention for calling Professor Gwendoline a cow.” She smiled.

He snorted. “I’ve taken points for that.”

“All right. I still think she’s a foul bitch, though.” She was grinning.

Ballsy. Was that the Gryffindor courage? The end of his lips curled up. It almost seemed like a smile.
It lingered a few seconds.

“Fine, Miss Granger. Detention. Tomorrow, seven o’clock. Here.”

She turned to leave, pleased with herself.

“Are you considering being a potions master, Miss Granger?” He asked. She turned to face him again. “Do you wish for an apprenticeship? Is that it?”

“I… don’t know. I haven’t really decided what I want to do. Why?”

“Good night, Miss Granger.” And he looked down at the potion he was stirring.

She stood there, disappointed for a moment, staring at him. She wanted to hear him say she would be a good potions master, that she should pursue it. *What difference would it make anyway, Hermione? He would never say it. You just want praise from the only teacher who has never given it to you before.* She turned and walked out.

Chapter End Notes

I promise there will be a tiny bit more... physical contact starting next chapter.
On her birthday, Hermione was awoken by Ginny. On the foot of her bed laid presents from Harry, Neville, her parents and Luna. Ginny held her own present while she grinned, standing over her.

“Wake up sleepy head. You’ll be late for class. And then you would probably kill yourself for it and that would make for a pretty tragic birthday.”

Hermione smiled. It had been the first time that week she had had a good night’s sleep. Brewing was actually soothing when the professor wasn’t instilling fear in you. Ginny wished her a happy birthday and handed her the present. It was a pair of skimpy black knickers with ruffles on the backside and a sheer corselette to go with it.

“Ginny, you don’t expect me to sleep in this?”

“Not sleep, genius.” Ginny grinned widely after rolling her eyes. “With my brother out of the way, the possibilities are endless! Live a little.”

Hermione laughed. “Not everyone can get a boyfriend as easily as you do, Miss beauty. I’m not that pretty or anything…”

“Stop being so modest. You’re Hermione Granger! Savior of the wizarding world. Half the boys in school fancy you – and frankly, I think some of the girls as well,” Ginny lowered her voice for that last part. “Now come on. Let’s go or you’ll really be late.”

Hermione jumped out of bed and started getting dressed. She could open the rest of her presents later. She noticed the lack of package from Mrs. Weasley. Ron must have filled her in with his lies.

“So, what are the plans for this evening?” She asked Ginny.

“I… Hermione, you said it was Ok for me and Harry… I didn’t…”

“Relax! I only wanted to know if you managed to throw your brother off. Besides, I’ve got detention anyway.”

“Again? Why?”

Hermione shrugged. “I called Gwendoline a fucking bitch to Professor Snape’s face.” She then turned to retrieve her shirt from her trunk, and smiled to herself, remembering how bold she had been… only to spend the evening with Snape. What the fuck was going on with her? She was just too needy at the moment.

“Woooow, are you insane?”

Hermione shrugged again as she looked in the mirror. Her hair was really a mess. She had brushed it before bed but those potion fumes had really done a number on it. And there would be more today.

“Say, Gin, can I borrow your book on beauty spells?”

Ginny looked surprised but grabbed it out of her trunk. “Sure. I woke up earlier to take care
of everything I needed.” She winked. “I’ll wait for you downstairs, see if Harry is already there.” And Ginny walked out of the dormitory.

Hermione flipped through the pages of the battered second-hand book. She had never really been interested in such nonsense, but she had to find something to do with her hair, or it would be a complete train wreck by the end of the day.

There really was everything in there: make-up spells, spells to deal with acne, rashes, freckles or any other skin issues, waxing spells, tweezing, plucking, all sorts of spells for decorating your nails, spells that made high heeled shoes comfortable or dealt with blisters they caused and even transfiguration spells for making your outfits suitable for any occasion. She would have to have a careful read of this book; it could be handy. But for now, she only had time to try a spell that made her hair straight and smooth. She then added an impermeability spell so that humidity or any other occurrence would not ruin it. And finally she practiced a quick spell to pin it up, for when it got in her way later, while brewing. She then set off to start her day.

The rest of the day was quite normal. She got congratulated by everyone who was close to her, and those who happened to know it was her birthday as well. Ron gawked at her whenever he was around, which made her feel incredibly smug. Who knew a simple hair charm could go such a long way? Some other boys were looking at her as well and Ginny elbowed her every time she spotted one, but none really peaked Hermione’s interest. She would love to just snog one in front of Ron, to get him all worked up, but she wasn’t as childish as she once was, and she didn’t really care about getting Ron’s attention, not anymore.

During a free period in the afternoon, she hurried back to her room to open the rest of the presents. Luna had given her a pair of earrings with a matching necklace and ring. They were nice, not as weird as the stuff Luna usually liked, but you could no doubt see that they were still made by her. They were too big. Giant blue butterflies the size of her palms that would hang from her ears to her shoulders, probably covering half her cheeks, and an equally large necklace. The ring was slightly smaller, but still too much. She used a shrinking charm on them to bring them down to an acceptable size and decided to wear the necklace and the ring for the rest of the day. Neville had given her a book on Herbology and Harry had gifted her one of the homework planners she so loved and had tried to get the boys to use as well. She hadn’t had time to order one yet for this year. It was very thoughtful of him. Her parents sent her a posh watch she also put on.

At dinner, Luna sat next to her on the Gryffindor table.

“Oh, I’m glad you liked my present. Though I see you have changed it a bit,” she said in her dreamy voice.

“Oh yeah, well, Luna, it’s just…”

“It’s OK. I think it suits you better like that. I wish I had thought of it before giving it to you.”

“I love it, Luna, thank you so much.” She gave her a big hug before Luna went to the Ravenclaw table.

Harry sat next to her and Ron followed. As Harry began to eat, Ron still stood beside him, nudging him to move to another spot.

“No, enough of this nonsense, Ron. Hermione is my friend too and I will sit with her on her birthday! You better find a way to be civil to her.”

Hermione smiled and squeezed Harry’s hand under the table in gratitude. Ron sat down next
to Harry, and seemed to be gathering courage to say something when Hermione kissed Harry’s cheek and stood to leave.

“I’ll see you in a bit, Harry” and she winked, knowing full well that Ginny had planned the evening with him but had lied to Ron saying they were spending it with her, for her birthday.

She got to Snape’s door at seven and knocked. He opened it himself and moved out of the way to let her in. Everything was neatly set up as the previous day. He showed her to her station, told her what she would be brewing and gave her brief instructions before going to his half of the table to begin slicing something.

She did not begin right away, and he watched from the corner of his eye as he dumped some pulverized roots into his cauldron that she took out her wand and charmed her today straight hair into a chignon. He smirked and continued to work in silence.

As she worked, she stole glimpses at him. Her head had been so preoccupied the previous night, she had not taken time to watch him work. It was the reason she wanted to come back today. It was a great opportunity, watching Severus Snape, potions master at work. She imagined not many people had seen this. Maybe only schoolmates, back when he attended classes and did not teach them. While teaching, he never sliced or brewed anything and just watched the students work, offering the snide comment every once in a while.

It was wonderful to watch him work. He had such agility in slicing, pulverizing, doing anything really, it was no wonder he could handle brewing three potions at a time while she only brewed one. In the time it had taken her to brew 3 potions the previous day, he had brewed eight. He cut everything so fast, she wondered how it was that he hadn’t cut off his fingers yet.

She began to notice his appearance as well. He looked calm, as she had never seen him. The line between his ever furrowed brows was not apparent and his brow was relaxed. He really enjoyed this. Brewing soothed him. His guard was down. He didn’t look so thin as he had before the war, nor as sallow, though that was no effect from brewing. It was probably the relative peace he had now. Not being a spy and always around a psycho megalomaniac really must take a chunk of worries off your mind. He probably had more of an appetite and slept better, that’s why his skin had more color to it.

And his hair! It was soft and shiny. Had he washed his hair? She didn’t know this of course, but he did not have classes late Friday afternoon, so he had had time to shower and relax with a book a bit before he went back to work with the potions he needed to brew.

“Is there a problem, Miss Granger?”

Fuck. He had looked up and she didn’t even notice she was gawking at him.

“Uhm, no sir.” She returned to her slicing. “I’m just impressed with the speed you work, is all.”

He smiled as he now moved on to dicing roots for the headache potion. “With practice you might get there as well.”

He smiled? He actually smiled! A proper smile. Fuck. It should be illegal for him to do that. His smile is gorgeous. Contagious even. She had inadvertently stopped working again. She noticed now his lips weren’t pursed as they always were, even when he had stopped smiling. When they weren’t pursed, his lips were full and pink and… hum, might be nice to kiss… Stop it, Hermione! What’s wrong with you? He was quite charming though. How had she not noticed this before? Why
is it that everything said about him was awful and hurtful?

“Miss Granger, I suggest you start that practice right now if you wish to finish at least one potion today. Or do you intend on spending your weekend in detention again, as my assistant?”

_Hum. Might not be a bad idea. Fuck._ “Sorry, sir.” And on she went with her slicing.

She stirred her third potion of the evening. She noticed Snape’s hair was greasy again. So it was the fumes of the potions that made it like that. That’s why she had never seen it soft, shiny and silky before. He was always in class, surrounded by fumes, and that of potions that were wrongly brewed by the students, which could make it worse.

Her thoughts drifted off. She began to think of how everyone had looked at her today. She could get another boyfriend if she wanted. She needn’t mind Ron’s asinine remarks. And as for being frigid…

… *perhaps all I need is a good, proper shag. With someone who knows what he’s doing. I’m not frigid, Ron, you imbecile, it’s just…*

_Oh bloody hell, not again._ He did not need to know about teenage sexual agonies. For Merlin’s sake, why could he hear her thoughts?

… *Professor Snape might need a shag as well. Maybe that’s why he’s so uptight most of the time. And he certainly looks like he would know what he was doing.*

Snape raised an eyebrow and smirked as he looked down into his potion.

_Hermione, stop this! What is the matter with you? Oh fuck, do I have a crush on him? No, nooo, noooo it can’t be. Are you insane? Nooo. Besides, he would never want you anyway. He’s a proper MAN, and a charming one too. And you’re no Lily Evans Potter, not even with beauty spells on your hair, you fool.*

A crush on him? The poor girl must be intoxicated by the fumes. He should give her a scare, remind her of who, _what_ he really was before the chit deluded herself more about him. Just let the opportunity present itself.

He heard a gasp and looked up. She was clasping her mouth with her hands.

“What is it?” He said coldly as his lips pursed. This might be the opportunity.

“I… my ring fell in the potion.” She had shrunk the enormous butterfly that adorned the ring, but hadn’t realized the ring itself was loose on her finger and might need shrinking as well.

_Perfect._

“And why, little miss genius, is it that you are wearing rings while brewing?” He snapped as he rushed to stir her cauldron to fish out the ring and assess the damage.

“I… I got it as a birthday gift today and I forgot to take it off,” she said, nervously and desperately watching as he looked for it.

It was her birthday? Bloody hell, he couldn’t be an ass to her on her birthday. _Why not, though? Nothing ever stopped you before._
He got it out and set it on the table as he checked if the batch had been ruined. He then turned to face her and came within a few inches of her nose. He looked absolutely murderous.

“You are extremely fortunate that the potion appears to be intact. Do you have any…”

As he scolded her, she could only feel his fresh breath on her, his smell of parchment and herbs, and books, a peppery touch that might be his cologne, and see his eyes piercing hers. The deep, dark, hypnotizing pools that were his eyes. His lips seemed so much more appetizing now than they had an hour ago, when they had a smile on them. His mere breath next to her face made her body tingle. What was this? She remembered his hand holding hers, his finger tracing her scar. It had made her feel more than any touch of Ron’s ever did.

“… how irresponsible…”

She took her hand to his cheek and pulled herself to his lips. They touched hers lightly and very soon she longed for more. The tip of her tongue teased his lips, begging for entrance, and surprisingly, he granted as his hands wrapped around her waist and pulled her whole body closer. His tongue ravished her mouth. He kissed her as she never had been kissed before. It made her feel… so much. Her body quickened against his, at his touch. He nipped her lower lip and it drove her insane, she couldn’t help but whimper. She felt a string of excitement pulling down from her navel to her core. It was wonderful, she had never truly felt it before. As he dipped down to kiss her, his hair was brushing against her cheeks, and that feeling alone made her stomach flutter.

He couldn’t believe that he had given into her, that he was doing this, kissing a student. But her lips were so soft. And the smell of her… intoxicating. He had never been kissed like this before, with such openness, such honesty, such abandon, such… trust. He had only ever been kissed with interest in what information he could provide, what could be extorted from him, what power he could provide. Or with pure lust, just the need to use his body. As a teenager he had also been kissed on a dare, something that caused him so much humiliation. During one summer, after having practiced with some older muggle girls of his neighborhood who didn’t really mind and were just there, he had managed to kiss Lily a couple of times. This was, of course, before the… incident. That had been nice and she seemed to like it. Though she did not poke fun of him or tell anyone, it had never gotten beyond that or happened again.

But this… this was… never had any woman given herself so completely to him in a kiss, no reservations or doubts. Her hands traveled up to his hair. She ran her fingers through it, his greasy, disgusting hair. She didn’t seem to mind. She lowered her hands again, and they were now fisted on the buttons of his frockcoat, trying feebly to undo them, then her fingers zigzagged around them.

No, he must stop this insanity. She was a student. A student! He could lose his job, and she would come to her senses at some point and regret all of this. They always did.

He pulled away from her and she immediately found her senses. She had kissed a teacher. Merlin! Was she out of her mind? She would be expelled, talked about all over school. And Snape. She kissed Snape. He would berate her, humiliate her… though he hadn’t stopped it right away. He had pulled her closer. He had kissed her back. He had enjoyed it too.

“Leave,” he said coldly.

She didn’t dare disobey or say a word. Or feel offended. She was in the wrong. How could she kiss a teacher? She broke a rule.

As she closed the door behind her, he sighed and leaned against the table as he saw she had left her now deformed ring behind.
Chapter 12

Chapter Notes

Probably didn't get Hagrid's accent right, sorry.

Hermione couldn’t stop thinking about that kiss. It appeared in her dreams, she remembered it at random moments of the day, and her whole body tingled again as if she were being kissed at that moment. The string of excitement would tighten between her navel and her core once again when she thought of the sensation his tongue entangled with hers provided, his large, strong hands on her waist holding her firmly against him.

She had never felt quite like that before. Krum was a very physical person, but it always overwhelmed her more than anything else. She even tried to avoid him more than she should. She used to think that the thought of being with him, snogging him, didn’t really excite her as she thought it should because deep down she fancied Ron.

Her first kiss with Ron was exciting. After wanting it for so long, it had to be. But they grew to be less interesting. She saw now that she kept trying out of stubbornness, the need to not fail, but there was no chemistry there, no compatibility, even if he weren’t such an ass.

But with Professor Snape… she could not focus on her homework. *Nothing* had ever kept her from her studies. She could only think about how good she felt with his lips on hers and how she wanted, needed, to feel it again. If he had wanted to lay her on the table right there and fuck her, she was absolutely sure she wouldn’t have had any objections. Why romanticize her first time, want it to be with someone she loved and who loved her? She thought she loved Ron and that he loved her, and now she thanked the heavens they never got to have sex. It would have certainly been disappointing, and more so after she finally saw how much of an imbecile he really was. No. She wanted experience. To be shagged properly. To be taught. To have release, finally achieve an orgasm.

But that couldn’t be, not with Snape. He was a Professor and she a student. That was so against the rules. And it was Snape. Snape! Sarcastic, rude, moody Snape. Like he would ever fuck a student. So beneath him. And he, being in love and devoted to Harry’s mother for so long, even after her death, he wouldn’t replace that for Hermione Granger, buck-toothed, bushy-haired, Gryffindor know-it-all who had always annoyed him, even if she wasn’t his student.

But he did kiss her back. He didn’t stop it immediately. And shagging wasn’t love. He certainly hadn’t spent his whole life not fucking anyone because he loved Lily Potter. Very doubtful. She could be one more. She wouldn’t mind. She would learn from him and get the release she so wanted, needed. Hopefully.

*No! Shit, Hermione, that’s never going to happen. It’s Snape. It’s insanity.*

She spent the weekend in the common room, trying to focus on her homework and taking longer than it usually took her to finish her tasks. She was trying to forget that kiss, but failing miserably. She was also hiding, afraid of running into Snape and doing something absolutely moronic.
Neville was the one who most kept her company, since Harry and Ginny were in Quidditch practice most of Saturday afternoon and on Sunday, they wanted to spend time alone together.

They had apparently talked to – or scolded – Ron and now they were able to talk to her more while he found something else to do or someone else to bother. But it still wasn’t the same as being able to hang out whenever, all together. Just one more reason dating someone you know, a friend, is a fucking bad idea.

It wasn’t until Sunday evening, when she had decided to wear the earrings Luna gave her that she noticed the ring that went with them was missing. *Ooooh nooo!* She left it in Snape’s classroom. Well, she wasn’t going to ask for it back. He probably tossed it anyway. Damn. And she had really liked it too, once it wasn’t bigger than an actual butterfly. It wasn’t real jewelry, but it was handmade by her friend. It was special. But the heat of the cauldron ruined it. She saw it when he fished it out and placed it on the table. Oh well, she still had the necklace and earrings.

Monday morning brought dread. On weekends, it was rare to see Professors in the Great Hall during meals. They didn’t go at the same hours as students, and Snape probably didn’t go at all. But now, now he would be there, at least at dinner, maybe now, during breakfast. And there would be classes… would she be talked about? Would he have said anything to anyone? He could say she had attacked him, which wasn’t a complete lie, just to get her expelled. Wouldn’t he love *that*. But he would have done it already if he were to do it., wouldn’t he? He had two days… He could just make snide remarks in class to embarrass her but not exactly let everyone know. And just the thought of seeing him… how would she react? *Oh God Oh God Oh God.*

He was at breakfast. But he didn’t even look at her. She… she felt things, things she had managed to partially suppress during the weekend, just with the sight of him. His lips, now pursed as per usual, still made her want them on hers. His hands, holding cutlery, such mundane activity, she wanted them around her waist. His hair, which curtained his face, now not completely soft and shiny, but not greasy as it would become at the day’s end, she wanted it in her hands, in between her fingers, brushing her cheeks. *Fuck fuck fuck fuck. Stop it, Hermione.*

“What’s up, Hermione?” Harry’s voice gave her a jolt.

“Huh?”

“You’re staring at the head table.”

“Am I? No, I’m just thinking. Staring into nothing in particular.”

“All right.”

On Tuesday she took the time to charm her hair again. She had asked Ginny for the book on Monday and had fallen asleep reading it. She wanted to try some of the things she had read. Though she hated to admit it, it made her feel better. More confident. And everyone admired her. Ron gawked at her. Maybe it would make an impression on Snape as well? She needed to be confident if she ran into him, to handle whatever he might say.

By Wednesday she didn’t really care if he was going to be insufferable and infuriating, make snide remarks, embarrass or humiliate her, she just wanted to be in the same room as him again. See what was going to happen. Maybe if he was really rude she would grow disgusted by him and forget all of this once and for all. She charmed her hair again, and did a slightly better job at it. She had found a charm that left her hair with wide smooth curls. Closer to what her natural hair was, were it
manageable without magic. Better than it being completely straight. She put more effort into it because she had potions today.

He taught the class as usual. She would look at him directly, to invoke his gaze to her, to see what would be in his eyes when he looked at her, but he never did. While they worked, he moved around the classroom, checking what they did, making his usual remarks. But he did not come close to her, and didn’t even acknowledge she was in the room.

On Thursday she forced the courage to raise her hand to answer one of his questions, but he just raised his eyebrow and answered it himself when no one else volunteered.

By Saturday she was absolutely desperate. He hadn’t exactly been rude or off putting as she had hoped to see if that would make her forget him and hate him. She wanted to be alone with him again and considered getting a detention from Professor Gwendoline to make that happen, but that would be so irresponsible of her. She already probably was the only Head Girl in history to get as many detentions as she had. And before the first month of classes was even out.

She thought perhaps a walk around the grounds, to get some fresh air would help her. Perhaps a visit to Hagrid’s. She had only been there once since school started. She asked Ginny to go with her and get Harry to come along.

“Oh, Hermione, we’re already going with Ron this afternoon!” Hermione sighed. “But we’ll go back with you after, if you don’t want to join us.”

“No, it’s fine. Just try not to be too long so I can go afterwards and not be out late.”

“You could go with us.”

“Yeah, right, ‘cause that would be pleasant.”

“You know, Ron wants to talk to you again, he’s just too stubborn and proud to. I even think he wants to get back together with you…”

“Absolutely not!” Hermione was offended.

“I’m sorry! I know he can be a jerk, but was it really so terrible? I miss hanging out, all of us, and…”

“Just drop it Ginny.” She was now so irritated that she climbed out the portrait hole and left Ginny behind.

She found her way to the grounds and sat under the beech tree by the lake. Just feeling the wind on her face and hearing the swooshing of the leaves and water as the squid swam by made her calmer. She watched Hagrid’s hut from afar and saw that in 10 minutes, Ginny, Harry and Ron arrived there.

Two hours later, she went around to Hagrid’s after sitting and enjoying nature and having one or two brief conversations with some acquaintances before they moved on to something else. But Ron was still in there. She found a tree from where she could see his hut better and sat in waiting again. She wished she had brought a book.

After a while, Luna found her.

“You look good,” she said sitting down.
“Thanks, Luna. You look good too.” She smiled.

“I like your hair like this, better than the other options so far.”

Hermione had charmed it differently every day. She had tried braids, bangs, straight, but was back to the smooth, open curls. It was easier to make it stick, and it was the one she thought best suited her, the one that looked more like what her natural hair would on a very good day, when it was well behaved. The other spells in the book were much fancier hairdos, which would make no sense for her to don in school.

“Yes, I prefer this one too.”

“Though I do like your natural hair. It makes you look strong. Like a Gryffindor.”

Hermione smiled. “Thank you!”

“You should come outside more. You look a lot more relaxed than you’ve had this week.”

“Yeah… I guess.”

“Who is it?”

“Huh?”

“The guy. I find that unfortunately it is always a guy that makes us so unfocused. Or Dabberblimps!”

Luna was very observant.

“Hum… I must still be upset over the break up with Ron.”

“No… that’s not it. I don’t think that was the wrong choice. And you’re smart. You’d know. It wouldn’t upset you.”

*Very observant.*

“Why do you think that? Don’t you like Ron?”

“Oh, I do like Ron! But he’s not right for you.”

Hermione hugged Luna.

“You are years ahead of your age, I think. So smart. An older man might understand you better. Complement you.”

“You’re a good friend, Luna.”

“Thanks,” she said dreamily looking up at some birds on the tree.

Hermione saw Harry, Ron and Ginny leaving Hagrid’s. Finally. She asked Ginny not to take long! It’s like they did it on purpose. She became slightly annoyed. It was almost six. Her visit would have to be very short.

“Luna, I’m going to visit Hagrid. Would you like to come?”

“Oh no. It is going to be dark soon. I don’t like being outside after dark.”
“Why? What creatures do we need to fear?” Hermione said smiling thinking of snarglepuffs or whatever else Luna always talked about.

“Oh, just the Death Eaters. I’m afraid another one would appear on the grounds. I’ve had my share of them, and don’t want to be tortured again.”

Hermione felt her heart sink.

“You know, you’re right. Go inside. I’m just going to say hello to Hagrid and I’ll be in myself.”

“All right. Be careful. See you later.”

But Hagrid would not have a quick hello. He chatted for over two hours, mostly about how Ron was such a good boy and Hermione should really give him another chance, and complained that she hadn’t visited him in too long, that Harry and Ron went at least once a week.

With the promise that she would go back within the week, Hagrid let her go when it was dark out already.

“Ya shouldn’t be ‘ere, ‘ermione! What with the curfew n’ all. Come earlier next time.”

Hermione rolled her eyes and sighed deeply as he shut the door behind her. She hurried through the grounds towards the castle, the full moon the only light to guide her way other than the one on her wand, when he heard a familiar voice behind her, ice cold.

“What… are you doing out here, Miss Granger?”

“I was just…”

“You weren’t thinking is what you were doing,” he snarled as he gripped her arm just above her elbow and dragged her along beside him. “Fifty points from Gryffindor.”

She managed to pull her arm from his grip, anger boiling inside her. “Let go of me! I can walk by myself, thank you very much.”

“Apparently you can’t, or you are having issues with forming intelligent thoughts, or you wouldn’t be lingering in the grounds at night while there are Death Eaters still out there, one having recently been on these grounds and escaped! He could very well come back. That is why there is a curfew in place, foolish girl.”

“I am very well aware, sir, and I have told you I can take care of myself. If it weren’t for your incompetence in capturing him, perhaps the grounds would be safer. Or did you take pity on your old mate and let him go?”

She regretted it as soon as she said it. He narrowed his eyes, his lips pursed. He looked like he could easily kill her right there. But sadness flashed quickly in his eyes. He pushed it back.

“I’m sorry, I didn’t…”

“Two days detention, Miss Granger,” he said coldly.

“I…” She wanted to apologize. She didn’t mean it, really, she was just on edge.

“I suggest you refrain from any further comment, lest you wish to lose all your house points and be in detention every weekend until N.E.W.T.s.”
She slumped her shoulders and looked at him, clearly ashamed of what she had said in anger.

“What… are you waiting around for? Go straight to your common room. Now.”

She turned on her heels and did as he said.
Chapter 13

Chapter Notes

Since I'm bored in bed with a lil' bit of fever... I give you another chapter with... a lil' bit of smut (finally!)

Thanks for the kudos and comments. Keep 'em comming, they're the highlight of my days.

See the end of the chapter for more notes

She was unbuttoning her shirt. Slowly. Teasingly.

“Professor? Can you help me?” Her bra was now in sight. Black lace. “I need you to…” Her hand was now running up her thigh, pulling up her skirt “… make me come.”

He opened his eyes. In the darkness of his room, he felt for his wand under his pillow, then flicked it to light the fire. He’d been dreaming about Miss Granger ever since that kiss. It was certainly better than waking up with a start every night because of nightmares related to the war, torture he had suffered, had inflicted… Lily. A woman he had only shared one or two innocent kisses with and nothing else, but that had ruled his life nonetheless. A woman who had spurned him and yet he was devoted to. It was getting to be tiresome. He had paid his debt. When would he stop feeling this guilt? Had his mistake been so great that he didn’t deserve to have some form of happiness, of peace at least, ever in his life?

It was better to dream of Miss Granger, but unsettling. Wrong. Your student. The little Gryffindor princess. And he woke up hard because of her. Fuck. Rock hard. And they had only kissed. Of course the fact he heard her thoughts helped his mind to drift into its midnight madness. But it could never be. No. She would cling to him, at least at first. It could never be casual. And casual was all he was good for, all he could do. All women ever wanted from him, all they stayed for. Not to mention he would lose his job, be the talk of the wizarding world. Just one more thing for them to hate me for.

No, no. He was flattering himself anyway that she would wish to have something with him. The other day was just a moment of weakness in judgment. Much weakness. Fuck. This little chit is really pulling a number on my head. Why the fuck? All that snake venom must have affected him after all.

He was just fascinated with the idea the chit planted in his mind that she respected him. Cared about him in some small capacity. No one had ever said that to him. No one had probably ever felt it. If he disgusted the very man he worked years for and was so loyal to, to whom he went with an open, bleeding heart, with honesty and despair, to him he showed more than he had to anyone, no one else would ever feel anything different. If he had disgusted the very best friend he had had, whom he had loved with all his heart…

Still, the little chit had said it and made him soften. Fool. He saw her qualities and was further pulled in. He could not deny that her feistiness had aroused him, earlier that night. The way she had freed herself from his grip and yelled at him. Nothing like the shy, insecure girl he thought she was, that she sometimes appeared to be.
He scoffed to the empty room. *What? Do you think you can find a friend, a companion in a student? Hermione Granger nonetheless? Insanity. Just because the war is over does not mean your guard can come down. People have always been horrible to you, war or no war, you seem to be forgetting that.*

And she proved that with the things she had said that evening. No matter what, he would always be the Death Eater, the greasy git, the bat in the dungeon. He must remember it. Keep the walls he had built long ago always up. The person he really was, or at least had tried to be, wanted to be, attempted awkwardly to be and failed miserably, had never been accepted, and then had had no place as a spy or among the Death Eaters, the only group who had let him in and seemed to give him some ounce of respect or friendship, as twisted as it was. And now he was made vulnerable because of a little chit’s kiss? No, that couldn’t be.

A drink, he needed a fucking drink. He stood and walked out to his sitting room, to his cabinet to fetch a shot of firewhisky, his dick leading the way. *You will NOT wank to a student.* He poured the drink and shot it down in one gulp.

But those soft lips haunted him. The total abandon. Not wanting anything in return but his lips on hers. The whimper she let out when he nipped her bottom lip. Such power he had over her right there. And she gave into it and trusted him with it, wanted him to wield it.

Fuck. He wouldn’t be able to be in a room alone with her. No. It was best to pass her detention to someone else.

*****

Hermione was a nervous wreck all day on Sunday. She was dreading having detention with Snape again. Would he embarrass her because of what she had done last time? Be completely awful? Oh Merlin, he would probably make her do something terrible and gross like sort live slugs or something. He would definitely not be as nice as he had been with her lately. Or smile. *His smile… He should really smile more.*

Part of her was also excited in the hopes that something else would happen. But she knew it was wishful thinking. Impossible. *Don’t delude yourself, Hermione.* But her stomach still did flips that seemed to make it reach her chest cavity.

*And after the awful things you said to him yesterday… accusing him of being incompetent and favoring a Death Eater? Really? What the hell were you thinking? Damn your fucking temper. He will definitely make you scrub cauldrons with a toothbrush.*

She had said such things because of her annoyance at the fact he treated her as a child. She was not a child. She could take care of herself. If he thought of her as a child, she had no chance for something more to happen. *You have no chance either way.*

But late afternoon brought an owl to her dormitory window. It tapped the glass with its beak, and she let it in. She was looking for something to give as a treat but the bird didn’t even bother waiting for it. She unrolled the parchment expectantly, but it was only from Madam Pince informing her that her detention would be in the library, with her. The bastard had shoved her off to someone else.

She arrived at the library at six, as requested, and all there was to be done was reshelv books
properly. There were a lot of books to reshel, but it wasn’t horrible work. She enjoyed it, being around so many books. She couldn’t use magic to do it, but that just added to the fun. Touching the books, smelling them. Seeing which ones she had read and if there were any she hadn’t that were interesting. Some people were using the library still, and undid her work, but she didn’t really mind putting their books back in place once they were done. This was no punishment at all. He must have known she wouldn’t mind this. Had he put her here thinking of that?

It was nearly nine when Madam Pince shooed her from the library. There were still more tomes to be stored, but Madam Pince said it was no problem, it could be done tomorrow and pushed her out the door, shutting it behind her.

On Monday evening she returned to the library for her second day of detention. She wasn’t really sure what time she should have been there, so she gulped down a sandwich to make it there by the same time as the night before, at six.

When she got there, however, Madam Pince seemed unaware of what was going on.

“Can I help you dear?”

“I’m here for detention.”

“Detention? Wasn’t that yesterday?”

“Professor Snape gave me two days of detention, ma’am.”

“Well then you go on to Professor Snape and see what you should be doing, because I have no need for you here.” She walked away as she spotted a pair of first years handling a book rather poorly for her standards.

Hermione’s stomach froze up in knots. She would have to go to Snape’s office. She didn’t know if it was fear or excitement that made her palms cold yet sweaty as she marched down to the dungeons and knocked on his door.

He opened it briskly and looked down at her over his nose.

“May I help you?” He said coldly.

“Uhm, I went to Madam Pince for my detention but she didn’t seem aware there would be a second day. She told me to come to you, sir.” She was so nervous she had to control her breathing as to not tremble. She could feel her cheeks burning, but she refused to look away from him. She would not let him notice how much he affected her now. Why did he? It was crazy. That kiss… best fucking kiss she had ever had.

He pinched the bridge of his nose as he thought what to do. Damn it, Irma. He knew never to ask her for a favor again.

“Fine, come in.” He was aggravated. He could have her write lines or something. I shall not wander on the grounds at night like a dimwitted fool. I shall not yell at my professor and arouse him ever again.

She stepped inside and stood halfway between the door and his desk, looking at him, holding her elbows. He flicked on the hearth before she complained of being cold.

“Tell me, Miss Granger, what punishment do you think is appropriate for your behavior?”
She furrowed her brow and shrugged. For the first time her eyes darted away from his to the wall and back again. “I don’t know, sir.”

“I suppose you think you did nothing to earn a punishment, the perfect Gryffindor princess.” He raised his brow. His eyes pierced hers.

“What I said to you, though said without thought and in anger, was very disrespectful. I apologize.” She said after taking a deep breath.

“Said in anger? And do tell what you had to be angry about? Did I intrude so rudely on your nightly stroll?”

Her hands were clenched beside her body and her cheeks turning more and more crimson. She could feel the frustration and anger burning inside her, and she would control herself. But he could see it.

“Do you have something to say, Miss Granger?” He smirked, his eyes fixed on hers.

No, she wouldn’t. He just wanted to take more points from Gryffindor, or have her in detention for the rest of her school days. The headmistress would probably take away her Head Girl badge. Her eyes darted to the wall again.

“No, sir.”

He raised his brow. “Good. We wouldn’t want miss Head Girl in detention for the whole year.”

He started to move towards his desk, past her, as she snorted. He swiftly turned to face her. “What was that, Miss Granger? Found something to say? I believe you may have some anger management issues.” He smirked. His face was very close to hers, though not as close as the last time. No. He had learned his lesson.

“Of course I was angry!” She couldn’t hold back any longer. “You treated me like a child, dragging me by the arm like I was some defenseless fool!” Her voice was raised. She would be scrubbing floors all year. Filch would be pleased. “And you didn’t even have the decency to let me explain…”

It was he who grabbed her shoulders and pulled her to him, touching his lips to hers, then quickly, hungrily, deepening the kiss. As his mouth subdued hers, her anger, his lips sucking on hers, his tongue exploring the whole of her mouth, her hands made their way around his waist pulling him closer, seeking support, steadiness for her body, since her legs were very weak and provided her close to none. He once again felt her total abandon and trust, her openness. Her soft lips. So soft. Her tongue delicately moving against his. It was enough to make his dick stir. One of his hands slid up to her neck, beneath the coat of her smoothly curled hair and the other down to the small of her back. She felt her cheeks and her neck burning hot again, but it was not anger. Excitement rolled around in her lower belly.

He pulled away from her and as their lips parted, she whimpered.

“You should leave, Miss Granger.” He said as he turned away from her and walked to his desk. *Bloody hell, what was that? Control yourself.*

“What? No! Why?” She said desperately as she hurried after him.

He swiftly turned to her once again and barked “Because I’m your teacher. I’m not a fucking
schoolboy to snog you then send you on your way.”

“Who said all I want to do is snog?” She found the courage in her to say it. She wasn’t a Gryffindor for nothing. Her hand reached his waist to pull him close again, but his hands grabbed her wrists and held them firmly against her shoulders.

“Do you even know what you are saying, girl?” He snarled.

“I do,” she said now calmly, sweetly, teasing him. “And I’m not a girl. I am an overage witch and can make my own decisions.” A quite talented one, might I add.

“Have you ever even done this?” He smirked. He knew the answer.

Her countenance changed. She was slightly hurt, embarrassed even. Not as confident as just moments ago. “What difference does that make?”

“A world of difference. You’ll regret it. This shouldn’t be casual. You’re not the type.” He let go of her briskly.

“It almost happened with someone I knew for years and I was going to regret it. I don’t think it makes a difference,” she said defiantly.

“Leave, Miss Granger.” He said it, but didn’t really mean it at that particular moment. Get a hold of yourself. You will NOT fuck a student.

How could she persuade him? She had to show resolve. She had to arouse him. She sat on his desk and opened her robes, letting them fall around her. She undid a button of her white shirt after loosenning her tie.

“Please. I need this. I want it.” She wet her lips and his dick stirred again.

He pressed up against her and looked into her eyes. His black, piercing eyes soothed her, and he slipped into her mind with ease, undetected. There, he saw no deceit, no agenda, no ulterior motive, nor mockery. Just attraction, lust, the urge to be wanted as well, the urge for release. That he could give her without claiming her maidenhead. The power that would give him intoxicated him. He slipped out of her mind and placed his hand on her thigh, under her long skirt. She was so willing and he had deprived himself of pleasures for so long, always busy with life threating situations. He deserved to have some fun.

“Is this what you want, Miss Granger?” His hand slipped further up her thigh and the string of excitement between her navel and her sex tightened.

“Yes,” her breath caught in her throat.

His thumb reached her heat and began to caress her over the cotton that covered her as the rest of his fingers rested on her thigh. She was glad she had tried some spells for tidying up down there from Ginny’s book.

“Is it?” He smirked. He thought that when he touched her she would understand the full extent of what she was asking for and be repelled.

“Yes,” she whimpered.

“Yes... what?”
“Yes sir,” her breath was growing heavy.

She tried to reach his lips for a kiss, but he moved his lips to her neck. No kisses. No. He had to keep his head clear. Her kisses… could be the end of him. He nipped her earlobe and kissed her neck, still waiting for her to regret it and pull away. Her hairs stood on end as her breath was growing more labored. He was looking for her sweet spot, kissing every inch of her neck. He heard a long whimper in his ear and felt her hand reach for his hair. There. The flesh at the joint of her neck and shoulder. He kissed it again and there was another whimper, her fingers running through his hair, encouraging him, pleading with him. He smirked, his fingers under her skirt all the while, over her cotton knickers. One more kiss on her neck and she spread her legs wider. Full access.

He emerged from her neck and could now see her thoughts as he looked in her eyes and continued to caress her mound and labia over her knickers.

Oh gods, this is really happening. I’m shagging a professor. Oh gods. In his office. Breaking so many rules. What if someone walks in? Sweet Circe this feels so good. So good. How is he doing this? I don’t even know how to… touch myself like this. So… Oh no! What if someone walks in? Or calls him on the floo? I’ll be expelled. Oh no oh no oh no.

“Is your mind always this busy, Miss Granger?” No wonder she never got off.

She made a desperate face and bit her lips as her cheeks turned bright red. She was embarrassed but a slight movement of his finger made excitement take over her features again. Even over her knickers he could feel she was wet. He pushed her knickers aside and his fingers invaded her slit, finding her clit. She gasped and her mind raced again.

“Relax,” his silky voce whispered in her ear. “Empty your mind and just breathe.” His voice soothed her, aroused her further. Her mind was blank in an instant. And it didn’t hurt that he instructed her to do it, as if in a lesson. She knew how to follow instructions. She wanted to excel.

Her hands supported herself on his shoulders as she nodded, her eyes half closed. She felt the pressure building in her. Sweet pleasure. And the feeling of giving up control… so good. Sweet release. Such magical hands he had… good at everything they did.

His fingers slid down to her folds. He moistened them in the excitement pooling at her entrance and slid them up to her nub again. She moaned. Such a sweet moan. Her head was thrown back, chest heaving. Up. And down. She moaned again, louder this time. He was causing that. For the first time in her. Such power. And suddenly he was hard. Fuck. That wasn’t supposed to happen. He was only trying to have some fun with her, get high on the power. But she was so wet. For him. Such a pretty, smart little witch.

She looked at him again and tried to kiss him. When he wouldn’t let her, she moved past his lips and nipped his ear. Then kissed his neck, whatever she could reach of it with his collar buttoned up. His dick twitched. It was straining against his trousers. Fuck fuck fuck.

She wondered if he was hard. Could she get real men hard or were only precocious boys aroused by her? She reached her hand down to his dick and could feel it almost ripping through his trousers. She smiled into his neck. His fingers moved just the right way on her clit and she moaned loudly again. She began to undo his belt and he growled, pushing her back and laying her completely on his desk. His fingers rubbed her faster and faster and she could think of nothing, do nothing, only of the pressure that built up in her and was on the verge of making her explode. His other hand touched her buttons and they popped open. His lips went to her breast and kissed it, his tongue teasing her nipple over her bra. The connection to her core was direct, and it made her go insane, it felt so damn good.
Her breathing became more and more rapid. She was close, so very close. He stood over her again, his fingers still on her clit, feeling her wetness spreading all over her, wetting her thighs even. Feeling her heat. Her breasts went up and down as her breathing became ragged. She let out the sweetest moans. Her hands went to her breasts and teased them, trying to mimic what he had done with his tongue since he had stopped. He adjusted his hard cock in his trousers, trying to find some comfort. And there it was. She was coming undone on his desk, arching her back, biting her lip, all under his command. As she was riding out her high, her body contorting on his desk, he pulled his hand away from her slit. His fingers glistened with her arousal and he wanted so badly to taste her.

_No. Fuck._ What had he done? She was a student. Hermione Granger, know-it-all who annoyed the fuck out of him. The Gryffindor princess. Miss goodie goodie. No. No.

He took out his wand and cast _Tergeo_ on his fingers with a flick. Her high having passed, her body relaxed, she sat up, reaching for his trousers, wanting to undo them, release him.

“No.” He pulled away from her.

She smiled. It wasn’t the first time he had said that that evening. “No,” she answered as she reached for him again.

“Get. Out.” He snarled as he pushed her hands briskly away.

“What?” She was now slightly annoyed.

“Get out. NOW.” He barked.

“Why are you being such a bastard?”

“Get out, and do not fucking come back.” He seemed disgusted. He was. With himself. “And ten points from Gryffindor for calling me a bastard.”

She jumped from the desk to the floor, grabbing her robes from the desktop. She was so angry, frustrated, hurt.

“Well fucking get ready to take thirty more points from Gryffindor” she said as she hurried to the door “you loathsome, arrogant prick!”

She opened the door and slammed it behind her.

Chapter End Notes

Promise that in a couple more chapters they’ll get on the same page...
You guys get me excited and I post more often than I should, really.

I'm still feeling a bit ill, so any problems with the text, let me know. Head was pounding while I proofread.

Despite her anger, Hermione slept wonderfully well that night. Relaxed. No tension about studies or revisions or anything else. She craved for release and he had given it to her. Still, she never wanted to set eyes on him again. That fucking prick. What kind of person would do that? Throw her out for no good reason in the middle of what they were doing, all disheveled and vulnerable. Bastards, that’s who would. At least she had gotten her share.

On Tuesday she was still beside herself. There was no fear of people knowing or of being expelled as there was after she had kissed him. He certainly wouldn’t want anyone to know about this. That would cause him to be sacked, it would be a fucking scandal. No one would know. He wouldn’t tell or make snide remarks and she certainly wouldn’t tell anyone, just to be judged by her friends. She went about her day normally and thanked Merlin she didn’t run into Snape. She didn’t even look up at the head table during meals, as to not have to see him.

Wednesday came and brought with it double potions. She avoided looking at him, and it took her much willpower to not raise her hand to answer questions she obviously knew the answers to and none of her classmates did. Or if they did, they didn’t volunteer to answer. He scolded them all for not having read the chapter he had sent as homework, said if they couldn’t even answer that, then the essays they were to hand in at the end of class must be abysmal. He took points from both Gryffindor and Slytherin for having horrible, incompetent students. He was clearly still in a temper.

“What’s wrong with you, Granger? You must have known the answers to some of those. At least one,” Draco said to her as they began preparing to brew the potion that was now on the board.

“Don’t insult me, I knew the answers to all of them.”

“Then why didn’t you answer? And just sat there staring a hole through the table?”

Hermione shrugged. “I didn’t feel like it.”

“Are you sick? You must be,” Draco sneered.

Hermione kept strong until the first period had passed. But when Snape strolled by the table and stopped at Draco’s side to check his work, he placed his hand on the edge of the table. She saw his fingers, clever clever fingers, that had made her feel so magnificent and wonderful. Flashes of that night came to her and all the tiny hairs on her body stood on end. Excitement pulled at her lower belly and she looked up at him as he looked into Draco’s cauldron. Fuck, she wanted him. Still. Badly. If he could do that with his fingers, just imagine…

His eyes caught hers and they narrowed. *Fuck fuck fuck fuck fuck*. She looked down at her cauldron and continued to stir. Had he read her mind? No. She hadn’t felt him there. No. He walked
away without checking her work or making any comments and she breathed in relief.

At the end of class, she filled a phial with her potion and pulled the essay due from her bag.

“Draco, could you do me a favor?”

“If you ask nicely,” he smirked.

“I thought I just did?”

“That is not what nicely means for Slytherins,” he winked.

“Draco!” She said, outraged.

“I’m kidding, I’m kidding!” He laughed. “What is it, Granger?”

“Could you please hand in my work?”

“Why don’t you do it yourself?”

“I…” She thought quickly of an answer. She couldn’t come up with any. Then her eyes saw Ron still packing his things up front.

“I don’t want to run into Ron.” She whispered.

“Still with the nonsense? Fine. But you have to get over that.” He picked up her phial and essay and walked over to Snape.

“Haven’t you already handed yours in, Draco? Doing double the work won’t get you double the marks.”

“This is Granger’s. She asked me to hand it in.”

“And why is that? Has she lost the ability to walk?” He smirked.

Draco looked back and saw she wasn’t there anymore. He shrugged. “I guess she was in a hurry.”

That night, Hermione was once again unfocused, losing her mind. She wanted Snape, however much of a bastard he may be, she wanted his hands on her. Needed it. She couldn’t sleep thinking about it. She warded her four-poster, the curtains already shut, and she started trying to give herself some release.

At first, she was tense. Embarrassed. Worried if someone would hear her. What if her wards weren’t good enough? She couldn’t do this, it felt wrong. But then she remembered his silky, smooth voice... relax... it said. She conjured up his image in her mind, the memories of Monday night, and her fingers easily found their way. She had her release, and slept soundly after it. But it was not the same as with him.

Thursday found her thinking about their encounter. As they worked in class, he sat up on his desk and wrote, probably grading essays. His fingers tapped the desk and enraptured her. She wanted him. And it would never happen. The only solace she had was that she had proven Ron wrong on two accounts at least. She was not frigid and another man could want her. Even if briefly, in a moment of weakness. A real man. Experienced. That night, she touched herself again fantasizing
Friday during breakfast, Ron came to sit with her. She was startled and looked around for Harry, who was further down the table with Ginny. He looked at her and smiled. What the fuck?

“Hermione, I’m really sorry.” Ron started. She picked up her toast and bit into it, not sparing a glance at him.

“What I said was horrible and wrong. I don’t know what came over me. Please forgive me. I… I… want to get back together. I love you, Mione.”

She looked at him. How could she get back with someone who had said such things to her? Who couldn’t carry a conversation of her interest with her. Who couldn’t make her feel... anything with a kiss. No. It was not possible. Not after everything she had experienced with Snape. And he was a near stranger to her when compared to Ron. Ron should know her better, at least know how to talk to her. No. It wouldn’t work.

“Hermione,” she said.

“What?”

“My name, it’s Hermione. And sorry Ron, but we can’t get back together. I forgive you. Thanks for the apology. But we can’t.” She stood up and went to class.

Throughout the day, Ginny and Harry came to her separately. They didn’t press her on why she had rejected Ron, they just wanted to see if she was okay.

In the middle of the afternoon, she had a thought. Ron would probably whine about all of this to Hagrid, and then Hagrid would badger her for hours again about what a good boy Ron was. She didn’t want that. She would have to visit him before Ron did. So she decided she would go today, before dinner.

So it was late afternoon when she walked down to Hagrid’s hut. She couldn’t be long. She didn’t want detention again. Although... if it was with Snape...

Hagrid loved to chat. And so he did, for a long while, and didn’t even seem to care that he had missed dinner, or that she had missed dinner. He was very excited about all the progress he had made with Grawp, and thankful that Professor McGonagall had let his brother stay in the Forbidden Forest. They got to talking about what they had done following the end of the war, and when she was able to leave, it was already dark out, though not so late.

As she had last week, she rushed through the dark grounds, a mixture of fear of being caught and hope of being caught by Snape consuming her.

She heard footsteps other than hers on the grass, and her heart thudded in her chest at the thought of it being Snape again. But something didn’t feel quite right and she gripped her wand. When she turned, she saw a hooded figure walking towards her, his wand held high. She caught him off guard in turning around, so she had time to throw a silent spell his way. It missed and he fought back. She cast a shield and tried to get closer to the castle as he attacked her, spell after spell rebounding off her shield. She cast a silent sectumsempra which hit his arm, and instantly his sleeve was drenched in blood. She then tried to stun him and missed, not being quick enough to deflect his next spell, which disarmed her.

She was going to scream for help, Hagrid’s might still be within hearing range, and reach for her wand, but before she could do either, a flash of light hit her square in the chest and she hit the
When Hermione came to, she was strapped to a tree somewhere on the edge of the forest. Not so exposed as to be easily seen, but not so far in as to be completely concealed. It wasn’t next to Hagrid’s, but she had some chance of someone finding her. She was helpless now, her wand fallen somewhere on the grass on the grounds next to the castle.

The hooded figure had lowered his hood and she recognized him as the Death Eater named Yaxley. She had been dueling someone next to him in the battle, before Harry came back from the dead and stopped everyone in their spots. He was much thinner, his robes ripped and ragged, his features more hardened. But it was him. Life on the run was hard, she knew very well herself.

“Well well well. When I came here today I certainly did not expect to find such a valuable source. Harry Potter’s little mudblood bitch.”

She spat on his face and the back of his hand exploded against her cheek. She could feel it swelling instantly.

“Now now, don’t make me hurt you before I get what I need from you.”

She must have looked at him in a way he did not care for, because he hit her other cheek with the back of his hand, and she could now taste blood in her mouth. She also heard a crack echo in her skull.

“Tell me, how was it that you and that Weasley blood traitor filth helped Potter? How could he defeat the Dark Lord?”

“Weren’t you watching the show? Harry dueled and killed him. Simple.” She spat blood on the leaves beneath her feet. Her arms began to burn for being tied backwards, against the tree.

“That is impossible. That boy could not kill the Dark Lord.”

“I guess he is a superior wizard.”

Yaxley’s eyes filled with rage. He lifted his wand. “Crucio” was the last thing she heard before excruciating pain ripped through her body. She thrashed against the tree but couldn’t move all that her body wished to, being tied to it. She heard herself scream in agony, though she had no idea of consciously doing so. He ended the spell, but her body still ached all over.

“Tell me how he did it!” He screamed. “I need to know! I will bring the Dark Lord back, be his most cherished servant.”

“He died! He can’t come back!” She cried, no feistiness, just despair.

He punched her face, and her nose definitely broke, she heard it. She felt it. “Crucio” he said again, and the agony came back tenfold. After seconds that seemed like hours, the spell was cut off again. Her body, her head, it all throbbéd. She was almost unconscious. She couldn’t bare it anymore.

“Tell me, filthy mudblood!”

“I’m telling the truth.” A whisper was all she could manage. She felt hot tears rolling down her cheeks.

“Fine, I’ll rip it out of you.”
He held her chin up, her empty gaze in his, and said “legilimens”.

He was pounding through her thoughts and memories. It was horrible, uncomfortable. It hurt. It was like he was raping her mind. He sought memories of the war, and she saw, along with him, her sleepless nights in the tent with the boys, her dwelling, her being tortured at Malfoy Manor. She watched again as many people she knew, her friends, died. Sirius, Dumbledore, Fred, Lupin. Yaxley laughed in her head, which made the pain so much worse. Then suddenly, he was gone.

Her head was limp. Through the slits that were her eyes with all the swelling and pain, she could only see the ground and the leaves under her shoes. She forced herself to look up and she could see Professor Snape standing behind Yaxley, holding his wand to Yaxley’s throat.

“If it isn’t the traitor, Snape. I should have killed you when Bella first came to me with her doubts about you.”

“Yes. You should have. How unlucky for you that you didn’t… try.” He hissed. “Are you so desperate and afraid to go to Azkaban, Yaxley, that now you lower yourself to lurking school grounds and waiting for defenseless students for you to torture?” Yaxley still held his wand and waited for an opportunity to turn and use it on Snape.

“This is no mere student and you know it. She’s Potter mudblood whore.”


“Are you a mudblood defender now as well as a traitor?”

Snape cut Yaxley’s neck, just for fun. It wasn’t deep, but it hurt, he knew, because Yaxley growled.

“Now that you will spend the rest of your few days in Azkaban, you might as well tell me what ludicrous plan you had. Why were you coming to this castle?”

“Someone will bring the Dark Lord back.” Yaxley laughed. “If not me, another. And when he’s back…” he still laughed like a madman, “You… you will suffer. So much. It will be glorious.” Yaxley moved to try and turn his wand on Snape but Snape let a jolt of electricity run from the tip of his wand to Yaxley’s neck. He tried again, but didn’t manage to free himself from Snape’s grip.

“Give me a reason, I beg of you.” Snape hissed. He reached for Yaxley’s wand and threw it to the ground, stepping on it and parting it in two. Then he stunned him and quickly tied his whole body up with a wave of his wand. Then he cast his patronus, Hermione saw. Why? To warn the headmistress, yes. Hermione watched limply as the silver doe cantered to the castle. She was in so much pain, she was crying, silently. Another wave of his wand and the ropes tying her vanished and she was so weak, she fell. His strong arms caught her, though. She felt some comfort, but she wanted the floor. She needed the floor. It was unbearable to stand. She whimpered and cried.

“Miss Granger,” she heard, and she forced herself down while his arms still held her. She cried but couldn’t say what she wanted, what she needed.

“Shh, Miss Granger,” and he lowered himself to the floor with her. As her knees hit the floor, she felt slightly better. He was kneeling beside her, still holding her. She suddenly needed to vomit. The pain was too much. She turned her face quickly away from him and threw up all she had in her stomach, the blood in her mouth, all was coming out and splashing against the leaves on the forest floor. As she did so, he held her hair back, and she felt a brief flutter of emotion toward him. Her heart beat in fondness. He waved his wand and cleaned the floor and her mouth, her chest.
She remembered something important she had to fetch, and began to crawl towards the castle. He pulled her back into his arms.

“My… my wand. I need… my wand.”

“Shhh. You don’t need it now. You’re safe.”

Safe. She was safe. There is nothing left to do. She had to lie down. She could rest now. As she began to lose consciousness in his arms, lying against his chest, she saw Professor McGonagall and Minister Shacklebolt coming in the distance.
Hermione woke up startled, her head throbbing, her whole body still aching. She was in the hospital wing, she noticed, and it was the dead of night. The place was empty. She could feel that Madam Pomfrey had the teeth Yaxley had broken regrown, but when she took her hand to her face, she felt it was still quite swollen and sore. So sore. Suddenly, all the muscles in her body were tightening up, spasming, as if she had been hit with the Cruciatus again, but a much softer version. One cast by a lesser wizard, perhaps. She remembered this, she had suffered this after being tortured by Bellatrix, though she did not remember it being this painful. Before she could cry out, Madam Pomfrey was over her, looking concerned, and gave her a spoonful of something that tasted awful, and the pain was no more. She drifted back into sleep.

When she woke up again, it was still the dead of night. Or was it night again? How long had she slept? She was still sore, though it wasn’t as horrible as last time. It was relatively bearable… if she lay still. Her head still pounded. She lay quietly trying to remember all that happened. Why was her head so heavy and throbbing?

She had been attacked. Yaxley. She tried to fight him but he disarmed her. Her wand. She would have to find it. When she could move, that is. He had tortured her with the Cruciatus. But she had suffered this before and did not remember feeling this much of a headache. It was as if something had exploded exactly on her head. He hit her too, repeatedly, could it be that? Just his sheer physical force? No. Her mind. He read her mind. Invaded it. Yes, that’s why she felt so horrible, as if her thoughts were tainted, slimy, dirty. He had seen her private memories and emotions and laughed at them inside her mind. But then it had ended abruptly. Why? Snape. Professor Snape was there, he captured him. He was so angry, she now remembered the murderous look he had on his face when Yaxley called her a mudblood whore. Her heart filled with… something for Snape. A kind of warmth, fondness. It deepened as she remembered how he had held her, held her hair as she was sick, how she felt safe and slightly better, given what she had been through.

She breathed deeply, forcing herself to calm down and her head throbbed less. She managed to turn it, to look around the room. Empty again. Only the moonlight shone in and kept it from total darkness. The table beside her bed was overflowing with things, mostly candy, chocolate. Her friends had probably been there to see her. On the edge of the table, almost thrown down by the impressive pile of sweets, she saw her wand. Her wand! Who had found it? On top of it sat a ring. It looked a lot like the ring Luna had given her for her birthday, only it was… improved, in some ways. But that ring had been ruined, she dropped it in a potion, the heat… she didn’t even have it anymore. Had Luna made her another? Unless…

With much effort she turned to pick it up. She analyzed it in the moonlight through the small slits that were her eyes, since her headache wouldn’t allow her to open them more, nor would the swelling. The ring was small and delicate, nothing like Luna would make. It looked like what she had transfigured it to, but even better. Almost like real jewelry. Had… had Snape kept it? Repaired it? No… that was insane. Why would he?

Madam Pomfrey came in with a tray of potions for her to take.

“What day is it?” She asked softly.

“Saturday night, dear. It may already be Sunday, I suppose. Now, open up!”
“What is that for?”

“What do you mean what is it for? For you to get better!”

“I know… I just… I don’t want to sleep all day again. I want to see my friends a little, if they come to visit.”

“This one is for the pain. It won’t make you sleep. I’ll give you a lower dose of Dreamless Sleep this time,” she smiled.

“Thank you.”

Hermione took all the potions Madam Pomfrey offered and sank back into the bed.

“Madam Pomfrey, do you know who found my wand?” She pointed to it on the table beside her.

“Oh, Professor Snape found it. He left it earlier this evening. Now hush, get your rest. Good night.”

“Right. Good night.”

So it was him. He had repaired the ring for her? She smiled. The bastard could be sweet when he wanted to. She put the ring on her index finger. Then sleep once again took her over.

This time she woke at around noon. Her soreness was lessened during the night, and she could move more easily, though she preferred not to. Her head still felt horrible. Harry and Ginny were already there when she woke, and Luna and Neville came an hour later. Madam Pomfrey agreed to let them stay as long as they promised to be quiet and not get her riled up. They asked what happened and she recounted as much as she remembered, leaving out the part where Snape was sweet and held her until help came, and how much that had moved her every time she thought of it, even though it really shouldn’t. She was reading way too much into it. He was just there, he did his job, which was to protect students as he himself had already pointed out to her once, and since she had fallen on top of him basically, he wasn’t just going to drop her to the ground, was he?

“Yeah, it’s being reported. Rita Skeeter suggested it was Snape who helped Yaxley into the grounds,” Ginny said. “Snape has got to be angry as hell. I’m glad I won’t be having classes with him until Wednesday. Maybe he’ll have calmed down by then.”

“That foul woman! It’s probably because he wouldn’t give her an interview. She has wanted one from all of us ever since the end of the war.” Hermione was outraged, but her expression quickly turned into one of pain. It took too much to be outraged.

“Hey, calm down! You want Madam Pomfrey to kick us out?” Harry said. “Are you OK?”

“Yeah, fine,” she answered quietly.

They sat together chatting for the rest of the afternoon. They ate chocolate frogs but not even chocolate made her feel that much better. At one point, Hagrid showed up, feeling awful that it was because of him she got attacked, saying he should have sent her on her way before it got too late. She told him not to worry, it wasn’t his fault at all. Ron showed up with Hagrid, and just sat quietly trying to fade into the background and just be one more of the group. Later on, Hermione caught a glimpse of Draco standing outside, but he was gone in a second. At the end of the afternoon, before
Madam Pomfrey kicked them out, they said their goodbyes. As the others headed to the door, Harry stayed behind and whispered

“Listen, Ron… he means well, but he is a little uncomfortable after…”

“Yeah, it’s fine. Thanks.”

Monday was a very slow day. Everyone was in class, so she had no visitors. The only thing that still truly upset her was thinking that a man had been in her mind. An evil, horrible man. She felt unclean. Remembering the roughness with which he had invaded her mind, the thought of having someone laugh at your deepest and most painful memories… The pleasure he felt watching it, she had felt it in her mind as well. It all made her skin crawl. She didn’t have a soul to talk to, a visitor to distract her mind. Until Draco walked in.

“Hey Granger, how are you feeling?” He sat at the foot of her bed and dropped his books beside him as he looked at her with that perpetually smug smile on his face.

“Oh, you know… I could be better.”

“Yeah, you could. Stopped caring about your hair, I see.” He sneered.

She took her hand slowly to her head – it still hurt to move, her muscles were still sore – and her hair felt bushy and enormous.

“Yes, well, I’ve had bigger problems. This hurts like hell, you know? Even more then I remember it hurting when Bellatrix did it to me.”

Draco looked down at his hands, an expression she had never seen on his face took it over. It took a second for her to identify it because it looked so foreign on Draco’s face, on a Malfoy face, but she was surprised when she did recognize it. Remorse. It was remorse.

“I’m sorry, you know. For what happened to you there… at my house. For not… being able to help. I… sort of wanted to, but…”

“I know. You couldn’t. Not really.”

After a moment of silence, a more natural expression returned to his face.

“You, Granger, are a wuss. Complaining of pain while you lie her and are cared for.” He was mocking her, goading her.

“What do you know of how much this hurts?”

“I know.” He sneered. “You think old man Riddle was pleased when I failed to kill Dumbledore and Snape had to step in?” He leaned over to take some candy from her pile. “You’re not going to eat all of this, are you? You don’t want to lose your figure. It won’t go well with that hair.” He opened a chocolate frog and bit into it. She rolled her eyes as she smiled faintly at his teasing, but then she became serious again.

“He tortured you?”

“Of course,” he said matter-of-factly. “And I didn’t have all this comfort while convalescing. Wuss.” He bit the chocolate again and smiled.
Hermione looked horrified. Draco just shrugged and said “At least he didn’t kill me.”

“Do you… hate Snape for it? For interfering?”

“No. He got punished as well. And it got done. I wouldn’t have done it at all, and it would have been worse.”

A sudden pang of despair hit her chest as she imagined Snape being tortured. And he would have had to nurse himself, probably, all alone…

“And you had to just lie in pain for days?”

“Nooo, Granger, you softy. There were meetings and what not we would have to attend, and we could not show weakness, so… lie in pain.” He snorted. “Snape managed to slip me a potion and I got better. I was such an ass I almost didn’t take it and showed it to the Dark Lord instead. He wouldn’t have been pleased.” He opened another chocolate frog.

“That’s awful. All of it,” Hermione said suddenly, gravely.

“I didn’t mean to bring you down, Granger. I shouldn’t have said anything. I just never had anyone to talk to about it. You know Snape is not so chatty. And I thought that the thought of me in pain would cheer you.” He sneered. “Or have I grown on you, Granger?”

“Shut up, Draco,” she said smiling. “Weren’t you supposed to be in class?”

“Pffft. Who needs History of Magic anyway? I wanted to come by yesterday, but…”

“I thought I saw you! Why didn’t you come in?”

“Yeah, like I was going to consort with the likes of Potter,” he huffed. “You need to choose better friends, Granger. Present company included.” He grinned.

“Don’t say that.”

“Granger, it’s been real nice, but I have to go meet McGonagall. I have to do all the Head duties alone, thanks to you. You better get well soon.”

Draco smiled and walked off.

Tuesday was no different and just as slow as Monday. Visiting hours were over when classes ended, so she only saw her friends in the odd free period. She could now stand and walk quite well, though occasionally she would get dizzy. She wanted to leave, but it wasn’t until Wednesday afternoon Madam Pomfrey let her.

She was getting ready when Draco arrived.

“Here,” he said as he handed her a piece of parchment.

“What’s this?”

“Your potions essay. Snape gave them back today.”

She eagerly took it from his hand, wanting to see her grade. She was disappointed with the Exceeds Expectations she got. She had approached all aspects of the subject, more than what was
necessary even. She exhaled, frustrated.

“Does the man ever give out an Outstanding?”

“Don’t think so, no. Going?”

“Yes, thank Merlin.”

“Mr. Malfoy, good that you are here.” Madame Pomfrey said. “You can walk Miss Granger. She is still prone to some dizziness, so it’s best she doesn’t walk around alone.”

“Certainly, ma’am,” Malfoy said.

“Do you want to take my arm, Granger?” He sneered.

“No, I don’t think that will be necessary.”

“Let me at least fix your hair,” he said, and before she could answer, he waved his wand and her hair was straightened and she was sporting bangs, to hide some of the bruises that still covered her face. They were lighter, but not completely gone.

“How do you know how to do that?” She asked.

“I’ve bloody watched Mother do it millions of times.”

Malfoy walked her to the headmistress’ office. She had been asked to go there. She wondered if after everything she was still getting punished for breaking curfew. Or expelled? Draco asked if she wanted him to go in with her and she said no, sending him away, saying she could make it to the common room fine.

The gargoyle stepped aside for her, and she climbed the spiral staircase. Before she could knock on the door to the office, she heard an angry voice from inside.

“… she is a dimwitted fool. It’s the reason the girl has been getting detentions non-stop. Something has to be done. It is probably why she couldn’t defend herself out there.”

It was Snape. Was he talking about her? She couldn’t blame him. He was right, about her being defenseless. Look at her. She should have been able to fight off one bloody Death Eater. And she shouldn’t have been on the grounds so late… A little harsh to call her a dimwitted fool, though. But that was Snape. Acknowledging that did not make it hurt any less.

She knocked and tried to hide the hurt and embarrassment on her face before she walked in. Snape stood in a corner, by the window, very stiff and grave, holding his hands behind his back. The sight of him made her stomach flutter, and she averted her eyes quickly to the headmistress.

“Is it true, Miss Granger?”

“Professor?” She didn’t know what Professor McGonagall was talking about.

“Is Professor Gwendoline not teaching properly?”

“I… I’m not in any position to judge her teaching skills.”

“Of course you are. Tell me, as a student, do you feel like your knowledge is expanding on her subject?”
“Uhm… no. We do not practice any spells or learn anything… new. I find.” She looked up at Snape quickly. So he was talking about Gwendoline, not her. She suppressed a smile and a sigh of relief.

“Well something indeed has to be done, Severus. I will speak to Kingsley. He surely doesn’t need me to keep her here if she is doing such an abysmal job!”

Snape just nodded once.

“Are you feeling better, dear?” Professor McGonagall asked.

“Yes, Professor.” She held on to the back of the chair in front of her as dizziness struck her.

“Miss Granger?” The headmistress asked alarmed.

“I’m fine. Just some dizziness I have from time to time. It’s nothing, really.”

“Well you should go rest. Severus, would you walk her out? See that she does not fall on her way to her dormitory?”

“Certainly, headmistress.” He looked a bit put off as he walked up to her and waited for her to head for the door. She turned to it after taking a long look up at him. Before they were out the door, the portrait behind the headmistress’ chair spoke.

“Severus, I would like a word with you.”

“Perhaps some other time, Albus,” he drawled. “I am… otherwise engaged at the moment.”

He closed the door behind him as he lightly pushed her to go forward.

They walked side by side in silence. She wanted to speak, to hear him speak, but she didn’t know what to say. She was thinking of asking him for Occlumency lessons, because she could still feel that slimy git Yaxley inside her head and she never wanted to be vulnerable like that again. But she was nervous to. Gryffindor courage failed her.

The only interaction they had was when he held her by the upper arm when he noticed she was dizzy again. They bumped into Neville, and he started

“Mr. Longbottom, I trust you can escort your friend to your common room, yes?”

Neville was stunned for a moment, with Snape… and him being… polite.

“Ye..ye… yes, Professor.”

“Good. Then do.” He turned to leave.

“Thank you, Professor,” she managed to say to his back. He stopped and nodded once over his shoulder before continuing on his way.

On Thursday she returned to her classes. During potions, she was thinking again of working up the courage to ask Professor Snape for Occlumency lessons. She needed a lot of courage, after all that had happened between them and all she was feeling. How would he react? He gave her so many mixed signals… He was sweet with the ring and in saving her, but he had thrown her out of his office in what seemed to be disgust when she was half naked, after giving her an amazing orgasm, her first. And she, she felt real fondness for him now, she knew, not just lust. She didn’t want it to
get complicated. There would never be anything between them, he wouldn’t want it. He loved Lily Potter. She was a girl, inexperienced, not so pretty, nothing that could make him forget such a strong devotion. If she fell for him, she would only get hurt. She wondered if being alone with him again would be wise.

But she needed to learn Occlumency. She never again in her life wanted to feel as she did with that greasy, horrible man going through her thoughts. She still couldn’t forget it, she still didn’t feel completely right.

She was chopping herbs for her potion and became dizzy. So dizzy, she dropped her knife on the floor and Draco had to hold her.

“You Ok, Granger?” He whispered. The noise of the dropping knife caught Snape’s attention and he lifted his gaze from his quill and parchment and found Draco with his hands around Miss Granger’s shoulders.

“Yeah, fine. Just got a bit dizzy. I’m Ok now. Thanks.”

“I think I should chop those for you,” he said as he bent over to pick up her knife.

“No, it’s fine. Professor Snape might not like that.”

Draco snorted. “I’d like to see him try and stop me.”

Draco moved over to Hermione’s work station and chopped for her. She stood beside him and gripped the edges of the table as she was still steadying herself, and saw Professor Snape was now walking towards them.

“Draco, it’s fine, I can continue now.”

“What seems to be the matter here?” Snape was beside them before Draco could answer her. He looked at them from over his nose and with a raised brow. The rest of his features were impassive and mask-like as usual.

“Granger isn’t feeling too well, sir, so I thought I could help her at least with sharp instruments, so she would not have to go back to the hospital wing so soon.”

Hermione looked up at Snape, nervous, bracing herself for the scolding that certainly was to come. But he just nodded once at Draco and stole a glance at her bruised face before walking away.

He didn’t seem to be in a bad mood. She had to take this opportunity to ask him. She would, later today.
Hermione knocked on his office door and waited anxiously for what seemed like endless minutes. Would he accept to teach her? Would he gloat about how right he was, how she had no business breaking the rules and being outside? She had proved herself to be defenseless when it actually mattered.

She had gone to her dormitory before dinner and charmed her hair again, though she had done it that morning. She had kept a version of Draco’s idea from the previous day, charming bangs to hide her bruises. But there were so many, the effort was almost useless. Her cheek bones and nose had been set right, but the bruises, though much lighter, were still very apparent.

She heard him call “enter” from within and opened the door. He looked up, his face unchanging when he saw it was her, the same expressionless mask. He returned to his writing, correcting essays probably, and as he looked down to his desk he said

“Yes, Miss Granger?”

She took a deep breath. “I was wondering if I could speak to you for a moment, professor.”

“You already are,” he replied coldly, still not looking up.

How could he just sit there, scratching his quill on parchment like nothing had ever happened between them, like he never gave her the most incredible orgasm right there on that desk, like he hadn’t saved her life…

“Miss Granger, do you plan on just standing in the doorway or are you going to state your business?”

“Well yes, I wanted…”

“Come in and close the door.” Still he did not look up from his work. She did as he requested and stepped forward, but not too close to the desk.

“I was wondering, sir, if you would be willing to give me Occlumency lessons.”

He finally looked up, and placed his quill on the desk.

“Occlumency? Why do you wish for such a thing?”

“Because… when… when I was attacked, he… used Legilimency on me. It was awful, I felt, I still feel, horrible. To have someone so evil and disgusting inside my head… I just never want to be so vulnerable again.”

He intertwined his fingers over the desk and looked at her, considering all she said.

“Do you plan on breaking the rules and taking strolls on the grounds at night again, so you are vulnerable to be attacked, Miss Granger?”

She couldn’t even be mad. She was in the wrong.
“No sir. But unfortunately I won’t have the protection of these castle walls much longer. Will you help me or not, professor?”

He considered her a bit longer. She was beginning to feel a bit light-headed because she had been standing for too long, but she clutched the book on Occlumency she held, one she had taken from the library, merely as a shield, a support for her to be there, and stood waiting for his answer.

“And when do you wish to start these lessons?” He asked.

“At your earliest convenience, sir. Today even, if it were possible.” She couldn’t stand any longer, her dizziness was overpowering and she stretched out her hand and leaned on the chair before her.

“You are still debilitated” he said as he stood hurriedly. “Sit.”

“I’m all right, I…”

“Sit,” he said gravely. His eyes seemed angry as he stared into hers.

She obeyed. He turned to the shelves behind him and seemed to be looking for something. “I have endured the Cruciatus curse enough times to know you are not yet fully recovered, Miss Granger. If I were to enter your mind now, the results could be… worrisome. You would not endure it.”

Her heart seemed like it was being crushed. How many times had he been tortured? The things he had gone through… and never being appreciated for it, never being trusted. No one to help him. How awful it must have been. And Dumbledore… what kind of man would send him back, time and time again, knowing this? Send him to his death! Punish him cruelly for mistakes he had committed long ago and long regretted? The same man who would send kids to hunt horcruxes without proper guidance. But at least she hadn’t been alone. She had Harry. And Ron, most of the time.

He turned back with two phials, one with a bright purple liquid and the other with a thick, orange concoction.

“Take this,” he said holding up the purple potion, “and come back tomorrow, at eight. This,” he held up the orange goo, “is for you to apply on your bruises.” He placed both phials on his desk before her and sat back down on his own chair.

She picked up the phials with one hand, the ring he had restored for her on her index finger, he noticed, and safely tucked them in her robes. She stood slowly, testing to see if it was safe to, and turned to leave.

“Thank you, professor,” she said when she was halfway to the door. “For the potions and for accepting to teach me.” He said nothing and just stared at her, his face expressionless. “And for saving my life,” she finished, and turned to the door again.

Her hand was on the doorknob when she heard “I was merely paying a debt.”

She did not turn. Her heart broke with his words and tears came to her eyes. She took a deep breath to steady her voice and said

“Well thank you anyway. Even if you were just doing your job.”

She opened the door and left, restraining herself to not slam it behind her.
In the safety of the bathroom in the girls’ dormitory, she cried. Why did he have to be so harsh? She had privacy because none of the girls were there yet. But she needed her sleep. She wouldn’t shed another tear for that man and would go to sleep so she could recover and make good use of her first lesson. The quicker she learned, the better. She wouldn’t have to burden him for long. She forced her tears to stop, and started to gently apply the concoction on her bruises. They were really not attractive, she saw in the mirror. The concoction made her skin tingle, and in a matter of minutes, she could see the bruises slowly fade. She had gotten all of them, all but for the ones around her left eye, when she felt dizzy and held on to the sink. The phial dropped into it and broke, the concoction washing down the drain. But it was ok. She looked much better. What was one black eye when you’ve had your whole face almost unrecognizable? She took the other potion and dragged herself to bed.

On Friday she knocked on his door again, at eight o’clock as requested. She was nervous about the lessons. What Harry had reported from his lessons and the confusing feelings she had for Professor Snape, along with his mixed signals, all clashing in her mind and making it impossible for her to make a satisfying prediction of what this would be like. Of what she had gotten herself into. Harry’s account was probably the more accurate. It was Snape, for Merlin’s sake! She remembered his words from the previous night… he was merely paying a debt. So hurtful. An ass. That is what he was. The other feelings churning in her were only hope. For some inexplicable reason she had developed a soft spot for him and hoped he would be kind to her, see her differently because of what they had shared. It wasn’t even proper sex, Hermione. You fool. But as her hand lifted to rap on his door again, she saw the ring he had mended for her for no reason. She remembered how, in spite of what he had said last night, he had thanked her for saving his life. He had helped her with the potion for her parents and had cared enough to ask if it had worked. He saved her and held her and comforted her while she suffered. And he did give her the potions last night… They had made her feel so much better, like herself again. He could be a decent human being. She remembered his smile, the only time she had seen it. His deep, soul rapturing kiss. His clever, clever fingers. Her knees became weak for a moment. Expect nothing, Hermione.

He opened the door and immediately cleared the way for her to pass. Again his hair was silky and soft, and he smelled nice. She walked inside and awaited further instructions as he closed the door. In front of his desk, there were two chairs facing one another. The fire was not lit, and the room was chilly as always. She held herself and shivered, but as soon as she did, he flicked his wand at the hearth, lighting it. She wanted to thank him but didn’t. She had thanked him yesterday and he had only made her cry.

“Have a seat, Miss Granger.” He pointed to the chair with its back to the stone wall with the door. She sat. “Did you take the potion?”

“I did sir, yes.”

“And how do you feel?”

“Much better. Like myself again. Another one of your creations?”

He simply nodded.

“It’s really good.”

“And you didn’t find the other one good enough to apply to your bruises?” He raised an
eyebrow. Her hair was charmed as it usually had been before, in wide smooth locks of curls, so he could see the bruise that marked her face around her left eye and down her cheek a bit.

“Oh! Right.” She touched her fingers to the bruise. “I did apply it, but got a little dizzy and clumsy, so I had a spill… There wasn’t enough left for that portion.”

He turned swiftly from the back of the chair opposite her, on which he had been leaning, and went to the same shelf from where he had gotten the potions the previous night. He sat before her with a jar of the orange goo in his left hand as he dipped his right thumb in it. He then used his other fingers, which were clean, to push her hair back from her face, and his thumb caressed her cheek, spreading the concoction. She closed her eyes and felt her skin tingle, but she was sure it was not due to the potion only. *Expect nothing, Hermione.*

He closed the jar and banished it back to its corner of the shelf without getting up. Then, with a wave of his wand, he cleaned his fingers.

“Uhm, thank you.” Her throat was dry because of her nerves.

“I take it Mr. Potter has… told tales of how these lessons go?”

“Uhm, yes, he has reported his experiences.”

He rolled his eyes. “It won’t be so fretful if you are more interested and applied than he was.”

She just nodded. She too thought Harry hadn’t tried nearly enough, though he still blamed Professor Snape for being awful for no good reason.

“I will enter your thoughts and you will try to block me by whatever means you can think of.” She nodded again. The book she had checked out of the library hadn’t been very informative on the actual techniques, so she had nothing to do but try.

“*Legilimens*” and in an instant she could feel him inside her head. He saw her parents, her first birthdays, days she had spent with them at the park. She was in no hurry to try and push him out because he felt good. It was nothing like Harry had said, nothing like Yaxley had been. His presence was actually soothing, cleansing even, repairing the harm Yaxley had done.

He roamed through the deaths she had witnessed of friends in the war, and even so, it wasn’t horrible. He respected her pain, did not laugh at it, and she suddenly wished she could share so much with him… He was roaming freely and found the night he had saved her, her despair at being attacked…. A bit of fondness for him. He pulled out of her mind.

“Miss Granger, were you planning on trying to repel me soon?”

“I’m… I’m sorry. It’s just… it didn’t feel awful with you doing it and I…”

“Yes, well, not all *Legilimens* will tear through your thoughts. You have to repel them either way. Would you rather I was… less delicate?” He raised a brow.

“No! No. I’ll try this time.”

His deep obsidian eyes pierced hers again. “*Legilimens.*”

He became curious to know what she thought of him, truly, and actively searched for himself in her mind. He couldn’t miss this opportunity. He found the memory of her stealing from his stores…. He already knew that. Then there was one of her setting his robes on fire, her first year,
while he tried to save her ungrateful little friend. Before she could try anything, he pulled out and she was looking at present day Snape in his office, in front of her, his eyes narrowed and his lips pursed.

“Care to explain, Miss Granger?”

She was blushing furiously red.

“I… I thought you were the one hexing Harry’s broom, so I…”

“Of course you did.” He looked disappointed and hurt, but only for a fraction of a second. His blank mask was successfully restored in a blink of an eye.

“Shall we try again?” He asked, more coldly than before. “Legimensor!” He continued with no further warning.

She willingly offered up memories of how she had always defended him to the boys, who always suspected him of something or other. But not her. She didn’t want him thinking she was like everyone else, always suspicious of him, based only on one ill-advised moment. After her first year, she always trusted he was doing what was right. She corrected them every time they called him Snape: Professor Snape. Even after their sixth year, when Harry would call him a murderer, though she did mourn and miss Dumbledore, something didn’t quite sit right with her about it. She always thought there must be some other explanation.

He was sitting before her again. He didn’t look as grave as moments before, but of course he would not show any other emotion.

“Miss Granger, do try to repel me this time. Legimensor.”

He, curious still, and looking for deeper, stronger emotions that would make her want to push him out, sought out the Weasley boy in her mind. He had seen him talking to her at breakfast the morning of her attack, a week past. Something had risen inside him and now he wanted to know where they stood. Why did it matter to him? No, he just wanted to teach her, force her to push him out of her mind.

He saw flashes of Victor Krum with his lips on hers. She was excited, it was her first kiss. His hands wandered a bit but she soon pushed him away and Ronald Weasley came into the mist the Krum memory had left. She felt more excitement with him, she had waited for him for long. But soon the excitement was gone and there was only a wait, a longing for it to come back. And it never did. Then there was anger and hurt, the awful words he had said to her… He vanished and in the mist, Snape saw himself entangled with her in a deep kiss, the rush of emotion that overpowered her unlike anything she had ever felt… he was pushed out of her mind and now could only feel her hand around his wrist and how it burned where she touched him.

“Fuck!” he let slip from his lips as he pulled his arm away from her.

“Oh my God! I’m sorry, professor, I didn’t…”

“It’s fine,” he said as he pulled up his sleeves to better assess the damage. She had used a burning spell on him. His skin was raw and red in the shape of her palms. He held his wand on top of it and murmured something and his skin was as if it had been healing for days already, almost back to normal. He then stood to look for something on his shelves.

“I didn’t mean to, I was just trying…”

“Yes, like I told you to. It was effective.”
He rubbed something on his arm and the skin was normal within minutes. He sat back down analyzing his forearm, and seemed rather disappointed when his eyes washed over the Dark Mark, faded and lightly scarred.

“Now, ideally you must not even allow me into your mind. You are taking too long to act. Try to block my entrance, and see that you do not kill me in the process. *Legilimens.*”

There was some small resistance, but he was able to break through it. And there he was, watching the night when he made her come so gloriously. Her body contorting with his every touch. Her lips emitting such sweet, sweet sounds. He could feel her lust, her desire, her excitement towards him and he couldn’t take it anymore. He pulled out of her thoughts.

She was embarrassed, but not so much that she could not look at him. He was there that night, he had been part of it too. She very much wished she was a Legilimens so she could see what he was thinking that night.

“Miss Granger, you must forget about that. It never should have happened,” he said, not unkindly.

But she became angry and hurt nonetheless.

“Yes, of course, because the big-toothed, bushy-haired annoying know-it-all isn’t up to the potion master’s standards. How could he have done such a disgusting thing, right?” she retorted, holding back the tears.

Was she insane? She thought she wasn’t good looking enough for him? Did she have eyes? Had she seen him? Merlin be his witness, he wished nothing better than to fuck her right there, see her body reacting so beautifully to his touch, her moaning under him like no one had ever before, with such openness and sincerity, not quite merely just to fuck and get off, like it didn’t make a difference who was fucking her as long as he had a dick. Not at all to manipulate, seduce in exchange of something. His dick had stirred just seeing it in her memory. It had always been different for him. He had had one or two silly girls fall for him back in his day, but they always fell back to their senses after knowing one fifth of who he really was. She had seen quite a bit of him, even if he did not mean to show it, enough for her to not even be there, yet there she was. But she would run one day, they always did. And she was his student. It was wrong. Very wrong. So much younger than him, though overage. But too young. No.

“Do not make this about your insecurities, Miss Granger! You are my student, I am your teacher. Perhaps you should leave.”

“No. I need the lessons. I need to learn Occlumency!”

“It was a mistake for me to accept teaching you in the first place.” He snarled.

“Well then please refer me to another Occlumens that can teach me and I’ll be on my way,” she snapped back.

He pinched the bridge of his nose and took a deep breath. He actually enjoyed her feistiness. Fool.

“I don’t know why you are so worked up about this. You are the one entering my thoughts, I should be the one embarrassed and want to leave. But I’m still here, willing. I don’t know why you care so much.” She had her legs and arms crossed.

“You’re right. I don’t.” *I shouldn’t.*
“Then please, let’s continue, sir. I want to learn.”

“Fine,” he said, he did not know why. “Legimens,” he continued. She was barely ready. He met some resistance but once again pierced through it with no difficulty. And he, without searching for anything, was faced with the image of her in her four-poster bed, the curtains shut and warded, her hands tentatively roaming her body. At first she was embarrassed and thought of not going through with it. But then she thought of him, his voice whispering relax in her ear and so she did. Though her surroundings were warded, she bit the corner of her sheets for good measure as her hand dipped into her pajama bottom and she started to breathe heavily. She thought of his kisses as her fingers mimicked what his had done, and a muffled moan could be heard. Her hand moved with more vigor as she thought of what he could make her feel if he were to touch her whole body, to invade her with his cock. It had been hard, she had felt it, and she was proud of herself because he had gotten hard with her. She thought of him, only him, and she grew more and more excited. It was the only thing that got her there. She wasn’t as excited as she had been with him touching her, it wasn’t quite the same, but it was release. She moaned more and louder into her sheets as her hands moved vigorously in her knickers, the other now lifting her shirt and teasing her hard nipple as she thought of his lips on it. She was going to come, and he wanted to watch, he loved the sight of it, but she finally managed to push him out of her thoughts.

Fuck fuck fuck fuck! Merlin’s balls, how mortifying. Fuck! She covered her face with her hands, quickly. Hermione, what are you going to do now? You need these lessons, you need to learn. Imagine how much worse it would be if an evil creep like Yaxley found such things in your mind? You’ll have to power through. Just open your eyes and stare him in the face and ask him when the next lesson can be. But you were thinking of him while touching yourself, he saw it. Uuuuhg, that makes it soooo much worse. Be brave! The Gryffindor that you are. Pretend like it’s nothing, look at him. The longer you take, the more power he has, and he’ll smirk at you forever, and you’ll know why.

She could feel her cheeks burning as if she had cast a burning charm on herself. But she took her hands down from her face quickly, determined to stare at him and continue as if nothing had happened. But as soon as her face was free of her hands, she hadn’t even opened her eyes yet, she felt his lips meet hers.

Chapter End Notes

Will there finally be full-on smut? Will Snape snap out of it and throw her out? Will Hermione regret everything and stop the kiss? Find out next time.

Hahaha.
Chapter 17

Chapter Notes

Another update already? Yes. So you don't think I'm so evil. And because Mondays are always long and hard...

(no pun intended).

See the end of the chapter for more notes

His tongue forced its entry into her mouth and it was the sweetest invasion. She was very soon kissing him back with the same intensity and yearning. Her hands sank into his soft hair and pulled him closer to taste her hungry kisses and he had his hands on her behind, pulling her onto his lap. As she straddled him, she felt his cock getting hard and her body quickened, but she broke the kiss. He looked at a loss for a bit longer than a second before he managed to compose himself.

“If you are going to scream at me at any given moment for me to get out, we better stop this right now,” she said, looking into his deep dark eyes and clinging to his neck.

“I won’t” he said, craving her lips and latching onto them.

Fuck. She wanted him, and he wanted this. He deserved to have some fun. Life was too bloody short. He knew that firsthand. Hell, even she had almost died a week ago. Why the fuck not give into this? Because she’s your fucking student, that’s why. No, fuck it. I don’t even like this blasted job anyway.

He broke for air and went for her neck. Fuck she was soft. And warm. Her skin smelled flowery and like books, her hair sweet, like coconut.

“You promise?” She whimpered in his ear and then nipped his earlobe.

“Yes,” he heard himself say. Merlin save him, he hadn’t even been inside her and he was already making promises.

She left a trail of kisses along his jawline and wanted his lips again, but he didn’t allow her close to them. No, better not. So I can think clearly. She tried for it again and he held her hair at the nape of her neck and pulled her head back slightly. She bit her lip as she felt her sex tighten and excitement ooze from her.

“Miss Granger, listen to me. This does not mean we are in any kind of relationship. Do you understand?”

She nodded. He let go of her hair and she was almost sorry he did. She leaned in for his lips and he dodged her and kissed her neck. She breathed heavily in his ear as he nibbled on hers.

“This does not change anything in classes. You will treat me with respect.” He kissed her neck again.

“Yes sir,” she breathed into his ear as she started to roll her hips on top of him, seeking some friction. Again she kissed his jawline, his chin and hoped to reach his lips, but he moved them to the
“You will not get any preferential treatment.”

“I wouldn’t expect it.”

“NO one is to know of this.”

“Of course.”

He nipped her earlobe and lowered his hands to grab her ass, under her skirt, as she rocked her hips on top of him more vigorously. His hard dick twitched.

“Eager kitty, aren’t you?” He smirked into her neck, playfully mocking her.

“May I make one request, sir?”

“What?” He pulled back his head to look at her. What now? He knew this was a mistake.

“Please kiss me.” Her eyes were so open and pleading. Fuck, she had seen through him.

“I thought I was,” he smirked, trying to be clever.

“My lips,” she said, kissing his chin. “Let me kiss you.” She kissed the corner of his lips.

“Please.” Her lips were on his, sucking his lower lip, begging for entry.

He couldn’t take it, and his tongue was ravishing her mouth in a heartbeat. So soft. So sweet. Bloody hell, this kiss will be my undoing.

He grabbed her buttocks and pulled her closer, and she could now feel the full length of his hard cock trapped in his trousers against the cotton of her knickers. She moaned into his mouth and tightened her grip on his hair. She could feel she was so wet.

Oh gods, this was it. She was going to lose her virginity here, in his office, surrounded by jars with weird, disgusting things inside them. Who gives a damn as long as his cock is inside you?

He stood and lifted her with him, her legs wrapped around him. He pushed her against the shelves beside his desk as he still kissed her, and touched a hand to something she did not see, which made the wall of shelves behind her open like a door. He carried her inside and sat her down on a soft gray sofa. She analyzed the room as he turned to ward the entrance again. It was a sitting room. From where she sat, she could see the whole of it. Facing the sofa were two matching chairs, a rug and a coffee table in the middle of the setting. Half of the wall far ahead consisted of a large window which seemed to look into the Black Lake. There was a small dining table on that end of the room, a cabinet beside the window and bookcases on the left wall. The wall to the right had a fireplace and another door. Everything was tidy and clean.

When he turned to her, she had already taken off her robes, shoes and her school tie, and had opened a few buttons on her shirt, showing some cleavage. Still, she looked embarrassed and nervous. She wet her lips and smiled at him, waiting. Yes, he would have her. He would explore her body and find every single spot that made her quiver, made her yearn for him. He would make her come magnificently and she would never forget him, her first. Even when she moved on, no matter how many men she fancied and seduced, she would touch herself in the late of night and think of him still. He would have that at least. And he needed to get her out of that uniform, so he wouldn’t be reminded of what exactly it was he was doing. But first, she needed to relax.
“Drink?” He asked and did not wait for a reply before heading to the cabinet in which his liquor sat. He poured them both a glass of firewhisky and sipped his as he walked to her and handed her the glass. He sat beside her as she sipped and coughed. *Obviously not accustomed to drinking.* He took a gulp of his drink and put it down on the coffee table, reaching for hers next to her lips and setting it down next to his. She went straight for his lips. His finger traced the buttons on her shirt as she hungrily tasted his lips and they popped open. She fried herself from his lips and looked at him in amazement and had time for nothing more as he pushed the shirt off her shoulders and leaned down to kiss her cleavage. She whimpered and smiled, and a hand went to his head, to encourage him. Even as he kissed over her pink cotton bra, her nipples hardened and her lower belly tightened. She spread her legs. She wanted to feel him, any part of him, *every* part of him on her, on her clit, rubbing. *Friction.* She needed friction. He smirked against her breasts and slid his hand up her thigh, slowly caressing it as his lips traveled up to the flesh between her neck and shoulders, where he remembered she very much enjoyed being kissed. She whimpered in his ear and moved her hips, lifting it, hoping his hand would find her heat faster. She was so wet she could feel her knickers were damp.

“Tut tut. Don’t be an impatient kitty,” he smirked again and she kissed his lips to wipe the smirk off. Her hands pulled at his frockcoat and she undid some buttons, enough so she could reach the skin of his neck. She kissed his scar, the scar that bloody snake left, and he growled as he pulled away. That didn’t scare her, and she leaned in for it again after looking him in the eyes and smiling, and she licked it, licked him all the way to his earlobe, which she nipped. She understood his reservations about the scar. She had her own about hers. So much so, that they were glamoured. But if anyone would understand and not shy away, it would be him, no?

She undid some more of his buttons as she nipped his ear, but she was getting impatient. His hand still caressed her thighs as he kissed her collarbone and she whispered

“Take this off. Please,” pulling on his frockcoat.

He looked at her warily but traced his hand over the coat, casting a seam splitting spell. The shirt underneath she could deal with. She unbuttoned it swiftly, and as she was pushing it off his shoulders, he stopped caressing her for a moment. He was muscular and lean. Fucking hot. The wonders a frockcoat could conceal. His chest and stomach had many scars, white and thin, that seemed like small cuts… or maybe whip marks. The scar the snake had left descended from his neck and dipped a bit onto his chest. His upper right arm had a burn scar, and of course, she could now see the Dark Mark and the scar that traced it in its entirety. Something flashed in his eyes as he waited for her to react. Insecurity laced with a bit of shame. Could he really believe she would be repelled by a few scars?

She just smiled and took her hand to his cheek, pulling herself closer for a kiss. She deepened it as she pulled the rest of her body onto him, straddling him on his sofa, rolling her lips and craving the friction of the wool of his trousers as his hands slid up her thighs to her buttocks. She kissed his neck, his scar again and he whispered in her ear with his silky voice

“Are you sure you want to do this, Miss Granger?”

That was not even fair to ask at this point. With that voice. And his warm chest against her half naked body. Feeling and craving his hard cock. Like she would be able to say no…

“Yes. Please, sir.”

He smiled as he pulled down the zipper on the back of her skirt.

“Such a polite kitty.”
He leaned down to kiss her breasts and she purred, she actually purred in his ear. Fuck, she would be the end of him. She fiddled with the buttons on his trousers and could finally stick her hand in his pants. She caressed his stiff cock over his boxers and he grunted against her breasts. She then pulled it out and gave it a tentative stroke, afraid she would do it wrongly. It was big. So big. Not that she had much to compare it to, but she had heard the girls talking during her sixth year, and what little had already passed of this year. She would pretend to be reading, to not be interested in such things and be above it all as they shared their experiences and laughed, but what she was really doing was listening intently, trying to learn something and feeling slightly embarrassed that she had nothing to share.

She tried caressing his cock again, remembering what the girls had described and what little she had managed to do on Ron before he came over her jeans, and Snape grunted as he palmed her breast with one hand and caressed her thigh with the other. She wished she could know for sure if that meant he liked it. Once again she stroked his rock hard dick, massaging the tip with her thumb and he let out a low groan. She wet her lips looking at his huge hard-on and could feel her pussy clench.

He very much liked the hunger in her eyes as she admired his cock. He took her chin with his index finger and thumb

“Bedroom”, he growled. She felt bold, reassured by his look and parted her lips, taking his thumb into her mouth and sucking on it as she stroked him again. He grunted and she stood, letting her skirt fall to the floor. She stepped out of them and walked towards the door to which he pointed with a smile on her lips.

It was as tidy as the sitting room. His bed, with dark green covers, faced the wall that was entirely a window to the lake, to its depths. Since it was dark out, nothing could be seen beyond it. A few sconces were lit, leaving the room dimly – and perhaps even a bit romantically – lit. He had an armoire next to the door, a chest of drawers, and an armchair facing the window. She imagined it would be a pleasant place to read.

The fireplace lit suddenly and she felt as he embraced her from behind, an arm around her under her breasts, his dick pressing against the small of her back. She reached behind her for it, and it was once again covered by his boxers. She pulled the boxers down as much as she could, and stroked his cock again.

“Why are you not yet on your back on my bed?” He whispered as he kissed her neck, his free hand lowering the strap of her bra. “With your legs spread wide so I can make you come like you never have before?”

Sweet Circe, he was crass, but it was hot as hell. He undid her bra and threw it to the floor, then nudged her towards the bed. She moved eagerly, and before they reached it, he twirled her around to face him, and she fell with her back to the bed. He leaned down on top of her and kissed her lips before trailing his way down to her now bare breasts with his tongue.

He circled a nipple with his tongue and she arched her back to push herself closer against him. He smirked and placed his whole mouth on it, sucking it, making it wet with his saliva. Making her even wetter, as her nipples had a direct line to her core, she discovered.

Her breasts were perfection. Soft, like every part of her. Small. A perfect fit, whole in his hands and in his mouth. His lips continued their deed on one breast as his hand palmed the other. She whimpered desperately and ran her fingers through his hair, as she arched her back, asking for more.

He stopped and kneeled beside her on the bed, his hand trailing down from her breast to her waist, reaching the waistband of her knickers. He let his fingers trace it for a moment before pulling it down slowly, driving her insane. She was blushing, a mix of embarrassment and excitement. There
was a huge damp spot on the crotch of her knickers.

“So wet, Miss Granger,” he remarked with a smile as he took her knickers off her feet and analyzed it, her cheeks burning red now with more embarrassment than excitement. He placed himself between her legs and lifted them to his shoulders to slowly pull her socks off. He had her folds in view, her pink, soaking wet, virginal folds. Fuck, he wanted to burry himself inside them so badly. *No. Make her come first.* As he pulled off her socks, he grazed his nails on her legs and she quickened, squirmed beautifully on his bed. She looked very embarrassed, yet so willing. She was able to smell her own excitement and wondered if he could too. That embarrassed her more. But her yearning for him trumped her embarrassment.

He spread her legs around him and leaned over her to kiss her lips. His hands slipped in between her legs and teased her tender flesh, making her moan into his mouth. He parted her slit and found her clit, making her moan louder, and then bite her lip. Her embarrassment dissipated and she spread her legs wider, providing him more access.

“Is this what you wanted, Miss Granger?”

She nodded. “So much.” Her eyes were shut and she took very short breaths.

His fingers rubbed her, up and down, and she bit her lower lip again. Up and down, and she moaned so sweetly. He lowered his fingers to her entrance and wet them in the pool of her arousal, spreading it around her labia, only to return to her clit. Around in circles, up and down, and she gasped and moaned and clung to his neck. She arched her back and moaned louder, rocking her hips against his fingers, seeking even more friction as he continued his ministrations, and his dick twitched. He felt the absolute need to suck on her tits again, so he did. As his tongue circled her nipple, his fingers teased her bud of nerves, up and down, faster and faster. He caught her nipple in between his teeth as he could feel her breathing growing more rapid. She was about to come, he could feel it. She was gripping the sheets around her, the edge of the pillow under her head. His lips abandoned her breasts and he sat back to watch, still rubbing her.

She felt wonderful. So much pressure building inside her. More than when he first did this, so much more than when she did it herself. Sweet Circe, his hand felt like heaven, his lips on her breasts, anywhere on her skin. And it felt marvelous to give up control, not have to predict what would happen, plan everything out, know what to do. He knew, he knew, and she needed just to enjoy it. She couldn’t process thoughts any longer, just feel, her breathing loud in her ears, his fingers, wonderful, clever fingers. His lips left her breasts and her hands automatically came to them, caressing, teasing, pinching.

Her breathing was labored, such a beautiful sight. Her chest going up and down, her moaning loud, rocking her hips against his fingers… and with a long, loud breath her body tensed up and she spasmed on his sheets, moaning, screaming, gripping his sheets, her embarrassment having abandoned her, and then she relaxed. Watching her come made him harder, if that was even possible, and the feeling of her juices on his fingers was absolutely maddening.

When she recovered her senses, she reached for his cock and caressed it over his black boxers. *Why the fuck is he still wearing that?* She pulled them down to free him as he kissed her collarbone. She managed to give it two pumps before he growled and pinned her hand over her head.

“Am I doing something wrong?” She asked softly.

“Not at all. If you continue, I’ll shoot off on your leg like a fucking schoolboy.”
“Oh,” she smiled. She took her other hand to him and stroked his cock again. “I don’t mind.”

“I mind,” he growled as he pinned her other hand over her head. “If you wanted this experience with a schoolboy, you wouldn’t be here.”

She just wanted to make him come. To do for him what he had done for her. She honestly didn’t mind if he came on her leg at that point. She was there for him now, not his experience. But she couldn’t say that. No.

“But it’s your turn now,” she smiled up at him.

“Yes, and I will come inside you,” he smirked. He leaned down to kiss her neck, then took his lips to her ear and whispered “Don’t you want to know how it feels to have a cock inside you?”

His voice… just his voice could do things to her. She whimpered as her whole body quaked. He smirked.

“Don’t you want to know how it feels to have my cock inside you?”

Arousal grew inside her again. *Sweet Circe, what a man.* “Yes! Please.” Her fingers sunk into his waist, pulling him closer and she purred in his ear again. *She will certainly be the end of me.*

He pressed the tip of his cock to her clit and she rolled her head back and let out a moan that was fucking music to his ears. He then pushed himself lightly to her entrance and she gasped and held her breath, clunging to his neck.

“Tell me if this hurts, kitten.”

She nodded and he slowly plunged himself inside her. She was so wet and slick he slipped in with ease. As he did, he heard an “Oh fuck yes,” escape his lips. Damn it. It had been too long. He had to control himself.

She breathed more easily and smiled. She was doing that to him, making him feel that way. Making him lose control. That alone was enough to make her feel so good. She felt full, but she somehow knew that he had not sunken himself whole inside of her, to the hilt. Still, it felt so fucking wonderful. Maybe it was best, maybe she could not handle all of him. He was so fucking big. He moved slowly and she moved in turn to accommodate him. The small discomfort she had felt was quickly giving room to arousal. He filled her up, at least some portion of him did, and it was sensational.

She was so warm, so tight. Fuck, it’d been too long since he’d felt this sort of heat. So long he could come with one thrust. *No. Make her come again. Such a wonderful sight. Make her never forget this.*

He pulled out, and in again, and she rolled her head back. Out… and in, and she gave a sweet drawn out moan, then bit her lip. Delicious. He could hardly keep himself together.

She saw the pleasure on his face, felt it in his grunts as he took her. Out… and in, and he struggled to keep on his mask, keep his guard up. He was failing. She could see it. She was making Severus Snape come undone, a sight not many people must have seen. She felt proud, aroused.

His lips met her neck again, that sweet spot that made her moan.

“Are you enjoying yourself, Miss Granger?” he whispered in her ear and excitement tightened in her core. He groaned when he felt it.
“Fuck yes,” she echoed his words and smiled, pressing her lips to his, plunging her tongue in his mouth. Her hands were in his hair. She seemed to like it, wasn’t disgusted by it. He had tried so many things, but it always became greasy, even if he was not around potion fumes. The fumes only made it worse. But she liked it. She grabbed it, pulled on it lightly, disheveled it.

“Do you want to come again, kitten?” He looked her in her eyes as he moved slowly inside her and it was just him, no masks, no barriers, no acts. She smiled.

“Yes please,” she panted.

“Then come.” His lips were now next to her ear and his hand embedded in her hair. “Come, kitten. You are so close, I can feel it.”

It was true. Her fingertips sank into his back as she screamed and squirmed underneath him, her core clamping on his cock as he held control and continued to move inside her, triggering more waves of pleasure. One, two more thrusts after she had come down from her high and he came as well.

He rolled off her and it wasn’t long before she heard “You should go.”

But she just laughed, looking up at his ceiling, relishing on this most delicious experience. She would not let him ruin it now.

“You have some mood swings, you know?” She sniggered.

“Miss Granger…”

“I know, I know, I’m going,” she said as she got up and looked around the floor for her knickers. Her bra she spotted by the door.

“Miss Granger…”

“Let me guess, I should never come back?”

“Stop interrupting me, you insolent girl! I am not throwing you out. But you will be missed in your dormitory. Chatty as you are, you must have told your friends about your lessons. They know where you are and will be waiting to hear how awful I surely must have been.”

She smiled and when she looked back, he was already on his feet, in silk black pajama bottoms, summoning a matching robe from his armoire.

“I will be telling no such tales, sir,” she smirked.

“Well I certainly hope you will be telling no tales at all.”

She smiled and moved to his sitting room to collect the rest of her clothes.

“When can I come back?” She asked and he raised an eyebrow. “For Occlumency lessons,” she completed rolling her eyes. “I still need those.”

“Don’t roll your eyes at me. Five points from Gryffindor.”

So, Professor Snape was back.
“Your next lesson is on Sunday, same time.”

“Yes, sir.” She finished getting dressed and didn’t quite look at him. She didn’t want Professor Snape right now, she wanted the man she had seen today. But she needed to separate them both in her mind.

He was going through his cabinet by the window and came back with two phials.

“Do you need anything?”

She looked puzzled.

“Are you sore?”

“Oh no, I’m fine.”

“Take this anyway. For if you become sore. And a contraceptive.”

“I definitely don’t need the contraceptive,” she said, taking only the first bottle he offered. He raised an eyebrow. “I took one at the beginning of term with Madam Pomfrey… it will last all year,” she explained. He smirked. He trusted that contraceptive. He brewed everything in the infirmary.

She was about to leave and stopped to ask

“Do I drink this or apply it? If I get sore?”

He smiled, an actual smile like the one she had seen while they were brewing that other day. So fucking charming. This wasn’t Professor Snape.

“You drink it. But feel free to apply pressure on the area at any time. I would love to find those memories in the corners of your mind during our lessons.” He smirked.

She blushed red as he opened the way to his office for her to leave.

Such a complicated man…

Chapter End Notes

I very much hope I was able to make that worth the wait. And let the smutfest begin!
Hermione walked back to Gryffindor Tower smiling, feeling so good about herself it was as if she was floating on air. And him… his hands, his lips, his body against hers… his silky smooth voice saying such naughty, delicious things to her… just thinking about it made goose pimples run down her body. She wanted him again. Oh fuck. Would he want to have sex with her again? He certainly had enjoyed it, she was sure. She smiled when she remembered his face as he slipped inside her, the words “fuck yes” escaping his lips. Oh damn, he made her feel so good. But he was clear before they started that it didn’t mean they were in a relationship or that he owed her anything. Maybe he would think she was clingy if she asked for more. She would have to play it cool. It was alright. She had already gotten what she wanted. She had amazing sex with a real man and was no longer a virgin. She felt more like a woman already. If he didn’t want any more of it, she could satisfy herself now, and eventually she would find another man who could spike her interest and desire as he had, and who would make her feel like he had. Expect nothing, Hermione. He’s your professor. He’s only teaching you Occlumency because you need it. You cannot be vulnerable like you were when you got attacked ever again. You’ll just have classes with him and lessons and everything will be back to normal eventually. He’s just your obnoxious, rude – misunderstood – bat from the dungeons, - smart, sexy when his guard is down, hot – greasy professor. You don’t want him anymore, it’s fine. You got what you wanted. She told herself that, but her stomach churned at the thought of Sunday evening.

When she stepped through the portrait hole, it was just as Professor Snape had foreseen, just as how she herself had known deep down it would be. Harry and Ginny were waiting for her and wanted to know how it had been. Even Ron was sitting at a distance, pretending he didn’t care but he was hearing every word.

“Isn’t it awful?” Harry asked.

“I didn’t think so…” Hermione answered. “In fact, compared to Yaxley, it was really nice to have him inside my head.” Inside me. She tried hard to hold her face straight and not smile.

“And he didn’t harass you for not getting it right?”

“Of course, a bit… but I really don’t even care, it’s just how he is. And towards the end of the lesson I was already managing to push him out after a moment or two.”

“And you didn’t feel like throwing up or just awful in general?”

“I feel fine.” Wonderful.

“Something’s not right…”

“Honestly Harry, maybe you had a harder time because Voldemort was in your mind as well, or maybe it’s because you already went to the lesson with prejudice against Professor Snape, but I thought it was a good lesson. He’s a good teacher, if you give him a chance and hear him out.”

“But…”

“Didn’t you yourself say you learned more from the Half Blood Prince’s book, Professor Snape’s book, than you had ever before? Because you didn’t know it was his and therefore accepted what it said. You see?”

Harry was quiet because he knew Hermione had a point, but he still looked rather annoyed.
Ginny rolled her eyes at him and took up the questioning.

“So, how did you push him out? Did Snape teach you how?”

“No, not yet. He just told me to try however I could and eventually I did it.”

“How?” Ginny seemed very interested.

“I guess… I guess I was embarrassed and just shut him out because of it. I even burned him by accident once, I didn’t even say or think an incantation for it.”

Harry seemed to take an interest again and even Ron shifted in his seat, with his back to them.

“Wow! And did he go completely berserk on you?” Ginny asked.

“No, not really. He had said for me to push him out however I could, so…” Hermione shrugged.

She was becoming very uncomfortable with all this questioning and how much they still thought so very badly of Professor Snape, even with all they knew first hand.

“Say… what did he find in there that made you so embarrassed?” Ginny asked smiling as she tapped her index finger on Hermione’s temple.

Hermione grew flushed, her cheeks so very crimson due to both annoyance and embarrassment.

“Just private memories, all right?” She got up and climbed the stairs to the girl’s dormitory.

As she got ready for bed, she tried to calm down. She had become annoyed by their questions and demeanor towards Professor Snape and had almost forgotten all the wonderful things she had experienced that evening. But as she undressed, she remembered his hands undressing her. His smell was still on her clothes, on her skin. She almost didn’t want to bathe so the smell wouldn’t wash off her. She smiled and laid on her four-poster, shutting the curtains so that Ginny would think she was asleep already and not bother her when she finally came up. But she barely slept, reliving and replaying every moment of the experience in her mind.

Snape lay awake in his bed as well. He had picked out a book to read but had no concentration to do so. Her smell was still on his sheets. How fucking fantastic she was. He had never felt quite as good as he had when with her. In her warm, tight center. So fucking delicious. No, stop it. You only feel like that because it had been too long since you’d been with a woman. There was no fucking time, all with being a double agent and working for two megalomaniacs, fearing for his life yet knowing it would eventually be requested of him, taken from him…. Yes, that was all. It had been too long.

And there is the fact she was a virgin… But you have had virgins before… not many but still… but they weren’t like her. And you yourself weren’t so experienced and able to leave a lasting impression the other times. Yes, that he did, leave a lasting impression, he was sure of it. She had thoroughly enjoyed herself and he knew that at least one person in this world would have a positive, lasting memory of him. If only he did not fuck it up later on. It was still October, there was plenty of time for him to cock it up and make her regret it. Damn it, he shouldn’t have agreed to continue with the Occlumency lessons. What the fuck were you thinking?
It couldn’t happen again. There could be no weakness of his part anymore. He had had his fun but now he must do his job. She was merely his student. *Who fucking purred in your ear as you touched her.*

Why was he flattering himself so much anyway? She got what she wanted, her experience with an older man, her release. She quieted her insecurities of being frigid and not being wanted by any other man, insecurities which that half-witted weasel she so ill-advisedly fancied had planted in her mind. She would now be sure of herself again and not want nor need him. She would go on to date some age appropriate Gryffindor hero and all would be well. All would be as it should. There was no danger in teaching her Occlumency. There would be no weakness of his part because he had fulfilled his long neglected desires and his more recent… curiosity about Miss Granger. It would trouble him no longer. He was nothing if not strong willed with a well-trained mind. And she had fulfilled her needs as well and would not tempt or weaken him. Or allow him anything else ever again. It would all be right from now on.

With that notion easing his mind, he was able to finally sleep, and he slept rather peacefully amidst the smell of her hair on his pillows.

Sunday couldn’t come soon enough for Hermione. She spent the first hours of Saturday catching up on all the homework she had not done due to her time in the hospital wing and re-reading all the lessons that were taught in her absence, as well as studying everything that would be seen in classes during the next week. There was a Quidditch match in the afternoon – Gryffindor vs. Slytherin – and she sat with Luna to cheer for her friends. Luna was happy to see that Hermione had now taken to wearing the ring she had made for her every day, and Hermione’s heart sank a little when she realized she was wearing it for altogether different reasons than being a gift from her friend.

She found herself searching the stands with her binoculars for Professor Snape, not paying attention to the game at all, but before she could find him she found Draco, sitting in a very isolated spot, watching by himself. He hadn’t even tried out for the team again, probably afraid no one would want him there and that he wouldn’t make it without his father’s influence, donating to the team and being part of the school board. She felt bad for him, sitting there all alone. He really wasn’t a bad person, he had just had a bad influence, been searching for his father’s approval. But now he could see he was better off without it. She made a mental note to invite him to sit with them next time. She was sure Luna wouldn’t mind.

Hermione saw Snape not too far from Draco, sitting with Professor McGonagall. She watched him for several minutes, her heart racing at the thought of his lips on hers, his hair brushing against her skin, and his hands under her skirt, and for one quick moment it seemed like he had looked straight at her and narrowed his eyes disapprovingly.

Luna cheered loudly beside her, her lion’s head hat roaring, and shifted Hermione’s focus from Professor Snape to the match. Harry had caught the snitch, winning the game for Gryffindor. As everyone around her ran to the field, she tried to find Professor Snape again through her binoculars, but he was already gone.

At dinner, she sat alone and couldn’t help but steal quick glances up at the Head Table, but he wasn’t there. When she was almost done with her meal, he came in through the door behind the table the staff always used. She drifted off into day dreams about having him inside her again, and unbeknownst to her, was staring at him.

“What’s up, Hermione?”
“Huh?” She was startled out of her thoughts by Ginny sitting next to her.

“What are you staring at?” Ginny asked.

“Nothing!” Hermione said promptly. “Just thinking that I should probably read last week’s lessons again. And I didn’t even take notes! Can I copy your notes from classes?”

“Sure. Though I don’t know what good they would do you.”

“They will be very helpful, thank you.”

“Did you see the game? We squashed Slytherin, it was beautiful!”

“I saw,” she lied. “You were great, Gin. Where are the boys?”

“They went to Hagrid’s. I needed some girl time, you know, some intelligent conversation.” Ginny smiled, prompting Hermione to laugh.

“So… now that it’s just us girls, tell me, what did Snape see that made you so embarrassed you burned him?”

Hermione turned red. She did wish she could tell Ginny about it all. It could be nice to have someone to talk to. She already had had to keep all her doubts and troubles with Ron to herself, she didn’t want to do it again. It was very tiring. But if Snape found out… he would kill her. Not that she didn’t trust Ginny to keep a secret, but Snape would be going around inside her mind… And there was the fact that she was afraid Ginny would judge her. For having broken so many rules, for having done it with Snape. She didn’t want any judgment to ruin her state of absolute thrill. *Expect nothing.*

“Just… private… hum, intimate… moments, you know?”

“Ugh, did the creep go around looking for them?”

“No! God, why do you guys always assume the worst when it comes to him? No, they just popped up in my mind, I couldn’t help it.”

“I don’t always assume the worst about him… I even kind of like him now that I understand what all the bitterness is about. It’s just… OH MY GOD, was it stuff with Ron he saw?”

Hermione blushed and looked away from her down into the plate on the table.

“Eeeewwww. I can definitely see why you would burn him. I wouldn’t want anyone knowing what I’d been doing with a fool like that either.”

Hermione laughed and almost spit out her pumpkin juice.

“See, no need to play the embarrassed one with me. I’m your friend. So, are you gonna have more classes with him or did you just give up in embarrassment?”

“I can’t give it up. You don’t know how awful it was to have Yaxley roaming inside my head. I felt so invaded, raped almost. It was fucking awful.”

“So when’s your next lesson?”

“Tomorrow,” Hermione said hesitantly.

“Good luck then.”
Sunday evening was finally upon her and try as she might to not expect a thing, she couldn’t help herself. So, under her jeans and jumper, she donned black silk knickers and bra she had bought for possible nights with Ron but luckily had never had the chance to wear. They were one of the few pairs of underwear she owned that weren’t cotton and plain.

She thought about wearing something other than a jumper, but she couldn’t get dressed up for private lessons with Snape when she always walked around in a jumper and jeans. People would talk. So she just checked to see if the charm on her hair was still holding and tried a simple charm that made her lips slightly glossy. And she was off to the dungeons.

She knocked and he answered the door almost immediately, as if he were next to it just waiting for the knock. Don’t kid yourself, Hermione. He let her in and the chairs were facing each other again, the same configuration from Friday night. The fire was going as well. He knew she would complain about the cold.

“Have a seat, Miss Granger,” he said, and she obliged. “We will continue with what we started on Friday. I will use Legilimency on you and you will attempt to block me or at the very least push me out very quickly.”

It was amazing how he sat there and just talked to her with that unfazed, blank mask of a face, as if just two nights ago he wasn’t on top of her in his bed, inside her, making her feel marvelous things, feeling pretty good himself. She was blushing just looking at him.

Though he did not look it (because what kind of fucking spy would he be if his feelings were always etched on his face?), he was a bit flustered. She wasn’t in her uniform. Of course, it wasn’t a school day. But her uniform gave him much more self-restraint than he had imagined. It made her the image of a girl, his student. Without it she looked the young woman she was, and the age difference seemed to shorten. Fuck, he wanted to vanish her clothes right now and just take her on the floor. Have her graciously and deliciously squirming beneath him, making magnificent sounds that showed him exactly just how much she enjoyed it. Control yourself.

“How can I do it? Aren’t there any instructions you could give me, sir?”

Instructions… she liked to follow instructions. He sighed. “There is no right way… some people imagine tall wide walls around their thoughts, impregnable. Others focus on the vastness of the sky or a body of water. Others simply make their mind blank. Completely,” he explained.

“And how do you do it? If I may ask, sir.”

He pinched the bridge of his nose and sighed. Was she really just there for the lesson? Done with everything else? Good thing. That is a good thing.
“I practice a much more complicated brand of Occlumency, Miss Granger. Simply blocking my thoughts to other Death Eaters could very well work, but it would not do for the Dark Lord. He would know I wished to hide something from him and would kill me or unhinge my mind. No, I had to create fake memories, hide important information amidst memories he would deem unimportant and therefore would overlook, or even create different emotions for memories that existed.”

Hermione was a bit lost. “Can I have a for instance?”

“For instance,” he paused. He did not wish to be rude to her but she was a nosy little critter. But she already knew of this particular memory and his feelings of it. He wouldn’t be exposing himself more than necessary. “I could not pretend I did not know about Lily Potter’s death, erase it from my mind. He would have known I was hiding something from him. He could not, though, know the truth about how I felt and what it motivated me to do. But at the same time he would not believe I was completely unfeeling, since I had begged him to spare her… So I had to manipulate the memory, my feelings…”

He seemed very distressed and annoyed while speaking.

She imagined how she had felt with Yaxley in her mind and how it would have been a thousand times worse if the murderer of someone she deeply loved had done it. He indeed had much self-restraint, command of himself. He was so brave. She wanted to hug him.

“Oh. Right,” was all she managed to say.

“But if memory serves me right, I used to think the Black Lake was very helpful, when I did not have the need for such elaborate schemes.”

She smiled shyly. He lifted and eyebrow.

“May we proceed, Miss Granger?”

“Yes.”

“**Legilimens.**”

She pictured the Black Lake at night. The moon reflecting off it. Snape was walking the margins and could see none of her thoughts. He lowered himself to touch the water. Once. Twice. Nothing. On the third attempt, he rippled the surface and her barrier broke. Her memories were flooding her mind and he could see it all. He pulled out.

“Very good, Miss Granger. But you must make it stronger. If you continue with the lake, picture not only its surface, but its depths, so if I break the surface I will be diving only into the lake, not your thoughts.”

“All right,” she nodded. But it seemed too much for only a few seconds preparation. She would try something else.

“**Legilimens.**” he said, and he entered a complete blank. She had very successfully emptied her mind. There was nothing he could touch or stir to make it brake. Only emptiness, nothingness. He stomped his foot where he stood but it did nothing.

She was feeling pretty good about herself when she felt him touching her thigh and her thoughts flooded her mind. Suddenly he was sitting in front of her, smirking, arms crossed over his chest.

“Hey! That’s not fair! You broke my concentration.”
“Your enemy won’t play fair, Miss Granger. They might…”

“Feel up my thigh? Really?” She said with a bit of annoyance.

“Do. Not. Interrupt me while I am speaking.” He said coldly. He continued. “They might hex you, torture you, and you must keep focus and get them out. Since I will not do any of those things to you,”

“Gee, thanks,” she said still, annoyed.

“Don’t. Interrupt. Me. Ten points from Gryffindor,” he said, wishing there was a discrete way he could adjust his half-awake cock in his trousers. Why the hell does her insolence arouse you?

“Sorry, professor. Go on,” she said more sweetly.

“Since I will do none of that to you, I use whatever weapons I have so you can practice.” He smirked.

Wicked man. “All right, let me have another try.”

“Legilimens.”

And again he was in a blank space. He touched her thigh and it did not change. His hand slide along her jeans and nothing happened. Very good. His hand was now on her waist and nothing happened. It took so much from her to keep focus with him touching her like she wanted him to, she didn’t want to do it anymore.

More because he wanted to than to try and distract her, he slid his hand under her jumper and touched the bare, warm skin of her belly. Her thoughts all flooded in, and before he could leave her mind she pushed him out.

And her lips were on his as she pushed him back into his chair and straddled him. Her hands were in his hair – she really did like that – and she ground on his lap, making his dick twitch. He broke the kiss.

“Miss Granger, I thought we were in the middle of a lesson.”

“Yes,” she said as she gave his lips a peck. “But I believe I have made great progress for today.” She kissed him again. He couldn’t resist her or even remember why he should. “I’m in need of another type of lesson,” she said as they broke for air.

His hands were on her buttocks, pulling her closer to him. She rolled her hips on his again and his dick stiffened more, though not yet to his full capacity.

“Please take me to your bed, professor,” she whispered in his ear and then nipped his earlobe, and before she had even finished the sentence, he was on his feet, carrying her inside his quarters.

He rushed through the doors and was by the bed in record time. He threw her on it and his hands were gliding over his chest, casting a seam splitting spell as she reached up to undo his buttons. Since he had taken care of the coat, she unbuttoned his shirt and pushed it off his shoulders before pulling him in for another kiss. Her tongue licked his lips begging for entrance. He was always reluctant to give it but he always gave in eventually. As his tongue plowed into her mouth and wrestled her own, she felt his clever fingers unbuttoning her jeans. She grabbed at his now bare back, feeling the scars he had there, and at his hair as she sucked on his lips, bit them, and he began to pull of her denims. She broke the kiss to kick off her boots and arch her back so he could pull her pants off.
“Silk knickers? I think you came to this lesson with ulterior motives, Miss Granger,” he smirked.

She blushed and bit her lower lip, but admitted to it as she worked on his trousers and caressed his cock over his boxers.

“I did, yes sir.”

He pulled off her jumper and grabbed her face to continue mauling it. He was so fucking hungry for her. And she for him. He could feel it. She wrapped her legs around him and sought friction. Oh no. Not yet. He would have his fun.

He broke the kiss and kneeled on the bed beside her as he slowly pulled off her knickers, grazing his fingertips on her bare legs, driving her mad.

“You wanted a lesson, Miss Granger. This will be a lesson.” He pulled the knickers off her feet, which she had lifted to the air, and he could see her pink soaking wet core, ready for him. But he’d have to wait. She looked puzzled at his words as he placed himself in between her legs and pulled her up into more of a slumped sitting position.

“Touch yourself for me,” he said.

“What?” She was immediately embarrassed, blushing furiously, and closed her knees.

He smirked as he moved closer to her and forced her feet further apart with his knees. She in turn opened her legs again as she came closer to caress his chest and kiss his lips. He didn’t concede.

“Touch yourself for me.”

“But why?” She asked, embarrassed yet again. “If you’re here and you can touch me. I want you to touch me.”

“It’s nothing I haven’t seen before,” he smirked. “I won’t touch you until you do it yourself.” His knees were still holding her feet apart. “Where is that Gryffindor courage I always hear about?”

“But…” She reached for his cheeks, for a kiss, mortified, trying to make him forget about this nonsense. He grabbed her hands and sucked on her fingers.

“Go on, kitten.”

She looked at him, frustrated.

“You need to learn to please yourself without shame. I felt what you felt while I was in your mind the other day. There is no shame in it. It is your body, do with it as you please. And you must not be ashamed of your partner either, whoever he may be. As long as he respects you. I saw you were embarrassed when you were with me as well. So go on. Touch yourself.” He leaned in closer to her and whispered in her ear “And you’ll make me so fucking hard if you do it.”

She smiled and slowly, reluctantly, took the fingers he had sucked on to her core. She closed her eyes and rubbed herself very shyly.

“Tell me what you are thinking of” she heard him say.

She blushed and bit her lip in embarrassment, but also in excitement with his silky voice in her ear, his breath on her skin. “You,” she let out in a small voice.

He smirked. “Use your words, Miss Granger. What am I doing?”
“Kissing me.”

This chit and her kisses... Her soft, sweet kisses. They would end him.

“What else?” He whispered in her ear and she could feel his body hovering over hers, his hair brushing on her cheeks. She wanted him to touch her so much. Her hands became less shy against her bud.

“You are touching me with your mighty clever fingers.” Her breathing was becoming heavier.

“Really? And what else?”

“I reach out to touch you. And I feel you… so hard. For me.”

“Open your eyes and look at me,” he said.

No, she would die of mortification if she did. She shook her head embarrassed, but now she could not stop rubbing her clit. She wanted to come, she had to, but it was escaping her because she was so embarrassed.

“Come on, kitten, open them.”

Kitten. She liked it when he called her that. She opened her eyes. He looked deep into her eyes, that soothing black pool, and smiled. Fuck he was gorgeous when he smiled.

“I am very hard for you. You don’t have to imagine it.”

Her breathing grew heavier still and her hands moved more rapidly.

“Let me see,” she said, and he lowered his boxers, pulling his dick out. She smiled and reached her other hand out to touch it. So hard. For me. She stroked it once and bit her lip as her fingers found her entrance to wet themselves in her fluids. She spread it to her clit, her labia, as he watched intently and grew more aroused. She then touched his cock again with her wet, glistening hand. He growled and pulled away. He was so hard, and feeling her warm juices could be enough to send him off the edge.

“You’re touching my breasts. Teasing my nipples,” she offered without him asking as she returned her hand to clit and rubbed, panting.

“Shall I suck those perky little tits, Miss Granger?”

“Oh yes, please!”

And he did. He couldn’t control himself any longer. He pulled her bra down and licked her breasts. They were so fucking perfect. He enclosed his mouth on one. He sucked it, then caught her nipple between his teeth. Her whimpers grew louder, her breathing was so heavy she could hardly speak.

“Continue,” he said.

“You’re inside me now,” she panted.

“And how does it feel?”

Her fingers sunk into her folds and she gasped. “uuhhh. So fucking fantastic.”

“And then what?”
“I… I… I can’t…” She moaned, as she breathed heavily, her chest rising and falling.

“Are you going to come? Are you, Miss Granger?” He asked smiling. She looked at him and could hardly nod.

“Then come for me, kitten. Come. Are you going to leave a stain on my sheets? I want you to come so hard you soak it. Soak my sheets, kitten, soak them so I can sleep with your smell in my room, on me.”

His voice, his words. They were the push she needed. She moaned loudly, one long, drawn out moan as she came undone with him hovering over her, watching her spasms as a smile came across his face.

“That was outstanding, Miss Granger,” he said as he laid on top of her and kissed her neck. “Outstanding,” he whispered in her ear and returned to her neck. She smiled. Outstanding.

Her hand was reaching for him and he stopped it midair by grabbing her wrist. He took her hand to his lips and sucked her fingers clean of her fluids.

“Hmm. You taste so sweet, kitten.”

And just like that she was aroused again. His dick was rubbing against her slit, and his licking her essence off her fingers was driving her insane.

“Now that you have learned to please yourself without shame, you don’t need me, do you?” He teased, his fingers now grazing her labia as his lips touched her collarbone.

“Yes, I do!”

“Use your words, Miss Granger. What do you need?”

“I need your huge, throbbing cock thrusting hard inside me… sir.”

Wow. Quick study. He smirked down at her and pulled her by her legs down into a lying position.

“Since you asked so nicely…”

She smiled as he held her waist and teased her entrance with the tip of his cock. He slipped inside her, restraining himself to not slip his whole cock into her and she groaned softly. He moved to kiss her neck and heard her saying “no…”

He froze. “What is it kitten? Did I hurt you?”

“Oh no, nothing like that…” She smiled as she reached to caress his cheek. “I just want all of you inside me. All of you.”

He smirked. “Are you sure you can handle that, kitten?”

“No. But I’m sure I need to try.” She licked her lips and bit her lower one and his cock throbbed inside her. He lifted one of her legs over his shoulder and slowly pushed himself further inside her. She let out a long moan as she felt so incredibly and deliciously full, sweet music to his ears.

“Good?” He asked smirking.

“Magnificent,” she half whispered, half moaned.
He pulled back and plunged in again and again she moaned so sweetly. He did so again... and again... and again she moaned. He lifted her other leg over his other shoulder and started to plunge into her a bit faster, and her moans grew louder with his rhythm. Fuck. It was like she was meowing. His little kitten. He smirked.

She became self-conscious about her moans, but she couldn’t help herself, they came out involuntarily. He felt so delicious inside her, she wanted to feel this every day. She grabbed the edge of his duvet and bit on it, to muffle her moans.

“Oh no no, kitten,” he said as he pulled it from her lips. “None of that. I want to hear you.”

She smiled as another moaned slipped out her lips and she rolled her head back.

“Bloody hell, kitten, I could come just hearing your moans.”

She smiled and reached up to caress his chest and his scant hair there. Her fingers traced one or two of his scars and she grazed her nails gently on him. “Then come,” she moaned.

“No. Kittens first.” He smiled and her heart ached slightly to see his gorgeous smile. He lowered her legs around his hips as his thumb found her clit and rubbed, up and down and in circles as his cock invaded her again and again. She arched her back and her moans got caught in her throat. His other hand reached to palm a breast and softly pinch her nipples.

“Oh God!” She let out and he smirked as he lowered himself to kiss her neck.

“That is very sweet, kitten,” he whispered in her ear and nipped it before continuing “but simply ‘professor’ will do.” He smirked.

She sank her fingers in his hair and dug her heels on his ass as he thrust harder into her and kissed her neck.

“You feel so fucking good. Professor.”

He grunted next to her ear and she continued. “Kiss me, please.”

His lips found hers and as his cock plunged into her folds, his tongue plunged into her mouth. She was coming, he could feel it, so he broke the kiss to hear her sweet sweet moans. He continued to thrust inside her as she came, and the feel of his huge cock filling her over and over again kept triggering her pleasure. Her wave of pleasure wasn’t even over yet when he lost control and came as well with a groan that caught in his throat. His cock pulsating inside enhanced her pleasure.

He slumped on top of her after he came, and she was stroking his hair as he waited to catch his breath, his head on her breasts. Too intimate. He rolled over to the bed and found his wand under the pillow. He summoned black silk pajama bottoms from his chest of drawers and sat up to pull them on.

Why he was in such a hurry to get dressed she did not know. She wanted to watch his bare body and memorize the details. In case she couldn’t see it again. She never knew. It would be good wanking material.

She pulled her bra up to cover her breasts as she sat up. She spotted her knickers on the floor and walked over to get it. Her wand was in her jeans so she couldn’t summon it. As she bent over to pick it up, he watched, and his dick twitched limply in his pants.

Fuck. I could take her again in a while... In the meantime, I can make her come over and over
again. Dry her out. I’d fucking love to see that.

She was pulling up her jeans when he said

“You are to come dressed like this next time. No fucking schoolgirl’s uniform.”

She smiled. “So… there can be more encounters… like this?”

“If you so wish,” he said, his face that expressionless mask again.

“Great.” She tried to not sound too excited.

“But no one is to know.”

“Of course.”

“So stop gawking at me at Quidditch matches and meals.”

She blushed. So, he had noticed.

“And nothing changes outside this room. I am still your teacher and you will treat me as such.”

“Yes. I seem to recall having this conversation last time. I remember the rules, sir,” she said as she pulled on her jumper.

He lifted his brow. Cheeky kitten. But he didn’t take points from her. Let’s see how she does in class…

“So… I can come back… whenever?”

“Not whenever, no. I have work to do, obligations to this school… and a life outside. You are a smart girl, figure out a way to contact me beforehand, when it interests you.”

She smirked.

“And make sure no one sees you. No one must suspect. No questions must be asked. Or this arrangement ends instantly.”

“All right,” she said. “And my Occlumency lessons? Do I still need them?”

“Of course you still need them. You’ve merely been able to block me with warning that I would be entering your mind. Enemies will give you no warning.”

“So when is my next lesson?”

“Thursday, at eight.”

“All right. Have a great week then, professor.” She smiled as he opened the door out to his office. She walked to the door and let herself out into the halls.
Chapter 19

Chapter Notes

I’ve told you I take liberties with Legilimency, right? So yeah, that's still in place. lol
Also, I don't really know how the Floo works (does the person calling see the room?
Only hear the people on the other side?) so just bear with me a bit.

Snape spent the next few days worried about how things would play out. How could he have been so magnificently stupid and let his dick do his thinking for him? Encouraging the girl to come back… it was madness. She wouldn’t keep her mouth shut, he knew it. Certainly the Weasley girl – at least – already knew about his indiscretion. And of course she would tell Potter. And teaching a class to those obnoxious teenagers would be even more unbearable with their little sniggers and knowing looks. Not to mention Miss Granger herself, who would think that she now had the liberty to address him however way she very well pleased. He could put an end to that swiftly, of course, but it would be a nuisance nonetheless. He chided himself every moment of the day for having given in to carnal desires not once, but twice, and with a student. What the hell had gotten over him? This shouldn’t have happened, none of it should have happened.

But Wednesday came and class was normal. It seemed Potter and Weasley knew nothing and a quick undetected search of their minds while they watched his lecture was enough to ease his mind and confirm they had nothing worth knowing in the wasteland they called their minds. Potter really hadn’t learned anything from their Occlumency lessons, so easy it was to slip into his mind. Insolent, like his father.

Granger was her normal little self, shooting her hand up in the air every five seconds to answer any questions he might dare to pose, rhetorical or not, making him want to choke her to death. Well, maybe not to death. He smirked. But the chit was intelligent. If her behavior became at all different, someone might notice, and so she played her annoying little part.

The verification that all was well made his mind free to now anticipate when – and if – she would be using the privilege he had given her. He shouldn’t do such a thing, and should immediately revoke such privileges when she came to call again. But he could not lie to himself and feign indifference towards the situation. He did have a great time with her, and hoped it could happen again. He had to be careful with that. Hope. Always set him up for disappointment. He should have learned that long ago. Good things never happened, especially to him.

Hermione wanted to go back on Monday already, but did not want to seem too eager, clingy or pathetic. Besides, she had not figured out how she could contact him privately to see if she could go, if he would be free. She had thought of giving him a coin with a protean charm, like the one Dumbledore’s Army used for meetings (one only he and she would have, of course), but it was a ridiculous thought, that he would carry around the thing and would even care to check if there was a message on it. Using an owl would be too risky. And she wasn’t even sure owls would reach him down in the dungeons. So she decided to just play it by ear – something very difficult for someone who liked having everything planned.

Thursday morning came with an offer from Ginny.

“You can sit with us again, you know, during classes. Especially potions, so you don’t have
to suffer Malfoy. Ron promised he won’t be an ass or a big baby.”

    Hermione smiled. It would be nice to sit with her friends again, especially now that she couldn’t care less about Ron or the things he had said to her. They didn’t affect her at all anymore. But she did not want to abandon Draco. He was actually a nice person now, when given the chance, and she felt bad for him, being all alone. Everybody deserves a second chance. She remembered how sad he had looked during the Quidditch match.

    “You know, Draco is not so bad.”

    “Excuse me, I think I misheard you,” Ginny said, appalled.

    Hermione snorted. “Don’t be bad, Gin! He is… nice to me. And I feel bad for him now, he seems so lonely. I think I’ll stick in the back with him in Potions.” Plus, sitting in the back reduces my chances of being caught gawking at Professor Snape, my fuck buddy. Or just feeling embarrassed in general, being so close to him. “Thanks for the offer, though,” she smiled.

    “Merlin’s balls, you are serious!” Ginny stared at her. “That is such a weird thought. Malfoy… nice.” She sneered.

    Hermione laughed. “Yeah, well, wonders never cease. Come on, we’re going to be late,” she said as she pulled Ginny out of the dormitory.

    The day went by without a glitch. Not even Professor Gwendoline spewing her nonsense could put Hermione in a bad mood – although, ever since she had been brutally attacked and Snape had spoken to the Headmistress, Professor Gwendoline’s nonsense spewing had reduced to a minimum, having been proved wrong and all. Nothing could wash away the excitement Hermione felt of finally having a meeting with Snape, not even the fact that he seemed to be in an especially foul mood in class that day. But she was confident she could change that.

    He was in a very foul mood indeed. Though he did not admit to it or even knew it… the cause was the fact she hadn’t enjoyed her privilege and looked for him, not even once since Sunday. He had fucking made himself vulnerable and lost the upper hand in giving her the power of decision, and of course she had had enough of him. So he lost either way.

    He didn’t even remember he had scheduled an Occlumency lesson with her for that evening until he heard a knock on his door and answered it. She wasn’t wearing her uniform, which might be a good sign. She might have remembered his little rule and be hoping for something else. Or it might mean nothing. He certainly wouldn’t make the first move. You shouldn’t be making any moves, fool. If she did expect… extracurricular activities, he would make her work for it, to gain the upper hand again.

    They had a very short lesson and soon proceeded to his bed. She was right, she could better his mood. She felt proud of herself, and he… he gave her the best shag yet.

    She couldn’t go another week without seeing him, and the bastard scheduled the next Occlumency lesson for the next Thursday. So she pretended she wanted to go to bed early the next night to get away from Ginny and Harry unsuspected. When she got upstairs to the girls’ dormitory, she pulled the curtains on her four-poster shut, indicating she did not want to be bothered, and disillusioned herself. Oh how it paid off to be ahead of your class. Very carefully, she made her way through the common room and waited for someone to enter so she could slip out the portrait hole undetected and head for the dungeons.

    And so she did every other day. Sneaking through the castle afterhours, breaking the rules.
The very thing she had always warned the boys against, she was now doing. So unlike Hermione Granger. But it was all worth it. SO worth it. Luckily she caught him free and willing every time.

The week flew by and it was Thursday again, and Hermione was sitting in Snape’s office, failing in trying to keep him out of her mind. She had made great progress in keeping her mind blank, even when he tried to distract her. But while having her mind blank and feeling no embarrassment, she couldn’t manage to shut him out. It was then he expressed the concern of having an ill-intended stranger so long in a blank canvas inside her mind.

“Your enemy can use your mind whichever way he chooses. He can paint and plant whatever images he wants to and unhinge your mind. If a picture is already painted, it becomes more difficult to manipulate. I believe you should try another technique.”

And so she began to try imagining the Black Lake again. But when Snape grazed its surface, he could easily penetrate her thoughts and memories.

“Paint a deeper picture, Miss Granger,” he said irritated.

“I can’t!”

He pinched the bridge of his nose. “Yes you can if you only apply yourself. Try. Harder. You’ve been to the bottom of the lake, for Merlin’s sake. It doesn’t even take much imagining.”

“I wasn’t exactly fucking conscious, was I?”

“Ten points from Gryffindor.”

Hermione grunted in frustration.

“Stop acting like a spoiled little brat and apply yourself. Keep me out of your thoughts. Legillimens!”

But she failed once again.

“Miss Granger!” He was irritated, frustrated. She could do this, he knew she could.

“Maybe if you let me in your mind?”

He arched an eyebrow and snorted. “Yes, please, come on in,” he said sardonically.

“Stop! It’s not like I’d be able to see anything. I just want to see how you block your memories and thoughts. Maybe if I see it, feel it, I can learn to do it faster.”

He nodded reluctantly after several moments of consideration and her eyes widened in anticipation. He immediately regretted having agreed to it, but foolishly did not go back on it. What the fuck was he doing? Why was he allowing this? Treating her with privileges already. But he was an excellent Occlumens, she would never penetrate his barriers.

She was sitting at the edge of her chair, waiting. He narrowed his eyes and knitted his brow and finally uncrossed his arms, leaning forward. She looked deep in the black pools that were his eyes and suddenly, she was looking into the black lake. She didn’t even remember saying an incantation. He just pulled her in. Hermione immediately noticed how much better his barrier was than hers. She could see not only the Black Lake, the full moon reflected off its surface, but also the castle up in the distance and the forbidden forest. She felt certain that were she to walk towards it, she could go inside and walk the castle halls she knew so well, open many doors and see the rooms
as if she was walking the real construction, and not find a single thought, emotion, or memory. Maybe if she walked around long enough, she would eventually find a locked door, hiding something.

It was a cold night, something she imagined was thought up also to hinder anyone’s success in navigating his mind. It certainly diminished her will. But it’s not really cold, Hermione. It’s all in his mind. Shake it off. As she concentrated on this. She felt mildly warmer.

She touched the lake’s surface as he did with her and the water rippled. She touched it again, and it just rippled again, not going away to his memories as her barrier did. Once again, and nothing. She decided to walk into the lake to see what happened, and it was as if she was walking into the real lake. Very soon she was swimming in its depths. She saw various weeds, rocks, and animals in so much detail. Even the giant squid swam by her. At first it felt like she would drown, and she desperately wanted to get out and breathe, but with some focus she was able to break that barrier at least. She knew it was not real and could not hurt her. He would not hurt her.

Hermione had seen and felt enough to make her understand how she could improve her barriers, but before she left, she had a silly curiosity. She wanted to see how his room looked from the outside, if she looked in its vast window from the bottom of the lake, what would she see there? So she swam towards where she thought she would find it and pretty soon she was looking into it.

She was pulled into a dark dusty room. The wallpaper was of an antique pattern and mossy color, and the curtains were partly closed, shielding the room from sunshine. Only a sliver of light made its way in. There were people yelling in the distance, but she could not make out what was being said. There was a little boy hiding under the desk in the corner of the room, he couldn’t be older than five. He had very pale skin, jet black hair that curtained his face, though it only went down to the top of his ears. Oh Merlin, it was Snape. She walked over to the desk and sat down on the floor beside him. His eyes were black but very different than current day Snape’s. It carried much sadness, too much for a five-year-old. That sadness was not so noticeable in present Snape’s eyes. He probably suppressed it very well, replaced it with disdain and indifference.

Young Snape was in very large clothes, too large for his tiny figure and he held his arm close to him, silent tears streaming down his face. She noticed the arm was in an awkward position. It was broken.

She could hear now a man screaming from outside the room

“Did I tell you to fix his arm with that little stick of yours, you cunt? No! He needs to learn not to disrespect his fucking father. If it hurts enough, he’ll remember. If you try to use that fucking thing again, I’ll break it in half, you bitch. Maybe I’ll break your arm too, for good measure.”

Hermione heard slapping sounds and the screams of a woman. Little Snape was so frightened, she wanted to hold him and tell him it would be okay. Then she felt someone grip her arm. She looked up and saw present day Snape, looking absolutely murderous.

“I believe you have snooped enough.” And with a pull of her arm, their surroundings swirled away as if it were smoke and she was sitting in the chair in front of him in his office again.

“I’m sorry, I didn’t mean…”

“This lesson is over. Get out,” he said coldly.

Only this lesson? She thought. That’s OK. Better than being completely shut off.

“Leave, now,” he said in between clenched teeth as he briskly got up from the chair in front of her
and turned to rummage through his shelves.

“No,” she heard herself say.

He turned slowly and looked at her with narrowed eyes, clearly angry.

“Excuse me?”

“I’m not leaving.”

“How dare…” he huffed in anger. “Twenty points from Gryffindor for your insolence.”

She wasn’t afraid of him. She knew him. Not as well as she was quickly wishing to, but she knew him. She had seen him with his walls down, even if for mere moments. She knew all of this was an act, a defense mechanism to hide a more emotional and sensitive man she knew was in there somewhere. He had obviously never been well received, and so this other harsh persona had installed itself. This man could earn respect, or at least fear, and not be bothered by anyone or anything.

“You can take all the bloody points you want, you won’t scare me. You think I care about the stupid House Cup?” She scoffed. “What are you afraid of? It’s not like I’ll tell anyone. I don’t think less of you for it. You can trust…”

“Severus? Could you come through to my office please?” The firm voice cut Hermione off, and she gasped. She froze in place, terrified. It was Professor McGonagall in the grate. Had she heard her? Oh gods, what if she had finished what she was about to say? Did she know? Is that why she wanted Snape to come through? Oh fuck.

Snape walked over to the fire and leaned on the mantelpiece. “May I ask what this is about, Minerva?”

Hermione whimpered in fear.

“Who’s there?” The headmistress asked.

“Miss Granger,” he answered coldly and raised an eyebrow at her.

Oh fuck oh fuck oh fuck

“Serving detention again?” She asked in an ironic tone.

“No no no, ma’am, I… I…” She couldn’t form a sentence.

“Miss Granger here has asked me to teach her Occlumency, following her attack… we were just having one such lesson. But Miss Granger was just about to leave… weren’t you?”

Hermione looked, wide-eyed, from Professor Snape’s cold mask of a face, his lips pursed, to the grate and back to Snape again. His eyes pierced through hers.

“Yes, yes I was. Excuse me, professors.” She turned to the door.
Chapter 20

Chapter Notes

I never do manage to post only once a week, do I?

Hermione hardly slept. She was worried about what it was the headmistress had wanted to talk to Snape about. Could she know about them? Could she have been on the Floo for long, and have heard her speaking so informally and intimately to her professor? But if that were the case, she would certainly have called her to go with him. Don’t be silly, Hermione, she is his boss. There is a myriad of things she could be calling him for. But she had to know.

She thought about going back later that same night, but going against her anxiety and instead, using her brain, she thought it was best to wait. He could still be with McGonagall, she might be seen there again and there would be no reasonable explanation to give… and he could also still be mad.

The image of Snape as a defenseless child, holding his broken arm and crying alone under a desk came back to her mind. How unfair that he had to have such a horrid childhood. No wonder he was so bitter. So broken. What else could have happened in his childhood? What terrible things? All of that along with his more recent years, his adult life, the horrible things he went through. She felt like Grawp was holding her tight in his grip again, with all the sorrow for Snape that overwhelmed her now. And he didn’t open up and talk to anyone about it. It must weigh a thousand pounds on his shoulders. She wanted to help him with that, she wanted for him to trust her, talk to her. Why? It’s just sex, Hermione. You want a relationship now? With Snape of all people?

Friday couldn’t go by fast enough. She wanted to meet him and make everything right, ease her mind about what had happened and find out if Professor McGonagall found out about them. Just the glimpses she caught of him during the day told her nothing, because he wore that same impassive mask. She needed to talk to him. But when she knocked on his door that evening, there was no answer.

Saturday morning brought Quidditch practice for Ginny, Harry and Ron, and most of the rest of the Gryffindors decided to enjoy the grounds while they could, since it was late October and pretty soon it would be too cold to bear staying outside. That made it relatively easy for her to make her way down into the dungeons unnoticed and knock on his door again.

“Enter” she heard from within, and she did, quickly closing the door behind her.

“Oh. Miss Granger. What can I do for you?” He said coldly, barely looking up from the papers he was correcting.

“What did the headmistress want that day?” She blurted out after looking to the grate and certifying it was cold, as usual. As it would have been that day had she not complained of being cold.

“Aren’t we growing a bit nosy, Miss Granger?”

“I’m sorry… I just… I was worried. Sir. Does she… know?”
“Know…?” He still didn’t look up.

“About… our… arrangement. Did she hear anything that day, over the Floo?”

“I assure you she knows nothing. If she did, I would not be before you here today. At least not… whole. And I am a man who much appreciates his privacy, Miss Granger. Do you really think I would not have some kind of ward on my fireplace? Any caller can hear nothing until I touch the mantle. She knows nothing.

“Oh,” Hermione let out. *Clever. Okay. Not bad. They were safe… Or were they?*

“Is there something else? Or do you plan on standing there all day?” He said impatiently.

“Humm… I left that day and you did not tell me when our next lesson would be… Professor.”

“I though it fairly obvious there would be no lesson… this week. The Halloween feast is on our designated day.”

“Oh, right.” There would be no lesson this week. All right. Better than no more lessons at all.

“So next week?” She asked tentatively. She wanted to go back to the easiness and slight informality they had achieved before she saw his intimate memories… again. She wanted to speak to Snape. Not Professor Snape. But he was clearly not having it. She knew more than he wished to reveal about himself. She had gotten too close and now his walls were back up completely.

“I will let you know.” He still wrote furiously on the papers he corrected. *How will you let me know?*

“And when can I… come back for other activities?” She regretted asking the minute the words escaped her lips. He was so indifferent, his answer would probably be very discouraging. He didn’t even smirk. He didn’t even flinch.

“I am very busy, Miss Granger as you can see. I believe it would be best to suspend such activities.”

“All right, sir. Have a nice weekend,” she said, trying to control her anger as turned on her heels to leave.

She hadn’t done anything wrong. Not on purpose. And she *had* apologized. Why did he have to be so difficult? Damn it!

So the week went by. The stress of all the homework and the revisions snowballed with anger she felt of being rejected for doing absolutely nothing wrong. By Wednesday she was much snappier than usual, everybody said so, and in Potions she was climbing up the walls just seeing him, hearing his voice while he lectured. Fuck, she needed release. And she wanted it with him. In addition to that, she felt the ever increasing need of being closer to him, knowing more about him, just talking to him. *Fuck, Hermione! Don’t complicate things, just don’t. It’s just sex. Just sex.*

Thursday was Halloween, and a couple of kids that had hid among muggles during the war had been trying for a while now to convince everyone of having a muggle-like party in the common room. It was the most fun they had had while in hiding, they said. Muggles would dress up in costumes, dance, have loads of candy. It couldn’t hurt to do something different, shake things up a bit. All the muggle-borns were up for it since they sort of missed their old traditions. And Ginny was absolutely enthusiastic, since she missed her trouble making older brothers – one in particular – and
was hoping she could honor his memory by putting into practice some of his teachings.

So during the feast in the Great Hall, various snacks and items from the table were shrunken and pocketed. Ginny sneaked to the kitchens and got more food. Decoration items were also “borrowed” from the Great Hall, and other items were transfigured. Everyone got costumes, though those who hadn’t had much contact with the muggle world created very picturesque ones. And following the feast, the Gryffindor common room was in uproar.

Hermione wore a cat costume which comprised a jumpsuit covered with fur and a tail, and a tiara with cat ears. Ginny was dressed as a mermaid and Harry went as a troll, though he was too cute for the costume to really work. Neville dressed as a frog, and Ron was the most stupid, dressed in his Quidditch gear.

Hermione was leaning against a wall, agonizing over the fact she was Head Girl and couldn’t control all the craziness that was going on. She had absolutely tried, but had since given up. It was futile work. She controlled one incident only for another one to break out across the room. Harry came up to her.

“Interesting choice of costume.”

“Huh? Why?”

“I would think after what happened in our second year, you wouldn’t want to ever think about being a cat again.” He smiled.

“Oh. Oh no, I’ve learned to look back on that fondly,” she smiled into her glass thinking about Snape calling her kitten as she sipped. Harry looked lost.

“Should I ask?”

“Probably not,” she sniggered.

“Okay, Hermione, you’re acting weird. I’m going to go look for Ginny.”

“All right, see you later.”

Hermione cooked up a plan right there and then, and decided to put it into practice. The common room was full enough and everyone entertained enough so that she could head up to her room and get a couple of things, then slip out the portrait hole undetected. She had to see Snape again.

Snape sat in his sitting room reading a book. He actually did more thinking than reading. He thought about how it had been almost a week since Miss Granger had looked for him. She had said what she had seen wouldn’t make her think any less of him. But of course she would now perceive him as weak. Pity him. That’s why she hadn’t come back. Or, maybe she didn’t come back because you told her not to, you dimwitted fool. But she had seen too much. They couldn’t become intimate as such. It was just sex, it had to stay that way. Then it would be easier to part ways when she inevitably moved on. They always did, move on from him. She apparently already had.

She might not be telling anyone or mocking him now, but in time, when she grew angry and sick of him – they always seemed to do that as well – she could use it all against him. How marvelous would the headlines be. They could hate him and doubt him even more than they already did. No, that wouldn’t do. They already knew more than he would ever care to share thanks to Potter and his huge fucking trap he couldn’t keep shut.

He heard a knock on the door to his office and part of him hoped it would be Granger. But he knew
it wasn’t. It was probably Filch to complain about some stupid thing or other. He thought he would have some peace and quiet on that end after the Weasley twins had left school, but trouble makers seemed to sprout up like bloody weed.

He opened the door and had to blink to make sure his eyesight wasn’t failing him. It was Miss Granger wearing a most ridiculous cat costume. He bit his tongue to keep a straight face as he looked her up and down, but could not help but to smirk.

The little chit passed him into the room without him saying a word that she could. But he would let that go. It wouldn’t do to be rude to her yet again. She didn’t mean harm, she was probably just embarrassed of being seen in that and wanted to hide. He smirked again as he closed the door behind her tail.

“Interesting choice of outfit, Miss Granger. Have you come trick or treating? Because I’m afraid I have no treats.”

“I beg to differ” she said as she smiled mischievously and ran her index finger from his belt down to graze his dick. It twitched. “And you can do many neat tricks with it was well, sir,” she smiled and winked at him.

The bold little chit made his dick twitch again. What did it say about him that he could barely keep it together after only a week of not seeing her, and while she was in that ridiculous little costume? He watched from beside the door as she walked over to his desk, trying to be sexy.

“If you think that outfit is enticing, Miss Granger, I hate to be the one to have to tell you… it’s not.”

“Oh, I know. Turn around and I can make it go away with a tap of my wand.”

He narrowed his eyes. “This is not how this works, Miss Granger. You do not give me orders.”

She looked at him very sweetly and smiled as she leaned back on the edge of his desk.

“I am not giving you orders, you grumpy old man.” She smiled and batted her eyelashes. “I am asking you nicely to pretty please turn around, professor Snape, sir. I promise I’ll make it worth your while.”

He very slowly and very reluctantly turned around, not before giving her a very serious look, his brows knitted and lips pursed.

“No peaking until I say so, please.”

The fire was out. She would be cold from now on, but it was better this way. No one would bother them through the Floo.

“Okay. You may turn around now,” she said after a moment.

He did, and when he laid eyes on her an involuntary grunt caught in his throat. She was still wearing the cat ears, her hair charmed up into a chignon. But from the neck down… She wore a dark green choker with two silver “S”s on it, a black lace corselet through which he could see her already hard nipples, and matching knickers which were see-through in the front, making him bite his lower lip, craving her, and which had ruffles on the ass. To top it all off, she wore strappy black sandals with stiletto heels.

“Are you still mad at me, Professor?” She asked looking ever so innocent.
“Bloody hell, you make it very hard for me to be,” he said as he walked towards her, trying not to walk too fast and seem too eager.

“And here I was just trying to make it hard,” she smiled.

When he got to her he held her by the waist as she immediately reached for his neck and kissed his lips. She, with her bloody kisses. He did not yield and grant her passage through his lips. She parted her lips from his and whispered in his ear.

“If you’re not mad… call me kitten.”

He smirked as he smelled her hair and nipped her earlobe.

“Only if you purr for me.”

And that she did, low and sweet in his ear just before she nipped it. She sat on his desk and whispered something against her fingers, casting a warming charm on them before unzipping his trousers, reaching inside them for his half rigid cock and stroking it as she smiled at him.

“Bloody hell, kitten.”

“Yes, that’s me,” she smiled.

She continued working on him as she kissed his jawline and chin. He gripped her waist and his cock was rock hard in no time.

He pulled her hand away. “I’m going to come on your hands if you continue, kitten.”

She tried for his lips again and this time he yielded and let her tongue part his lips. His invaded her mouth in return, and he could feel her breath growing heavier already. When they broke for air, he asked

“Why are you wearing this?” touching her choker. He wanted access to her neck and that thing was making it bloody hard.

“It’s my collar. Because I’m your kitten.” She smiled mischievously.

It was only then he realized the “S”s on the green velvet stood for Severus Snape. He growled as he smirked.

“And such a good kitten you are.”

Her hands ran through his hair as he kissed whatever he could of her neck.

“Promise me that no matter who you move on to after me, I will be your only kitten,” she whispered in his ear.

“Who the bloody else would be my kitten?” He asked without much thought. “Only if I were to fuck Minerva, and I’d rather present my dick to one of Hagrid’s blast-ended skrewts. It should be equally pleasing.”

She began to laugh hysterically. He pulled back from planting kisses on her neck to look her in the eyes.

“I’m sorry… but you can be really funny!”
He smiled and her heart warmed to see it. *Such a great smile. Such a shame it doesn’t show often.*

“Oh, you think it’s funny, do you? The maiming of a part of me you seem to enjoy?”

“No, no. It is not funny,” she said as she reached for his dick and stroked it again, her laughter dying down to a smile. “I do enjoy it. So very much.”

He pulled her off the desk.

“Come to the bedroom, kitten. I have rounds in an hour.”

“Oh no,” she pulled him back. “I have very fond memories of this desk. I would like to make some more. I want you to think of me every time you sit down to work on this desk.” She smiled slyly and leaned on the desk, lying belly down on it, her legs swinging to and fro in the air.

“You want me not to get any work done, is that it?”

She just smiled and maintained her pose on the desk.

He pulled on her legs tenderly, slowly sliding her off the desk into a standing position in front of him, facing the desk. He pulled her close to him, wrapping an arm around her waist and she rubbed her fine ass on his rock hard dick. He grunted as his other hand went to the back of her neck and caressed the latch on her choker. It popped open and he pulled it off her, pocketing it quickly as his lips touched the flesh between her neck and shoulder. She quivered as all her hairs stood on end and she rubbed herself on his dick again. His teeth grazed her flesh as he growled and the string of excitement that existed between her navel and her core tightened.

“Don’t be bad, kitten, or I’ll come all over your ruffles and you won’t feel me in your tight little pussy. Do you want to feel me inside you?” He asked, his hands gliding over her breasts and up to her collarbone.

“Oh yes. Please,” she moaned.

He took his hand to her lips.

“Lick,” he ordered with a whisper in her ear, and she was so hot for him she took three of his fingers in her mouth and sucked on all of them slowly and repeatedly until they were soaking wet.

He sucked in air through his clenched teeth. The little chit was going to make him come all over the ruffles on her knickers. It had been so fucking long. He took his wet fingers down over her breasts and stomach and plunged them into the front of her knickers. As he stroked her clitoris she bucked back into him and her hand reached back behind his head and she gripped his hair.

“Oh fuck yes. I missed your fingers. Wonderful, wonderful, clever fingers,” she moaned as he teased her smooth, swollen labia only to part her slit and rub her bud of nerves again.

Her moans were sweet music to his ears, and as his fingers slid down to her soaking wet folds and entered her, she was such a good kitten she lifted one leg, supporting her knee on the edge of his desk, so he could have better access. She tried to turn his lips to hers but could only manage to kiss his cheek and jawline.

“Please fuck me, sir,” she half whispered, half moaned and he couldn’t take it anymore. He pulled back his hand and bent her over the desk, her leg still supported on it, and he pulled her knickers aside, slipping his dick past her folds and into her core.
She gave that long drawn out moan he so enjoyed hearing as she gripped the edges of the desk, her cheek resting on the tabletop.

“Bloody hell, kitten. Do that again for me.”

He pulled his cock out completely and thrust it in again. Then again and again, as she moaned loudly and slowly. As he thrust himself inside her over and over again, she smiled, resting her cheek on the wood.

“You feel so good inside me.” She moaned.

“I fucking think so too.” He pulled out and flipped her over, only to pull the thin cloth that covered her slit aside again and plunge into her. She looked up at him and bit her lower lip before letting out another moan, and then a smile.

He ran his hands up past her waist to her breasts. He pulled down the lace that covered them and caressed them, teasing her nipples with his thumbs and index fingers. She arched her back as she reached for his waist and sank her nails into him.

“Watch your claws, kitten.”

He pulled her to sit up. She supported herself on his shoulders, gripping his frockcoat as he thrust more rhythmically and leaned down to suck on her exposed breasts, catching her nipples in between his teeth, making her roll her eyes and head back.

“Fuck me harder, babe,” she let out and he held her knee to her shoulder, her stiletto heels rocking in the air as he vigorously pounded her.

He watched as her face changed rapidly in between so many expressions of pleasure and desire. Her breathing growing ragged, her chest lifting and dropping. She was going to come. He loved having this power over her, this effect on her. How could have he ever thought of turning her away.

His thumb found its way to her clitoris and rubbed it. It was enough to push her off the edge. He continued slowly rocking into her as he rode out her high. After she came down from it, he thrust once, twice, four more times and came as well. He pulled out of her and put her knickers back in place, grazing his fingers over the cloth, over her swell, and she quivered.

“Thank you sir,” she said with a smile as she pulled herself up. He was buttoning up his pants. “I really enjoyed myself.”

He smirked. “I could see. I have to leave soon for rounds, kitten. You need to go. Or I’ll have to give you detention for being in the corridor after hours.”

She smiled. It was the first time he continued to call her kitten after sex. He always switched back to Miss Granger.

“Yes, well, I just have to change first. Or people will notice.”

“Because the ridiculous costume you were wearing before will go unnoticed?”

“Yes. It is my party costume.”

“Party? Are you Gryffindors having a party in the common room?”

“Yes,” she smiled mischievously.
“I might have to warn your head of house.”

“You won’t. You can’t explain where you got the information.”

“Cheeky kitten. I can take you in costume with me and say I found you wondering the halls.”

“Please don’t,” she swirled her wand around her and was back in the cat costume she had arrived in. “Not that I very much want the party to go on, but I don’t want to be the snitch either. And it provides good cover for me to slip back in unnoticed.”

He raised an eyebrow to her.

“Go. Before I change my mind.”

“Thank you,” she winked. “And when can I come back?” She asked playfully.

“As soon as fucking possible, kitten.”
Chapter 21

Chapter Notes

So... to those of you who blushed with the last chapter... I think you might furiously blush with this one...

Although they both wished to meet again as soon as possible, between her homework and study schedule and finding a moment when she could get away from her friends unnoticed, one when she wouldn’t be missed, and the essays he had to correct and his patrol duties, they didn’t find the time as soon as they would have liked. Not to mention she still hadn’t figured out a dignified way for her to communicate with him, and he did not want to admit to himself, let alone to her, that he had interest in contacting her as well, so he refused to find a way of his own.

It was Wednesday evening and Hermione was in the library studying away, but she couldn’t take it anymore. She had to go see him. Merlin willing he did not have rounds today or had already done them. Draco had been with her there but had had his fill of studying and had left a few minutes before. The library was only minutes away from closing anyway. She could tell her friends that she found a quiet, unused classroom where she could finish her studies after the library closed if they missed her. It wouldn’t be hard to believe, she had done it before. Since she and Ron weren’t exactly on speaking terms and Harry now had Ginny to help him with his work, she much preferred doing the work on her own, with no interruptions and loudness, both of which were constants in the common room.

She closed her transfiguration book and rolled up the three feet of parchment she had written on the dangers of human transfiguration, and stuffed them in her bag. Before no time, she was in a deserted hallway and could disillusion herself without being seen doing it, and cast a muffliato on her shoes as well, and off she went to the dungeons.

Just before she got to Snape’s door, she remembered his stupid rule of not going to see him for sex in her school uniform. Fuck! She came straight from the library, there was no helping it. He wouldn’t accept that excuse, though. But she had an idea that might appease him. She found a tapestry behind which she could hide and got to work.

He answered the knock on his door rather quickly. He could already distinguish her knock from any other. It seemed like no one was there, but he could smell her sweet coconut shampoo and could see the imperfections of her disillusionment charm as she walked past him into the room. Her spell work was good enough to fool the babbling idiots that were her peers, but if she ran into another professor, especially one that was in the Order, she would most certainly be found out. He’d have to talk to her about it later. He closed the door and a moment after she heard the click, she cast a spell to show herself.

He was unbelievably disappointed. Here he stood craving her body and she had the nerve to show in her school robes and with her bag over one shoulder. Fuck. After he had specifically told her not to. Like he needed another fucking reminder of what a creepy old bastard he was, shagging someone half his age. His fucking student.
As most emotions with him, disappointment quickly turned into anger. He strode over to his desk – unfortunately his cape was not on his person to give that billowing effect – and placed, rather harshly, two chairs facing each other and waited behind one of them, his eyes narrowing at her. She looked at him puzzled.

“I assume that you came here for an early Occlumency lesson, since you are dressed in your uniform, Miss Granger.” He said her name pointedly.

“Oh, no. That’s not why I came.”

“Then what. Is. It?”

“Well… I… I missed… uhm, our private meetings.” She was afraid that if she said she missed him, she would freak him out and get him even angrier, beyond salvation for the evening.

“That may be so, but you will have to leave. I told you the rules and I make no exceptions.”

“Are you sure?” She asked with a mischievous smile. She dropped her bag on the floor and opened the robes that covered her, pulling them off her body and letting them drop as well.

She had shrunken her uniform. Her white button-up shirt was hugging her figure, displaying it perfectly. It had become shorter as well and displayed part of her abdomen, her bellybutton. The first couple of buttons were open, showing her cleavage. Her tie was charmed into Slytherin green and silver, loose on her neck. Her skirt was very short, way above her knees, barely covering her knickers. Her knee-high socks only made the image all the better. And right there in front of him, she charmed her hair into bunches and made a very innocent face.

“I thought you might make an exception today, sir.”

He stood with his jaw dropped looking at her. She smirked.

“But if there is no possibility…” She turned her back to him and slowly bent over to pick up her robes, exposing her buttocks and slit and the skimpy Slytherin green cloth that covered it.

Merlin help him, the little chit already knew how to work him. He wanted to be mad and carry out his rule, she needed to learn. She could not use him like this. But his dick stiffened quicker than he ever remembered it doing and his trousers became so fucking suffocating all of a sudden.

“Bedroom,” he growled and she sprang up smiling and practically skipped past the passage way he opened through his shelves. He pushed her past the sitting room. They couldn’t get to the bedroom fast enough. When they got there, he left her standing in front of the bed as he sat on it.

“Strip for me,” he ordered as he leaned back to watch.

She smiled and blushed in embarrassment, but began to slowly unbutton her shirt and dance to the rhythm of some song that played in her head. When her shirt was completely open, she began to loosen her tie as he said “Leave the tie on.” She slowly pulled the shirt off her shoulders and threw it at him, smiling. She unbuttoned her skirt and shimmed out of it, smirking. She kicked her shoes off. “And leave the socks.” She smirked again and walked over to him, straddling him on the bed.

“You old perv,” she said teasingly, sweetly, smiling and kissing his pursed lips, her hands running up from his shoulders to his hair.

“Do you really think that?” He asked as she kissed his jawline and chin, since he had not given her the access she desired to his lips. His hands were still supporting him on the mattress. She
pulled back and looked him in the eyes. He seemed lost in between insecurity and anger.

“Of course not! I was just teasing you!” She pecked his lips and looked at him inquisitively, unsure if she had ruined the evening.

He took his hands to her buttocks and pulled her core closer to his cock, then caressed her ass. She felt his hard-on and rolled her hips to get friction.

“I actually think you are quite tame for what I imagined of a Slytherin,” she still rubbed herself on him.

“Tame, am I?”

He swiftly flipped her to lie on her back on the bed, and he crawled on top of her. He grabbed her hands, one after the other, and pinned them together over her head. He caressed her wrists and murmured something and she felt something like ropes pulling on her arms and tying her to the headboard, but they were invisible.

“Please don’t hurt me,” she blurted out. He froze, looking at her, the small smile that had crossed his lips quickly vanishing and anger flashed in his eyes for half a second before it gave room to bitter disappointment.

“If you think me capable of hurting you, Miss Granger, you shouldn’t even be here.” He waved his hand at her wrists and she was free. He climbed off her and moved to the next room so quickly she wasn’t even able to react and hold on to him. She took her hands to her face and grunted in frustration. Hermione, you fucking idiot! What was that? The man saved your life, more than once most likely with all he did in the war, he’s going to hurt you now? Fuck! How could you accuse him of that?

She got up and found his teaching robes hanging next to the door. She put it on to cover herself a bit. It was so long, she would definitely trip on it. Hermione entered the sitting room and saw he was on an armchair with a book. He didn’t even look up at her.

“Get dressed and leave,” he said coldly, flipping the pages to find his place in the book.

She moved around behind him and put her hands on his shoulders to see how he would react. He just turned the page of his book. Good. She leaned down, her hands sliding down his chest.

“I’m sorry,” she said when her lips were next to his ear. “I really am.” She nipped his earlobe. “It was just a reflex. I said it without thought.” She kissed his neck. “Because I’ve never been tied up in a good way before, you know. It just made me a little anxious.”

Snape sighed deeply. Of course. She’d been attacked only weeks before. Tied to a fucking tree. He was such an idiot.

“Please take me back to your bed.” Her hand slipped down to his cock. It had gone slightly soft, but she stroked him over his trousers and nibbled on his ear in an effort to get it back to his full glory. “You can do whatever you want to me,” she whispered.

“That is a very dangerous offer to make, Miss Granger.”

“What. Ever. You. Want.” She was still stimulating him. “I trust you. Tie me up again. Show me how much of a Slytherin you really are, professor.” He was hard again. She grazed her nails on his chest, over his frockcoat. “And don’t call me Miss Granger,” she purred in his ear.
He threw the book on the coffee table and stood. He picked her up and threw her over one shoulder. She gasped in surprise, but did not protest as he took her to the bedroom and threw her back on the bed.

“There he is!” She smiled as she pulled off his robes and threw it to the side. She willingly put her arms up above her head and smiled. “You are too tame for a Slytherin, professor.”

He growled and crawled on top of her again, waving his hand over her wrists and tying her up again. “I’m going to blindfold you too, cheeky Gryffindor,” he whispered in her ear as blindfolds appeared covering her eyes.

His tongue trailed the way down from her collarbone, past her hard nipples, which he sucked on briefly, down to her stomach, then kissed his way down to her navel and then her hipbone. He wanted to go further down but her knees were tightly closed. He looked up at her and could see her cheeks were bright red under the blindfold and she bit her lips not in pleasure, but in doubt and embarrassment.

“I thought you said I could do whatever I want to you. That you trusted me,” he smirked, analyzing as her expression changed.

“I do, but you never… I don’t… I…” She was so nervous. He had never gone down on her. Would she smell okay? She should have showered before this. Why was he doing it now? Would he enjoy it? Did he feel he had to so she could do it on him?

“Weren’t we over these embarrassments, kitten?” He kissed her chin, then her cheek as she tried to blindly reach his lips with hers. He granted her a small kiss in the spirit of calming her down. She sucked on his lips, her tongue massaging his, and she did calm down a bit. His lips moved down to her collarbone and he moved her tie out of the way when he licked a trail down her cleavage. She smiled and arched her back, trying to push a breast in the direction of his lips. He sucked on one as his fingers teased the other. He teased her nipple with the tip of his tongue then caught it between his teeth lightly, which caused her to moan and part her knees despite herself. His hand slid into her knickers, down her mons and a finger parted her and found her clit to tease. She spread her legs wider. He dipped two hooked fingers into her folds and began to hit that sweet spot inside her, slowly, making her whimper. In and out, and she whimpered again. His thumb then got to teasing her clit as his other fingers continued to slowly fuck her. She moaned and rocked her hips against his hand. He then stopped and she whimpered, begging for more. He took the opportunity to place himself between her legs, preventing them from closing again and continued his lips’ interrupted journey down to her stomach and navel until he reached her green and silver lace covered mound. She held her breath.

“Breathe, kitten. Just breathe,” he said as he kissed and licked her over the cloth. She breathed and relaxed as he continued to kiss, suck and even nip her over her knickers. Her nervousness dissipated more and she moaned softly, showing her excitement. He then pulled the fabric up, into her slit, making it rub against her clit and causing her to moan louder as he placed his kisses and licks on the bare skin of her labia. She quivered and hung her head back, and pretty soon she was very wet, staining her knickers. He pulled them off slowly and she lifted her feet up towards the ceiling to aid him as he passed them over her sock covered legs. He placed his face in between her legs again and held her hips as she felt his tongue moving on her clit, up and down, up and down, and his lips occasionally gently sucking on her mons, on her nub. She was going to say something but immediately forgot what. Her lips couldn’t form the words. Only moans and whimpers came out. Fuck this felt so good. So good. She could feel her essence pooling in her core, oozing out of her. She thought she had never been so wet.
He suddenly pulled his tongue away from her clit and planted kisses on her hipbones, her mons, her inner thighs, grazing his teeth there, teasing her. When she thought his magical tongue would return home, he moved to kiss other parts of her skin. She could never know where his lips would land, she was going insane. She groaned and couldn’t see he was smirking. Suddenly his tongue was back, flat on her clit and she moaned in relief and desire as it began working its magic again, pushing her closer to the edge, licking and sucking her bud of nerves as she whimpered and moaned. Her legs began to tremble and to press against his cheeks, and his hands moved to her thighs to hold her open. His strength in holding her only made her wetter for him.

She tried to touch him, she wanted to sink her fingers into his hair and encourage him further, but she pulled her hands and remembered she was tied up. She wanted to look at him as well, see if he enjoyed this as she did, but couldn’t. His lips abandoned the sweet spot again, moving to her groin, her inner thighs, her mons, and she whimpered. “Please. Pleeeeeaaase,” trying to push her hips up but being unable to, since he held her open.

He smirked, and moved his tongue down her slit to her entrance, and as he licked her opening and his tongue entered her, his nose rubbed on her swollen, sensitive clit and drove her so close to release. *Fuck, I love his nose. I love it. Love it. I’ll punch whoever makes fun of it in front of me from now on.*

She panted, her breathing labored. She was heaving, almost there.

He licked the full length of her slit and returned to licking her clit.

“Oh yes, yes. Severus. Severusssss,” she cried as she came.

He had thought that he didn’t want her calling him by his name, that it was too informal, too intimate. But it was exactly what was missing. She screaming his name, reaffirming that it was he who held that power of making her scream and come undone so fucking beautifully.

He watched as her body contorted, kissing her bud lightly as it did, making the pleasure ripple through her body more and more. And then it relaxed under him, and he planted light kisses on her inner thighs.

“You so are delicious, kitten. I could eat you all day.” He trailed back his kisses from her knee to her groin, then kissed the flesh between her navel and her mound.

“Severus,” she said again with no fear of him reprimanding her. If he didn’t like it he would have said so already. He liked the sound of her voice gasping his name. “Severus.” He kept at what he was doing, kissing her other thigh.

“Sev.”

He stopped. The only person who had ever called him Sev had been Lily. He fucking forbade anyone else from ever trying. He would hex whoever did…

But when he heard her doing it, it didn’t bother him. There was no anger boiling up inside him. He even… liked it.

“Sev?” She was now apprehensive with his silence.

“Yes?”

She exhaled in relief. “Please untie me,” she said so softly, so vulnerable.
“Is it too tight, kitten?”

“No. I just want to touch you. To see you. To kiss you.”

He smirked and waved his hand towards her, vanishing her blindfold.

“There.”

“My hands?”

“No, no. That is what a tame little Gryffindor would do. You will remain tied.”

She smiled. “Why are you still dressed?” She locked her legs behind him looking up at him, craving to taste his lips, which glistened with her essence. He waved his hand in front of him casting a seam splitting spell and his clothes fell from his body.


He held her knees to her shoulders and teased her with his cock, rubbing it on her clit and exposed folds. She bit her lower lip and whimpered. He then plunged himself in her core and relished in the drawn out moan she let out as her head lolled back. He rolled his hips slowly, moving inside her, and she sucked in air through her teeth as her body quivered. He pulled himself out and plunged back in. Again. And again as she moaned and smiled up at him. One hand left her legs and palmed her breast.

“Oh yes. Please. Oh fuck that feels so good.” She moaned and he began to burry himself in her with more speed. She was so wet he slipped in easily and the sounds from her wet core could be heard as he entered her again and again.

“You are so wet, kitten. So fucking wet. Can you hear your wet little pussy?”

“Yes,” she whimpered, embarrassed.

“Is this all for me?” He smirked.

“Yes,” she half panted, half moaned. Her breathing was heavy and she was getting past the point of forming coherent thoughts.

“I’m sorry, I didn’t catch that,” he teased as he leaned into her, her ankles over his shoulders.

“Yes. Yes.” She managed to say louder. “All for you, Severus. You’re… the only one… who makes me feel… like this,” she panted.

He smiled and the feeling that she was going to melt because of that smile was added to all the sensations he provoked in her at that moment.

“Yes, that is what you get when you fuck Slytherin men.”

“And what a magnificent man you are, Severus Snape,” she cried.

He looked lost with the compliment for half a second before smiling again and pounding her harder. She was certainly just referring to his sexual abilities.

“Oh Sev, I’m gonna come. I’m gonna come!”

“Are you? Then come for me, you naughty witch,” he replied as he fucked her harder,
lowering her legs and moving his hand between their bodies to rub her clit.

“Come with me,” she moaned loudly, her heavy breathing making it almost unintelligible.

“Oh no, I’m not done with you yet, kitten.”

She threw her head back in between her arms, her eyes rolling back in her head, and cried out as her body tensed up and she was driven over the edge. He watched with a smile on his face and an inhuman amount of self-control not to come as she clench around his girth. He still plunged into her slowly, triggering her pleasure again and again as she tried to come down.

He pulled out of her as her body relaxed and she smiled, her eyes still closed. He touched her wrists and undid her bonds, and she reached up her hand to feel him, her arms numb from the strain. She lazily caressed his chest, his arms, trying to pull him in for a kiss.

“Turn around, kitten.”

“Huh?” She uttered, still in a haze.

“Turn around, on all fours.”

“Oh, no, no, Sev, I can’t take it anymore, I’m so tired…”

“No, do you see this here, kitten?” He held his rock hard cock and stroked it once. She looked at it and nodded, smiling. “Still hard, for you.” She bit her lower lip. “Do you think it’s fair to leave me like this when I made you come… twice?” She shook her head, still smiling, and reached down to stroke him. “Did you not have fun, kitten?”

“Yes. So much fun. So much,” her sleepy voice said as she still caressed his cock.

“Then turn around and I promise you will have the time of your life.”

She smiled and turned around lazily. Tired. So tired. She slumped down with her ass up in the air.

He plunged into her but there was no sweet moan he so enjoyed hearing. He pulled out and slapped her bum three quick consecutive times, alternating cheeks. That made her alert as she pulled in air through gritted teeth.

“Do it again,” she asked smiling, now on all fours and gently shaking her bum at him.

“Oh, you like that do you?” He slapped her cheeks again, one on each. It stung but in such a wonderful way. She pushed her bum back towards him ever so slightly, as if pleading for more. He slapped her once more and caressed her ass cheek, his fingers then slipping down to her slit and teasing her glistening folds.

“Looks like kitten is getting wet again. Naughty little Gryffindor princess likes to be spanked.” He spread her juices all over her labia, up to her bum.

She blushed, and though he could not see it, he knew. He smirked. “Perhaps you have a bit of Slytherin in you.” She pushed back into him. “Have you been a bad kitten that deserves to be spanked?”

“Yes. Very,” she moaned promptly.

“Tell me how you’ve been naughty.”
“I fantasize about my Potions master,” she said with a smile. He slapped her once.

“What do you fantasize about?”

“About him fucking me. In a bathtub.” She said slightly embarrassed.

He slapped her bum. “What else? And use your words.”

“About him fucking me in the library,” he slapped her and she cried out. “Against the bookshelves, on the study table,” he slapped her twice. “I finger myself in bed thinking of him until I come.” He slapped her once more.

“That is very naughty indeed,” he said smirking.

“I fantasize about him fucking me in his classroom, on my work table.”

“And will you get wet all over that table?” He slapped her again and she moaned.

“Oh yes, very wet.”

“Looks like kitten is a bit of an exhibitionist,” he smirked and slapped her again. “Anything else?”

“I sometimes wonder what he would feel like… in my bum.”

He smirked. “Really?” He caressed her cheeks and teased her slit again.

“Please fuck me, Severus,” she moaned.

He plunged into her and her lips let out the moan he longed to hear.

“There it is,” he smiled and smacked her ass again. She moaned louder. As he began to pound her, he spread her cheeks and let his thumb caress her puckered entrance.

“Oh fuck, Severus!” She cried out as she raised a hand to grip the headboard.

“I thought I was,” he smirked as he thrust into her. She threw back into him enthusiastically, he hardly had to do anything.

He united her bunches in one hand and pulled on them as he vigorously fucked her. She felt a jolt of arousal run through her body and all her hairs stood on end. He pulled again, only this time he pulled her back completely, to lean back on his chest, have her body against his.

“Why do you charm your hair, kitten?” He whispered in her ear as he rolled his hips to move inside her, making her moan once again.

“To look good. For you,” she let out without thinking.

“You don’t have to do that for me,” he grabbed her hair again and she could feel her charm being reversed, her hair growing back into its normal bushy state. “I like your unruly hair,” he whispered to her and kissed her neck. She smiled and reached back to sink her fingers in his hair.

He held her by the waist and his other hand teased her nipples. She turned her head, trying to kiss him but all she could manage was to kiss his jawline. He slipped his fingers in between her thighs and rubbed her bud of nerves.
“Oh fuck yes, Sev,” she breathed as she let her head rest back on his shoulder. He pulled her tie to loosen it with his other hand, then took it off her completely. He took his hand to her throat, and for the briefest moment she felt a pang of fear. But then she remembered who it was, and that he would not hurt her. Even if he did, she would die in fucking ecstasy. His fingers were as good as his nose on her clit, she loved them. He squeezed her neck, but she could still breathe. He only constricted her blood flow, and every sensation she felt was increased tenfold. He let go, his hand going to her waist again, his other one ceasing its ministrations and just resting on her mound.

“Do that again,” she pleaded, still holding his head next to hers, her fingers in his hair.

“Do what again, kitten?” He whispered and kissed her neck.

“Choke me. Everything.” She panted.

He smirked as he breathed “You are a Slytherin at heart” in her ear. Gladly obliging her request, he took his hand to her neck again as the other teased her nub. When he let go of her throat, his hand glided down to her breast and teased her nipple as he continued to rub her clit and thrust into her. She pulled on his hair as her other hand gripped his thigh, trying to pull him even closer to her, her body tensing up and convulsing against him as she screamed “Severussss” and her essence flowed freely down his fingers and cock and legs. He came as well, grunting in her ear and gripping her hips.

“Oh no, I wet your bed!” She said in embarrassment. It was the first time she had come quite as hard, squirting. She didn’t know it was possible.

He chuckled in her ear as he still caressed her inner thigh. “That just means I did I good job and you had fun, kitten.” He kissed her temple as he slipped out of her. “Was that wild enough for you or should I take it up a notch next time?”

She turned around quickly and was able to finally steal the kiss she so longed for all night, their tongues wrestling as she sunk her hands in his hair and he held her close to him by the waist. He nipped her lower lip as they broke apart.

“That was fantastic. Fantastic. Such a good job,” she said as she let her body fall back onto the bed.

He lied down beside her looking at the ceiling, furrowing his brow. “Of all the character flaws I possess, I never thought being a cradle-robbing lech would be one of them” he groaned, a little disgusted with himself for having been so aroused with her little schoolgirl costume. She was still in her fucking socks, for Merlin’s sake.

“What?” She turned to him. “No. No. No self-loathing,” she said sleepily. “I want this. You aren’t taking advantage of me. If anything, I seduced you.” She smiled and stroked his cheek, but before she knew it, she dozed off.

She did not know how long she slept, if it was mere minutes or hours, but she woke with Snape’s voice calling “Miss Granger” from a distance.

“Hermione,” she said blinking her eyes open.

He wore black pajama pants and was going through a drawer in his dresser. He pulled out
the top of his pajamas and pulled it on, buttoning it up with dexterity. His hair was damp.

“Excuse me?” He asked as he turned to her.

“After what happened tonight, call me Hermione. Or kitten.” She smiled. “You can’t do all of that and then Miss Granger me. Call me Hermione.” He arched an eyebrow and she understood immediately. “In here. When we are alone.”

He stared at her for a while, eyebrow still arched. This was getting too personal. He should have stopped her from calling him by his ridiculous given name. But he really did enjoy hearing it from her lips… she was a clever girl, she wouldn’t let it slip in public… no, it was too dangerous, he needed to stop it. He should fucking stop all of it. He needed to. He sighed.

“Very well. Hermione,” he heard himself say, without his own consent. “You cannot stay here. It is getting late, your friends might notice. You should go.”

She nodded. “I’m going to have to use your shower, though.”

He arched an eyebrow again.

“I can’t go back like this. I’m sweaty and messy. And I smell of sex. And naughty potions master.” She smiled.

His lips twisted into a cocky smile of sorts. He pointed to a door to her right, close to the window that gave view into the lake’s depths. “Through there.”

She tried to get up but her legs would not obey. “I don’t think I can walk, though.”

Snape smirked. “What every man wants to hear.” He walked over to the bedside table and took a bar of chocolate from the drawer. He took her hands and pulled her to sit up, breaking a piece of the chocolate and offering it to her. “Eat.”

She bit into it and savored it. He held her hands to steady her as she slowly tried to get up.

“Can you walk?” He asked when she was standing.

“I think so. Slowly.” As soon as he let go her legs bucked a bit under her. He caught her and lifted her into his arms, carrying her to the bathroom.

She smiled at him, pushing his damp hair back from his cheeks.

“Aren’t you sweet.”

His face became grave as his lips pursed.

“I am not sweet.”

“Don’t scowl. I’m not mocking you. You can be sweet. Sweet is good. Chicks dig it.”

“Chicks dig it?” He smiled and held back a laugh.

“Yes, we do. Keep that in mind for future endeavors,” she smiled and kissed his cheek. She hated to think he would be with someone else after her. He could be fucking someone else while he was with her. They never said they were exclusive. But she felt a pang, a desire to be the only one as she thought of it. She couldn’t ask about that though, he wouldn’t take it well. He had been clear, this did not mean she could make demands of him.
He got to the bathroom and sat her on the ledge of the tub. Of course she is already thinking of leaving. They never do last long around you. But you will have your fun as long as she wants it. Just keep your distance, do not get attached. Good luck with that, since you are already on first name basis now, fucking idiot.

“Will I have to wash you?” He asked smirking.

“No, I can manage.” She smiled.

His bare feet crossed the checkered floor to the cabinet under the sink and grabbed a bar of soap for her. She took it as he went over to turn the shower on. It smelled nice, the soap, peppery, like him. It seemed like he made it himself. He went to another cabinet near the window and took out a fresh fluffy white towel and hung it where she could reach it from the shower.

“Get to it then,” he said as he left.

She got out of the bathroom wrapped in the towel, her hair charmed back to the wide smooth curls that had adorned her head lately.

“What’s with the hair…Hermione?”

She smiled back at him as she bent over to pick up her bra and shirt off the floor. Hearing him say her name was such a sweet sound.

“It was charmed when I came here, I can’t go back with it different. I’m supposed to be studying, not practicing beauty charms.”

She dropped the towel to put on her bra and he went into the sitting room. When he came back, she had her shirt already buttoned. As she looked for her skirt, he came up behind her and caressed her bum, something cold and slimy on his hands. She looked back startled and he showed her a phial.

“For the sting and redness.”

“Oh. Thanks.” She felt a tingle, which probably meant the marks were fading already. She had rather fancied keeping them there. His marks on her. A reminder of him. Of this wonderful night.

She pulled on her skirt and knickers and was about to leave when he said “Take off your knickers.”

“What? No, Severus… I can’t anymore. Really. You’ve tired me out, and it’s late, I…”


She reluctantly pulled them off, afraid of getting to the dormitory at too late an hour but at the same time excited for what else he would do to her. His ordering tone aroused her, she couldn’t deny. Sweet Circe, this man was insatiable. Good.

She took the knickers off and waited. He reached out his hand, asking for them. She handed them over.

“You may go,” he said.
“What…?” she looked puzzled.

“I like souvenirs,” he smirked.
Chapter Notes

Thanks for all the kudos and comments and reviews! They are always VERY welcome and I read them all, though sometimes I don't answer each and every one.

Hermione woke up with a hand gingerly shaking her shoulder. She opened her eyes to see Ginny above her, smiling.

“Who is it?”

“What?” Hermione asked still half asleep, not quite following her friend’s line of thought.

“Who’s the guy?”

“Guy?” Hermione felt the blood leave her face as she still tried to look innocent and oblivious. “What guy?”

“Come on, Hermione, you are seeing someone. I’m not stupid. I hear you coming and going at all hours of the night, every day. I’m a very light sleeper, for your despair.”

She had taken up the habit of seeing Snape every day for at least a week and a half now. She didn’t care much anymore about seeming detached and mature. After what he had done to her last week, fuck, she needed to see him every day. She would go at different hours, according to excuses (or lack thereof) she could think of. If she was to be at the library studying, or at an Occlumency lesson, she would go earlier. When it seemed to be pushing it giving such excuses, she would wait for everyone to go to bed or she would pretend to go to bed herself before everyone else and sneak out disillusioned. The funny thing was, they didn’t have sex every day. Far from it. There would be days he had meetings or rounds, others he was correcting something or other, and she was just going to see him, exchange a couple of minutes of witty banter and leave before he got impatient with her and threw her out. She enjoyed it. She smiled as she thought of that. One of those times, she had actually had an Occlumency lesson and was getting better at it, because of that time she delved into his mind and saw how he did it.

“And don’t get me wrong, Hermione, I love you, but you seem a lot less uptight and snappy than before. You even smiled at the Halloween party instead of freaking out about all the rules we were breaking.”

Hermione smiled as she remembered what had happened that night.

“And by the stupid grin on your face right now, you not only are seeing someone, you are in love.”

Hermione’s smile faded instantly. “I am not.”

“So there is someone. I knew it!”

“There’s no one, Gin,” she said as she got up and moved Ginny out of her way.
“Is it Draco?” Ginny asked with a bit of a repulsed look on her face.

“Ginny!” She did not want to deny it was Draco. If Ginny kept on at this idea it would be useful for her to think it was Draco. Better than finding out the truth.

“What? If he’s making you this happy, I won’t judge!”

“There’s no one, Ginny!”

“Right, okay. I have all day, you know. It’s Sunday. You can talk to me!”

“I know I can. And I would if there was anything to talk about.”

“If you are worried about me telling Ron, I won’t. I know he’s been harassing you to get back with him.”

He was. Ron had approached her twice in the last few days, begging to get back together.

“Come on, Mione. We’re so good together,” he would whine.

She couldn’t help but burst out laughing.

“What?” He said, a stupid look of puzzlement on his face.

“I’m sorry, but we weren’t. We were good as friends, but not as a couple. We have almost nothing in common, save the war and always trying to save Harry. You never listened to me or what I had to say, always dismissed it as boring.”

“I can change. I will change.”

“Good. Appreciate your next girlfriend more.”

“I want you, Mione. Why won’t you give me a second chance? I said I was sorry. Please forgive me. There is absolutely no reason to not give me another chance.”

She just snorted. How could she possibly go back to him when she was now with a man – a man- who not only stimulated her body – oh that he did so very well – but also her mind. He was a great wizard from whom she could learn so much, had already learned so much. Who she admired. And he only talked Quidditch to taunt the other heads of houses – he had even taunted her before the last Gryffindor game – but he did not live and breathe it like Ron seemed to do. That was the best part.

Well that’s all very well and good, Hermione, except for the fact that you are not with him. Not really.

She sighed. “No Ron. I’m happy with where I am now,” she had said.

“I know you won’t tell Ron, Ginny, but there is nothing to tell. Really.” Hermione had already changed out of her pajamas and was now standing in front of the mirror trying to do something about her hair. She remembered that Severus had said he liked it natural and she smiled. God bless that man for saying that. But her natural hair was… difficult. She went back to working on it every morning, combing and doing whatever else she could without charming it to be different, just because he had put a smile on her face with his words. That is dangerous territory, Hermione.
“So, what are we doing today?” Ginny asked, smiling.

“I have some homework to do, and since it is already too cold to sit outside… I’m going to the library.”

“All right, let’s go then.”

“Ginny, are you going to trail me all day in hopes of seeing this alleged boyfriend? Cause you won’t see anything, you know.”

“You insult me! I just want to spend some girl time with my best friend. And it just so happens I have homework as well.”

“All right.” Hermione smiled. “What about the boys?”

“I expect they will cock around all day then desperately put some shit together tonight, like they always do.”

Hermione laughed. “And they want to be Aurors. Merlin help us,” she said playfully.

They spent almost all afternoon at the library with Luna. It was impossible to go see Snape. When Ginny said she wanted a girl’s day with Hermione, she was not kidding. She was with her every waking moment, even waving Harry off whenever he tried to come close or pull her away. Every so often Ginny would try to get her to open up about something, to see if she would slip about “the boyfriend”, but Hermione held strong. It’s not that she didn’t want to talk to her about it, ‘cause she so did. But Snape could find out. He was a Legilimens, for fuck’s sake. And then he could call it all off and possibly kill her as well. And she couldn’t bear to not see him, not have him touch her. Not now. Not yet

Plus, she was really afraid of the judgment Ginny would dispense, though it would probably be much less than say… Harry. She did not need them to ruin her mood about this.

When Hermione said she would go back to bed early, Ginny followed her. She definitely wouldn’t be able to sneak out as planned. She stayed up talking to Ginny, eating sweets and laughing.

Luckily she had an Occlumency lesson scheduled for Monday evening. She didn’t have to lie or sneak out, and Ginny definitely did not want to tag along. Though she was appreciative of Snape, she admitted he could still be scary and she would not dare intrude on a private lesson with him.

So she met Snape and had a good lesson. Obviously they had a mind-blowing shag afterwards. She was walking down the halls, on her way back to the common room, smiling at any and everything. She was smiling not only due to the very satisfying sex she had just had, but also because she had had the nerve to try and make Snape open up to her, even if just a little, and he had.

“So, how was your day?” She had tentatively asked as his lips met her collarbone and his hands eased the straps of her black and purple laced bra off her shoulders.

He arched an eyebrow. “What the fuck difference does that make?”

“I just want to have an idea if I’ll be dealing with Professor Snape or with Severus today,” she tried, pulling that excuse from her head on the spot. “If it will be naughty or very very naughty,” she smiled.
“Which do you prefer?” He smiled as he opened her bra. She held on to his neck, straddling his lap.

“I really can’t say,” she still smiled as well.

He grabbed her ass and pulled her closer, and she could feel his stiff cock against the lace of her knickers, restrained by his trousers. He then palmed her breast, hoping to get on with it with no further interruptions.

“You haven’t answered me.”

He grunted in frustration. “Fine. I see you are not giving this up. It was a foul day, as any when I have to teach dimwitted adolescents. Especially first years, who don’t let me get through five minutes of lecture without showering me with questions.”

She sniggered. “They just want to learn.”

“Doubtful, since they never get smarter in the following years. And they ask nothing of potions, only of the war. The only reason I don’t hand out more detentions is not to have to endure them longer than necessary. And not to cut into my shagging know-it-all Gryffindors time.” He smirked and sucked on the breast he wasn’t massaging.

“So you have better days on Wednesdays and Thursdays when you teach me.” She smirked as well.

“Hardly,” he said as he turned her to lie on his bed. “While you are very bright, you do not make up for your classmates’ stupidity. And every time your hand shoots up in the air I want to tie them that way and spank you.” He said it in anger of her constant questioning, but she just smiled as she locked her legs around him.

“Now there’s an idea,” she smiled. He growled. “Do I brighten your evenings at least?” She risked it. He did not answer and just kept trailing his lips’ way down to her mound. And then she didn’t feel so talkative anymore.

She caught herself smiling so much her cheeks hurt. No no no no no... Was Ginny right? Was she falling for him? No, no, no, no. Crap. No Hermione! Anxiety and apprehension took over her mind as she overanalyzed her feelings and actions and what they meant while walking up to Gryffindor tower.

It was late to be wondering the halls, but not so late that the common room would be empty. She braced herself before she gave the Fat Lady the password. She couldn’t go up disillusioned. Her friends would notice she hadn’t come in at any time, and she would just appear in bed the next morning... that would be hard to explain. She had been so caught up in the rollercoaster of emotions she felt on her walk up to the tower, she did not stop to think of an excuse as to why she was later than expected.

“Where were you?” Harry asked in a worried tone.

“What do you mean? I had an Occlumency lesson.”

“And Snape kept you there till now?” He asked surprised. “Your other lessons haven’t been this late.”

She was at a loss. If she said the lesson had been this long, they could suspect something was up with him. And she had no other excuse thought up.
“No, the lesson ended an hour ago. I… afterwards had to…” While she tried to think on her feet, Ginny smiled at her knowingly.

“Leave her alone, Harry. Who are you? Mr. Granger? The girl can have a life separate from you, you know;” her friend defended her.

“Geez, I was just worried. She was attacked not too long ago.”

“Well you can see she is fine. Stop badgering her.”

Some sort of punishment. That’s it! I talked back to Snape, or saw one of his memories! And he had me scrubbing cauldrons till now. Good. Ok.

“Relax guys I was just…” Hermione started, but Ron cut her off.

“Are you seeing someone?” His face was as red as his hair.

She wanted to say no, but some sort of anger rose in her. Why the hell does he care? He still thinks I’m not capable of finding someone and that I would just hurry back to him?

“I hardly think that is any of your business,” she heard spilling from her lips.

“So that’s why you won’t take me back? Why can’t we know who it is then? Are you ashamed of him? Are you shagging him?”

He was growing angrier and his voice grew louder. Half the common room was now watching the spectacle.

“Ron, mate, cool it.” Harry said holding him back as he rose from the chair where he had been sitting, his fists clenched at his sides.

“So you’re off shagging some bloke in the corridors of this castle, is that it? And you don’t want to introduce us? Or is he the one who’s ashamed of you? He probably thinks you’re just some slut he fucks, nothing more. Whore.”

“Ronald Weasley, you ass!” Ginny screamed.

Harry held him back.

Hermione had been in shock while he talked and couldn’t bring herself to say anything to interrupt him. Now anger rose up and in one quick movement, she took her wand out from her jeans’ pocket and swished it at him, hot angry tears rolling down her face. His face began to swell immediately as every inch got covered in boils, and she ran through the portrait hole while most of the on-lookers laughed at him or tried to help in some way.

She roamed the halls aimlessly and didn’t even bother to disillusion herself. How she could have fancied and dated such a fucking asshole! Been his friend? She had never thought him capable of saying such things. She cried hot tears that flowed down her face like a waterfall. She could not control them, control herself. Why did everything that dunderhead say affect her so much? She shouldn’t even care. It was fear. Fear he was right. Fear she was just a slut to Severus.

It was funny how Severus, who everyone saw as a git, would never say such a thing to her. At least she didn’t think so. He was hard to get to know. But what little she managed to penetrate his protective walls showed a glimpse of a good man, and she was sorry not everyone could see through his rough exterior and only listened to the rumors or what the papers said about his role in the war.
They should really see him. She smiled amidst her tears as she thought of him and looked at her index finger, to the ring he had restored for her, for no good reason.

But they did only shag, basically, and afterwards he would send her away. What if he did think she was a slut, a play thing he could toss out at any moment? He was honest to you from the start about what this was, and he never lacked respect with you. Don’t think about what that foul little boy said. Don’t ruin everything.

But she couldn’t help but cry harder thinking Severus didn’t really care about her, and never would. He had always loved Lily. She knew this.

She was so agitated she knocked some armor in the hallway over and it went tumbling down with a resonating clang. She tried to use her wand to lift it back to its place, but her nerves wouldn’t allow it. A door opened behind her and she heard a very familiar silky voice call “Hermione?”

Fuck fuck fuck. She covered her face with both her hands and didn’t turn around to face him. She was in the dungeons. Her feet had carried her there of their own accord. She couldn’t be here. No, no. She couldn’t come crying to him with her problems and insecurities. They weren’t in the type of relationship where he would comfort her and listen to her whine, kiss away her insecurities and worries. She had to get out of there. Calm yourself and turn to leave.

“Miss Granger!” He said more angrily, and she turned around, slowly uncovering her face.

“I’m sorry, I didn’t mean to… I don’t know how I… I just…” She tried, still sobbing.

He looked from side to side to verify that no one was around. With an angry wave of his wand he lifted the armor to its place and then quickly pulled her inside his office. He was already in his pajamas.

“What is wrong, Hermione?” He asked kindly after he had shut them safely in his office, his index finger lifting her chin so she could look at him.

“It’s nothing, it’s silly. I shouldn’t be here, I didn’t mean to come back, to bother you…” She was babbling. She still sobbed. She tried to wipe the tears away with her hands but they rolled down in such speed that it wasn’t enough.

He sighed and escorted her to his sitting room, sitting her down on an armchair. He kneeled in front of her as she sobbed away, and once again lifted her chin to him, but she looked away to wipe her tears again. This was mortifying. She needed to get out of there.

“He slipped into her mind and saw what had happened. Ron screaming horrible things at her as she just took it. He felt her anger and sadness and doubt all overwhelming her.

“That fucking little dimwitted asshole!” He looked murderous, but Hermione managed to smile a little.


She was still sobbing. She needed to calm down. He hated anyone crying, it annoyed him. But to see her crying made him feel… something different. He desperately wanted to see her smile again.
He went to his cabinet and came back holding a phial.

“Take it. For you to calm down.” She obeyed.

As her tears stopped flowing down her face, she let out

“I can’t believe someone I called a friend for so long would have such horrible things to say to me.”

“He’s a fucking imbecile. Don’t bother yourself with him. I will hex him. I could kill him. No one would ever find the body.” He looked dead serious.

Hermione smiled. She was calmer already. “Thank you. But I hexed him already.”

“Did you? What did you do?”

“He’s probably covered in boils in the infirmary right now.”

He smiled proudly. “That’s my lioness,” he said as he pushed her hair back from her face.

She felt warm inside with his words and his smile. She should go before she said something stupid.

“I should… go. Leave you to your… rest.” Her thoughts were blurry and her voice kind of slurred, she didn’t know why. She got up quickly and noticed she was dizzy. She almost fell over him, who was still kneeling in front of her, but he held her and sat her back down.

“You are not going anywhere. You would pass out before you got to your common room.”

“You… drugged me!” The potion was starting to make her very groggy, still she managed to sound outraged.

He snorted. “Yes, to get my way with you. Finally,” he said sardonically.

She whimpered and pouted. She was high on the potion already. He picked her up to carry her to his bed.

“Do you?” She asked, out of it.

“Do I what?”

“Think I’m a slut.” She started to cry again, though more calmly and quietly.

“No. There are many adjectives I would use to describe you. That is not one of them.”

“Like?” She smiled and twisted his hair in her fingers.

“Intelligent. Brave. Strong.”

“Awww!”

He snorted, holding back a laugh.

“What else?” She asked.

“Determined. A bookworm.” She pouted and grunted at this. “That is not bad,” he continued. “I am one myself,” he said as he put her down in his bed.

She smiled. “You are. What else?”
“Know-it-all.” She smiled. “Delicious,” he said in a low rumble. “Now go to sleep.”

She was almost asleep when she suddenly sat up and threw her feet down to the floor. “I have to brush my teeth.” She stumbled up towards the bathroom. He caught her, slightly annoyed, and escorted her there. She picked up his tube of toothpaste and squeezed some on her finger, scrubbing her teeth with it. He carried her back to bed when she was done and laid her under the covers. She was seemingly falling asleep and he decided to get into bed as well. She sprang up with a gasp.

“For Merlin’s sake, woman, what?”

“I can’t sleep in my clothes!”

“By all means, take them off,” he smirked with a raised eyebrow.

“No! I can’t sleep naked!”

“Why not? I’ve seen all there is to be seen.”

“Nooooo. No.” She whined, and it bordered on comical. “I’ll just summon my pajamas,” she motioned her wand and he grabbed her wrist.

“No!”

“Why?”

“Would it not seem rather unusual to have clothes floating out of Gryffindor tower, through the corridors of this castle, into my quarters? Are you mad, woman?”

“Oh.” She pouted.

He sighed and pinched his nose. “Fine.” He summoned a pajama shirt from his chest of drawers for her to wear. They were black and silk, like the ones he had on. She clumsily got undressed and put it on over her bra and knickers.

They were both in bed, lying apart. He was almost asleep, thinking that he should have sent her to her dormitory. This was too intimate. Sleeping – actually sleeping – together. But he couldn’t have done it. Not when she was in such a state.

“I’m cold,” he heard her say. He reached for his wand under his pillow and flicked it at the hearth to light it, but she was already scooting close to him.

“Can I snuggle?” She asked, her head already on his chest, her arm around him.

“If… you must,” he said, surprised, annoyed, his eyebrow raised, but feeling… warmth spreading in his chest. In a blink of an eye, she was asleep on him. He stayed immobile, not quite knowing what to do. He then put his arm around her and murmured a warming spell, pulling the covers up to her shoulders and pulling her closer to rest his chin on her bushy hair.
He opened his eyes to a sunlit room, sunlit through the few high windows the room had and the window to the lake itself. It was a miracle he woke up at all since he had never in his life slept so well. Her unruly mane was covering half his face, the smell of her coconut shampoo filling his nostrils, so sweet. Her slow, steady breathing on his chest regulated his, calmed him. His arm was still around her and completely numb. That was something which had the potential of definitely annoying him, but right now it felt so… good. But it had to end. She had to go back to her dormitory and get ready for classes before the halls were full. And this was intimacy far beyond his abilities. He would do something to cock it up and make her regret ever giving herself to him. Or she would regret it on her own eventually. He had to stop it. All of it.

“Hermione” he called as he gingerly shook her shoulder.

She woke up, but didn’t open her eyes. She wanted this to last forever. Lying on his chest was the most wonderful feeling, akin to having him inside her. But he certainly wouldn’t have liked it. He wasn’t the type. Why did she have to stumble there last night? He had helped her and been sweet, but he didn’t want a babbling, crying teenager on his hands. Or one that snuggled him. It was too much for him, surely. When she opened her eyes, it would be over.

“Hermione,” he shook her again.

She opened her eyes and moved away from him, blushing, to stretch.

“Good morning,” she tried.

“Good morning,” he answered. “You have to go to your dormitory before everyone wakes and you are seen in the halls. Or before your roommates notice you’ve been out all night.”

“Right,” she said as she rolled to the side and threw her feet to the floor. She got up and saw the full view of the depths of the lake through his window. Sunlight was flowing through the water and she could finally see everything and not just blackness. She walked up to push herself to the glass and take it all in. He was already in his trousers and reaching in his armoire for a white dress shirt when he called her again.

“Oh, sorry. I just was always curious to see it during the day,” she smiled feebly. She found her clothes and took off his pajama shirt, handing it to him. “Thank you,” she said.

He took it from her hand without a word and placed it on the bed.

“Not just for the shirt, you know,” she said pulling up her leggings. She wanted to elaborate but couldn’t, due to shyness and a little sadness that she couldn’t help but feel. He was weird. Distant. He just nodded at her thanks.

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Chapter 23

Chapter Notes

Surprise update! Just cause I need it.

Movie and book elements combined here.
“And sorry for intruding in your privacy. I know you don’t like it.” She wanted a response, to hear his voice. She pulled on her jumper and he just snorted as he buttoned his shirt.

“You should hurry, students will be out of bed soon,” he said pulling his frockcoat from his closet.

“I’m ready. When… when can I come back?” She couldn’t help herself.

“Well, given that your friends are suspecting something and that ginger head imbecile shouted it out for all your House to hear, I think we should give it a rest for a bit.”

“Well, given that your friends are suspecting something and that ginger head imbecile shouted it out for all your House to hear, I think we should give it a rest for a bit.”

“Yeah, OK. That’s probably best,” she held back her tears.

He saw the sadness in her eyes and almost took back his words. “For a couple of weeks. Just until something else is news in this blasted castle.”

“Yes, all right.” But she couldn’t help but feel that he was just letting her down easy. She was not going to cry in front of him. Not again. She would not. No.

He walked her through his sitting room and was about to open the way to the hall when she stopped in front of him.

“Since we are not going to… see each other for a while” – anymore – “can I ask for a kiss? To hold me off till then” – as a goodbye. She managed a smile.

He pulled her by her waist after some consideration and held himself close to her lips, but did not go the whole way. She cupped her hands on his cheeks and touched her lips to his. Her tongue then began to plead for entrance and he quickly granted, his tongue delve into her mouth and wrestled hers as her hands sank into his hair and one of his hands pulled her closer by the waist as the other came to the back of her neck, sinking into her bushy hair.

When their lips parted she gasped, then looked down at the floor as he opened the door and verified no one was lurking in the halls. She was going to cry, she knew it, and he couldn’t see it. She had really fallen for him, it seemed, and now he wanted time apart. She didn’t think she could take it.

He moved out of the way for her to pass and she managed a “see you around then” as she hurried away. When she turned a corner, she let the tears burst out of her.

She was sitting on her bed, still crying and staring out the window when Ginny woke up.

“Hermione? Why are you still crying? Ron does not deserve your tears, that fucking moron.”

Hermione was lost for a moment, not even remembering what had transpired the previous night. All that weighed her heart was the fact that she had fallen for a man she could never hope to win over, and who most likely would never see her intimately again, since he had no wish for a relationship or to forgo his privacy, and most likely detested this position she had put him in the previous night. Stupid Hermione. Can’t even keep a casual great thing going.

“Yeah, no, he doesn’t. He just made me so…angry. And sad. To think I once considered such a creep my friend. And fancied him.” She looked over to see Ginny staring at her from her own bed. “I’m sorry, he’s your brother, I shouldn’t have said that.”
“No, no, it’s not that. You should say a lot more. I fucking hate him. Why… are you dressed in last night’s clothes?” Ginny smiled.

“Oh… I… I couldn’t sleep. So I got up about an hour ago and went for another walk.” Hermione came up with the excuse surprisingly quick, considering all the concerns that took over her mind. If there ever was a time that she needed someone to talk to about Severus… But she couldn’t.

“Oh… I thought… never mind.” Ginny saved her questions and suspicions for a more appropriate and happy time.

“Did you take Ron to the hospital wing last night?” Hermione asked.

“Yes,” Ginny replied annoyed, getting out of bed to start getting ready for the day. “Only because my mother wouldn’t let me hear the end of it if I didn’t. But he deserved to contort in pain all night.”

“Am I in trouble?” Hermione asked pulling off her jumper and searching her trunk for a fresh uniform shirt as the other girls began to get up and dressed as well. Her tears had stopped falling. She willed them to.

“What?” Ginny asked brushing her hair.

“You know, for having hexed him.”

“Oh. No. I told Madam Pomfrey it was an accident he himself had caused while practicing spells.”

“And he agreed to that? And Harry?”

“Ron couldn’t say anything. He had boils on his tongue as well. Well done, by the way!” Ginny smiled. “And Harry knows better than to contradict me,” she smirked.

Hermione remembered Severus calling her his lioness, looking proud. She held back the tears again.

“What about after, when he can speak again?”

“Don’t worry. I had a little sisterly chat with him.” She looked at Hermione meaningfully.

“And the rest of the common room?”

“NO one is happy with him. In fact, Harry is the only one who took a degree of pity on him and is willing to visit him at the hospital wing today.”

They got ready for the day and headed down for breakfast. She basically walked in tow of Harry and Ginny all day, shoulders slumped due to her sadness, blushing whenever someone looked at her and whispered something to the friend next to them.

On Wednesday, she had every reason to be a nervous wreck. She would have potions AND Ron would be out of the hospital wing. Ron just made her nervous because of the thought that he would harass her all day either to beg forgiveness or victimize himself. Other than that, she could not care less about him. The potions lesson made her more nervous. The thought of seeing him while knowing she wouldn’t be able to sneak to his room and have him hold her again… And he hadn’t said a word yesterday morning. What could he think of her? Then she remembered his sweet compliments to her. The kiss she had asked for and he hadn’t denied. So she willed herself to calm
down and cautiously hope that he hadn’t simply let her down easy, that he would indeed allow her back when things had died down a bit. With this thought firm in her mind, she entered the classroom in the dungeons.

She sat on her now usual table, at the back, and Draco had not yet arrived. She noticed Ron and Harry already sat at the table up front. Ron was not covered in boils, but his skin wasn’t smooth either. He had some very ugly marks all over his face that would probably take a while to completely go away. He had his head down and looked very beat.

Ginny arrived and sat beside her.

“Gin?”

“Yeah?”

Draco arrived and made a comment before Hermione could ask what Ginny was doing there.

“So, my harem is growing it seems,” he grinned. “Trouble in paradise with Potter, Weasley?” He sneered.

“Shut up, Malfoy.”

“How rude! You come to my table and tell me to shut up! Didn’t mother Weasley teach you some manners?”

“It’s not your table, asshole.”

“Gin, stop. He’s OK,” Hermione cut in.

“Wow, definitely some troubles there,” Draco mumbled.

“For your information, Malfoy, I’m only here because at the moment, I would rather sit with the likes of you than with my ass of a brother.”

“Yeah, what’s with that?” He turned to Hermione. “What did he do?”

“You don’t know? Everyone in school is talking about it,” Ginny said.

“Yeah, well, if you haven’t noticed, not many people talk to me. I just overheard he was hexed.”

“Hermione hexed him,” Ginny whispered.

“A little belated, no? If it’s for what he said to you when you broke up,” Draco said to Hermione.

“Wait, he knows what he said when you broke up? And you didn’t tell me?” Ginny was outraged.

“Ron’s your brother. It would have been awkward…”

“What did he do this time?” Draco asked.

“It’s nothing, it’s fine.” Hermione said.

“Tell me what he said when they broke up and I’ll tell you what happened on Monday,”
Ginny smiled mischievously.

“You know what, you’ve got yourself a deal, Weasley.” Draco stretched out his hand, grinning, so Ginny would shake it. She took it.

“Hey!” Hermione protested.

“You first,” Ginny said, ignoring her.

“Oh, of course! Always mistrust the former Death Eater. He must be lying.” Draco said ironically. “Fine. If I remember correctly, the gist of it was that she was boring and frigid and ugly, and since no other man would ever want her, she better take the pity fuck he was willing to give her.”

“Draco!”

“The bloody fucking bastard! He said that to you?” Ginny turned to Hermione. Hermione just blushed. “You should have told me! I would have fucking punched him when he whined that he was miserable without you.”

“Now your end, Weasley.”

“Right. Hermione has been… wandering lately, arriving late at the common room and all.”

“Don’t talk about me like I’m not here! I’m sitting right here!”

“And I’ve been thinking she’s been seeing someone,” Ginny said, ignoring her.

“I told you I’ve been studying, that’s all,” Hermione protested.

“Anyway, on Monday, she was less careful and arrived grinning like an idiot when we were sitting in the common room. Ron jumped to the same conclusions I did and yelled at her for the whole common room to hear that she was… a slut,” she whispered.

Draco contorted his face to show disgust. “I’ll hex him. What do you fancy I do to him?”

“Are all you Slytherins this protective?” Hermione let slip.

“Has another Slytherin offered to defend your honor, then?” Draco smirked. Hermione blushed and looked around. Ginny was smiling, looking at her with much interest as well.

“No… I was just asking in a general manner. I thank you for your kind offer, but you’ll notice I have hexed him already. I can take care of myself, thank you very much.”

Snape walked in, robes billowing in tow, and the room went silent. Hermione looked down at her hands immediately, calling forward calmness and a look of indifference.

They were to brew a potion which required a dragon’s pulverized tooth. Snape had informed there was a piece and a piece only for each in his stores, considering how hard a dragon’s tooth was to come by. Also, a dragon’s tooth was very fragile once plucked, he warned. Ginny got in line to get hers and took the opportunity to tell Harry the new piece of information she had retrieved and to berate Ron.

Hermione preferred to stay behind and slice some roots before retrieving her piece of tooth. Draco stayed as well.
“I know you’re shagging Snape,” he whispered.

Hermione cut her finger instead of the roots they were holding. She quickly picked her wand from the table and murmured “epskey,” pointing it to her finger.

“What the hell, Draco? Don’t whisper such horrendous things to a girl when she’s holding a knife!” She tried to conceal her surprise and convey disgust at the very thought of being touched by Snape.

“Yeah, right. As an actress you’re a great witch, Granger. No use hiding it from me.”

“I have no…”

“Well, let’s see… There’s the fact that you can barely look at him anymore, and when you do, you blush like someone hit you with a burning spell… And he doesn’t roll his eyes when your hand shoots up in the air anymore. His been more… mellow. Not so easy to annoy him anymore and lose house points. The other day I went to his office and actually caught the man smiling!”

“That means nothing. I don’t know what reasons he has, but I’ve been feeling awkward around him ever since I pulled him out of the Shrieking Shack covered in his own blood. It was really weird,” she tried to justify herself while her stomach flipped to think he could actually have changed a bit due to her.

“And then there’s that right there…”

Draco pointed to Ron walking back to his cauldron with his dragon tooth and Snape casually and discretely tripped him. He stumbled and the tooth almost fell to the ground.

“Careful Mr. Weasley… We wouldn’t want that to break and you to end up with no marks now… would we?” He smirked.

“A Slytherin defending your honor?” Draco smirked.

“That… that is just a coincidence.” She blushed and her stomach churned. Oh my goodness, Draco figured it out. Snape would go crazy with that. If he hadn’t already dumped her, he definitely would now. But could he… care for her? It was kind of sweet, him picking on Ron for her… Dear God, did I just think that? How the world turns…

Ginny came back and Hermione went to the stores quickly. When she came back, Draco was smirking as Snape abused Ron for having chopped up the ingredients instead of slicing them, and not paying attention to instructions. He took points from Gryffindor and cleared Ron’s work station, ordering him to redo his work.

Draco grinned away, looking at Hermione. She was more crimson than her House banner.

“Stop it!” She said from the corner of her mouth. She looked at him pleadingly.

“Relax, I won’t blab. I very much like my neck unsnapped.” Draco whispered as he pulverized his dragon tooth. “He looks at me as if he were calculating how big a grave he would have to dig whenever I touch you.”

“He does not,” she smiled. “It is not like that and it’s not even a thing anymore.”

“Oh yeah?” He leaned closer to her ear and whispered directly into it. “Watch.”
“Draco!” She elbowed him. She looked up at Snape and his eyes narrowed at them, his lips pursed.

“What the fuck are you two up to?” Ginny asked as she noticed Snape’s murderous stare in their direction.

Snape walked over in large strides. “Is there a problem here?” He asked.

“No sir,” Draco and Ginny answered promptly.

“No sir,” Hermione said afterwards, managing to look up at him without smiling.

“I suggest you two leave your… flirting to be done outside this classroom. Ten points from Slytherin and ten points from Gryffindor. If I look at anyone in this class and they are doing anything besides brewing, they will get no marks.”

He turned to head back to his desk up front, his robes billowing, his hands behind his back.

“I told you,” Draco whispered.

Hermione beamed down at her roots.

A week had passed. Everyone thought Draco was Hermione’s new boyfriend and he was happy to play the part though she strongly urged him not to. Half the school thought that if she was dating him, he maybe deserved a chance, so he slowly began to have more people be decent to him. The other half thought she had gone mad. She was afraid Snape was one who believed the nonsense as well.

Ginny, though, was wiser. She sat through some classes with both of them and something didn’t add up. They didn’t act much as a couple, only as friends, and Hermione was not as… happy as before. She had gone back to being a bit snappy and irritated in the past week. And she hadn’t done much late night “studying”. That couldn’t be a coincidence.

Snape was also much more rigid than he had been lately. He couldn’t sleep well, not as well as he had that night with Hermione in his arms, or even before, when he slept alone but with her scent on his sheets and pillows. He went back to having a few nightmares, though nothing as awful as it had been before he had started shagging the little chit. He hated that he had to send her away and that she apparently was very quick to find comfort in Malfoy. He had tried to enter his mind during classes, but Draco, unlike Potter, was a relatively skilled Occlumens. If he wanted to find something he would need more time with him. But it had been a week since Draco hadn’t sought Snape for a quick word or Sleeping Draught, like he was used to doing. Perhaps Hermione was now helping him sleep easy.

He couldn’t fucking take it anymore. He would not be able to teach another class and not kill a student without seeing her, hearing from her. And since now her interest was in Malfoy and that was the talk of the castle, no one would think much of seeing her leave his office.

The seventh years were in his classroom and he couldn’t even remember what his instructions to them had been. He just knew they were silent and they were brewing. She sat in the table in the back, as usual. What was not usual, however, was that the Weasley girl sat in between her and Malfoy. Hum. What could have happened there?

He ripped a piece of parchment from a pile on his desk and wrote something on it, murmuring a spell
as he did it. He crumpled it up in his hand and walked about the room, checking students’ work. When he came around Weasley, he suppressed the urge to dump the contents of his cauldron on his fucking shit-filled head.

He went to the last table and looked over Draco’s work, and the Weasley girl’s. He then stopped behind Hermione and as he looked over her shoulder, close, so very close, he could smell her hair again. He saw her skin prickle and a long steady breath being inhaled then exhaled softly. So he still had some influence there after all. He smirked. He discreetly placed the crumpled parchment beside her cauldron, on the side no one could see, and as his arm brushed against hers, she quivered. He tapped his index finger on the table next to the parchment twice and left for his desk.

She almost whimpered at the loss of closeness, but unfolded the parchment slowly, discreetly, after ascertaining Draco and Ginny were busy.

*Tonight? Nine o’clock.*

She looked up at him. He had his index finger on his temple, his thumb supporting his chin as he surveilled the room from his desk. He gave a curt nod, encouraging her to answer. She discreetly wrote *yes* on the parchment and he seemed to see her answer on a piece on his desk. He nodded curtly again.

Hermione was very excited. He called her again, even before the “at least two weeks” he had mentioned feebly. She came back from dinner and took a shower, put on the very best lingerie she could find in her trunk – she had taken to ordering them from a magazine for witches Ginny had that made owl deliveries - and put her regular jeans and jumper over them. She handled her wild hair, so that it was natural but presentable and even put on some perfume. She saw it laying around on Ginny’s dressing table and thought she wouldn’t mind. It was supposed to increase pheromones.

She went to the common room and sat with Ginny and Neville for a bit. Harry, the only one who took some amount of pity on Ron and still hung with him, though not happy with what he had done, eventually left Ron, who went up to his room, and joined the others. When her time for meeting Snape was approaching, Ginny and Harry went to a corner to be by themselves. Hermione sat with Neville for a bit more before saying she was tired and was going to call it a night. She went up to the dorm and closed her curtains on her four-poster so no one would “bother her”. Then she disillusioned herself and slowly and carefully made her way through the common room without being noticed.

When she knocked on his door, he tried not to seem too eager, even if he was aching to take her so much that he could do it against the door as soon as she walked in. He remained behind his desk and called out for her to enter. That she did and he could instantly smell her divine scent. Something was new in the mix of fragrances that was her skin, but he liked it very much. He did not want her to think he considered her a slut, a simple play thing he called on when he needed to fuck. He really didn’t think that, though he felt some confusion as to what it was exactly that he was feeling, what it was they had. *Well fuck, that’s a first.* So he sat behind his desk and looked at her, not with narrowed eyes but with his blank unfazed mask. If she had truly begun a relationship with Draco, the slight would be even greater were he to attack her as he very much wished to.

She remained shyly by the door. She didn’t know how to act because of her new found feelings for
him. She would cock it up, she was sure of it.

He decided to break the silence.

“Would you like an Occlumency lesson?”

_Fuck. No no no. If he breaks my barriers he might see I’ve fallen for him. He will absolutely freak out and end this for sure. No, that can’t happen._

She looked distressed, he noticed.

“No… I think I have evolved a lot, don’t you?”

She had. He knew she was trying to hide something from him by her demeanor, and it had been a while since her thoughts would simply float to him. She had become more naturally guarded with her training. He could still easily penetrate her mind, without her even noticing it, he would wager. But did he want to? Should he? Whatever she was concealing from him could be hurtful. It could be what she really thought of him. Her trust and respect were too good to be true. To last, after she had been in such close contact with him. They must have faded and now she was just one more person who simply put up with him. And he could not endure the judgment or mockery from _her_, who once looked at him so openly and honestly and trustingly like no one ever had before.

“Yes, you have shown improvement. But it is an art that demands constant practice.”

“Yes, well. We could perhaps take a break from that.” She bit her lip hesitantly.

“Very well then…” Why did she accept his invitation if she was just going to stand by the door and act shy? He was becoming annoyed.

“If you did not wish to come, why did you?”

“Who says I didn’t want to come?” She asked wide-eyed.

“Your demeanor, Miss Granger. And since you don’t even wish for lessons anymore…”

“Hermione.”

“What?”

“You called me Miss Granger. We’re alone here.” She looked rather hurt. First sign of normalcy. Good.

“I didn’t think you would want such intimacy, since you can’t seem to leave the door’s vicinity.”

“I’m sorry, Severus.” She relaxed a bit. “I am just… surprised. I thought you had ended this the last time we were together.”

“Is that what you want?” He asked coolly as he raised an eyebrow.

“No! Not at all.” She came closer. “I thought since I… since Ron made the whole school suspicious, you wouldn’t want to take any chances.” _Or that since I cried and fell asleep in your arms you would be scared._

“It seems you are making excuses for me to project what you want.”
“No!” She furrowed her brow in frustration. “What I want is for you to take me to your bed and ravish me. I don’t even know what we’re still doing here!” Infuriating man!

He smirked at her irritation. That’s the Hermione he knew how to deal with. “What about Mr. Malfoy, Hermione?”

“What? Oh, that…” She sat down across from him. “Don’t be mad…”

“That is not a good opening for me not to get mad,” he said already irked. “You are a free woman, Hermione, if you want to…”

“Let me talk!” She said. He looked at her menacingly, annoyed with the interruption. “It’s nothing like that.” She sighed. “Draco knows.”

“Draco knows…what?” He arched an eyebrow.

“About us… uh, this.” She corrected herself quickly.

He narrowed his eyes. “How?”

“He figured it out. Said you were acting different towards me, and in general. And that I didn’t look at you in class. I tried to deny it, but then you abused Ron and there was no dissuading him that it was because of what Ron had said to me. People started thinking we were together because of what you said in class, and Draco is just being a brat letting everyone believe it.”

Snape sighed and pinched the bridge of his nose. His colleagues had also noticed a change in him, said he was more approachable and… content. Damn the little chit for making him… whatever she was making him.

“Are you mad? Don’t be. Please. He said he won’t tell. He’s scared of you a bit I think.”

“Yes, because he knows what’s good for him,” he said at last. “I’ll talk to him. Make sure I imprint more fear in him.”

She sighed in relief. If that didn’t discourage him, then he really must want her. She smiled. Could she dare be more forward?

“Now…” She stood and walked around his desk, to straddle him where he sat. Her hands clasped on the back of his neck and then slipped into his hair as she spoke. “Will you take me to your bed?” She smiled and rolled her hips on him, feeling his cock twitch. “I’ve missed…” you “your cock throbbing inside me” she whispered in his ear.

He grunted as his hands grabbed her ass and pulled her closer. She purred in his ear and nipped it. He stood, carrying her, and rushed past his sitting room into the bedroom and threw her on his bed. She smiled as she quickly pulled off her jumper to then reach up for him, fisting his frockcoat.

“I want you inside me, Severus,” she moaned as she gave up unbuttoning his coat and went for the buttons on his trousers instead.

“And I want to be inside you, kitten,” he found himself saying as he cast a seam-splitting spell on her jeans.
She woke up feeling some annoyance. She wanted to sleep, but something bothered her. Cold. She was cold. She then gained the perception that she was naked. Why? She tried to remember, her eyes still closed, her mind begging for more sleep. She had gone to Severus’ office. They talked and cleared up some things. He seemed to want her, and even in her tired state that thought made her smile. They had sex. Magnificent sex. She could have come just by feeling him enter her after all the apprehension she had felt all week, but he, as usual, had gone above and beyond and satisfied her like she never thought she could be. Then… she didn’t remember. She opened her eyes, irritated, and was a little startled to find the stone ceiling above her was not that of her dormitory, nor were the stone walls she could see by the fire light that crackled somewhere in the room. Severus’ room? Was it? She blinked a couple of times to further enhance her eyesight. She took a better look around and saw indeed it was the room in the dungeons. She hadn’t gone to her room. He had let her stay? Hermione looked to her side and there he was, sleeping on his stomach beside her. His hands were under his pillow, under his head, and his face was turned towards her. He had pulled the covers over her and let her sleep there. And he was peacefully sleeping beside her. She smiled as her heart skipped a beat to think about what this could mean. No, Hermione, don’t read too much into it. Don’t set yourself up for disappointment. Just enjoy the moment.

He had no shirt on and she could see on his strong arm that burn scar that had caught her eyes since the first time he undressed before her. She remembered he had seemed insecure about his scars and marks, as if she was going to be disgusted by them. But all she wanted now was to know the stories behind them, know every bit of him there was to know. Yeah, good luck with that.

She turned to her side and without much thought, started tracing the outlines of his burn scar, which was about as big as the palm of her hand. With his eyes still closed, he furrowed his brow.

“Is there something I can do for you, Hermione?”

She sniggered. “I’m cold,” she said as she pulled her hand back to herself.

He opened his eyes and reached for what she thought was her ass, but it was one of his pajama shirts, which already rested over the covers, on top of her, and she hadn’t noticed. He knew she would be cold and had prepared for it. How sweet. He handed it to her. She smiled.

“Oh. Thanks.”

He turned to lie on his back and closed his eyes again as she sat up to pull on his shirt and button it up. Why had he let her stay? No, she couldn’t ask him that.

“Was that a brewing accident?” She asked as she looked at his scar, buttoning the last few buttons.

He scoffed. “Don’t insult me, witch.”

She smiled. “Were you always such a genius that no accidents ever took place?”

“Absolutely,” he said with his blank expression.

“Then what was it?” She was still sitting up, looking at him.

He scowled. “Awfully chatty when you’re cold.”

“Am I?” She smiled. She was reaching to caress his scar again when he, with his eyes still closed as
he was trying to go back to sleep, grabbed her hand and hindered her progress.

“Don’t,” he said opening his eyes, looking dead serious and slightly frightening.

“Was it in the war?”

“Hermione…” he said waringly.

“You don’t have to be ashamed of anything.”

“Why the fuck do you care?” He snapped and immediately regretted it as he saw her flinch. Fucking idiot, you’ll scare her away.

She pulled her arm back from his grip. There she goes. She pulled up the sleeve to the shirt she wore and reached under his pillow where she knew he stored his wand, pulling it out. She looked very annoyed and slightly insecure, and he looked at her, puzzled. She waved his wand at her forearm and then stored it back under his pillow. She extended her arm in front of his eyes.

“I have scars too,” she said shyly.

He saw the word mudblood carved into her forearm, bright pink. He grabbed her arm again, sitting up to analyze it.

“Who did this?” he asked in between gritted teeth, his eyes narrow in anger.

“Bellatrix.”

He turned to face her, his eyes still angry but also demanding an explanation as an eyebrow shot up.

“I was… we were caught by snatchers a while after you took us the sword of Gryffindor. They took us to Malfoy Manor for… and Bellatrix…” She was getting overwhelmed, tears stinging her eyes.

“She recognized the sword and tortured me so I could say what else was taken from her vault. Turns out she was worried because there was a horcrux in there.”

She breathed deeply and wiped away the tear that escaped against her will with one hand as he still held the other arm, analyzing the scar.

Bellatrix. He would love nothing more than for that fucking whore to come back to life so that he could have the pleasure of hitting her with an unforgiveable. Carving cunt on her arm.

“Why do you use concealment charms? You don’t need to hide this, not from me.”

“I… I guess I’m not as brave as you. It makes me insecure.”

He kissed her scar. She tried not to look too shocked and drop her jaw, but fuck, he could be really sweet. Not even Ron, who had seen it happen, had objected to her concealment charms. What was she thinking? Ron is an ass. Of course he wouldn’t even care or notice it bothered her. A lot.

“But it feels good to finally talk about it,” she started. “Maybe you…”

“Are there any more concealment charms on you?” He cut her off.

She looked away, down to the sheets. “On my… my neck.”

He touched her neck and the charm faded, revealing the scar on the side of it.
“Who?” He asked once again angry.

“Same story, same day.”

No. He wouldn’t have hit Bellatrix with an unforgivable. He would have ripped her apart limb by limb with his bare fucking hands. If she had a grave he would violate it and do it right now.

“And… my chest,” she said, still embarrassed.

He sunk his hand into her hair and pulled her close, placing kisses on her neck. This was yet another version of Snape. *Complex man.* His lips traveled lower, following his hand that undid her buttons, down the middle of her chest, revealing the scar there that ran from her collarbone to almost her navel. He looked up at her. He didn’t even have to ask.

“Dolohov,” she said.

*Dolohov I could still have the pleasure of killing.*

He continued to kiss her, his lips trailing back their way to her neck.

“So… that scar on your Dark Mark?” She tried. “Draco doesn’t have that.”

He growled into her neck.

“Fine, don’t talk if you don’t want to.” She moved away from him and lay back under the covers. “Go back to sleep, I’m very sorry I disturbed you.”

She was upset he could not trust her. *Hermione, what did you expect? He could never trust anyone. You can’t force yourself in. You don’t have that right just because you are in love with him. He doesn’t feel the same and he never will. Just take what you can get. It’s better than having nothing of him at all.*

He sighed. “I tried a few spells to remove it. But of course it wouldn’t be so easy.” He lay back down as well, looking very crossed.

“But why…”

“Because I couldn’t bear to fucking look at it anymore,” he barked.

“And your burn?” She took advantage of this sharing mood, not minding the bark.

He shut his eyes and took in a deep breath. “It was punishment.”

What could he have done for Voldemort to inflict that on him? And why…

“But there are healing charms for burns, and potions, you’ve used them yourself when I burned you… unless Voldemort…”

He flinched at the name and cut her off. “It wasn’t him. And I was not old enough to know or use such spells.”

She remembered the memory she had access to. *His father.*

“Oh…”

He stared at the ceiling and huffed instead of breathing, trying to control his anger at the memories
that now flooded his mind. She came close to him, her arm now resting on his chest, her hand caressing him. She kissed his cheek, then leaned over him to kiss his burn scar, and her lips left a trail of kisses across his chest as she came back to lie on her side of the bed. Her hand then slid down his left arm to try and caress his Dark Mark but he pulled it away and wouldn’t allow her.

“I’m sorry you had to go through such horrible things. Thank you for trusting me and telling me, Severus.” She rested her head on his shoulder. The smell of her hair, her calm breathing, her hand caressing his chest, it all calmed him.

“I don’t know how you can sleep down here without snuggling. It’s so cold,” she said after a while, snuggling closer.

He huffed but wondered the same. How on earth had he been able to sleep at all in life up until now, without her warmth on him. Again he slept soundly as she laid in his arms.
Chapter 24

They set their next meeting for Friday. He had waken her up in the early hours of the morning so she could go back to her room unnoticed, and this time, she was not going to be caught in last night’s clothes by Ginny. She sneaked into her four-poster carrying her pajamas. In there, with wards up, she changed so it would look like she was waking with the others.

Snape had offered to give her an Occlumency lesson when they set their next meeting. He wanted to observe if her demeanor would change again at the mention of Occlumency, and it did. She became nervous and evasive and said “maybe, we’ll see” to his offer. She had been so adamant about learning this and never going through what she had been through again, and now, all of a sudden, it didn’t interest her anymore? Overachiever that she was, she would never think that what she had already learned sufficed. Especially since he himself said it wouldn’t. She was definitely trying to hide something from him. What could it be?

His innate need for control demanded he know exactly what was going on, but some part of him was scared of being disappointed. He was… pleased with their arrangement. He recalled when she asked if she made his evenings better and he begrudgingly admitted to himself that she did. Oh how the world went around. Who would have thought that he’d be enjoying the company of the little Gryffindor know-it-all princess? A person who so often consorted with Potter? He certainly would have never guessed, and he was willing to bet no seer in the land would have foreseen it either. He smiled to himself as he sat alone in his classroom waiting for the next group of babbling idiots he had to teach to come in.

Perhaps you should pull whatever she is hiding out of her. Find a reason to end it all. This is getting dangerous. If you would be disappointed with it ending now, imagine what you will feel if you let it go on longer. Don’t kid yourself, she WILL leave you eventually. Everyone does. She is young, too young, and still has much to do and see. Better prospects. And even with all she went through, a war at such a young age, she is so cheerful and… unbroken. She won’t bear a grumpy bitter old man for long. She will see a better prospect in Draco or any other boy her age. What were you thinking, opening up to her last night, talking about your wretched past? She shouldn’t even be sleeping with you, fool.

The bell rang and his expressionless mask was firmly in place, though all sorts of thoughts and emotions swarmed inside him.

Friday evening was upon them and she knocked on his door, so excited, later than usual, since he had had rounds and a staff meeting. Also, Friday nights were tricky for sneaking out of the common room. No one believed her “studying” or “going to bed early” anymore, even if she was a bookworm and a Head Girl. Luckily, Ginny and Harry grew tired of hanging with her and scampered off to be alone, and Neville was happy helping some First Years with Herbology. Everyone else was busy with their own thing and she did not have a hard time slipping out unnoticed. Fortunately, Ron’s little outburst eventually led to everyone feeling bad for her and wanting to respect her privacy.

Snape opened the door and was surprised to see she was not disillusioned. He narrowed his eyes at her.

“What?” She asked as she strolled in. “There’s no one around, check for yourself.”
He did poke his head out to the hallway and looked from side to side before being relatively satisfied and shutting the door.

“If you like to live dangerously, that is your issue, but don’t drag me into it,” he started, but she wasn’t paying attention. She was walking up to him, and suddenly, her hands were gliding up his chest, finding their way behind his neck and resting there as she smiled up at him. *Fuck.* How could he scold her like this? Her scent was enough to make his dick twitch now, apparently. *Dangerous.* He refrained from holding her and with his arms at his sides, his fists firmly clenched, he continued.

“If you insist on being irresponsible and not coming here undetected…” her hand slipped back down his chest and was reaching for his trousers, undoing the buttons. It then reached in his boxers and stroked his dick. She looked up at him and smiled, still stroking him.

“Go on.”

*Fuck.* “Don’t be cheeky with me, witch.” He grabbed her arms, trying to take over control, but succumbing to her every touch.

“Yes, sir. I promise from now on I will better disguise myself, even though I was very careful and know no one followed me. Sir.” She smiled mischievously and he grunted at her touch. He was getting hard.

She was pulling him down by his neck with one hand while the other still worked on his now fully erect cock, her eyes begging for a kiss – he already knew that stare – when there was a knock on the door.

He growled in anger as she froze in fear.

“Who the fuck is that?” He barked.

They knocked again.

She pulled away from him, terrified. Had someone seen her go there? *Fuck, fuck, fuck.* He buttoned his trousers, imprisoning his hard-on and led her to his sitting room, where he also grabbed his robes to conceal his arousal.

“Stay here. And don’t be such a frightened kitten,” he said as he saw her wide-eyed and pale. “Where is the cheek from a minute ago?” He smirked.

She looked at him disgruntled and stuck her tongue out at him.

“That will be punished,” he said with a smirk as he closed the bookshelf behind him, going back to his office.

She tried to hear who it was, what was going on as she apprehensively touched her ear to the back of the bookshelf that worked as a door. But nothing was to be heard, thanks to his wards. So she stalked around the room and stopped in front of the bookcases he had in there. So many books he had. All very interesting. She had read some of them, even had copies of her own. He even had muggle books. Novels, poetry, scientific ones. Shakespeare sonnets, Jane Austen. She smiled. So he had a romantic streak, and some potential. *Of course he does. He has devoted his life to saving the son of the woman he loved. Her son with another man. A man he hated.*

She pushed the thought he loved another woman, a dead woman, and not her aside and continued looking over the books. She was so engrossed in her task that she didn’t hear him come
back in, and only felt as he cupped her breasts from behind and kissed her neck. She smiled.

“You have very interesting books, Sev,” she said as he still kissed her neck, nipping her ear at times, and she felt his hard cock against her behind.

“Do you want to read, or do you want me to fuck you?” He purred in her ear as his hands reached under her jumper to tease her nipples.

“Oh… if ever there was a difficult decision…” She let out. He chuckled. “Who was that?” She continued. His hands teasing her breasts were making her lose some focus.

“Malfoy.”

“Draco?”

“Thankfully, yes. Any other Malfoy at my door wouldn’t have a pleasant outcome.”

“What did he want?”

“Sleeping Draught. I took the chance to scare him shitless. He won’t be blabbing.” One of his hands delved into her leggings and two fingers parted her, reaching into her folds after circulating her clit. She moaned loudly and reached for his hair and sunk her fingers into it.

“Oh… Sev!” His fingers worked such magic that her feet barely touched the floor now. She held on to the bookcase.

“What would you like done to you today, kitten? What would you like to learn,” he smirked into her neck as she moaned wildly with his continuous ministrations on her nipple and clit.

“Does the smell of books arouse you kitten? Do you want me to take you right here? You are very… loud today,” he whispered and she grew quieter, blushing. She panted, biting her lips to not scream as he continued to tease her clit and entrance with his long digits. She gripped the bookshelves harder.

“Is spanking the only thing that loosens your tongue, kitten?” His fingers continued to ravish her, sinking in and pulling out of her in rhythm, spreading her arousal on her clit and teasing it for a while before sinking back into her. His lips kissed her neck and shoulder, driving her insane.

“Yes! Great… idea,” she moaned. “Spank me.”

He took his hand away from her and she whimpered in disapproval. He pulled her by the hand to the bedroom, throwing her on the bed and pulling off her jumper hungrily, undoing her pink lace bra almost at the same moment as well. He discretely pushed it under his pillow beside her head. As he did, he caressed her arm with his other hand, where her scar was, and removed her concealment charm.

“No, no, don’t…” she said with a bit of desperation.

“Hush,” he whispered in her ear and then lowered his lips, kissing her scar on her neck and removing the charms there too as his hand glided down her chest and removed the charms there.

“No concealment from me, kitten,” he whispered.

She smiled, her heart filling with warmth due to his sweetness. His lips traveled to her breasts, licking circles around her nipples, then catching one between his teeth. She held his head
there, caressing his hair and whimpering at his advances. He lowered his lips to her stomach and then kissed the scar on her arm before pulling off her leggings along with her knickers all at once. She smiled as her heart once again filled with warmth. With love.

“Severus, you didn’t even see the knickers that I so carefully picked out for you to enjoy,” she teased still smiling at him as he brought his face to the same level as hers.

“You think I care about your knickers? What I enjoy is underneath them,” he hovered over her, smirking. “Your pink, tight little cunt I so adore,” he continued, pressing his wool covered cock to her center, making her roll her hips up towards him, seeking friction, “so I can make it soaking wet for me,” he nipped her chin, “taste your deliciously sweet juices,” he sucked on a breast, “slip inside you with ease and plunder you all night.”

“Yes, do that,” she gasped as she began to undo the buttons of his frockcoat. She very much enjoyed his crass language. It really turned her on, especially with that great fucking voice.

“Do what?” He smirked.

“Whatever you want. Spank me. Fuck me all night long. Fuck me so hard I find it hard to walk in the morning.” She was still working on his buttons. His fingers found her clit and she rolled her head back and moaned as she pulled on his coat. “Fuuuuck. Why do you wear so many damned buttons?” She asked in desperation, working as quickly as she could to undress him. “Come off, come off, come off!” She repeated as he smirked, and her dexterous fingers undid two more buttons. But suddenly, he was completely naked, his clothes nowhere to be seen.

“What the hell was that?” He asked.

“Don’t know,” she shrugged. “I guess I really wanted you naked,” she smiled, pulling his body to rest on hers. She nibbled his ear and locked her legs around him, urging him to enter her.

“How did you do that? I doubt you’ve been taught that here. And wandless!”

“I don’t know. I was just trying to get you naked as fast as possible because I wanted to see and feel that marvelous, magical cock of yours.”

“Naughty kitten,” he smiled, a wide, wonderful smile and proceeded to kissing her neck. Her stomach fluttered at the sight of his smile. She sank her nails into his buttocks, which made him growl.

“Watch the claws, kitten.”

She smiled into his neck and grazed her nails up his back, sinking them in him again, this time on his shoulder blades.

“Claws!” He growled as he took her hands, one at a time, and pinned them over her head.

“There it is,” she smiled mischievously.

His scowl changed into one of those beautiful smiles as he noticed what she was doing. “You little minx. If you want it rough, you need only ask.”

As she looked up at him smiling over her, her heart pounded in her chest and her stomach flipped around inside her. Sweet Circe. I think I definitely love him. That smile alone is enough reason for me to love him.
And because she was so open and vulnerable, giving herself at that moment, he saw what she thought, even if he was actively trying not to, fearing what horrible thing she must be hiding from him.

He froze on top of her, holding down her hands, and gaped at her unblinkingly.

It was then that fear of him having seen what she was thinking filled her. He would freak out, like he seemed to be doing now. No, no… But that wasn’t possible. She didn’t feel him inside her head. No, he had seen nothing. Please God no.

She was about to ask him what was wrong when his lips came crashing down on hers, this time his tongue was the one to do the begging for admittance into her mouth, an absolute first. She gave in almost immediately, finding it strange at first, that he had kissed her without her having to beg for it or steal it, but deciding to just enjoy it while it lasted.

While his tongue still ravished her mouth, his fingers interlaced with hers where he pinned her hands. They broke for air and she smiled up at him as he observed her for another moment. He then slowly buried himself inside her and nipped her chin as she moaned and squeezed his hands in hers. His lips found hers again and their deep, passionate kisses continued as he slowly thrust inside her. His hands let go of hers and sunk into her hair, his forearms cradling her head and her hands ran through his hair as they still kissed.

She felt euphoria like she never had felt before fill her body, and the sensations he triggered in her were enhanced, something she didn’t think possible.

He kissed her cheek, her neck, her collarbone as they moved in synchrony ever so slowly.

“Oh, Severus,” she let out as she brushed his hair back and nipped his ear. It was the first time the sex they had was this slow and smoldering. Her body quivered beneath him every time he breathed heavily in her ear, against the skin of her cheek and neck, and every time his lips touched hers. He in turn grunted with every moan she let out and as her hands left his hair and grazed his sides, his back, his buttocks.

“Sev…Sev…Sev…” she panted as she felt herself reaching the edge.

He pulled up one of her legs, her knee touching the side of his chest as he kissed her lips deeply. She was pushed over the edge, her fingertips sinking into his shoulder blades as their lips parted and her head rolled back.

As she clenched around him, he felt that he too was going to lose control and he could not help it even if he wanted to.

“Hermione,” he groaned against her temple as he came inside her, bucking into her as he did, his pubic bone brushing against her swollen clit and triggering more waves of pleasure in her. He kissed her neck, her collarbone, and rested his head on her breasts as he came down from his high. She was pleasantly surprised at this and took her hands to stroke his hair.

After a while of this, he rolled to lie beside her, silently. She was already falling asleep, her eyes half closed.

“May I stay?” She asked with a half-smile.

“Yes,” he replied as he watched her.

She smiled and turned her back to him.
He continued to watch her, stunned about what had just transpired, what he had heard of her thoughts, what that had made him do. He was trying to make sense of it. He certainly must have heard her wrong, had some kind of hallucination. It was the only plausible explanation.

“I’m cold, Sev,” he heard her say. He pulled the covers over them and embraced her from behind as he murmured a warming spell to fall over her.

“Thank you,” she snuggled back into him.

And once again he fell asleep drowning in her wild curls.
Hermione woke up in his arms. Light was shining in through the lake and it was probably later than she had ever slept being in his rooms. But he was still asleep, and she wasn’t about to wake him. She wanted to enjoy this feeling for as long as she could, being in his arms. She remembered what had happened the night before and wondered what had happened there, what that meant. She smiled. It felt really wonderful. It always felt wonderful but it was… different the previous night.

She leaned into his chest as he lay on his side and took in his scent, got soothed by his gentle breathing. She felt like maybe it wouldn’t be so bad to wake up like this always. No, Hermione, don’t go there. Don’t be a silly teenager. This is not what this is, he doesn’t feel like that, nor will he ever. Just enjoy whatever you can get for as long as you can.

He opened his eyes. It was late, later than he had ever slept certainly, and she was still there, in his arms. He could feel her bushy hair tickling his chin and its sweet smell filling his nostrils. But he would have to wake her. He was about to gingerly shake her when her hand moved from his waist further up his back.

“You overslept. I’ve been awake for a while.” She remained in place, still in his arms, though she had noticed he pulled back a bit.

“And why did you not wake me?”

“I didn’t know whether you would wake up cranky or not. If you liked being waked,” she sniggered.

He snorted. “I’m not used to getting this much sleep anyway,” he said, noting that it had become increasingly harder to become cranky with her, or even around her. Bloody hell, this had to stop. His colleagues must be right in noticing his mood had changed. “You should have left without waking me then,” he said as he pulled himself completely away from her and tuned to sit up, swinging his feet to the stone floor.

“And miss our routine of you kicking me out? No, I would never,” she said with a smile, sitting up herself.

“Hermione, I’m not kicking you out,” he said slightly exasperated, pinching his eyes together, “but you know that this… this cannot be broadcast. And you need to get to your dormitory before your roommates talk and spread rumors and…. Well, get people talking more.”

“I know,” she answered still smiling. “I’m just teasing you. Don’t get annoyed. It’s Saturday and it’s 9 a.m. The girls sleep until noon easily. And Ginny… well, considering she was with Harry last night, she must be sleeping in as well.”

“Bloody hell, Hermione. Potter mauling the Weasley girl is not an image I need in my head,” he said, a bit disgusted.
She laughed a bit before she was reminded that Harry was the spitting image of his father, and Ginny had some similarities to Lily Evans… seeing them together was probably strangely upsetting.

“I’ll just wash up quickly and get out of your hair, Mr. Cranky pants,” she teased and went into the loo.

She must be insane. Could she really love him? How could someone like her love him? She woke up happy and perky for Merlin’s sake. He would do her no good. She deserved better. Maybe he had fooled himself and seen something some deep hidden part of him wished for. That was probably it. She most likely didn’t love him and he just saw wrongly. You are an accomplished Legilimens, you have never gotten anything wrong, you fool. He reached under the pillows and pulled out her pink laced bra he had slept on. He smelled it and pulled the drawer in his nightstand open and stuffed it in there.

She came out of the bathroom looking fresh and still stark naked as he was closing the drawer. His dick twitched as she bent over to pick up her knickers and leggings from the floor. No, don’t. He went into the bathroom himself. He only took a minute to wash his face and brush his teeth and came back out.

“So what are you doing today?” She tried as she pulled on her leggings.

“Nothing interesting. Correcting stupidity in these dunderhead students’ assignments. Rounds. If I have some time I might go into Hogsmead. You?”

She smiled. “Nothing much. Homework. Revision. I might visit Hagrid.”

He furrowed his brow as he pulled his head out from the armoire he had been rummaging in. “And take your little night strolls? Have you forgotten the dangers that roam the grounds? I will not hesitate in giving you a month’s worth of detentions if I catch you out there after curfew.”

She laughed and refrained from pointing out how hypocritical he was being, since she roamed around the castle after hours to go meet him. But she didn’t want that to end. She didn’t realize how much her roaming the halls did worry him, but he let her do it because his need to see her was greater. “Professor McGonagall is out of the castle on some business, is she not?” She asked.

“Yes, what does that have to do with anything?”

“That makes you headmaster,” she said coming closer to him.

“Hmm.” He arched an eyebrow.

“Tell me… Headmaster Snape, is detention with you more… severe?” She smiled mischievously as she pulled him closer and stood on her tiptoes to reach his lips. “No pun intended,” she whispered and touched her lips to his. She was surprised to find that like on the previous night, he did not offer resistance as she sucked on his lips and let her tongue dive into his mouth. He growled as she grabbed his buttocks and pulled him closer, her uncovered breasts rubbing against his chest. He pushed her away.

“We better not start this now, Hermione.”

“Right,” she smiled. “Have you seen my bra?” She asked, looking around the room. Her jumper she had already spotted and started to move to get it.

“No,” he answered with a straight face. “It must be under the bed. I’ll look for it later. You
need to hurry.” He would later tell her, when she once again asked, that the house elves had probably taken it to wash and hadn’t returned it to his room.

She shrugged and pulled on her jumper, and he walked her out into the sitting room and to the door that led to his office even though he was shirtless.

“Mr. Weasley… has been on his best behavior?” He asked as they walked. “Not that his best is much,” he rolled his eyes.

“Oh yes. He hasn’t bothered me at all.” She smiled remembering Severus tripping Ron in his class.

He led her to his office door, and before she left, she transfigured her jumper to look slightly different than it did.

“What’s this?” He asked.

“I’m going to Hagrid’s now, have some tea with him maybe. When I get back to the common room, I have to be dressed in something different from last night, don’t I?” She smiled and touched the doorknob but just stood there, analyzing him.

“What?” He asked, not curtly.

“I was just trying to decide if I should try to steal a goodbye kiss from you before I go,” she smiled, “or will that make you grumpy and ruin this perfectly fine morning?”

He furrowed his brow and narrowed his eyes. She almost regretted trying to be cute. But then he stepped closer to her and pulled her by the waist. His expression softened and he willingly kissed her lips. It was not a deep kiss. It was tender, his lips suckling on hers and nipping her lower lip when they parted. Her heart swelled with joy as she smiled.

“Have a good day, Severus.” She turned the knob and left.

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10/04/18

Hermione walked around in a wonderful mood not only on Saturday, but for several days. Even though they did not meet every day, just the thought of him made her happy. When she thought that apparently some breakthrough was achieved, since now he was letting her sleep with him and was overall less curt and cranky, she became even more happy and- despite trying very hard not to be – a little hopeful.

Ginny and Harry were very pleased she wasn’t snappy and bossy anymore, but also very curious as to what – or who – the reason may be, since Ginny had convinced Harry there was no way she was dating Draco. Ron would just sulk around. He had played the victim so much that now more people pitied him and talked to him.

Draco did not do anything to set people straight about him going out with Hermione, but also
didn’t do anything to encourage rumors, in fear of Snape. Hermione stopped caring about what people said, especially because if they thought she was dating Draco, they wouldn’t look in the right direction. She was now often seen with Draco because she was really considering him a friend and very much enjoyed his company. She would often giggle with him, because he assured her that Snape was acting very differently, and it was because of her for sure.

“I’m telling you, he’s a different man,” he said on a Sunday afternoon as they sat out on a bench next to the lake. It was rather cold, but they both appreciated the silence and privacy. “He might even... be falling in love. Ugh. That’s a strange image right there.”

“Shut up! He’s not! He can’t be… that’s not… no.”
Draco sneered. “Well you are definitely in love already.”

“I am not!” She smacked his arm, annoyed that she couldn’t hide it even from Draco. If he could see through her, Severus would. And he would run away fast. He would fucking fly away. She didn’t want that.


“Shhhhh!” She smacked him again. “Someone might hear you!” She whispered and looked around apprehensively.

“Hear me? We’re the only two crazy enough to be sitting out here in this cold. I think my balls have actually detached from my body and are rolling around in my trousers, somewhere around my boots. We’ll see if we can hear them fall to the ground when we get up.”

“Fine, let’s go inside then.” She started to get up.

“No, wait.” He pulled her back to sit. “First tell me… how in bloody hell did this come to be? You and Snape? The picture of Gryffindor perfection and the bitter old bat from the dungeons? Who hates your best friend, by the way, and had the hots for his mom, might I add. That is so… unbelievably quaint.” Hermione raised an eyebrow at him. “What? I read,” he sneered.

She laughed. “I don’t know… I just kind of began to see him in a different light. And one day in detention I was high on the fumes of the potions we were brewing or something and I just kissed him without thinking.”

“So you jumped him? Ha! I would think it was the other way around.”

“No, stop. He’s not like that. He didn’t even want to at first… I’m the one who had to… insist.”

“Haha! Granger! You little maneater you. No wonder he’s falling for you.”

“Shut up! He’s not! He wouldn’t.”

“All right, have it your way. But I want dibs on being in the wedding party. He would prefer me over Potter anyway.”

“Shut up!”

“Fine. Let’s go inside before my toes fall off.”
Snape was always very irritated when not around her, even if less than what everyone had become used to over the years. But it had gotten worse since he had seen what he saw. That was the effect of trying to figure out what in the bloody hell was going on. When he saw what he saw in her mind, he should have ended it. This is not what this was, not the type of thing he needed. She was getting too attached and would end up hurt by him. He didn’t want that. But why, then, could he not end it? Why didn’t he want to end it? It was just sex, he could get that easily anywhere, especially now since Potter and his big mouth had made him out to be the wounded hero. He was being selfish in keeping her with him. She deserved better. She could easily find someone better. He would hurt her sweet kind heart eventually. But she wants to be with you, so… Why not? No, you selfish bastard. Oh fuck, could you care for her? You do, you care for her, don’t you, dunderhead? That cannot be. Do NOT get attached! She will rip your heart into bloody pieces when she undoubtfully finds her senses and leaves, when you inadvertently fuck it all up. And you could not go through that again… But maybe… maybe it’s worth it.

But was it even right, what he saw? He hadn’t seen anything else since, not that he went looking. And she never again wanted Occlumency lessons.

It was late one night and all students should be in bed, but Hermione and her disillusioned self was walking down the corridors, heading for Snape’s room in the dungeons. She was turning a corner, happily striding along, almost skipping, and she came to stare Professor McGonagall in the face. Her blood froze in her veins as she remained immobile. Fuck. She was in so much trouble. How would she explain this? But wait. She was disillusioned, and had cast muffliato on her shoes so they would not make a sound as she walked. It was okay. She just had to move carefully so she would not bump into the headmistress. But if that was the case, why was she staring so intently in Hermione’s direction? Professor McGonagall pulled out her wand.

“Show yourself!”

Hermione had to bite her tongue to not scream. She saw professor McGonagall moving to strike her with some spell and quickly ran back around the corner she had turned, and hid in a nook behind a tapestry that hung on the wall. She had narrowly escaped the revealing charm the headmistress had cast. She quickly controlled her breathing to not make any noise as she heard Professor McGonagall’s hurried footsteps pass by the tapestry.

She peaked out to make sure McGonagall was gone and saw she was looking around for someone as she turned the next corner. Since Hermione was closer to the dungeons than to Gryffindor tower, she ran to Severus.

When he heard the knock on the door, he noticed it was more frantic than usual. He opened the door slightly and could already feel her squirming in through the narrow space that was open.

“Close it, close it!” He could hear a disembodied voice urging him. “Close it NOW.”

“What the…” he started as he closed it and undid her spell. He could see desperation in her eyes. Before he could ask, she started.

“I think the headmistress saw me!” she was blushing furiously and on the verge of tears.

“What?! Coming here?” He asked, alarmed.

“No. In a corridor, upstairs. She cast a revealing charm and I narrowly escaped it. I think she is looking for me right now.”
“Well…” he was going to remind her that he had already pointed out that her disillusionment charm needed work and she needed to be careful, but thought better of it, to not upset her more. “If she didn’t see you coming here, and didn’t know it was you, there was no harm done.”

“You told me. You said my spellwork was horrible…”

“I did not use that word.”

“… but I didn’t listen,” she continued badgering herself. “I should have worked on it. Oh God, I’m so awful. It’s a wonder I was able to keep myself and the boys alive last year with such crappy, sloppy work! The snatchers should have seen our camp site before!”

He wanted to stop her from talking herself down, but there was no time.

“Severus!” There was incessant knocking on the door. “Severus!” McGonagall called urgently.

Hermione widened her eyes and clasped her hands to her mouth, whimpering. Snape wanted to calm her down but had to get the door.

“Severus!”

“In a minute, Minerva!” He barked.

Hermione hurried to crawl under his desk. He put an index finger to his lips as she did, indicating she be quiet.

“Minerva, how my I help you?” Hermione heard from under the desk as he opened the door.

“What took you so long, Severus?”

“Excuse me, but I was under the impression I could enjoy some free time at this hour. I was in my room, reading.”

“Well, there is an intruder in the castle, we must go and find them,” she said with urgency. “Come, let us go. I’ll get Filch as well, and Philius.”


“Need I remind you that Miss Granger was viciously attacked here? It is not completely impossible, unfortunately.”

“Miss Granger was roaming around on the grounds at night. For an intruder to actually get inside the castle with all the wards is most unlikely,” he drawled.

“We are wasting time here, Severus. I saw someone disillusioned roaming the halls. We need to find them before they get away, if they haven’t already.”

“Very well. But might I say that it is probably just a student out of bed. If you could see them while disillusioned, their spell casting was less than perfect, something I doubt a Death Eater or someone dangerous would do. Also, they would have fought you.”

“If it is a student, we need to find them and punish them. Either way, come with me now.”

Hermione heard the door close.
Severus had been gone for a half hour at least, and Hermione stayed put under his desk, biting her nails and her lips. She heard the door open and froze. When she remembered only he could have opened it because of the wards, she breathed easier, but did not move from her place.

“Hermione?” She heard his silky smooth voice call.

“Yes?”

“Get out from under there, you’re safe.”

She reluctantly came out. “So?”

“Minerva accepted it was probably a student who ran back to their common room once they were nearly caught. Still, the teachers are to be on the lookout for something strange.” He rolled his eyes. “You need to be more careful,” he moved closer to her and pulled her by the shoulders so his lips could meet hers. He was engrossed, kissing her deeply, his hands traveling down her body, one on her ass already as the other went down over her breast.

“Teach me,” she said into his mouth.

He backed away. “What?”

“What I’m doing wrong, with the charm.”

“Right now?” He furrowed his brow.

“Yes right now, Severus! I frankly can’t concentrate on anything else.”

He snorted. “You really can’t stand being less than perfect in anything, can you?”

“Oh, you’re one to talk!” She crossed her arms over her chest and scowled.

“Oh really? You’re throwing a tantrum with me thinking that will get you somewhere?” He scoffed as he touched his bottom to the edge of the desk, crossing his arms as well.

“Severus, I need to know this! What if next time she catches me? Or any other professor does? You said so yourself you guys are to be on the lookout. I really need to be able to continue to come see you.” She smiled.

He pinched the bridge of his nose. “Fine,” he said annoyed. “Show me how you do it.” He sat back to watch.

She performed the movement with her wand around herself saying the incantation and vanished, though he could see the imperfections where she stood.

“It is the movement,” he said, a little bit curtly.” You need to twirl your wand like this” and he showed her, doing it on himself. She undid her charm to try again, and he undid his. With three more tries she was doing the spell perfectly, but wouldn’t accept Severus’ word, so she did it countless more times.

“It is perfect, Hermione. For Merlin’s sake, stop practicing, you overachiever.” He was irked, pinching his eyes together and still leaning on his desk. He sighed.

“If it’s perfect, then you shouldn’t be able to catch me.” She smiled and even though he
couldn’t see her, he knew she had by the tone she had used. He was beginning to know here very intimately though he tried to be detached, and that annoyed him.

She began to move around his desk. She wanted to kiss his neck from behind, surprise him, but he reached out his hand and grabbed her arm effortlessly, undoing the charm. She looked so very disappointed.

“See! If I did it so perfectly, how could you do that?”

“It was perfect.”

“Yeah, right,” she scoffed. “How then?”

“Your smell. Your hair. You smell like coconut.”

She took a lock of her hair to her nose and smelled it, but couldn’t feel anything too strong. “No one ever complained,” she said disheartened.

“I’m not complaining,” he said quietly, embarrassed and annoyed.

“No one had even ever mentioned it.”

“Yes, well, I guess I pay more attention than others. Or have a keener sense of smell.” He was trying now to not show so much of himself. It was a mere detail, the smell of her hair, but he was afraid he was opening up too much and giving her some hope she should not harbor.

She came up to him and stood in between his legs. Her hands sliding up his chest to his neck. She smiled and kissed him. She deepened the kiss, only for him to pull away a moment later.

“I’m a bit tired. I’m going to bed.”

He opened the door and walked into his sitting room and past into the bedroom. He left the way open for her to follow, because though he thought he should turn her away, he wanted her to stay more than anything at that moment. But she did not understand his actions. Had she upset him in some way? By demanding he teach her and tiring him? Did he want her to leave? She followed him in. He was getting undressed, standing by his closet.

“Hum, oh… okay then. I’ll… I’ll go.” She said with a hurt voice.

He said nothing and waked over to his chest of drawers, pulling out pajamas from the first drawer. She was about to cry. Such a complicated man. She didn’t even know what she had done wrong. He put the pajama shirt on the side of the bed she usually slept in, at the foot. He pointed to it as he said. “Stay. If you feel like it.”

He went into the bathroom to take a shower. He was irritated that he had revealed so much to her. His walls wanted to come up again, but he also wanted her to stay. He was conflicted. He felt awful. He didn’t know how to do this. He couldn’t bring himself to ask properly, for her to stay. Actually say the words, say he wanted it. He knew how to say it when they were going to fuck, but not now, when it was just… sleep… when it was more personal. He took a shower thinking she had probably left upset because of his crude ways. Fucking idiot. She deserves better. All the more reason to just end it.

He stepped back into the bedroom to find her in his shirt, sitting on his bed, waiting for him with a smile.
Scaleybark made an image of the end of the chapter! Yaaaay. Thank you!
And here it is:

**Gift art: A Curse Might Be A Blessing** (0 words) by Scaleybark
Chapters: 1/1
Fandom: Harry Potter - J. K. Rowling
Rating: General Audiences
Warnings: Creator Chose Not To Use Archive Warnings
Relationships: Hermione Granger/Severus Snape
Characters: Hermione Granger
Additional Tags: Art, Digital Art, Cell Phones, Gift Art
Summary:

A gift for:

CHAPTER 25 OF

A Curse Might Be A Blessing

For:

DC_FITZPATRICK
**Chapter 26**

**Chapter Notes**

Surprise update! Cause I need some cheer and your comments bring me that! :)

Ok, so, as you may have noticed from my English, I'm not from the UK. Never been, sadly, and I don't know how school works there. Are there exams before Christmas break? How long is Christmas break?

Also, I'm pretty sure that in the Wizarding world there is something about fifth years and seventh years not having any other exams during the year because they have OWLs and NEWTs. But I kind of ignored that. lol.

So yeah, this is just a request for you to, once again, humor me with these details I ignore/forget/create. Thanks :D

It had been two weeks. Two damned weeks since she was last in his room. She did not give any reason, any notice as to why she hadn’t come back. The means of communication he had so smugly thought she was going to hurry in creating at the beginning of this arrangement had never been crafted. Even if there was a means, he would be damned if he was going to act like a lovesick puppy and ask her why she had disappeared. He saw her in class and could easily detain her to talk afterwards, but he wouldn’t. If she did not wish to be in his presence anymore, he wouldn’t force himself on her. It was her decision. Her wise decision.

He was a fool to think she could actually love him. Who could love him? If she had indeed felt anything for him, she was certainly ashamed to admit it, since she never again asked for an Occlumency lesson. She, who had made him teach her how to properly disillusion herself in the middle of the night, while he was sporting a hard dick which urged to be inside her. Like he would believe she thought she was good enough at such a difficult art after he had told her she needed more practice. Of course. Who would want to admit to loving him? Why the fuck did he care? It was just shagging, for fuck’s sake. He could get out with more frequency during the Christmas break and find another shag easily in some muggle bar. He had a certain mysterious quality muggle women seemed to be attracted to.

He had been extremely irked during the past two weeks nonetheless, and ruder than what was now expected from everyone. Sleeping without her did not get him much rest and he now lacked concentration, which only annoyed him more. But he didn’t admit to himself that the reason was the lack of her company. And now that midterms were over, he had about four days to correct all the castle’s blasted exams so they could get their grades before boarding the Hogwarts Express for Christmas holidays, and so he could get his fucking rest. How fucking fantastic. Having to concentrate for *that* joyful task.

Hermione had been revising for midterms frantically for the past two weeks. Still wary of her disillusionment skills, she had asked Harry for his invisibility cloak, so that she could stay after hours in the peace of the library so she could properly revise. She had thought more than once about going to Snape’s rooms after leaving the library, but she was always so tired that nothing would have been achieved. So she never did go. She also wanted to ask him for some Pepper-up potion so she could study longer and not be tired for the exam of the next day, but she thought he would never agree to
it, so she let it be too. She settled for whatever George and Lee were selling, which was what most Seventh Years were ordering as well. Ginny took orders and owls would peck the windows of Gryffindor tower in the dead of night with the clandestine deliveries.

It was a Friday evening. Midterms were over and Hermione could finally, FINALLY rest a bit. But her anguish wouldn’t let her. She was sure she had failed every single exam and it ate at her. And besides, she needed to see Severus. Even if they did not have sex, just to see him would soothe her. Although, if she could have him… sweet release is what she needed. She had to go to him. She could rest there, with him.

Hermione took advantage of still having Harry’s cloak and sneaked down to the dungeons even though there were still people roaming the castle corridors. She made sure the hall in which his office was located was empty before knocking on his door.

“What?” He barked from inside. She knocked again. “Come in already,” he growled.

She opened the door with the cloak still on and while she pushed it closed, he drew his wand. He was so on edge that it didn’t go through his head that it might be her, as she had appeared at his door so many times.

“Show yourself!”

She took the cloak off quickly, letting it fall to the floor.

“Severus! What the fuck?”

He stowed his wand and lifted one of his eyebrows.

“Oh, it’s you,” he said coldly.

“Oh it’s you? Were you expecting someone else?” She tried not to sound too outraged, since she had no right to demand anything of him. Her heart weighed in her chest as she remembered that they were not in a relationship and he could see someone else if he wanted to. In fact, she was in the wrong, coming like this without warning or agreement to a time. And undercover. Anyone could be there and find it odd that she was coming like this. But her need to see him was so great…

“I was not expecting anyone, considering you haven’t appeared in over two weeks.” He looked down with his impassive mask and continued scribbling on the papers he corrected, trying to act indifferent. But she had spent enough time with him to see through some things.

“Oh Severus, I’m sorry.” She walked over to his side. “I was studying for exams! I wanted to come but I was always too tired.”

He looked up at her and she really did look knackered. “How many hours have you slept per day?”

She smiled and put her hands on his shoulders and lowered herself onto his lap. “Do I look so terrible? Let’s see… I’d study until midnight and wake up at four to revise some more. So four, sometimes five hours.” She kissed his lips but he did not kiss back.

“You are insane. You will die of sleep deprivation.”

“Then let’s go to bed,” she whispered and kissed the corner of his lips. Then she tried to properly kiss his lips again and this time he gave in. He always did now. Many times he initiated the kissing himself.
“I want nothing else,” he said as their lips parted, his spirits lifted a bit, “however, I need to get ahead in these corrections.” He pushed her to stand and turned back to the desk and the parchments on it.

“Oh,” she looked over his desk, “okay… have… have you corrected mine?” She chewed on her lips.

He said nothing and just continued to read the parchment in front of him.

“If I could see it… my grade… it would be one less thing to anguish me. I would sleep better…” She smiled before biting her nails. He did not look up. “How did I do?”

“You will get your grade along with the rest of your class. No preferential treatment, remember?”

“I was awful, wasn’t I? I knew it. I couldn’t remember one of the seven properties of scale of dragon, I just couldn’t… it was so fucking frustrating and I revised it, I did, but…”

“Heaven, be quiet! You are worrying yourself into a heart attack for no fucking reason at all. You always excel at anything you do, you are always top of the class, so just fucking relax.”

“But I didn’t get an Outstanding, did I?” He did not answer. “I knew it, I didn’t. Ugh!” She let out in frustration.

“You are maddening, you know that, woman?”

He opened his drawer and took out a small rectangular box that was wrapped in gold paper. “Here. This might distract you.” He placed it on the table before her.

“What is this?” She held the box and analyzed it, her heart thumping in her throat.

“Well, since I cannot trust to know when and if you will be returning… this is your Christmas present.”

“What?” She clasped her hand to her mouth. “I didn’t… we didn’t say we were going to exchange gifts… I… I didn’t get you anything!”

He just shrugged as he kept reading the exams. “I don’t want anything.”

She was so happy she could cry. Who would have thought that Severus Snape would give her – anyone – a Christmas gift? She had thought about getting him something but had no idea what to get him, and feared he would see through her, her feelings.

He sat correcting papers as she tried to control herself. She then leaned behind him to kiss his neck and nip his ear.

“Thank you,” she whispered in between kisses and nips. “I love it.”

“You haven’t even opened it,” he said, slightly annoyed.

“Well I love it simply because it’s from you.”

He harrumphed and continued to correct.

“Severus is grumpy today,” she teased as she went around the desk to sit across from him. “I could help you with that,” she winked at him.
She delicately opened the wrapping and stored it in her coat pocket while he was not looking. She was left with a little black velvet covered box. Her heart was overflowing with joy. She opened the box to find a silver charm bracelet. The charms on it were very specific, personal. A cat, a Gryffindor lion, a wand, a book, a cauldron. A crimson stone, like a ruby. A green stone, like an emerald.

“Oh Sev! It’s beautiful!”

The end of his lips curled up in a tiny smile.

“Where did you find this?”

“I made it.”

“You… you made it?” She was aghast.

“It’s not that hard, really, it’s just…”

But she was already on his lap again, kissing him. “Thank you. Thank you. I love it,” she kissed him again, her tongue dancing with his. After a while of kissing passionately, as they began to breathe heavily, he pulled away.

“Get your hungry lips away from me, witch. I have work to do.” He smiled and her heart melted.

“What is the green stone for?” She wanted to see if he would say it represented him, the Slytherin in her life.

“You know very well that you have the soul of a Slytherin, you little minx,” he whispered. “And the stones hold a charm.”

“A charm?”

“Wear the bracelet on your wand hand and it will give your spells a little… kick.” His lips curled up. “Have it on you and it will give you some measure of protection. For your midnight strolls, you know.”

She snorted. “I have found more interesting things to do with my evenings…” She kissed him on his cheek. “I don’t think I’ll get attacked while doing it.”

“Only if you ask,” he purred in her ear. All her hairs stood on end.

“So it’s a charmed bracelet?” She smiled at her lame joke. He did too, more timidly. “Put it on me,” she stretched out her arm. As he closed the clasp around her wrist, he said

“Do not wear it during classes and exams. It would be cheating.” She gasped as if offended. “Do not wear it in my class… ever. I don’t want you vanishing my clothes with your lustful thoughts and leaving me exposed to a bunch of teenagers.”

She sniggered.

She pulled out her wand. “Lumos.” And the light at the end of her wand was a bit brighter than she could usually make it. She smiled.

“Now, off with you. Let me work.”
She stood and walked over to his shelves. “Do you have rounds today? Or something else?” She asked analyzing his books.

“No, just these corrections.”

“Then can I sit here with you? For a while. I’ll be quiet. Reading.”

“Won’t your friends miss you? It’s still early.”

She shrugged.

“If you think I will correct your paper while in your presence and…”

“No, it’s nothing like that. I just want to sit here, in your company… I’ve missed you.” She regretted it almost instantly. But why? He had just given her a present. *Made* her one. He wouldn’t mind being told he was missed, would he? She looked to him for some sign, but his face was that unrevealing mask. Infuriating.

Then his lips curled up slightly into a small smile, nothing like the glorious thing that was his full, real smile he let out inadvertently from time to time, and then he nodded. She breathed in relief.

She transfigured one of his chairs into something more comfortable and fluffy. He grimaced. She picked out a book and sat with it. She read, he corrected.

It must have been her presence, her breathing, her scent. He concentrated much better and corrected much more exams than he had planned for that evening. And it was still relatively early. He could drown into her and make up for the blasted two weeks she had disappeared. And to think that in a couple of days she would go away for the holidays. He would stay there, of course. There was nothing for him in Spinner’s End and he had only planned a trip for the summer, so he would help protect the castle and whatever students did stay, if any. It was something to do. It was best for her to go, though. She might go on a trip with her parents, meet someone new, better for her. Forget about him. And he would be freed of this blasted attachment he had developed towards her. Be able to sleep alone and even with his damned nightmares, still concentrate and work, function as a human being. Not to want to be inside her. He had been alone for years, celibate for long periods of those years, with the war and being a double agent leaving him no time for himself. And he couldn’t risk being compromised. He had gotten along just fine. He could continue to live without her and this, whatever it was. He *should* do it since sooner or later that would inevitably be the case.

But now, now he had to be with her, make up for lost time and enjoy the few days he had left with her.

He looked up from the parchments on his desk and saw she was sleeping, crooked on the chair, an open book on her chest. He went to her and picked up the book, closing it and placing it on the desk. He picked her up and carried her to his bed. With a flick of his wand, her clothes fell from her body, stitching themselves back up in the air and falling folded on the armchair that sat in the corner of the room. Over her lingerie he dressed her with his black pajama shirt that already belonged to her in his mind and he only kept in his drawer. He covered her with the sheets and duvet and went into the bathroom to take a shower.

When he stepped out, he noticed she held herself and whimpered, though she was still sleeping. She was cold. He lay behind her and wrapped his arms around her, casting a warming spell. She calmed down, felt more comfortable, and he rapidly fell asleep.
“Good morning, kitten,” she heard whispered in her ear, making her body quiver. She snuggled back into him smiling, but still half asleep, and could feel his hard cock against her behind. Excitement tightened in her lower belly.

“Did you sleep well?” He planted a kiss behind her ear. “Are you well rested?” His breath on her ear drove her insane. He then nipped her lobe, making that string of excitement tighten again.

“Unhmm,” she managed.

“Wonderful,” he said and nipped her ear again, and ended up slowly sucking on it. Then his lips were on her neck and his hand on her stomach, sliding down into her knickers. His clever fingers parted her and just the feeling of his skin on hers made her whole body quake. Two fingers rubbed her clit in circles, then up and down, teasing her, lightly pinching her as his lips and tongue worked on her neck, making her moan and quiver, goose prickle covering her body. His fingers then left her nub and began to tease her labia, making her heart beat accelerate. She grabbed his arm as an incentive, then let her hand slip down to his and try to bring it back to the sweet spot, but he wouldn’t obey.

“Tut tut, impatient kitten,” he rumbled in her ear with a smirk on his lips and she groaned in frustration and arousal because of his silky voice.

His fingers went further down, past her folds, into her entrance. He felt how wet she was already and smiled into her neck. His fingers thrust into her a few times as he hooked them an rubbed the sweetest spot inside her before he pulled them out, soaking wet, and spread her arousal up to her clit, teasing her there again. She moaned softly, trying to control her breathing, but failing miserably. It had been too long, she needed to come. She wanted him to make her come. He then pulled his fingers away from her and his hands from her knickers and she groaned.

“No Sev, please don’t stop,” she whined. “I need this. I need you,” she let slip her lips.

He rolled on top of her and with a slick move of his hand, the buttons on her shirt popped open. She rocked her hips up to better feel his hard cock against her core. His lips hungrily reached a breast and kissed it over the cloth of her bra as she arched her back to push herself further into his mouth. He then pulled her bra down and caught a nipple between his teeth, reveling in her moans, her hands in his hair, pleading him for more. He sat back and quickly pulled her knickers off to more hurriedly still bury his face in between her thighs. As his tongue moved against her bud of nerves, licking it slowly, savoring her, his lips sucking on it, on her whole mound at times. She let out loud moans and started to struggle for breath.

“You are so fucking delicious, Hermione. I want you for breakfast every day.” He lowered his tongue to her entrance and his nose took over the job of stimulating her clit.

“Oh Sev. Severus.” Her breathing was ragged. She rocked her hips on his face, her clit and center craving more and more attention. “I love your nose.”

His blood ran cold before she had finished the sentence, fear filling him up, and then it quickly changed to… disappointment? Why?

“Don’t come, kitten,” he said against his folds as he felt her tighten her grip on his hair and her thighs beginning to press against his cheeks, her hips rocking faster. His voice reverberated inside
her and only took her closer to her orgasm.

“How… uuuhhh…. The fuck…. Am I…. uuh… going to… do that? Why…” but it was coming.

His lips tore away from her and she whimpered in disapproval, but he quickly plunged his throbbing cock into her, catching a nipple with his lips. He needed her as well, her warm core to engulf him.

“Severus,” her fingertips sunk into his waist. “Severus,” she gasped as he withdrew from her, not completely, and plunged inside her again. He quite liked to hear her call his name out of breath. It made him harder.

“Such a magnificent cock,” she said with a smile. He thrust in her again an hit her sweet spot. “Oh fuck yes!” she exclaimed.

He was still in his pajamas, so she tried to unbutton his shirt. She wanted it so badly, to see his bare skin, she vanished his clothes once more, especially since she still was wearing the bracelet.

He kissed her lips, his tongue plunging into her mouth in rhythm with his cock plunging into her core, and she could taste her muskiness on his lips and tongue. He moved slowly, rhythmically, deliciously, hitting the right spot inside her and his pubic bone tapping on her sensitive, swollen clit. Her fingertips sank into his shoulder blades as she came and clenched around him.

“Severusssss,” she cried rolling her head back. He watched with a smile she could not see, still slowly fucking her and enhancing her experience. She looked into his eyes, smiling, after she came down from her high and he caught himself hoping she would say those words, say what he had seen in her mind. What the fuck is happening?

He pulled out of her and flipped her over, sinking back into her from behind. He pounded her more vigorously, his body pressing hers against the bed as he held her waist, smelled her hair. She moaned, her pleasure building up again. The slight roughness aroused her as much as the tenderness from before, and the fact he was holding her down like he was, helpless at his mercy, was delicious. Her thighs were pressed together under him, pressing her clit, and that along with the gentle bumping against the mattress also drove her mad, stimulated her bud of nerves. She turned her head to try and face him and he kissed her lips once more.

She felt even tighter in that position. He would come in two seconds. He pulled out of her and turned her back around before plunging back into her. She squeezed his ass, pulling him closer, rolling her hips against him, desperately seeking friction. He positioned his thumb on just the right spot and gave her the friction she so needed while he held her knee up to his chest, to get full, deeper access into her sweet, sweet core. She was so close to coming when he stopped rubbing her to press his body against hers to reach her lips. She dug her heels into his buttocks and clenched furiously around him. He touched his forehead to hers and grunted, his orgasm overtaking him as she achieved hers as well.

“That was… fantastic. I needed that, Sev.” He smiled and kissed her lips. “Every day should start like this,” she said.

She had said she would be back Sunday night, but he asked her to go to him every day.

“But Ginny and Harry would notice and suspect something… even more, I mean.”
He just shrugged. What did he care? They would be off to Christmas break in 3 days and would forget any suspicion. Especially since she would forget about him during that time. He wanted to breathe her before she was off. She agreed to go every day with a smile.

She got back to her dormitory and everyone was asleep. She snuck into her four-poster and changed into her pajamas, but forgot to take her bracelet off. So when they woke up and went about their activities, it was only a matter of time before one of her friends noticed the new item and wondered about it. She said it was a bracelet her parents had had made for her during the summer and she just hadn’t worn it very much, but of course they didn’t really believe it. She didn’t let them get a closer look at the charms that hung from the bracelet, tucking it in her jumper sleeve.

She spent the days with her friends, visited Hagrid, talked and laughed. Even with Ron things were a bit less awkward, though they would never be the same again. At night she would take advantage of still having Harry’s cloak, since he hadn’t missed it, and would go to Severus’ rooms. He would still be correcting some exam but it wouldn’t be long before he had his hands and lips on her.

“Why are you wearing that blasted cloak?”

She shrugged. “I don’t want to take any chances at being seen again.”

He pinched his nose and sighed. “But your spellwork is perfectly good,” he said calmly though he was visibly annoyed.

“Still…”

“So you don’t take my word for it? And you don’t trust my teaching skills.”

“It’s not that! I just don’t trust that I’ll do it right when I’m dying to come get in your pants,” she smiled coyly as she undid his trousers and stroked his cock.

On Monday they received their grades. Hermione did spectacularly well, as usual. In the evening, he had rounds and a staff meeting, since on the next morning most of the castle’s inhabitants would be gone. She waited for him in his bed, but when he got there, she was asleep. He did not wake her and fell asleep beside her, drowned in her hair.

He woke with a heavy heart. It seemed like the night had gone by in a minute, and for the first time he didn’t wake up completely rested when by her side. It was 8 o’clock. He would have to wake her.

“Hermione.” He shook her gingerly. “Hermione. Wake up.”

She opened her eyes lazily and smiled.

“You’ll be late for the train.”

“What time is it?”

“Eight.”

“Shit, shit, shit!”

She jumped out of bed and pulled on her leggings. She pulled off his pajama shirt without
unbuttoning it, threw it on the bed and pulled on her jumper.

“I have to go, quickly.” She hurried to the sitting room. He followed her and opened the door that led directly to the corridor, just to see her zooming past him into the hallway, pulling on the damned cloak.

She left without a word, without a kiss goodbye.
Chapter 27

Chapter Notes

Short one. But it won't be long till I post the next.

The first thing Snape did was walk back into his bedroom and put away the pajama shirt she had worn. Something inside him, stronger than himself and his rational thoughts made him do it. If the shirt was left lying around, a house elf would collect it to wash, and her smell would be no more on anything in his room.

In the top drawer of his chest of drawers, while he was stowing away her sleeping shirt, he found the torn picture of Lily he had taken from Grimmauld Place. It had been a very long time since he had thought of Lily or longed for her. Why was that? Hermione. He should feel bad about not having thought of Lily, of what happened, what he caused. The debt seemed to remain unpaid while he was alive. He should feel bad for having a distraction in Hermione and not feeling incredibly wretched all the fucking time. But he didn’t. He just smiled as he thought of the girl.

It would be short-lived anyway, of course. It had probably already ended. Do not think of her. It’s not meant to be. It wasn’t even meant to get this far. He dropped the picture in the drawer and closed it, walking over to sit on his bed. He then opened the drawer in his bedside table and looked at the small box that sat in it. The few things he had kept of Hermione’s. A pair of Slytherin green knickers, the collar with his initials on it, a pink bra. A picture he ended up cutting out from a Prophet from a few months ago which had sat in the teacher’s lounge.

“Fuck!” He slammed his fist on the bedside table. These sorts of things could not happen. He should throw it all out now. He stared at the box for a moment before slamming the drawer shut and stepping to his bathroom, hoping a warm bath would set him right. He had things to do this Holiday: potions to brew for the infirmary, some to brew for himself; study some things, keep his mind sharp. Kingsley had also asked him for some thoughts on what the Death Eaters that still hadn’t been caught could be doing, if they were plotting something and what it could involve if they were, or if they were simply hiding, wishing for revenge. And where they could be hiding. That would be interesting to ponder. And if he could get to Dolohov and kill him, all the better. Kingsley had asked also if perhaps he could use legilimency on Yaxley and a couple of others the Ministry had managed to capture. All that required a clear, focused mind. One NOT of a foolish old man who thought of the schoolgirl he had shagged for the past few months.

But as he sat in the warm bath he had prepared for himself with a few concoctions of his own mixed to it for a more soothing effect, all he could remember was how she had expressed the fantasy of fucking in the tub and how he should have fulfilled it, to be her first in yet something else, so he could be imprinted in her memory for a long time. An opportunity lost.

“For fuck’s sake!” He called to the empty room, irritated, and shoved the heel of his hand on the surface of the water. Since it was of no use, he got up. He thought perhaps then a bit more sleep could do him good. He dried off and combed his hair, and when he stepped out into his room, he saw it already had been cleaned and the bed made by the house elves. A tray of breakfast had been set on his reading table since he had not been to the Great Hall to eat. Good thing he had put away her shirt. He changed, ate a bit, and lied down again, over the covers and was about to drift off when
there was a knock on his door.

For Fuck’s sake, who can it be? Can’t I have one blasted moment to myself? It is surely Minerva, demanding some task or other. I tell you, the worst decision in the world was agreeing to be deputy headmaster. Might as well have continued as the damned headmaster myself.

He reached the door and opened it to see Hermione standing there, smiling. Oh bugger, I’ve gone insane at last and I’m having hallucinations. He blinked but she continued to stand there.

“I know the school is relatively empty and all, but it might be wise to let me in,” she said.

He stepped aside for her to enter as he asked “Have you missed the train? There was more than enough time for you to catch it.” He closed the door.

“What? No. I was never going to catch the train.”

He looked bewildered.

“I just needed to say goodbye to my friends. I’m staying. My parents want to take a trip alone on New Years to… reminisce,” she grimaced, “on some memories of their own.” He snorted at her grimace and couldn’t hold back a bit of a laugh. She thought the sound of him laughing was absolutely wonderful and smiled. “So, to spend only one week with them and them be alone, I thought I might as well stay here.”

“Oh,” was the only thing he could say that would keep his impassive mask up and whatever was boiling up in his chest area down.

“You didn’t think I would go away like that, did you? Without saying goodbye? I wouldn’t.” She stepped closer to him and threw her arms around his waist. “Can I come here tonight?” She asked resting her chin on his chest looking up at him as he stood staring down at her, his arms at his sides.

He leaned down to whisper in her ear as his hands went to her back “I’ll make sure you do. Don’t I always?”

She quivered at his words and the silkiness of his voice pouring into her ear. He kissed her lips and her tongue hungrily entered his mouth, looking for his. They were entangled for a moment before he pulled away.

“All right, I have to go,” she said. “Harry is waiting for me and I told him I was only going to the loo.”

“Potter stayed behind as well?” He asked as she opened the door.

“Yes,” she answered. He rolled his eyes. “I’ll come back later.”

Harry waited for her on the steps outside, so they could go visit Hagrid before lunch, before it got too cold and too dark, and before he left for the break as well. Harry had stayed behind because even though the Weasleys considered him family, he did not want to intrude on such a delicate time as this, a holiday after a member of the family had died. Or so he claimed. It was true in part. But all of Hermione’s friends talked and were worried about her staying there alone when she had been so viciously attacked. So Harry agreed to stay behind to look out for her.
Due to the times they had, the war, the hurt, the sorrow, most families demanded their children be with them during the holidays, so very few people stayed behind. In Gryffindor tower, only Harry and Hermione remained.

She stepped out beside him.

“Come on, Harry, let’s go.”

Harry stood and grinned. “Are you all right?”

“Yeah, why?”

“It took you a while.”

Hermione rolled her eyes. “Come on.” She stepped out on to the cold and already hardened ground.

“I just hope you washed your hands.”

“Harry, you are spending too much time with Ronald.”

Harry snorted.

They went to Hagrid’s, they had lunch, they laid around the common room and talked, they had dinner. After dinner they went up to the tower again. Hermione loved Harry, but she had already spent the whole day with him. She wanted to go see Snape now. But Harry would not tire himself, would not go to bed. So she decided to say she was going to bed and then sneak down in his invisibility cloak.

“Already? But it’s early,” Harry said.

“Yeah. But I’m tired. Not much to do here when there isn’t some mystery to solve and evil to fight,” she smiled.

“Yes, that’s true. Speaking of which, are you done with my cloak? There is no more late night studying to be done… for now.”

She wanted to hold on to the cloak, but there were no more excuses. She would have to trust her disillusionment spell. “Hum, yeah, alright. I’ll get it for you.”

She ran up to her dormitory and came down again with his cloak in hand. “Thanks. It was… very helpful.”

“Sure,” he smiled.

“So… I’m going to bed. Good night.”

“Are you sure you don’t want to stay down here longer?” He ate some chocolate frogs and read a comic book.

“Yeah. I’ll see you tomorrow.”
“Ok. Good night. Tell Snape I said hi,” he grinned.
Chapter 28

Chapter Notes

Hello, good people.
I meant to have this up a bit sooner than this, but the muses have kindly visited me and bestowed upon me ideas for TWO new stories with this favorite couple of ours, and I just had to get the 5 chapters swimming in my head down on paper before they left me. I actually just remembered to come around because I have no more functioning pens in the house. lol. (yes I write longhand, technology has not convinced me. hahaha)

See the end of the chapter for more notes

“Wha...wha... what are you talking about?” Hermione was trying to hide her shock and pretend she did not know what Harry was talking about, but she could feel her hands trembling. She held them in one another to try and conceal it.

“I know, Hermione.” He said. She looked at him puzzled. “That you are… seeing? Snape,” he finished.

“Harry, where did you get that idea? It’s absurd! You need to find something to distract yourself.” She let out a half-hearted laugh.

“Stop it, Hermione, You’re an awful liar. I saw you in his room.”

“You saw me?” She asked, now outraged.

“On the Maurader’s Map.”

“Oh, so you’ve been spying on me? Just to fulfill some morbid curiosity of who I’ve been seeing?” She was now visibly angry.

“No, no, it wasn’t like that, I swear,” Harry was desperate to explain. “I was just worried that you were roaming around with the cloak at night. I thought you had found something and were investigating, that you would get into trouble…. You know, old habits. But I saw you were actually in the library, so I was more at ease. However, when exams were over and you didn’t give me my cloak back, I thought I might take another look and…”

It was partly true. Harry had finally had the idea of bringing out the old map when Ron had his little outburst and people started talking about her love life. He was half curious and half concerned, because it wasn’t like Hermione to hide something. But following that episode, she stuck with him and Ginny for a while, so there was no need to check it. Then, she was always in the common room and he would see her going up to bed and not coming back down, so there was no need, since he thought she hadn’t come by an invisibility cloak of her own. When she wasn’t there with them, he could never catch her actually leaving, to follow her on the map. When he got to it, she was already somewhere he could not find. He never thought of looking in an actual teacher’s quarters. That would be breaking so many rules and so unlike Hermione. So he remained puzzled and mostly curious, since his concern slowly faded because she would always appear the next day and seem to be doing very well.
Until exams week. She asked for the cloak, so he knew she could sneak out undetected. He kept a sharper lookout, with no results. She was always in the damned library, until he fell asleep on the map. And then finally one day, he noticed how Snape looked at her, and only her, while they sat in for his exam. His eyes seemed to drill into her skull, thinking and wondering while she looked down and scribbled on parchment. Harry was even so bold as to drop his quill on the floor and stand to pick it up, and Snape didn’t seem to care or tear his gaze away from the back of class. He thought it odd, and began to follow him on the map as well. On the last day of exams he finally saw her in his office. At first he thought she was maybe only going for an Occlumency lesson, but at one point they were too close to each other to be only student and teacher. He kept looking all night until he saw him carrying her to his bed. He checked every day from then on, to make sure what he saw was not a hallucination, and to make sure she went freely to him, though once they were in his bedroom he never looked too long. It creeped him out. A lot. Of course he wouldn’t give Hermione the full story. He did not need her angrily screaming at him right now.

Hermione sighed. Fuck. One more who knew. Snape would turn her away for sure, it was getting too dangerous, word was spreading. McGonagall might hear about it at any moment. Wait. Was it just one more who knew?

“Harry, you haven’t told anyone, have you?” She asked desperately.

“God no! No. Not even Ginny, who is dying to know who it is that you are dating.” She had thought of the map too, but he refused, giving some excuse of respecting Hermione’s privacy, though he himself was looking constantly.

Hermione sat down again. More like crashed down into the chair. “Fuck, Harry. Severus is going to be so pissed off you found out.”

“So?” That was awfully weird to hear. “If you are scared of him knowing I know, if he is going to do something to you, maybe you shouldn’t…”

“No! It’s not like that! He would never hurt me. Why do you always assume the worst of him?”

“I’m sorry. It kind of just comes naturally sometimes… But what is it then?”

“This was just supposed to be se…”

“TALKING. All you do is talk. Discuss books and stuff.”

Hermione snorted. “Well, it was supposed to be casual, a secret, and now people are finding out…”

“People? Does someone else know?”

“Draco.”

“Draco?? So he comes first now?”

“Who cares who knows? He’s going to end it now because it’s getting out of hand. Now that I’ve…” She ran her fingers through her bushy hair in desperation.

“Oh my God Hermione, are you in…”

“DON’T!! Don’t say it. No. No. I can’t be. Can I?”
“You seem to be,” Harry said after a moment of analyzing her.

Hermione was so worried about not being able to meet Severus anymore, of being turned away, that she hadn’t even stopped to think what Harry thought of the fact she was seeing him.

“Oh God Harry, do you hate me?” She asked suddenly.

“Hate you? No! I admit it’s a weird idea, but you’ve been very cheerful. And he seems… not so solemn anymore. If you are happy, I’m happy for you. I guess… he’s not such a bad guy.”

“Thank you, Harry!” She threw herself on him and hugged him tight. It felt good, not to have to hide this from him, to be able to talk to him.

“How long exactly has this been going on?”

Hermione cleared her throat. “It’s complicated… but, uhm, since around when I got attacked, I guess.”

Harry looked surprised and had no answer for that. If only he had checked the map more thoroughly, he would have known for weeks now, and could have teased her so much. So many opportunities lost.

She sighed. “I guess I have to go see what happens…” She stood.

“Just don’t tell him I know.”

“Oh no, I get nervous… and he has a way of figuring things out. I should just get it over with. I already hide… uhm, too much. I might burst.”

She walked to the portrait hole.

“All right then, good luck,” he called out.

As soon as he heard the knock he opened the door. Like a little lovesick puppy, he had been waiting by the damned door. Disgusting. He had felt something like exhilaration when he learned she was to stay for the winter break. He would have more time with her. But he had to play it carefully, shield himself. Her openness, kindness, cheerfulness was causing him to become attached in some form. But it was casual, nothing more than that. He could not forget it, so when she finally did leave, having grown tired of him and his… ways, his heart wouldn’t be so completely crushed. There had been… hope? For a while. He had seen in her thoughts she might love him. But of course she was just confused. Who could love him? Why the fuck was he hoping for it anyway? He was better off alone. It was how he functioned, it was who he was. She was better off alone. This was just them having some fun, and he would enjoy it while it lasted.

As he opened the door, she jumped on him, her lips claiming his. He eagerly returned her attentions as he shut the door behind her.

“Severus,” she gasped in the brief moment they broke for air. “Fuck me. Now,” she blushed pinker than she already was due to the arousal kissing his experienced lips caused her.

“I don’t much appreciate being ordered around, Hermione.” He furrowed his brow before her
lips crashed on his again, but he wasn’t really mad. It’s so hard to get mad at her now.

“It’s not an order. Just a very, very strong request. Pretty please fuck me now,” she smiled.

“Right here?” They were still standing by the door.

“I don’t care where as long as you are inside me.” She held his shoulders for support and hoisted herself up so her thighs were wrapped around his waist. He aided her as he growled.

With her clinging to him, kissing his lips, his neck, licking his scar, he hurried to the shelves behind his desk. He touched that especial spot which made them open to his sitting room. He couldn’t get to the bedroom, he just couldn’t wait to taste her, so he dropped her on the sofa and then dropped to his knees on the floor before her. He kissed her lips deeply, his tongue ravishing her mouth as he glided his hands all over her body, down her breasts, her waist, her thighs… He pulled down her leggings along with her knickers, and lifted her legs over his shoulders. He placed his tongue flat on her bud of nerves and started licking, doing such magnificent work that it made her head loll back and her eyes roll back into her skull. She needed this. She needed to be with him, feel him. If he was going to end it all when he found out Harry of all people knew, then she needed this last memory with him.

She scratched his back, grabbed his shoulders as he licked her, his tongue entering her, his nose rubbing her nub just the right way. She awkwardly and quickly pulled off her jumper and her bra.

“Severus…” she gasped as she placed her hand on his, which rested on her hips, “play with my tits,” she pleaded, blushing in embarrassment.

He looked up and smiled, easing one of her legs from his shoulder so he could reach up and palm her breast. He teased her nipple, lightly pinching and twisting it as he returned his lips’ attention to her clit. His magical tongue, swift as it was sharp, made the pressure build in her quickly. She was about to come, she could feel it, but that didn’t erase the fact she wanted to come with him, over and over again.

He felt her signs and knew she was almost there. Her labored breathing, her hands tugging at his hair, her thighs pressing against his cheeks. He pulled back and let his fingers take over stimulating her clit so he could watch her. He dipped two hooked fingers in her folds and fucked her with them as his thumb flipped back the hood of her clitoris and rubbed her button. She came, wailing, throwing her head back, her body thrashing on his couch, her juices slightly staining it, and he reveled in it. Such a beautiful sight. He could watch it every hour of every day, her coming. He leaned in and kissed her mound, her belly under her navel, still looking up at her as she felt the aftershocks of her pleasure.

He picked up her still limp body and with her legs clinging to his waist, he took her into his bathroom and sat her on the edge of the tub as he got the water running. She then asked, tugging on his belt and undoing it

“Why are we in here? You can’t seriously think that was all I wanted, can you?” She pulled off his belt wearing a very coy smile.

“I seem to remember some confessions of bathtub fantasies,” he smiled.

“Oh yes. Yes. I’d very much like to have your wet body against mine.” She was undoing his pants. “Take that blasted coat off.” She tugged at it as his trousers fell to the floor and he stepped out of them. His dick was so hard and enticing, right there in front of her face. Big. Thick. Hard. His pink
tip begging to be licked. She had thought about taking him in her mouth so many times... sucking him dry, providing him with what he did for her. But she didn't know how, not really. She had read some about it, but was too insecure to try. And too shy to ask if he wanted it, since he never had. What if he didn't like her... abilities? What if she did something wrong?

Courage still failed her then, so she tugged on his frockcoat again as he slowly undid the top buttons. “Come on. Off. Off.” She tugged with her wand hand, wearing her bracelet, and she managed to vanish his clothes. “I really love this bracelet,” she smiled.

“And I’ll be left to wander the halls unclothed before the end of this school year.” He smiled as he sat beside her, his lips reaching for hers, the tub still filling. As they kissed, his hand found her mound and his fingers circled down to her clit. She quickly moved to straddle him, wishing to feel his rock hard dick, but before she could rub against him, he stopped her, letting his fingers continue their deed.

“Why must you torture me like this, Sev?” She gasped.

She wiggled and ground on his thigh, on his fingers, her hands clasped around his neck, and he chuckled. She melted into him. She loved to see him smile, hear his laugh.

“I want you soaking wet, kitten.”

“For Merlin’s sake, I am soaking wet, Severus. I’m always soaking wet for you. You need only look at me.”

“Really?” He smirked. “So are you soaking wet during my classes?”

“Yes, in every single one of them.”

“If I check your knickers after class, will they be wet and... sticky?” He continued to stimulate her with his fingers.

“Very much, yes,” she gasped as his fingers moved past her folds now.

“How very naughty,” he chuckled again. “I shall check on that when classes start again.”

Would he still be with her till then?

“But I need you much wetter than that, kitten. So the water doesn’t wash it all away. I wouldn’t want to hurt you now, would I?”

“You could never hurt me,” she whispered in his ear. One of her hands slipped down to his cock and began to slowly stroke him “Your magnificent cock molded me. We fit perfectly together.” She was still clutching his neck, rocking her hips against his fingers, and stroking his cock. She gently squeezed him and then her thumb caressed his tip. His fingers hit just the right spot and she moaned.

“Oh fuck, kitten.” Her words, her ministrations, made his dick twitch in her hand. He waved his free hand at the faucet and it stopped running as he slid into the tub, pulling her in as well, but to sit in between his legs, her back to his chest.

The water was very shallow, and the bathtub seemed wider to her, as if he had cast a spell to make it roomier. Granted she had never actually been inside it, but she had stood next to it countless times now. Whatever he had done, it was very comfortable. Even more so when she leaned back onto his chest she had now become used to sleeping on.
He spread her legs wider, pushing her feet apart from the inner sides with his feet. He pinned them to the sides of the tub. Then, one hand cupped a breast as the other touched her knee and slowly slid down her thigh, the suspense and desperation of him touching her core again driving her insane. He finally made it there, his fingers stroking her mound and labia lightly before finally rubbing her clit.

“Do you want to come again, kitten?” He whispered in her ear.

“Yes,” she gasped. “On your cock,” she added as she felt it hard behind her and remembered the sight of it rock hard in front of her face, which had made her mouth water.

“All in good time. First, I want to make you come so hard and squirt so much you fill up this tub.” His fingers continued to gently rub her as his other hand twisted her nipple. “Do you want to come hard? All over my hand. All over your legs.” His words, his low rumble, also made her body quiver.

“Oh fuck, Sev.”

His hand left her breast and with a wave, the handheld shower head lifted from its support next to the faucet and turned on, levitating towards them. Its gentle spray fell on her breasts, wetting her from the neck down as he continued to rub her and caress her breast, his lips kissing her neck. It then levitated lower, in between her legs but at a distance, and he spread her labia and drew out her swollen nub. The spray hit her clit as he held her open and she whimpered and squirmed marvelously against his chest. He planted kisses behind her ear, on her neck, nipped her earlobe, sucked on it, as the water still stimulated her, a rogue finger of his aiding the purpose every once in a while, flicking her clit up and down, from side to side, but never giving up spreading her completely open.

“Oh fuck Severus, fuck. That’s… uuuuh, so good. Ooooh.” She rolled her eyes back into her head and her head onto his shoulder and even drooled a bit. He pinched her nipple and made her moan louder.

Snape then took his hand from her breast and grabbed the shower head that floated in the air, bringing it closer to her core, still holding her open. A silent spell made the shower head begin to vibrate, and he touched it to her clit, the spray and vibration driving her wild. She moaned loudly and sunk down a bit, stretching her hand back to hold on to him behind his neck.

“Hmmm… Sev…” she couldn’t string more words together and just whimpered with her eyes closed.

He rubbed this newly created vibrator slowly on her clit, the spray still on and hitting her as well, his feet holding her legs open. She whimpered, moaned, wailed, all while convulsing against him. Her legs trembled and tried to close, but he wouldn’t let them. He applied more pressure to the makeshift vibrator, and it in turn pressured her clit. He then rubbed, adding movement on top of the vibration, making her cried out. She grabbed his neck, his hair and within moments she was coming, moaning his name loudly and repeatedly, her spray and the spray from the shower head mixing as one. When she thought she was done, he rubbed her with the vibrating shower head again and again she squirted, more waves of pleasure hitting her hard. He tapped her clit and again she cried out.

“Oh fuck, Sev,” and she sprayed all over his hand.

“Call out my name again, kitten. Tell me how much fun you’re having.”

His hooked fingers dipped into her and stimulated one more wave of pleasure.

“Oh my God… Fuck… Severus.”
“Am I the only one that makes you come like this?” He smirked and thrust his fingers in her again and what little she had left to give came out.

“Yes! Yeeees! Severus, wonderful man.”

She was left limp in the tub in between his legs as he still held her pussy, caressed her inner thighs, trying to regain enough consciousness and strength on her legs to return the favor.

She clumsily turned around to straddle him and claimed his lips with hers, giving him passionate kisses, sucking on his lips and wrestling his tongue desperately, trying to convey her appreciation. She pulled back and looked him in his eyes and he smiled looking back into hers, and she wanted so much to tell him she loved him right then and there. She had to bite her tongue not to, and kissed him again to further prevent her mouth from acting without her consent.

He held her close to him as they kissed and she gently started to rock on his dick, trying to stimulate him. He waved a hand and drained the tub, only to make the faucet turn on to fill it up again.

Her wet, slick, warm slit rubbed on his length as their lips were still locked. She moaned softly and sweetly into his mouth as she did this, and he groaned into hers in turn. At times his tip was pushed to her entrance but she did not allow him access entirely.

He couldn’t take it anymore. He guided himself into her warmth and slipped into her slickness easily. That characteristic moan of hers filled his ears and he grunted.

“You kill me with that sound, kitten. Sweeter than any song I’ve ever heard.”

She smiled and kissed his lips, and as they were slowly moving against each other, their lips interlocked, he waved to close the faucets.

She moved on him, her hands moving from his neck into his hair as he laid back and gripped the edges of the tub, grunting, his eyes staring hungrily at her. She kissed his neck and nipped his ear and voluntarily clenched once around him. That prompted him to grip her waist, pulling her closer, as he lightly bit her neck. She let out the sweetest moan in his ear.

“Oh fuck, kitten, you feel so good.”

She clenched again and he pulled in air through gritted teeth. “Have you been reading?” He smiled.

“A bit,” she said sheepishly. “Do you like it?” She clenched again and he groaned.

“If you do it again I’ll come before you do.” He held her close and licked her neck where he had bitten her, then kissed her, trailing his way from her neck to her ear.

“It’s fine. I’ve already had a good go,” she smiled and kissed his lips as she clenched again. He groaned into her mouth and slipped his hand in between their bodies, his fingers finding her clit to speed up the process she commenced once again with her grinding on his dick. She moaned into his mouth in turn. She moved more rapidly on top of him, making the water splash about them. He continued to apply pressure to her clit and that along with his thickness thrusting inside her in such sweet rhythm made her clench around him involuntarily in no time. She was coming, sinking her fingertips into his shoulders, breathing heavily in his ear and he came with her. His fingertips sunk into her waist and he bit her shoulder again.

She kissed his lips deeply after her moment had passed, then turned to sit in between his legs, her back leaning on his chest. He waved his hand at his cabinet under the sink and a few phials
levitated over them, pouring themselves into the water. The faucet turned on again and bubbles started to proliferate around them, the smell of cherry blossom filling the room. His arms were resting on the edges of the tub as she snuggled back into him.

He was so good at wandless magic. She would ask him to teach her some time. It was thanks to him that she had learned non-verbal spells. He was a good teacher, even if he was extremely strict and a bit impatient. But he was a genius. She would ask him. If he was still with her after he found out Harry now knew about this. *Oh Merlin, is this love? It must really be.* She didn’t ever want to be without him.

“It’s very unfair,” she mumbled without perceiving she was saying it out loud.

“What is?” he asked from behind her.

“Uh… that you always make me come more than once and you only get one go,” she thought quickly and came up with that. *Ugh, how fucking lame.*

He chuckled. “Once is enough for me.”

“Not for me. I want to make you come more.”

“I’m too old for that.” He started to tense up as he remembered the very perverted cradle robber he was.

“You are not old!” She took her hand back to his hair and caressed it. “I…” *love you just as you are. No. Fuck.* “think you should make a potion for that. A sort of Pepper-up for horny people,” she laughed.

He laughed as well, and she loved the sound. It made warmth spread around her heart. “I most certainly will not.”

“Then I’ll take an apprenticeship in potions, become a master myself and do it,” she teased.

“You would make a brilliant potions master. Almost rivaling me,” he kissed her cheek and stood. “But I do hope you won’t waste your time and talents on that,” he said as he summoned a towel.

She stayed in the tub, beaming. A brilliant potions master. He had never complimented her so openly like that. So he *did* think she was smart. When she awoke from her day dreaming, he was nowhere to be seen in the loo. She picked up the towel he had left for her and stood, emptying the tub and going to join him in bed.

She quietly got into the shirt he had left on “her” side of the bed. *It’s not your bed, Hermione, you don’t have a side.* She managed to get in the bed as he was getting in and she quickly snuggled into him, before he even had a chance to properly make himself comfortable. He just sighed, but did not seem irritated, and settled in with her in his arms. This felt so good. It should never end.

She needed to tell him though. She would drive herself insane if she didn’t. She already had to hide her feelings, she didn’t want to hide anything else.

“Severus?” She said as her head was on his chest, his chin on her bushy hair.

“Hmmm?” He let out. He was half asleep.

“I…. need to tell you something.”
His insides churned and then froze. Was she about to tell him that… should he stop her? How, without being an ass? “Yes?” Could he want to hear it?

“Uhm, Harry… he knows. About… uh, this.” She held him tighter, afraid he would rip away from her in anger. But he stayed.

“Fuck,” he said, a bit more out of disappointment that she had not said what he thought she would than anger.

She thought he would be much madder.

“Did you tell him?” he asked, not irked.

“No, no. I wouldn’t…”

Tell your friends you were shagging the likes of me.

“betray your trust like that. He saw us.”

“He saw us?” He was a little more impatient.

“On his map.”

He scoffed. “I should have burned that damned thing when I had it in my hands. Why the fuck was he looking at my rooms anyway? Spying on me? Bloody insufferable like his father.”

“He was spying on me, worried that I might get into trouble when I asked for his cloak.”

He harrumphed, then fell silent.

She looked up at him. “That’s it?”

“What?” He furrowed his brow.

“Nothing. I just thought you would… be angry.”

“Do you want me to be angry?” He smirked. “You want to get spanked, naughty kitten?” He gently slapped her bum.

She blushed and smiled. “Maybe later.”

“I’m not worried. He isn’t telling anyone if he knows what’s good for him.”

“He won’t tell because I asked him not to.”

Chapter End Notes

I hope that properly got your smut (and fluff?) on.
She spent the next couple of nights with him. Since Harry knew and he was the only one in Gryffindor tower with her, she could come and go more freely. She would knock on Snape’s door and he would let her in, greeting her with a kiss. On both nights he was reading something when she arrived. They talked a bit, mostly about their days – or her day – and he would go back to reading. She would read too. Sometimes she interrupted him to ask how his book was. How fucking annoying. She wouldn’t like it if someone did that to her, but she so wanted to talk to him, to share, to know him better. She wouldn’t mind if he did that to her. At least he didn’t complain or seem annoyed in any way. On one of those nights, he had rounds. She waited for him in his room and they went to bed together.

It was getting way too personal, Snape thought, as he had been thinking for a while now. But there was something inside him he could not control any longer, and it wanted this. It needed it. It wasn’t so bad. His colleagues mentioned he seemed… friendlier. They smiled at him and engaged in conversation more often. He didn’t mind it as much as he used to. Some, like Minerva, weren’t shy and asked what was going on with him. He just shrugged. It was really uncontrollable. He didn’t mean to be like that, but it just came out. He was more open. Which would just make it hurt more when she tired of him. Still, he couldn’t seem to convince himself to turn her away and end it before she did.

It was Christmas and there would be a feast in the Great Hall. All would have to attend, especially since there were so few of them in the castle. Much like in their third year, the long House Tables and the Head Table were vanished from the Hall. There was only a smaller table in the middle of the room. The table looked smaller still due to the magnitude of its surroundings. Other than that, nothing was small. All of the decorations were as splendid as ever. Snape had wanted to do something like it when he was headmaster, so that at least during that time some cheer would be present in the damned castle. But of course it was all nonsense to the megalomaniac and the goons he had placed at Hogwarts with him. And even if he was able to put up the decorations, it would be of no use. No one stayed behind other than staff. And it wouldn’t make anyone like him any better or realize he was on their side.

The ones who were attending were Snape, Minerva, Filius Flitwick, Sybill Trelawney, Filch and four students: a Hufflepuff fifth year, a fourth year Slytherin, Potter and Hermione. The first two were muggleborn and their fathers were in the military and based overseas for the year, along with their families. It would be impractical for them to go to London pick them up for only two weeks or so. They could be together again in the summer. The other professors had gone home to some form of family or other, and Hagrid had gone to France to see Maxine. Almost everyone had plans. At least this time it wouldn’t be so terrible for Snape. The teachers who had stayed weren’t hostile towards him. And she was there.

The Golden duo were the only ones who hadn’t arrived yet. Severus was anxious to see her. He hadn’t all day, as was usual. But now, as he went about his day, whether it was working with Kingsley at the Ministry or brewing in the classroom that doubled as a lab for his experiments, or even sitting in his room reading, she was on his mind. It was a strange feeling. The little chit started asking him about his day every time they met a while ago, and at first he gave short and rather impatient answers, not understanding why that mattered and why she was asking anyway. He would only answer to keep her in a good mood and get in her pants. But now… now he looked forward to sharing with her. Fuck. Stop it. He didn’t quite understand what this was. Why he was feeling it with her. He sort of remembered feeling something… similar when he first met Lily, but he wasn’t quite sure…. It wasn’t really reciprocated back then, ever. He quickly locked that thought away. This is
not that. It can’t be. He didn’t know what it was, but his survival instincts told him it was dangerous.

Potter walked in and Hermione followed close behind. She looked angelic, like he had never seen her before. She wore jeans and a white blouse with a modest V neck, but deep enough to make his dick twitch. Stop that. She was in high-heeled boots that came almost up to her knees over her jeans. Fucking magnificent. He dug his nails into his palms to keep his face expressionless and not smile. That would most definitely give him away. She had her wild, chestnut curls down, with a thin diadem that was a silver crown of flowers adorning them on the top of her head. Angelic. She was very self-conscious and shy, he could tell. He wanted to run to her and kiss her and tell her how gorgeous she looked. Stop that.

Oddly, she was to be seated beside him. He didn’t know if the gods were being kind or wicked to him. As she sat down, he took in her smell. Thankfully, it just sounded like and annoyed sigh. Not so out of character for him.

The plates were filled and the feast began. Everyone conversed and he tried to join in from time to time. His colleagues were friendlier towards him and it was… interesting to maintain that. But he had to watch himself so that he didn’t engage her specifically in conversation.

At one moment, Sybill noticed Hermione’s bracelet. “That is a lovely piece of jewelry, child. Where did you get it?

Sybill… always impertinent. Snape maintained his eyes fixed on his plate and prayed Hermione wouldn’t look at him out of reflex. She didn’t. Instead, she took her hand out of sight, to her lap, not too quickly, and smiled graciously.

“Thank you. It was a gift.”

Snape had to restrain himself to not snort. He knew very well about her dislike of Sybill. He shared it.

“I have been meaning to ask you, Miss Granger,” Minerva began, “If you are well. If you are seeing someone?”

Hermione looked up at the headmistress, puzzled.

“I just… worry so very much about you, you know. About all of you,” she added, trying to include the other two students. But they knew the headmistress and most of the staff had a soft spot for the Golden Trio. They obviously had a deeper connection with the members of staff, since most of them were part of the Order as well. So the two girls just ate quietly.

“And I just want you to be well,” Professor McGonagall continued. “With Mr. Weasley, well, at least I knew you were with someone sweet and safe, who wouldn’t mistreat you.” Snape bit his tongue to not snort. Minerva still had plenty to learn about how to become up to date with students rumors and gossip. She had obviously missed something there.

Minerva was blushing. “Forgive me for getting motherly on you, Miss Granger.”

Hermione just smiled. “I appreciate your concern, headmistress, but I am fine. Very well.”

“Why on earth did you even break up with such a sweet boy as Mr. Weasley? Who knows what horror you might find now.”

“Excuse me?”

Hermione furrowed her brow at him and Snape’s obsidian eyes tore through his soul.

“I just mean that boys… can sometimes be very irresponsible. And we cannot see it when we are young, how wrong one can be for us. And if you must hide it from even your closest friends, it seems, it cannot be good. I know Draco is very nice, but…”

“Yes, Hermione, hiding really can’t be a good sign.” Harry grinned again. Being almost alone in the castle was pretty boring. This was the most fun he was having in days. Until he caught Snape’s murderous look.

“You shouldn’t believe rumors, professor. I’m really not seeing anyone, I don’t know why people won’t believe me. I just want some time for myself, it’s no big deal, no cause for worry,” Hermione said.

Almost simultaneously, Professor Trelawney turned to Harry and gasped as she grabbed his hand.

“My boy! My Inner Eye sees great danger in your near future! If you are not careful, you might die.”

Harry glanced at Professor Snape and saw he still pierced his soul with his murderous stare. “You know what, Professor Trelawney?” He grinned, “I think you might be right this time. Thanks for the warning.”

“But…” Minerva began.

“Must we discuss Miss Granger’s love life throughout dinner, Minerva? Really? Has it come to this? It makes it very hard to keep the food down.”

“You are right Severus, I have overstepped. Forgive me, Miss Granger.”

Hermione discreetly squeezed Severus’ thigh in thanks under the table while the rest of the table was immersed in conversation again.

Harry made the mistake of waiting for Hermione. She was last to stand and leave the Great Hall, and as they walked out into the Entrance Hall, it was empty… except for Snape.

“Right then,” Harry said. “Good night and Happy Christmas.” He started up the stairs.

“Potter. A word,” Snape said coldly.

Harry stepped down from the couple of steps he had already climbed only to be cornered by Professor Snape.

“Have you, Potter, a death wish?”

“No sir.”

“Have you survived the Dark Lord twice only to perish by my hands?”

Harry saw he did have murder in his eyes. But he was also now fairly certain he wouldn’t
really kill him. He might definitely feel inclined to at times, but he wouldn’t do it. Harry felt smug, but held his tongue. Better to try to stay on Snape’s good side.

“Absolutely not, sir.” He looked up to Snape’s deadly obsidian stare and smiled faintly.

“Then I suggest you never again perform such foolishness.”

“Sorry sir. I was just fooling around. But I would never take it to the point where I could actually harm Hermione in anyway.”

That was all Snape was concerned about, really. He nodded, though still very irritated, and turned to head down to the dungeons. He did not wear his teaching robes that billowed behind him.

“Good night, Harry. See you tomorrow.” Hermione was about to follow Snape.

“You’re not actually going with him, are you?” Harry asked. “He looked absolutely murderous! Perhaps it’s better to give him some space to cool down?” He sounded worried.

“Harry! He would never hurt me. You have to stop thinking so badly of him. Besides, I know how to handle him,” she smiled slyly.

“Eww! I did not need that image in my head, Hermione!”

She turned, still smiling, to the dungeons.

“My Inner Eye is disgusted!” She heard him call behind her and sniggered. She disillusioned herself when she was out of anyone’s sight, for good measure.

Snape moved quickly. He was impatient, annoyed, angry. He didn’t care for his job. No, it wasn’t that. If he did get sacked, it might be the push he needed to do whatever else it was he needed to be doing. No. It was Hermione that worried him. If he caused her to be expelled, she would hate him. If she was to be talked about all around the wizarding world and associated with him, she might end it. The shame she would feel of people knowing she was shagging such a person. He had to accept it. It would happen, the end, sooner or later. But he preferred it to be later rather than sooner. Fuck. Potter fucked it up. *Fucking Potter.* He could kill him right now. She could also have taken offense in how he talked to – threatened – her friend. Shit.

He entered his office and slammed the door behind him. He was trying to focus, pacing, think what must be done now, trying to breathe away his anger, when there was a soft knock on his door.

Snape opened it and could see absolutely no one. She had mastered the charm. He could, however, smell her divine scent. He just stepped back to let her in and she closed the door behind her before she lifted the charm and made herself visible. His heart beat easier upon seeing her and he breathed deeply in relief. She still looked angelic as she had at the feast. She came closer and smiled up to him with her hands behind her back.

“Hi. Happy Christmas.”

He took his hand to her hair and played with it a bit, twirling a lock in his fingers before touching her cheek.

“You look beautiful,” he said, and she blushed instantly. He had never paid her a compliment on her looks so directly.
“Oh no, it’s just the different outfit and a few beauty charms, I’m not…” she was saying, clearly embarrassed, looking down at her feet now.

He took his index finger under her chin and lifted her gaze to him. She stopped talking immediately.

“You are beautiful,” he uttered, and her legs turned to jelly at the sound of his voice saying such things to her. He closed in and lightly touched his lips to hers, slowly deepening the kiss soon after. She threw her arms around his neck and he began to slowly push her into his sitting room, then his bedroom, all as they still kissed. She undid whatever few buttons of his frockcoat she could.

The back of her knees hit the mattress and he laid her down on the bed. As he hovered over her, she looked up at him smiling and brushed his hair off his cheeks, only to have it curtain down again. He moved her hair as well, and pulled off her diadem, letting it fall – not accidently – to the floor on the side of the bed her head was laying towards. He moved in to kiss her behind her ear while his fingers undid the buttons on her blouse. She gently whimpered near his ear as she enjoyed his tenderness and could feel his dick growing hard against her leg. Her hands wiggled between their bodies so she could unbuckle his belt and unbutton his trousers.

He stood to unbutton the rest of his coat, completely forgetting he could just vanish it. At that moment, the only magic he could feel was whatever was happening between them. She sat up to pull off her blouse and only then did she remember she was wearing a rather old beige bra, the only thing that wouldn’t show through her blouse. She covered herself, embarrassed.

“I forgot… it’s the only one that wouldn’t…”

He touched his index finger to her lips and hushed her. He then pushed her arms down, exposing her battered bra and kissed her lips. “Beautiful.”

He was rid of his coat and she helped him with his white button down shirt before he lied on top of her again and kissed her lips, then collarbone, making his way down to her stomach while he cupped a breast. He undid her jeans and kissed her hipbone and then pulled her boots off, before pulling her jeans completely off along with her knickers. He let his trousers fall to the floor and stepped out of his shoes while she undid her bra.

Hermione pulled him down over her, and as their lips touched with hungrier and more passionate kisses, she could feel his arousal touching her core. He held her knee to his waist and entered her, biting his lip to not gasp her name, and she bit her lower lip, muffling her moan as her fingertips sank into his behind, pulling him further inside her. His hands moved to cradle her head, sinking into her wild mane as her fingertips traced his back, gently, up and down. Their movements were slow, passionate, smoldering hot. Their breaths grew heavier and more labored but still were synchronized. She looked into his eyes and caressed his cheek, and had to bite her lip again as to not tell him she loved him. Part of her believed this, right there, what they were doing, was love and therefore he must feel it too. But part of her knew better than to delude herself like that and say such things, which would only annoy and scare him away.

“Oh Sev. Sev. Severus,” she cried out as her mounting pleasure was about to reach its peak. She dug her heels into his behind and the wave washed over her. “Severussss,” she cried and as he felt her incessant tightening around him, he groaned deep in his throat and came with her.

Once their bodies were relaxed, he kissed her chin and she pulled him up to her lips. She smiled and he rolled to her side. She turned and laid her head on his chest, wrapping her arm around his waist, and he let his arm wrap around her shoulder. They fell asleep in each other’s arms. It was only the second time he had ever made love, and that notion scared him more than any war,
or torture he had ever endured.
Hey people. Just to remind you that I very much appreciate your kudos and reviews! Don't be strangers, leave a comment!

I might have extended Christmas break a little too much, I don't know. But just go with it.

See the end of the chapter for more notes.

Hermione’s days during the break were mostly spent with Harry, and her nights with Snape. But one night, since Snape had a late meeting with McGonagall and then had rounds, she decided she would stay in Gryffindor tower with Harry. And so they talked and laughed well into the night, and Harry, who wasn’t an early riser in normal circumstances, was guaranteed to sleep till noon the next morning, or even past it. She therefore decided to try and pay an early visit to Snape. If someone was there with him, she had the Occlumency lesson excuse, and could pretend she had gotten the day or time wrong. She was glad he hadn’t pressed her for more lessons, though. She knew she still had to improve, but for now, keeping him in the dark about her true feelings was more important. He would shut her out if he found out and she didn’t want to be apart from him. She dreaded to think what would happen when summer came and she was done with school.

She knocked on his office door, but he opened the one to his classroom, next to it. He was in his black trousers and white dress-up shirt. His hair was already greasy – very different from what it had been in the evenings during this break – from the fumes of potions he was brewing. She wanted to help him. Just being around him was enough to light up her day, oddly, since he wasn’t much of a cheerful kind of guy. He was different around her, though. He sighed and feigned annoyance with her request, but let her in anyway. He couldn’t lie to himself, try as he may. He wanted her there.

She recognized what was brewing in the first cauldron as being an anti-cold and flu potion. She had read about it in his book in the beginning of term and concluded he was brewing for the school’s stocks, since winter was upon them. The other two cauldrons had nothing she could recognize.

“What are these?” She pointed to them and then continued to crush slugs with the blade of the knife she held. “I can’t recognize them as anything I’ve ever read about.” She grimaced at the awful task that was given to her.

He chuckled at the faces she was making. “You wouldn’t. These are my creations.”

“Oh. Severus Snape, potioneer extraordinaire,” she smiled. “You should have a proper lab.”

“I do.”

“You do? Why are you brewing here in the classroom like a peasant then?” She kept smiling, which made him smile.

“Because it’s in the basement of my house.”
“Oh.” She wanted to see his house one day… *You’re delusional, Hermione.* “But I meant here, you should have a lab here at Hogwarts.”

“Yes. Maybe you should have told Dumbledore that before the old goat died.” His face went dark for a moment. “He perhaps would have listened to you,” he finished quietly.

Hermione too did not wish to discuss Dumbledore. She still had mixed feelings about the old headmaster and how he handled the whole situation the wizarding world was in at the time. “Professor McGonagall would surely give you one,” she tried a shift in the subject.

“She offered. But I’ve grown accustomed to brewing in here. Besides, I do not know if I’ll be in Hogwarts for long.”

“Oh?” Her heart thudded in her chest. Where would he disappear to? Would she be able to find him? Would they still be in contact? She fiercely wished they would. “Moving on to bigger and better things?” She tried a smile but it came out feeble.

“Maybe.”

“You should make your potions known to the world. You know, sell them in shops and stuff.”

“Oh yes,” he said sarcastically, “because I’m so trust-inspiring. People would definitely buy them.” He added sardonically and snorted. “They would think it was all poison.”

“They would not!” She cried. “I’d buy them. They’re fucking brilliant. I mean, I was kept in the infirmary for days and still came out with bruises all over, and pain. You gave me just one little phial of some brilliance you brewed and I was good as new. And the stuff for the scar on my hand… all wonderful.”

“They’re not perfect, they need to be improved.”

“I think they’re brilliant. But what the fuck do I know. Most people would think they’re brilliant as well. But if you think they need work, work on them. Then patent them. And sell. And be rich and travel somewhere tropical or something.” She smiled.

He snorted as if dismissing what she was saying, but inside he felt… warm. No one had ever been supportive and encouraging of him like this before. *What is this witch doing to me?*

“You’re lucky. At least you…” She didn’t finish her sentence. She just shoved what was on her chopping board into the cauldron as he had instructed and moved on to the next ingredient.

“Go on,” he said.

“No, it’s nothing. It’s silly. You don’t want me rambling on.”

“You do not know what I want. Go on.”

She smiled. “At least you have this. An impressive skill, something you know how to do well and seem to enjoy doing. You can do anything you want with it. Great things. I… I have no idea what to do with my life.” She sighed and looked like she was about to break down. “Harry and Ron want to be Aurors, they know it. And they will be good at it too.”

Snape snorted as he stirred a cauldron. “That is questionable. At the very least when it comes to Weasley.”
Hermione sniggered a bit but soon became exasperated again. “Ginny already has offers from professional Quidditch teams. Harry does too, if he decides to back down from the Auror thing. Neville is great in Herbology and wants to teach it… I just feel like I’m stuck.” A few tears rolled down her face and she quickly wiped them away, hoping he hadn’t seen.

He sighed. “You’re not stuck. You are young and still have time to decide, you don’t have to do it now. Your problem is that you excel at everything. Longbottom is only decent in Herbology, of course he’ll hold on to that. Potter and Weasley are just boys clinging on to the idea of being heroes forever. You are fucking great at everything, so it gets harder to decide. What you need to figure out is what you enjoy doing, what you are good at not because you revise like a crazy woman into the night, but because it comes to you almost effortlessly, and take it from there.” He was looking down, chopping. She was looking at him, smiling widely.

“You think I’m great at everything?”

“It is well documented that you are.” He furrowed his brow, still looking down, feeling a bit annoyed that he had complimented her so openly.

“Well if I’m so great at everything, why don’t you tell me what these potions of yours do, teach me how to brew them. I might help you improve them.” She laughed.

“Smug little witch,” he looked up at her, smiling.

After lunch, he took her to the Forbidden Forest to help him pick roots and fungi and whatever else was still possible with the cold and the bit of snow that had fallen. He left before her, of course, to not be caught together and so he could survey the area and make sure there weren’t any intrudes or dangers. He worried about her being attacked again. She met him there a few minutes later. Since Hagrid was not at home and no one was lurking around the edge of the forest, the little clearing behind his hut was a great place for her to steal kisses from him, which he granted with some feigned annoyance.

Later on, she asked for the Occlumency lessons to be substituted briefly for Charms, so he could teach her how to cast a proper invisibility spell, which was safer than just a disillusionment charm. And so he did, every night, before they went to bed.

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New Year’s feast went by more calmly than the Christmas one. Harry wasn’t as cheeky, and he was actually more supportive, because he saw firsthand how happy and giddy Hermione was every time she came back from seeing Snape, and how at peace she was, especially since there were no exams and homework to stress about. She would still revise every day, of course, but it took up little of her time and she would not snap at him if he interrupted her.

A few days later, Hermione was hurrying down the halls after a package had arrived for her. She knocked excitedly on Snape’s office door and he called for her to enter. It was evening, after dinner in the Great Hall, where she noticed every member of staff that was in the castle (many had already come back from holiday) had said something to Snape before sitting down to dinner. That was weird... She entered his candlelit office with excitement etched on her face as he had parchments
and books open all over his desk and poured over them. *Researching how to make his potions better?* She smiled to herself, since he hadn’t looked up yet.

She walked around the desk and stood beside him, waiting. He looked up at her and she leaned down to plant a kiss on his lips.

“Hi,” she smiled.

“Hello,” his lips curled upward slightly.

“I have something for you.” She took out a tiny package from her coat pocket and set it on his desk in front of him. She took out her wand from her sleeve and tapped the package, and it grew back into its normal size, which was rather large. “Happy belated Christmas,” she smiled and sat down across from him.

He just stared at the package, apparently in awe, but trying to hide it.

“This is the part where you open it. And smile and at least pretend you liked it.” She grinned. “Haven’t you ever gotten a present before?” She teased.

He looked up at her, still in disbelief.

“Oh blimey!” She clasped her hands to her mouth. “You never have, have you? Oh fuck oh fuck, I wish I had thought of something better then.”

He finally took his hands to the package and slowly untied the rope that held the cloth around it closed. He then pulled the cloth off to reveal a large tome, very old, one could tell by the yellowish pages, but very well conserved. On its black leather cover, the title in Latin: *Magnificus Potionibus.* He still said nothing and only stared at it.

“Do you hate it?” She asked, apprehensive.

“Fuck, Hermione, do you know what this is? How could I hate it? This is rare, very rare. All the copies were believed to have been burned during the Inquisition.” He opened it and flipped a few pages. “I only heard of this during my studies, and worked with a few ancient notes from wizards and witches who passed it on from that time. This is… probably the only copy left. This… is precious.”

“So you like it?” She smiled.

“How could I not? Where did you find it?”

“Oh, I was traveling with my parents during the summer. I like visiting used book shops. I found this in a little muggle store in Greece. I thought it curious and could feel there was some magic in it so I bought it. Later on I researched it here, in the Hogwarts library. I couldn’t find a copy or any clear mention of it, but there were some clues that it had been important. I thought it would make a good present for you. Not when I bought it, of course, but lately. I borrowed Hedwig to go pick it up with my parents’.”

“Hedwig? I saw the creature die.”

“Harry got another owl and named it Hedwig.”

“How original,” he rolled his eyes.
“Anyway, you can make better use of it. I bet you know some translation charm or even know Latin or something.”

“I do. Know Latin.” He caressed the book cover and stared at it, still unbelieving.

“Of course you do.” She laughed. “So you like it?”

He pushed away from his desk and waved her to go to him. She did, and sat on his lap. He held her. “I love it. Thank you.” He kissed her lips tenderly.

“I’m so glad. I’m sorry it’s so late.”

“It’s not late,” he said quietly.

“What are you talking about? Christmas was over ten days ago.”

“Yes, well… today is my birthday.”

She let her jaw drop and her eyes widen. “It is?” She kissed him, deeply, slowly. “Happy Birthday, Sev!” She kissed his cheek, then his neck, his scar. “Why aren’t you at a party in the teacher’s lounge or something?” She asked into his neck.

He snorted. “I would kill whoever organized such a thing.”

“So you never celebrate your birthday?” She asked, appalled.

He shrugged. “It’s not a big deal. I never have.”

“Never? Never had a cake at least?”

He didn’t answer and held his impassive mask in place, and she remembered how awful the only memory of his childhood she had had access to was. Of course a household like that would not provide him with celebrations. And back then he had not had many friends, and after…

She jumped from his lap and rushed to the door.

“Hermione?”

“I’ll be right back.” And she closed the door behind her.

He moved to his sitting room with his new book and started reading it from the first page. He could read it through by the end of the month, with luck. Such a thoughtful gift. For him. This witch… she would be the end of him. He wanted to cry. Fucking cry. Don’t cry, you ridiculous wizard.

He was distracted reading when there was a loud pop in the sitting room. He looked up with his wand drawn to see Hermione holding a cake and a house elf’s hand. The house elf whimpered and hid behind Hermione.

“Fuck!” He exclaimed.

“It’s ok, Winky, he’s just a little jumpy.” She let go of Winky’s hand and placed the cake on the table where he sat. It was a simple, one-tiered cake frosted in green with ‘Happy Birthday Sev’ written in silver.

“Winky was kind enough to bake and frost a cake for you,” she smiled.
“Winky can do better, if only mistress would allow her more time,” the elf said, disheartened with her subpar work.

“This is fine, Winky. Great job. Thank you,” Severus said.

Hermione smiled and could tell him she loved him right then and there. He was kind to the house elf. She thought she would have to tell him to thank her.

“See Winky, you did a wonderful job. You may go back now. Thank you so much.”

With a loud pop Winky was gone, her big tennis ball eyes watering with pride.

“What the fuck, Hermione?”

“Relax. She won’t tell anyone. I know her.”

“You know her?”

“Yes. I had an organization to free elves and… well, it’s a long story.”

He snorted. “I bet they took that very well.”

“Not really.” She stuck her tongue out at him, and he smirked.

She waved her wand and two candles appeared on the cake. Thank Merlin they didn’t give away his age or he would be seriously irritated, and feel like a cradle robbing pervert. She stood behind him and leaned down, her arms loosely around his neck, her lips next to his ear.

“Happy Birthday to you, happy birthday to you, happy birthday dear Severus,” she purred in his ear, “happy birthday to you.” She kissed his cheek. “Blow out your candles and make a wish.”

He was emotional, but of course he did not let it show. Why was he even letting her do this for him? He blew out his candles, not before snorting, of course. She moved to his lap.

“I will not tell you what I wished for.” He said. I dare not. I cannot.

“No, you can’t! Otherwise it won’t come true!”

She kissed his lips tenderly, then took her wand and cast a spell to cut the cake. She picked up a slice and fed it to him, licking the frosting from the corners of his lips. He licked her fingers clean, then picked up a slice and fed it to her. She also licked his fingers. They fed each other another slice, and began kissing deeply, and caressing each other more boldly.

They moved into the bedroom and she excused herself to use the loo. She thought they were to have sex, which is why she came out in her knickers and bra, but he was already sitting in bed, with only his boots off, reading the book. She smiled, appreciating how alike they were, and glad he really liked the gift.

“Should I go?” She said, teasing him.

“Hmm?” He didn’t even lift his gaze.

“Should I leave you two alone?” She smiled.

“Oh no, no.” He waved his hand and her pajama shirt lifted from the drawer behind her and fell to the bed beside him. He did not lift his eyes from the pages.
She sniggered and put on the shirt, slipping under the covers beside him, and then she fell asleep.

He got up at some point. He remembered that. He showered and changed into pajamas. Then he sat in bed, leaning on some pillows and watched her for a while as she slept peacefully beside him. He smiled to himself and picked up his book from his nightstand. It was so interesting, so rare. So many useful ingredients, potions, methods, lost for so long. To think she found it in a muggle shop… if this had fallen into the wrong hands… And she gave it to him. Such a treasure she could have kept to herself. Something fluttered in his stomach.

He read for a while before falling asleep with the book open against his chest. But now, now he didn’t feel the book weighing on him. He wanted to open his eyes and see what was going on but he couldn’t. So sleepy. It was still the middle of the night. But then he finally felt pressure on his dick. He was hard. What was he dreaming of? He couldn’t even remember. He forced his eyes open to see Hermione stroking him, her face next to his hard cock as she watched it intently. She looked up at him and smiled.

“Sorry to wake you.”

“Not at all,” he smirked.

Some pre-cum dripped from the slit on the end of his member and she watched curiously, her hand stopping its movement. He for a moment thought she would pull away from him in disgust, because of course a beautiful woman like her would be disgusted by him, this was all just a dream. But she licked his tip and then her lips. She then smiled and stroked his cock again, spreading what was left of his pre-cum all down his shaft before taking him in her mouth, all that she could handle at least, which was a little over half. He groaned in pleasure as he felt her soft, plush, warm mouth move around him. She felt like velvet, so divine. He exhaled and closed his eyes for a moment but forced his eyes open to watch her as she did this. What a marvelous scene it was, she sucking half his cock as her hand stroked close to his base. She looked up at him and seemed to smile with her eyes as her lips engulfed him. She took him out of her mouth and licked his length, up then down, slowly, and then took his bollocks in her mouth. He growled, his breathing labored. After a few moments of playing with his bollocks in her mouth, she took his cock in her mouth again.

“Hermione,” he gasped.

“Hmm?” She hummed and her throat vibrated against the tip of his cock. He rolled his eyes so far inside his head that he swore he saw his brain.

“Oh yes. Fifty points to Gryffindor.” Then he added a “fuck!” when he realized he had just said that out loud.

He looked down at her and her eyes seemed to smile more intensely. She continued her deed, licking his cock, drooling on it, sucking its tip before taking all she could in her mouth again.

“Hermione, kitten, I strongly… suggest you stop now if… you want to take advantage of this as well,” he said with much difficulty, breathing heavily as she continued to suck and stroke him.

“Uh-uh,” she hummed and again her throat vibrated on him and he saw stars.

“Bloody hell, kitten.” Head Girl indeed.
One, two more strokes with her lips and he was on the edge.

“Hermione, I’m going to… please, step back or I’ll… kitten I can’t…” She, having picked up on how he liked it when she hummed, started to do so continuously on his cock, and he exploded in her mouth, down her throat. She swallowed him, all of him, licking the tip of his limp dick as she took him out of her mouth, and then licking her lips and smiling.

“Oh fuck, kitten.” A hundred points to Gryffindor. He was even blushing. He could feel the warmth spread on his cheeks.

“You taste delicious,” she said as she sat up and straddled him.

“That was…” he couldn’t finish the sentence.

“It must have been good if it made you speechless,” she smiled as she began to unbutton his shirt.

“Where did you learn that, kitten? I normally wouldn’t care, but you’ve made me a jealous man, it seems.”

She smiled and caressed his now bare chest.

“Reading, of course.” She started to grind on him and unbutton her shirt. “I’m glad you enjoyed it. I was worried you wouldn’t.”

“Reading really is a wonderful and instructive hobby,” he smiled.

She just continued to grind on his cock, smiling.

“Kitten, if you think I’ll get it up again tonight, you are sadly mistaken. Not even magic can do that.”

“It’s alright.” She stopped grinding on his dick and sat further up, closer to his navel. “I can help myself.” She licked her fingers and stuffed them in her knickers. She started rubbing and bit her lips, moaning on top of him. He watched and his eyes sparkled. Was she drunk or just extremely horny? Why wasn’t she embarrassed as she usually was? He wasn’t complaining, just curious.

He took his hands to her thighs and caressed them, smiling.

“Do you want to help me?” She gasped as she still rubbed her clit gently.

“If I can be of service, yes,” he smirked.

She pulled the crotch of her red and black-laced knickers aside and rubbed herself on his stomach. He could feel her juices wetting his skin. She then pulled his hand to her mouth, still stimulating herself slowly on his stomach, and she licked his fingers thoroughly and took them to her core. He hardly needed to move his fingers as she was grinding on them, moaning and throwing her head back.

“Bloody hell, kitten.”

Her bra unclasped in the front and was strapless, so she undid it and threw the item to the floor. She opened her already unbuttoned shirt and cupped her breasts, all the while still rolling her hips on his fingers, making them very sticky with her excitement. She teased herself, pulling her nipples and moaning so fucking sweetly. He started to get hard again. Bloody hell, it was a miracle.
He felt like he was nineteen again. When his fully erect dick touched her bum, she smiled.

“Look who decided to join us. I must be an incredibly talented witch.”

“Oh fuck, you are,” he rumbled

She lifted from his fingers and sat on his length. She continued to grind, rubbing her clt on his length, her labia kissing his cock. She took his fingers to her lips and sucked them clean of her essence.

“Good God, Kitten!” Two hundred points to Gryffindor.

She used her hands for support on his chest as she rubbed her clt on his shaft and he growled, his fingers sinking into her hips. When she rubbed her swollen clt just the right way on his cock, her whimpering turned into a loud moan and she sank her fingertips in his chest. The faces she made, biting her lips, just worked to drive him more insane. He growled again, impatient.

“Does Professor Snape not like being teased?” She smiled teasingly.

“No,” he said through gritted teeth.

“And what is he going to do about it?”

He pulled on the black strings on the sides of her knickers and ripped it off her, throwing it to a dark corner of the room.

“Lift,” he ordered, holding her by the waist. She did, and he slipped into her, feeling relief as her warmth surrounded him. That delicious moan of hers escaped her lips, and his cock throbbed inside her. Five hundred points to Gryffindor.

“Oh Sev, you feel so good. I want you to fuck me all night long,” she said as she softly bounced on his cock.

“You’re so naughty today, kitten. I like it.” He was grabbing her ass cheeks, aiding her movement on him.

“Am I? Then why don’t you spank me?” She suggested as she slowly rode him. His eyes sparkled. He began to slap her bum slowly and every time he did, she cried out in pleasure.

“Oh yes, Severus!”

He slapped her again.

“Yes. Spank this naughty kitten.”

As she rode him, her breasts bounced in front of his eyes so deliciously, and he could not ignore them. He cupped one as he took the other in his mouth, his tongue circling her nipple, his teeth grazing it. She lightly pulled on his nipples as well, and he growled and intensified his teasing of her. She clenched around his cock and he growled again. He slapped her bum hard, making her moan and clamp on his cock again.

“Bloody hell, kitten, you’re going to make me come early like a fucking schoolboy.”

“Come, Sev, come. Do you want to come on my breasts? In my mouth again?” She was panting, intensifying her riding on his cock. “Tonight is all about you, baby. Have your way with me.”
He grabbed her legs and flipped them both over so he was on top.

“I just want to make you come, kitten.” *Hear you scream my name, come undone under me, so beautifully.*

“Then fuck me hard, Sev. Fuck me hard and make me come harder than I’ve ever had.”

He started pounding her, holding one leg over his shoulder. She grabbed his hair and pulled on it lightly, biting her lip as she looked into his eyes.

“Yes, like that. Like that.”

*A thousand points to Gryffindor.*

“Kiss me,” she asked, panting. He did, deeply. Once their lips parted she nipped his bottom lip. He did the same in turn and slowed down his rhythm. He rolled his hips to slowly move inside her, and she whimpered. He was right there, hitting the spot. She let out long, loud moans again and again. Her hand reached down to her clit and he moved it away, replacing it with his own.

“Allow me, kitten.”

“Yes. Yes. Pleeease. I’m yours to do with as you please.”

He stopped for a second because of what she had said and she whimpered in despair. “Don’t stop fucking me!”

He kept going, moving his hips slowly, his fingers on her clit. It wasn’t long before she came undone, crying his name.

“Severuuuuusss. Oh fuck yes, Severuss.”

He couldn’t resist her clamping around his cock, trying to suck him dry, and her moans and screams. *She is screaming my name.* He came with her, and collapsed in a heap on top of her.

After a few minutes of silence, their heavy breathing the only thing filling the room, Hermione caressed his hair as he lay on her breasts and smirked. “Did you have a happy birthday?”

“Oh kitten… Hermione. The best,” he panted.

“And yet, it only earned me fifty points,” she smiled. He was drowned in her hair, taking in her scent, kissing her neck, nipping her ear.

“If I could grant you all the house points I wished to, you would win the house cup alone. Trust me.” He mumbled into her neck as they began to fall asleep.

Chapter End Notes

* College was a while ago and my Latin is very rusty, but I meant for the book title to be something like "Magnificent Potions" or "The Magnificent Book of Potions". 
Hermione laid with her head on his bare chest, his arms around her, sleeping peacefully, breathing in his scent.

“Severus!” She heard, and thought she was dreaming. “Severus! Severus!” It came with frantic knocking. “Severus!”

It was professor McGonagall’s voice. She was knocking on his door. Hermione’s blood froze in her veins and she shook Severus awake with some urgency.

“What is it?” He became alert immediately, his hand under his pillow, gripping his wand.

She said nothing and only tilted her head indicating the door in the sitting room that led to the hall, through the open door of the bedroom.

“Severus!” The knocking recommenced.

“Fuck!” He uttered as he let go of her and swung his feet to the floor. He put on a robe and put an index finger over his lips, indicating to her she should be silent. She nodded, scared to death.

He shut the bedroom door behind him and opened the door of his sitting room that lead straight to the hallway. A gargoyle shielded it from students and any other passers-by, but unfortunately Minerva knew what lie behind it. Fortunately, she couldn’t get in his wards.

“Minerva. How may I help you?” He drawled.

Hermione sat on the floor next to the bedroom door, listening.

“How can you be sleeping in? Today of all days?”

He looked at her, intrigued.

“The students come back today! They’ll be here any minute now! We need to go manage the situation. There will certainly be chaos with so many students coming in from break.”

“Fine, Minerva. I will shower quickly and meet you in the Entrance Hall in twenty minutes so we can go ‘manage the situation.’ Will that suffice?” He was annoyed. Minerva was overly anxious. They had at least three full hours before they needed to even start worrying about students pouring in, and he had hoped he would spend at least one of those hours thoroughly eating Hermione out until she came repeatedly all over his face. In gratitude for last night’s events.

“Very well. Twenty minutes! I need all the help I can get. And since I can’t seem to find Miss Granger anywhere… Honestly, why would she disappear like this when she is Head Girl and she knows I need her today? I hope she is in no trouble.”

Snape snorted. He was nervous about her comment, but it came off as disdain, as usual.

“Been to wake her already, have you?”

“Yes. Mr. Potter said she woke him early to go for a walk. He stayed behind because he wished to sleep in. But I can’t seem to find her.”
“Let me go change, Minerva, and we can see if we manage to find Miss Granger.”

He let her out and went back into the bedroom. Hermione was sitting by the door on the floor, her knees under her chin.

“Do you think…”

“Don’t start to worry yourself sick, kitten. She didn’t know you are here.” He stretched out his hand and she took it to stand. “But we should move quickly. She might come knocking again in twenty minutes.”

“And I was so hoping we could shower together,” she smiled mischievously as she unbuttoned the pajama shirt she wore.

He emitted a guttural sound of desire and smiled. “I would love nothing more than to thoroughly wash every square inch of your body, kitten, but we can’t.” He was gathering his clothes and laying it out on the bed so he could change into them quickly after his shower.

She came closer to him and wrapped her arms around his waist.

“Maybe if we’re really fast…” She kissed his chest right where his scar ended.

“Stop distracting me, woman.” He headed to the bathroom. “Besides, it’s no fun to be fast. I enjoy savoring you.”

While he showered, she changed. She tired of looking for her knickers, and they were ripped anyway, so she pulled on her leggings without them. She would shower after she met with the headmistress. The cleansing charms she performed on herself would have to suffice till then. She still had to swing by the tower and change into her school uniform with her Head Girl badge so she could help with the arrival.

He came out of the shower and went to the bed, reaching for his wand under the pillow. He then waved his hand at the bed and his clothes flew over to him and he was magically dressed within seconds. He tapped his head with his wand and his hair was dry and shiny, curtaining his face. It wouldn’t be as smooth and silky in an hour, but she liked it no matter what.

“Shall we?” He asked, his hand on her back, nudging her into the sitting room.

“I want a kiss first,” she smiled, and he brushed his lips against hers before his tongue parted them.

“Yes, now we can go,” she said when they managed to disentangle.

He led the way. He opened the door and there was the headmistress, ready to knock again.

“Minerva!” He must have gone paler than was normal for his complexion, but managed to keep his impassive mask in place.

Thankfully, Hermione was no idiot. She was behind him, and managed to slip behind the door unnoticed. She cast an invisibility charm on herself and hoped to any and all deities that it was well done, cast a *muffliato* on her shoes and then she slipped under his arm, he felt it, between him and the door. She stood very still, waiting for a clear path to bolt. *Clever girl*, he thought with a pang of pride welling up inside him. *Clever lioness*. Thank Merlin she knew how to cast non-verbal spells.

“What took you so long?” McGonagall cried.
“Can’t a man shower in peace in this castle?” He uttered, annoyed.

“Come on, let’s go.” She turned her back to him and he felt Hermione slip out from under his arm to the opposite side of the corridor. He closed the door behind him.

“So, no breakfast?”

“Not right now. If you wanted breakfast you should have woken earlier,” Minerva snapped back.

He no longer could smell Hermione’s divine scent. She took a different route to the tower.

It had been a close call. Too close, he thought. So he said it was best to stop their constant encounters for a while and certainly stop sleepovers. The constant encounters had to stop anyway, now that classes were back and the castle was filled with the little buggers again. But not having her sleep with him, not even once a week at least… he wouldn’t get proper rest.

She managed to lie to her friends again saying that Occlumency needs constant practice, and that during the break she had asked professor Snape to meet with her for just that, since she had to make the most of it while she was still in Hogwarts. Indeed, I do, she thought with sadness. So once a week they managed to meet early under these pretenses. But of course she never actually wanted Occlumency lessons.

“Why don’t you want Occlumency lessons, Hermione?” He found the courage to ask one day. “And don’t tell me it’s because you think you’re good at it. You never think you are good enough at anything, overachiever.” He tried to be nonchalant, but was terrified of the answer. He didn’t know which of the possible options would be worse. Why the fuck did he care? Merlin, I’m already in too deep.

“I just don’t want to waste what little time we have with you becoming annoyed with me when you could be… engaged elsewhere,” she tried to be coy but her brightly red cheeks gave away her nervousness.

“Is it because I’m an awful teacher? I know I am, you do not need to spare my feelings, if that is what worries you.”

“You are a wonderful teacher,” she said as she cupped her hands on his cheeks and brushed her lips on his. “But I have to go right now. Harry is having a hard enough time keeping this from Ginny as it is.” She got up from the bed to look for her clothes. He let it go, berating himself for caring in the first place. She’ll be gone in a few months, you ass. Let her go. Don’t do this to her, or to yourself.

****

Valentine’s Day was on Sunday, and there was a Hogsmeade trip on Saturday. She thought if she should get him something or if that would be too much for him. She was anxious to give him something, but also afraid to scare him off, so she thought she would test the waters.

Friday night she was resolved on sneaking to his room, even though there was no
“Occlumency lesson” scheduled. It had already been a month since their little scare. She could be bolder. So she waited a while, and when Ginny and Harry retired to their little corner of the common room to be alone, she told Neville and Ron she would go to bed. Neville knew she still wasn’t comfortable being in such a small group with Ron, where she would have to interact with him more directly, so he made nothing of it. She cast an invisibility charm on herself in the dormitory and headed back down, careful to not bump into anyone or anything. She slipped out when someone was coming in through the portrait hole.

She was excited to see him, try and figure out what he thought of Valentine’s day, what he thought of their… situation. She got there and he gladly welcomed her and thoroughly and passionately ravished her. She might buy him something after all.

He went into the loo afterwards, and she thought there would be no problem in going into his drawer and taking out the shirt she would sleep in. As she did, a photo fell to her feet. She bent over to pick it up and instantly recognized the picture’s inhabitant as being Harry’s mom. She had seen him looking at the album Hagrid had given him thousands of times. Of course Severus kept her picture. Severus loved Lily. He had all his life. She was kidding herself thinking this, what they had, could be what she wanted it to be, ever. Tears started to fill her eyes.

She felt his hand snatch the picture from hers, and she looked up at him. He looked… furious. But also a bit… frightened?

“I… I’m sorry, I was just…”

He shoved the drawer shut and went into the sitting room gripping the picture. She broke down and cried.

Fuck. Fuck. Fuck. Why didn’t you put this picture somewhere else, you fool? Why didn’t she open the fucking drawer that has her blasted knickers in them? What do I do? How do I explain this? What will she think? He paced the sitting room, trying to find the courage, the words…

She came out, fully dressed, holding her elbows and looking at the floor.

“Hermione…”

“I think I should go.”

“Hermione, let me…”

Tears were streaming down her cheeks. “Severus, please open the door for me.”

“Hermione,”

“I really can’t do this right now. I’m sorry I invaded your privacy. Please let me go.”

He hated to see her like that. Crying. It infuriated him that he had caused that. But he couldn’t keep her there against her will. He opened the door and she hurried out into the hall, not even bothering to disillusion herself.

He had certainly screwed this up for good.
She couldn’t get him out of her head. It was Valentine’s day. She had thought of him so much that she couldn’t help but buy him something in Hogsmeade the previous day. It wasn’t much, just a box of chocolates and a bottle of firewhisky. She couldn’t focus enough to think of something better. She loved him, and she’d rather have half of him, of his time, his attention, his affections, than nothing at all. She knew about Lily when she got into this. He had done nothing wrong. She didn’t even have the right to demand anything from him. She would go apologize for being an utter mess and present the gift as an apology. Nothing to do with Valentine’s day. Yes, that’s it.

She stood from the chair in the library she had been sitting on most of the day and made her way to the common room. It was very crowded, and many conversations overlapped.

“They say they used the Cruciatus on him…”

“…carved something on his skin…”

“… the screams were horrible…”

She heard but paid no attention. She had to get to her trunk and retrieve his gift and head down to the dungeons.

Harry appeared in front of her and quickly pushed her back to the portrait hole and out of it.

“Hermione…” He started when outside, away from anyone’s sight.

“Harry! What in God’s name…”

“Hermione…”

“You know what, I’m glad I found you. Can you lend me your cloak? Just in case. I’m not sure I can cast a proper charm today, and I need to go see Severus because it’s Valentine’s…. Why are you not somewhere with Ginny?”

“Hermione! You haven’t heard?” Harry was pale and his hands cold.

“What? What?!”

“A. a Death Eater… attacked Snape in Hogsmeade today.”

Chapter End Notes

I'd just like to say I'm sorry. Let's hold hands and get through this together. I'll try to post the next one sooner than usual so the angst isn't so horrible.
“Wha...What?” She was pale as snow. “You’re kidding me, right? Is this some kind of sick joke?”

“Would I do that to you, Hermione?” He looked at her lovingly.

Tears started to run down her face. “How... when? No, where, where is he? I have to go see him.” She started for the stairs. He held her back. At the same moment, the portrait swung open behind them and he had to pull her aside and out of the way. She didn’t quite know what she was doing, what she felt, what was happening as she saw a couple of fourth years head down the stairs. They looked at her as if she were an alien. It was when she noticed she was sobbing frantically. Was he dead? Why wasn’t Harry letting her go see him? Why wouldn’t he tell her where Severus was?

Harry pulled her into a close-by nook behind a tapestry before anyone else came out and saw her in this state. He cast a muffliato.

“Where – is – he – Harry?” She sobbed so much that she was finding it hard to breathe. “Is – he – dead?”

“Calm down, Hermione. He’s alive. He’s in pretty bad shape, but alive. They took him to St. Mungo’s so you can’t exactly go see him. Sorry.”

Her brown eyes where blurry as she looked up at him. “When... what happened?”

“About two hours ago, we were at Hagrid’s… we looked for you, even in the library, but didn’t see you… I thought you were with him so I encouraged Ron and Ginny to go see Hagrid without you. While… While we were there, the headmistress called Hagrid to go help, ’cause there was an attack at Hogsmeade’.” He took a breath and she pleaded with her eyes for more information.

“Apparently… Apparently he was in the bookshop, distractedly browsing… he didn’t have time to pull his wand out to defend himself. They… tortured him pretty badly before someone got there to help. There were two, one fought the villagers who tried something outside while the other… they managed to apprehend one while the one who was inside torturing him escaped. Snape was unconscious when the teachers got to him.”

The sobbing had stopped but tears flowed freely down her face. “I can’t even go see him! Last time I saw him I was so… so stupid! I didn’t even kiss him goodnight then!” She sobbed and cried so much, snot came out her nose. She was a mess. Harry produced a hanky with his wand and gave it to her.

“You need to calm down, Hermione. He’ll be alright. He’s tough. You’ve seen... in the war. Don’t worry yourself sick. You have to be calm to get back in the common room. Or else someone might suspect...”

Everyone was in the common room due to the events. They probably would have cleared out Hermione from the library, had she stayed.

“I know, I know.” She took deep breaths and tried to calm herself. It worked. Barely. Tears were just beneath the surface and any tiny provocation could make them burst out. But she could make it to her four-poster if she went quickly. Harry helped her with some charms to clean up her face and appearance in general.
She went back into the common room escorted by Harry. They went to the corner where Neville, Ron and Ginny sat.

“Hey guys,” she managed to blurt out before they made any comments. “I’m really tired, so I’ll talk to you tomorrow, okay? I put in a lot of hours of study today. Good night.”

She hurried upstairs to cry in her warded four-poster.

Hermione was able to turn her head off, so she wouldn’t cry in public. But that meant turning it off for everything. She couldn’t focus in any of her classes. That was the bright side of always having been an uptight control freak, she thought. She had already read and revised everything that could be said in class a thousand times. It was in there, in her brain, somewhere. She hoped it could be tapped into when she really needed it. She didn’t even bother spending time on her hair. She just pinned it up in a messy bun on top of her head and didn’t even care.

The worst was not having any news. She couldn’t ask anyone without it being suspicious, especially since she would most likely cry. It really made her see how meaningless she was to him. She couldn’t get information. Something so simple. It made her heart break even more. If he was awake, would he find a way to send her some word?

On Wednesday she entered the potions classroom dreading what was to come, yet still hopeful she would see him there. But Slughorn was already sitting at his desk, waiting for the class to settle themselves in. She breathed deeply through her nose as not to cry.

Draco came in and took his place beside her.

“How are you holding up, Granger?” He whispered.

“I…I…” She looked up at him and her eyes were watering.

“Shhh.” He put an arm around her and pulled her closer against him. “It’ll be fine. Really. He’s a tough bastard. He’s been through worst, I’ve seen it. No one ever knew because Dumbledore hid it, probably. But he’ll get out of this, he always does. And a Death Eater is nothing compared to Voldemort himself inflicting pain on you, trust me.”

As Ginny walked in, he let Hermione go and she tried to dry her eyes. Ginny looked at them suspiciously but had no time to comment as Slughorn started class.

Friday night and she still hadn’t had any news from or about Severus. She was sitting in the common room, trying to focus and do some homework – a few of which were overdue – and breathing deeply as to not physically hurt Ronald. He kept going on about how Severus – the git, he said – deserved it and how it was obviously going to happen at some point. No one missed him anyway and it was all for the best. Harry tried to shut his friend up, especially since he knew about Hermione’s predicament, but it was of no use. Ginny was always happy to contradict Ron and also took Harry’s side, and even Neville, who was scared to death of Severus and had some right to hold a grudge, to blame him for what had happened to his parents, defended him and said it was very unfortunate that Ron felt anyone deserved to be tortured by Death Eaters.

“But the git has always been horrible to you! How can you defend him?”

“Everybody makes mistakes. And he has been really not so bad after the war. Strict, but not
bad. It’s like he has been… increasingly happier.”

Hermione smiled to herself despite the constant despair surrounding her heart. Would her friends be so supportive if they knew what she had been doing with him? Could she be with Severus? Have a future? Make it work and not be hated by her friends?

Before Ronald could start spewing his hippogriff dung again, she closed her books and collected the parchment she wrote on, getting up.

“You know, Ronald, I will remind you that I was attacked just for being connected to Harry. That makes you just as likely to be attacked as well, when you leave the safety this castle provides. It makes any of your family members likely to be attacked. Do you think you deserve it? Or they?”

She did not wait for an answer before turning and heading up to the dormitory, books in hand, under the awestruck gazes of her friends and a slight grin from Harry.

The dormitory was empty and Hermione lay there looking at the ceiling feeling like the giant squid was on top of her chest. She loved him and had never said it to him. He deserved to know. Had he ever heard someone tell him that? The man had never gotten a gift before, for Merlin’s sake. What if he died? Would he die never having heard that he is loved and is a wonderful man, no matter what some people say or think? No matter what he was made to believe. No matter his flaws and choices and mistakes. No matter his past. Would she have to live with it, the love she felt, suffocating her from the inside, not being able to let it out ever? So what if he would be shocked, mad, confused and could even push her away. It all seemed so stupid now, for her to not have said it.

She wanted to know something, talk to him, see him. Maybe if she sent her Patronus with a message… If he was awake to see it, he could find a way to contact her. And even if it was a shared room, no one would know it was from her… unless… would Professor McGonagall or someone else from the Order be visiting him now? She could wait, send it later. Would it startle him? Would it make him mad?

She was desperate, it was worth a shot. She should practice though, because she didn’t know if she would be able to produce a Patronus in her state. She used to think about when she got her letter from Hogwarts, about her first A, her report cards in muggle school, moments with her parents. Those were her happy moments. But now she thought of Severus’ lips claiming hers, her name escaping them in a whisper. My lioness, he called her as he wiped away her tears. He kissed her scars, accepting her as she was.

She pointed her wand to the ceiling. “Expecto Patronum” she whispered with tears in her eyes. And instead of her happy little otter, an eagle emerged from the tip of her wand and flew around the room twice, leaving a silver trail behind. Hermione watched with her jaw dropped as it disappeared.

“What was that?!?” Ginny was at the door and closed it behind her as she still looked up at the ceiling at where the Patronus had been.

Hermione was startled. “I was… practicing and…”

“Your Patronus changed?”

“I… I don’t know, it’s the first…”

“Oh my god, Hermione, are you in love?”
“What, what?”

“I mean, I’ve only heard of Patronuses changing when people fall head over heels in love. Are you in love with the mystery guy?”

“I’m sure there are other instances where…”

“Tonks’ changed for Lupin… Snape’s is the same as Harry’s mother’s was…”

Hermione began to cry at the mention of Severus.

“Merlin’s balls! It’s him, isn’t it? The mystery guy is Snape?! It makes sense. That’s why you’ve been so weird. Merlin’s balls, Hermione!”

Hermione could not stop crying. She was not able to deny it. And to top it all off, Ginny seemed disgusted by her. Then Ginny came closer and squeezed her to her chest, showing her surprise was not disgust.

“I’m so sorry, Hermione, that this happened to him. That you have to go through this. I’m here for you.”

“So… so you don’t hate me?” Hermione said against Ginny’s chest.

“Hate you? Why would I?”

“Because… it’s Snape.”

“So? You seem happy. Well, not right now, but up until a week ago. That’s what matters. He has a sexy mystery smoldering angry thing going on, I totally get it.” Hermione laughed softly amidst the tears and Ginny smiled, letting her go. “Does he treat you well?”

“Yes, very.”

“Then there you go.”

Hermione still had tears trailing down her cheeks.

“He’s tough, Hermione. He’ll get through it. He did not survive that psychotic asshole to die now. Don’t worry.”

“I need to know how he is. I need some news. Maybe you and Harry can help me find something out?”

“Harry? Harry knows?”

Hermione nodded. “He figured it out during Christmas break. Don’t be mad at him, I asked him not to tell.”

“I’ll deal with him later. Of course we’ll help. We’ll figure something out.”

“I’m so glad you know. I wanted to tell you, but I was afraid Sev would find out and end it. He doesn’t really want people knowing. It was… supposed to be casual. I’m the idiot who fell in love.” Her tears were drying up.

“Wow, Sev? Sev. You call him Sev and he hasn’t killed you? Honey, I think he’s gone deeper than casual as well.”
“I’ve needed someone to talk to…”

“Then talk, Hermione! Tell me everything. I’m here.”

And they talked all night and Hermione’s heart was soothed.

On Saturday morning, Hermione was trying to have some breakfast, although nothing had looked appetizing that whole week, when Ginny came in hurried steps to sit beside her.

“This is the plan: we’re going to sit next to the headmistress at the Quidditch match. Harry will ask her as a concerned fellow member of the Order who had his life saved countless times by Snape. You’ll be there and hear the update,” she whispered to Hermione as she poured herself some juice. Hermione looked up to see Harry coming in with Ron.

“What about Ron?” Hermione asked.

“Just ignore him. And that’s advice for your whole life.” Ginny grinned. Hermione smiled and smacked Ginny’s arm in a friendly manner.

As they left the Great Hall towards the Quidditch pitch, Hermione noticed Draco waiting for her with Luna in the Entrance Hall, since she had taken to sitting with them during the matches. Luna had her eagle hat on and was dressed in blue, head to toe. Draco seemed less concerned with her exotic ways than he had on previous occasions, and was even chatting to her. When Hermione, Ginny and the boys reached them, Luna joined the group. Draco turned to apparently take another route to the Quidditch pitch.

“Draco!” Hermione called. He turned to her, both hands in his pockets. “Come on!”

He looked at her inquisitively. “What about…” He pointed to Harry and Ron, who walked down the steps to the grounds, with his chin.

Hermione shrugged. “So?”

Draco came forth and offered her his arm. Luna took the other.

Harry led the group, Ginny by his side. Ron walked behind them, rather put off, and looked back every few seconds to see Draco with Hermione and Luna hanging on his arms. His look was of disgust, a great imitation of Draco’s famous sneer.

“Have you lost something back here, Weasley?” Draco asked, his own sneer in place. Ron did not look back again.

They managed to find seats next to Professor McGonagall. Harry sat beside her, Ginny by his side and Ron by his sister. Draco, Hermione and Luna sat one step below them.

After a bit of small talk, Harry began. “Professor, how is Professor Snape doing? Will he be coming back soon?”

“You shouldn’t worry yourself about such things Mr. Potter. Professor Snape is getting the treatment he needs.”

Hermione groaned, discouraged, but Harry pressed on.

“But I would like to know. He protected me throughout these years, and after all he has done
for the Order… I would like to even go visit him. Do you think that would be possible, Professor?”

Ravenclaw scored and they were all startled by Luna’s hat. It cried like an eagle.

“Absolutely not, Mr. Potter. Worry about your studies. Here.”

Draco must have caught on with the plan, because he turned around and said

“You know, headmistress, I would really like to hear of him as well. He is my favorite teacher, and also helped me a lot. I’m sure no one here would spread rumors to alarm the students. Granger and I, as Head Girl and Boy, will see to it. We are just concerned.”

Hermione managed to turn around and nod as she squeezed Draco’s hand in gratitude.

Luna, who wasn’t aware in the slightest of the plan or Hermione’s need, turned and said dreamily “I do like Professor Snape very much,” and ended up helping, even if unaware.

Professor McGonagall sighed, as if defeated.

“Since he was put under the Cruciatus for quite a while without reprieve, even by both Death Eaters at the same time, he’s suffered severely. He is being kept under the effects of Dreamless Sleep so he can recover. But he has woken on one or two occasions and seems responsive. With rest and the care he needs, he will be back soon.”

“All right, thank you Professor. Send him our best next time you see him, though I’m sure he won’t care for it,” Harry grinned.

“Will do, Potter. Will do.”

Hermione turned to face the pitch and discretely let a couple of hot tears wash down her cheeks.

“If you want updates,” Draco whispered to her as her eyes watched the game, “Mother knows people at St. Mungo’s. I can get you updates.”

Hermione found his hand again and squeezed. “Yes, please.”

And so life went on. With Draco’s information and Harry asking McGonagall once a week, Hermione was able to breathe easier and focus more on her schoolwork, though she never was completely at peace. But reports indicated that he was indeed recovering.

After three or four weeks of the attack, on a Monday, Ginny ran to her in the Great Hall during lunch and whispered

“He’s back.”

Hermione choked. Did that mean what she thought it meant? “What?”

“Snape. He’s back. I just heard from a Hufflepuff fifth year that they had potions this morning. With him. He’s back.”

Hermione’s heart beat faster in her chest.
Chapter 33

Chapter Notes

I was going to post this tomorrow, because I was going to read it over again with fresh
eyes, but I just got too excited. So if there are any mistakes, forgive.

Hermione ran to his office right after dinner, not even bothering to somehow disguise herself.
She knocked frantically on the door, but there was no answer. She waited for about an hour to see if
he would arrive from somewhere. Nothing. She knocked again, maybe he came in via Floo, but no
answer. She felt like opening the door and barging in, but was afraid some ward might be tripped.

On Tuesday she wanted to find him in between classes, but was not able to find the time. So
after dinner she repeated her Monday ritual, with the same results.

On Wednesday morning she finally saw him, in class. He looked well enough in health, but
very impatient and stoic. Whatever progress people had noticed these past few months seemed to
have backtracked. Of course he would be angry. He was viciously attacked and almost killed, yet
again. She wanted to look in his eyes, reassure him somehow, but he avoided any and all eye
contact.

His regained severity began to scare Neville again, and so he added the wrong ingredient to
the potion they were brewing and a loud explosion occurred. With a wave of his wand, Snape
cleared the fumes only to reveal Neville’s startled face, very red due to the heat, all his hairs standing
on end.

“Are you purposefully trying to kill us all, Mr. Longbottom, or are you just too dimwitted to
properly follow instructions?”

“I…I… I’m sorry, sir.” Neville looked devastated.

Snape sighed. He waved his wand and cleared Neville’s face as best he could. “Ten points
from Gryffindor. Do double check the instructions on the board before you do anything else, Mr.
Longbottom.”

Hermione smiled. The Severus she knew was still in there. At the end of class, she started to
slowly put her things into her bag. She wanted everyone to leave so she could have a minute alone
with him. Draco understood and left immediately, as did Harry, carrying Ron. Ginny hung back.

“You want some back up?” She whispered.

“No, thanks.”

But before everyone could leave, Snape called Neville up to his desk. Hermione waited by
the door, but the conversation seemed to be taking ages. He seemed to be ascertaining that Neville
did not need to go to the infirmary due to the accident, and also advising he take a little extra time to
re-read the lessons before class if practice made him so nervous. McGonagall’s voice broke
Hermione’s apprehensive waiting.

“Miss Granger, hurry! There is a situation with dungbombs, Peeves, and a couple of second
years that requires your attention up on the third floor.”

Despair took over her features, but she couldn’t deny the headmistress. She was Head Girl after all. Fortunately, Ginny was still waiting outside.

“Go. I’ll talk to him and ask him if you can go see him tonight.”

“No, no, Ginny, he might…”

“Shush. Go.”

“Come, Miss Granger!” The headmistress called her again. She followed through the crowd as she mouthed back to Ginny “thank you.”

Ginny was going to be late for their next class, and unlike Hermione, she would not have a good excuse, so she walked up to Snape’s desk and interrupted his conversation with Neville.

“Excuse me, professor…”

“Miss Weasley, can you not see I am talking to Mr. Longbottom?”

“Yes sir, but this will only take a minute. Hermione,” she said her name pointedly, and her eyes conveyed a hidden message as well, “was wondering if she could have an appointment with you sometime today. She is extremely worried,” she stressed the word, “about some notes she took in professor Slughorn’s classes and wanted to go through them with you. Sir.”

Snape raised an eyebrow. “I see… And why… Miss Weasley, is it not Miss Granger asking for this audience?”

“The headmistress needed her on some Head Girl business. She was waiting to talk to you, sir, but had to go. So I volunteered to speak to you, since she has knocked on your office door for the past two evenings and could not find you.”

“Very well,” his eyebrow was still high on his forehead, “you may tell Miss Granger I will be in my office tonight at seven o’clock.”

“Thank you, sir.” Ginny turned to leave, whipping her hair.

She knocked on his door, stomach churning with excitement, despair, fear, concern, love, an odd mix of feelings. He opened and walked away towards his desk. She walked in and closed the door.

She had expected the cold treatment. It was natural for him. He probably felt weak, embarrassed, frustrated, though he would never admit to it. So of course his barriers would go back up. She only hoped that it was indeed only that, and that he would accept her attempts of reassuring him, and let her back in.

“Why did you not answer me yesterday? Or the day before that? Why did I have to hear from Ginny that you were back, Severus? You could have sent me an owl or something!” She was demanding things, something he made clear in the beginning that this arrangement did not entail, but with all that she had gone through in the past month, she was past the point of caring. And he might not be willing to admit it, but something did change for him in the time they had spent together. He might not feel as strongly as she did, probably never would, but he felt… something. Everyone had
noticed a change. So maybe her demands would not aggravate him completely.

“Why does Miss Weasley know about the arrangement we had?” He changed the subject.

“Had? HAD?” She asked outraged.

“Answer my question.” He was trying to deflect.

“Answer mine first!”

“I… was not here,” he said stiffly.

“Bullcrap, Severus. I waited for you outside for more than an hour on both occasions. Just tell me the truth, please.”

Oddly, he did not wish to deceive her. Against every instinct he had developed throughout his life, he now wanted to answer all her questions, tell her absolutely… everything. What is this witch doing to me? He sighed and his shoulder relaxed, just a fraction.

“I was not here on Monday. Poppy insisted on a daily check-up of my… wounds,” his eyes darted away to a wall for a second, “and on redressing them. It took longer than was needed because Poppy is insufferably thorough and students came in every five minutes with a headache or cramps,” he rolled his eyes, “obvious and weak excuses to try and see me, little gossips.”

“Okay… and what about yesterday?”

“In addition to not knowing what the situation was since we last saw one another…” he just stopped midsentence. He cleared his throat. “I did not answer because… I am not yet… recovered enough… to engage in the activities we usually… performed.”

Rage took over her features. “And you think that is all I care about?!” She asked outraged. “Even if that is what our… arrangement dictates, would you really think I am so heartless as to not care about you being attacked and almost killed? That I wouldn’t want to see you, know how you were doing? What the fuck, Severus?” Her cheeks were red with anger and frustration. “I sat here worried sick for a fucking month! What the hell were you doing in Hogsmeade alone? Why weren’t you more careful?!”

The feelings he couldn’t quite name that were beneath the surface and he tried to control could not be controlled any longer when anger was thrown on top of it all.

“You think I wanted this? That I wanted to be attacked? Hated by the whole of the Wizarding World? A traitor to one side, an untrustworthy git to the other, never fucking being appreciated for what I did and bloody went through?”

“What are you talking about? You’ve got a bloody Order of Merlin, that is appreciation right there!” They were both yelling now. Thank Merlin for his wards.

“That does not change the fact that I became a Death Eater of my own accord. That must mean I am evil, surely! Untrustworthy, slick, selfish, just making the best of a situation. And it does not change the fact that I will always be the greasy bastard that killed the greatest wizard of our time, Saint Dumbledore, does it?” He huffed at the end of his rant. He wasn’t so very strong that he could just go around shouting, but he tried to maintain composure.

He was fuming. Hermione did not want to yell at him, she hadn’t come here for that. What was she doing? She wanted to make him feel better, not worse. She took a deep breath.
“I’m sorry, Severus. I’m sorry.” She came forward, closer to him. He was still breathing heavily and looked away from her. “I appreciate you. Very much. So much that I was so worried about you, I couldn’t function properly for a month!” Tears began to fill her eyes. “I feared for your life, feeling terrible that the last time I saw you I didn’t even kiss you goodbye! And I am so… meaningless that I couldn’t even visit you.” She was sobbing now. “The only information I could get was clandestine, from Harry asking professor McGonagall or Draco asking some healer his mother knows… I was so desperate to hear from you, to see you, and then you ignore me when you come back. If you don’t want to see me anymore that is fine, but just let me know you’re okay!” Tears didn’t stop flowing down her cheeks.

“I… didn’t know. You should have just come in, then,” he said more calmly, taking his hands to her cheeks and looking into her eyes. To think someone could care or worry for him like that… he would never have guessed.

“And trip you wards? I wanted to…” She took a breath to gather courage. “I wanted to come here and get one of your shirts to sleep in while you were away. I missed your smell. I missed… you. But I can’t even get through your stupid wards, you don’t trust me enough for that.” She regretted the last sentence instantly. She might have gone too far. The man liked his privacy and was entitled to it. She didn’t live with him. She was just a student. She shouldn’t be able to get through his wards.

He had been almost embracing her, holding her face up to him, then he stepped away, letting her go. There it was, she ruined it.

But he took her hand and took her palm to his lips. He murmured something against her fingers and the feel of his lips brushing her skin made her shiver. He then planted a kiss on her palm before touching it to the shelf behind his desk she knew opened to his quarters. She felt a tingle run through her hand and arm.

“There,” he said. “You can come and go as you please. Of course you’ll have to be careful so no one will see you and…”

She looked up at him, doubting what he had said. She placed her hand on the shelf and it moved aside beneath her touch, revealing the way to his sitting room. She smiled at him and gently pulled him down for a tender kiss. She then pulled him inside his rooms.

“Sit.” She pointed at an armchair.

“Hermione, I can’t…”

“Sit the fuck down, Severus!”

He sat, furrowing his brow, in an effort to prevent the yelling from recommencing. She took her hands to the buttons on his frockcoat.

“What are you doing?” He raised a brow as he took her hands away.

“Your wounds require daily care, yes? I want to do it. Let me do it. Let me help. Tell Madam Pomfrey you are able to handle them yourself now, and let me see. Let me help.”

“No, I don’t think…”

“Severus, I’m going to treat your wounds. Deal with it.” She was tired of walking on egg shells around him. He had to see she cared, she really did, and he could trust her and did not need to shield himself. Besides, she would go insane if she didn’t help somehow.
He looked at her with narrowed eyes, but did not protest again when she recommenced her unbuttoning.

“Potions and ointments?” She asked as she continued unbuttoning his coat. He waved a hand at a cabinet far behind him and many phials came forward and placed themselves on the table beside the armchair. He looked annoyed. She ignored it.

She finally opened the last button of his shirt and exposed his chest. There, she could already see a large bandage. She pushed his shirt off. There was a bandage over his Dark Mark as well.

“Is this all of them?”

“No,” he said begrudgingly. “There is one on my back.”

Having certified that it would not hurt him for her to, she straddled his legs and began to carefully pull the bandage off his chest.

“Tell me what happened?” She asked in a sweeter tone.

He sighed. “I was in the bookstore. My back was to the door. The bastards caught me off guard. Dolohov and a fucking bottom feeder I never even bothered to learn his name.” He was growing angry with the memory. Hermione finished pulling off the bandage from his chest and took her hand to his cheek, caressing him, brushing back his hair, in an attempt to calm him down. “Such a pity, because I would have killed them both if they weren’t such cowards. I would especially enjoy killing Dolohov.” He looked at her chest where her scar lied, now covered by her jumper and probably a concealment charm. “They both hit me with a Cruciatas, then burning and cutting spells, some other torture spells, courtesy of Riddle’s dark mind, while I was down after. After the third Cruciatas, I passed out.”

She tended to the wound on his chest. A burn wound. It was still open and a bit raw, but Hermione knew what his potions could do. Potions St. Mungo’s did not have. He would be healed in a few days, at most. It might still leave a mark, but it was nothing to her. She would love him the same. He already had several small white marks on his chest, old scars, and now new pink similar ones joined them. It must have been the same torture spell Voldemort used to punish them. She gently rubbed one of his ointments on the wound after cleaning it with a spell and a potion. She then produced another bandage with her wand and covered his wound. He wasn’t completely comfortable with this, certainly he thought it made him look weak and helpless in her eyes, but he accepted her care well enough.

But when she moved on to his arm, he tightened his muscles. He wanted to pull it away from her grip, but she did not let him. He was always unwilling to let her touch his Dark Mark. When she pulled the bandage off, she saw the word traitor had been carved into his flesh, over his Dark Mark. It was angry red, still, surely some form of Dark Magic. He breathed heavily in anger, shame, and averted his eyes when she looked at him.

“Oh Severus.” Her heart felt heavy, her chest constricted. She knew how awful it felt to suffer such a thing, to feel so helpless. And for him… it must be so much worse. She took her hand to caress his wound. He pulled it away.

“No, don’t.”

“Severus. Severus, look at me. I need to tell you something.” She nudged his chin so he could face her. “Don’t freak out, okay?” Her heart was beating so fast. “You don’t have to say anything. In fact, I know you won’t, but it’s okay. I just want to tell you this and not have you be
weird with me.” She took a deep breath and looked deep into his dark, soothing eyes.

“Severus… I love you. So you don’t need to hide anything from me, or be ashamed. I love you, flaws and scars and all.”

She held his arm again and caressed his wound lightly. Then she gently brushed her lips against it. He let her, looking baffled. He didn’t remember ever being told he was loved. If his mother ever did it, they were very few times, and they got drowned by all the bad that always happened in that household.

She loved him. She loved him.

She tended to his wound and didn’t dare look at him again, feeling self-conscious and a bit afraid of what she might see in his eyes.

“You…” he started after a long moment of silence, “You shouldn’t.” She jerked her head to look at him. “You deserve better, Hermione. I’m not a good man.”

“Shhh.” She took her index finger to his lips. “Don’t talk about yourself like that. You are the best of men.” She smiled and gave him a light peck on his lips.

She returned to tending to his wound in silence, feeling a bit less nervous.

“And Miss Weasley knows…” He broke the silence.

“Oh. She saw how messed up I was while you were gone and put two and two together. I didn’t even have the strength to deny it.” Hermione sniggered, a bit of nervous laughter she tried to conceal.

“Are you mad that she knows?”

“No. If you trust her…”

“I do.”

“She does seem like the best Weasley.” He managed a small smile. She smiled back at him, happy to see his smile.

After she tended all his wounds, she got up.

“I have to go. People think I’m here going over notes with you. But I’ll sneak back later to spend the night. May I?”

“Come and go whenever you choose, remember?” He smiled, and stifled the apprehension that rose in his chest of having her sleep in his bed again, of letting her in again.
“So?” Ginny asked in a low voice as Hermione approached her in the common room, holding the papers she had taken – shrunken in her pockets – to pass as notes.

“He’s Ok. Still has some wounds, though.”

“That was quick. You didn’t have a go on his pet snake?” Ginny smirked.

“Ginny!” Hermione berated her.

Ginny laughed. “I’m sorry. I had a cover story all prepared and you were quick.”

“Cover me later tonight. I’m going to sneak back.”

Ginny smirked. “That’s my girl.”

****

Hermione wandered the halls under Harry’s invisibility cloak. She carried the bottle of firewhisky she had bought him for Valentine’s day, that’s why she wore the cloak. The chocolates she had eaten on the first week after his attack, so nervous and anxious she was.

She approached his door and instead of knocking, she looked both ways to make sure no one was there before she opened it. No one would be there. She was sure. It was past eleven after all.

She left the cloak on the sofa and as she did, she could see him sitting in bed, reading. Reading the book she had given him and making notes on a separate piece of parchment. She smiled.

“Hey.” Hermione walked in the bedroom. He looked up. “Where can I leave this?” She showed him the bottle she held.

“What is that for?”

“Oh, I just… It was something I got for you for Valentine’s day. I couldn’t come up with anything better.” She shrugged. “It’s nothing. There were chocolates too, but I ate those.”

He smiled. “You can leave it on the table out there. I’ll put it away tomorrow. And thank you.”

He gathered his notes and stuffed them in the book, closing it and standing to follow her to the sitting room, to put it on the table. They came back into the bedroom and he, already being in his pajamas, laid down. She began to undress, worried about what she should do for a shirt to sleep in, considering what happened last time she went through his drawer. When she was standing there in her white cotton knickers and jumper, she had finally worked up the courage to ask.

“Can you… would you get me a shirt to sleep in?”

He was already under the covers, watching her undress, wishing he was completely recovered so he could fuck her the whole night through. But due to the amount of Crucius...
other torture spells his body was put under, he still had to rest and take some rounds of potions so he completely healed. He was still prone to seizures if under exertion.

“You know where it is. You can go get it,” he said with no malice. She looked at him, discouraged, and slipped under the covers dressed as she was.

“It’s okay. I’m fine.” She laid on her side, her back to him.

She heard him sigh and felt the covers being pulled away slightly. He got up and walked to the chest of drawers, pulling out a shirt. Then he got back in bed and placed the shirt on the covers, over her.

“There is nothing in the drawer for you to fear,” he whispered.

She remained still. She didn’t quite know what to think, what that meant. Had he just moved it or had he… chucked it out? For her?

She sat up to change into the pajama shirt and then laid back down, her back to him. She chewed on her lips, nervous now about the picture of Lily and what had happened to it, what did it mean if he did chuck it. She just wanted to snuggle up to him and forget everything else, but was afraid that snuggling might hurt him because of his wounds. She felt his hand on her waist, but his body was not close to hers.

“Are... are you cold?” He asked reluctantly.

She smiled and pulled on his hand, so he could come closer. “Yes.” He snuggled up to her from behind and she felt like she was home. She breathed easier. “I don’t need to be cold, you can snuggle me any time, Sev.” She caressed his hand.

After a moment of silence, he found his voice to start: “I too had a Valentine’s present for you... but it was left behind at that damned bookshop.” He said it in a low rumble.

She felt her heart squeeze tight and her throat constrict. He was buying her a present, and he got attacked. Even though she had irrationally stormed out of his room, he had bought her a gift.

She turned to face him. “I don’t need a present.” Just being here with you is enough. No, don’t push it, Hermione. She kissed his lips and they fell asleep in each other’s arms.

He dreamt of being attacked, suffering the Cruciatius over and over. He wanted to get up and fucking fight, kill them both, kill them all, but he couldn’t. He was on the floor, squirming in pain like a fucking helpless child.

“Severus!”

He woke up and saw he was gripping Hermione’s arm, hurting her. She looked like she was in pain and scared. He let go immediately and saw the red palm print on her arm.

Ever since his attack he had had a hard time sleeping. He only did because they fed him potion after potion, but after the first two weeks, when they let him out of the induced coma, he could not sleep properly. These nightmares tormented him. And he missed her smell, her warmth beside him. He thought he would sleep better once he laid beside her. And he did. But not enough, it seemed.
“Hermione! I… I didn’t mean to, I’m sorry.” He now caressed her arm and she breathed easier. He stood and took large, hurried steps to his cabinet in the bathroom. He came back with a jar with a ointment in it and rubbed it on her arm. His palm print disappeared instantly.

“Are you okay?” She asked, her brown eyes wide and slightly damp.

“Am I okay? Are you insane, witch? Are you okay? You must know that I would never purposefully…”

“Severus, I know. I know.” She reached up her hands to his cheeks. “You were only having a nightmare.”

“Are you all right?”

“Yes, I’m fine.”

“You should… you should go. You shouldn’t be here, I could…”

“I’m not leaving you here alone!”

“I could hurt you again and I will not have that happen!”

“You would never hurt me, I know. I’m not afraid. Come back to bed, Sev. I’m not leaving.”

“Hermione…”

“No, I won’t have any of it. Come to bed. You need to rest.” She laid down and pulled back the covers and his forest green duvet so he could get in. He could not resist her smile, her eyes, so open, so accepting of him even after what he had just done. He got back in bed and lied down with her back to his chest, her hair in his nose. He slept peacefully for the rest of the night.

Snape was very much worried and torn. He had always had nightmares, but never had such a reaction and the possibility of hurting someone because of these nightmares. Then again, he had never actually slept with someone so frequently. His previous sexual experiences were very much detached, and though they would sometimes stay the night, it was never a constant event. Nor had it ever entailed much… sleeping. Or being so close. So he worried about her safety. She would not leave, and insisted she would be back the following night and all the subsequent nights until he was 100% healed. It was a very… strange?… different feeling, having someone so adamant and worried about his well-being. It brought a… warmth to his heart. He looked up from his desk to the back of the class, where she brewed the designated potion of the day alongside Draco and Miss Weasley. Her hair was beginning to frizz. He had difficulty in repressing his smile.

He worried about her. He did not wish to, he could not hurt her. Of course at some point or another he would say something or do something that would, and he wouldn’t be able to control it or completely understand it, but that is what always happened. It was him. It was just a matter of time. Then she would leave and all the better for her. However, hurting her physically he could avoid, control. He had to. He would not be like his father. He would not. He had to convince her to not spend the night with him.

But on the other hand, she had been the one that had caused such nightmares to dissipate. And he did enjoy having her nestled in his arms. Maybe there was some potion he could take to control his dreams, his movements while he slept. So fucking selfish of you, you prick. These… these feelings, this thing inside him was so confusing… unnerving… infuriating. He was always in control
and this seemed to take it away from him. What was this?

He continued watching the class working quietly. The Weasley girl seemed like she was a good friend to Hermione. She hadn’t sat with her brother again ever since he had spewed his idiotic remarks at Hermione all those months ago. He was glad for that, that she had a good friend. Draco also seemed to have taken to her, and say what you will about Slytherins, but if they took to you… They were loyal and protective till the end. But her having so many good friends would only make it harder for him. For her. If… this were ever to become public. If she continued to insist she… loved him, they would turn on her and she would suffer. And who could blame them? Who would support a friend who stubbornly insisted in being with someone… like him? It wasn’t good for her. Not having her friends support would finally cause her to resent him and leave… and somewhere along the way, the distance he had been keeping from her so he would be prepared for precisely that moment, when she left him, had disappeared. So he would suffer. No doubt about it. He should be grateful he got so much time with her. He would never have imagined he would find… this, whatever it was, and with Hermione Granger of all people. It was supposed to be just sex, some fun for him after so many years not living for himself at all. It was about the power he had over her in bed. So fucking intoxicating. But now she had some power over him as well, and he didn’t quite understand what it was.

The Weasley girl looked up from her work and saw him watching their table. She smirked at him and looked back down. That’s right, she already knew. And she hadn’t abandoned Hermione. Could that mean…?

****

He was dreaming of being attacked again. A hand clawed his face and chest and it burned, it burned so much. He could feel the weight of Dolohov straddling him to strangle him. He pulled his wand from under his pillow and pointed it at Dolohov’s throat, only to see when he woke with a start that it was Hermione, looking frightened and worried.

“Severus, you’re safe.” She caressed his chest, his wand still at her throat.

He lowered his wand immediately, despair in his eyes. “Fuck! I’m sorry, I’m sorry.”

She laid down on his chest and sunk her fingers into his hair. “It’s fine. I’m okay, you’re okay.”

He inhaled deeply with her on his chest, but did not embrace her. She had stubbornly come back that night and treated his wounds, which thanks to his potions were healing more rapidly than they were in St. Mungo’s. Then she had stayed for the night. Sleeping with her did soothe him, but he could not keep putting her in danger. He could not.

“Get out,” he said in the coldest tone he could muster with her.

“What?”

“Get out. Leave.”

She sat up to look at him and the hurt in her eyes tore at his chest like a sectumsempra. “Go. Now,” he managed with much difficulty.
But the hurt in her eyes changed to defiance. “No.”

“Miss Granger…”

“I will not leave, professor,” she said mockingly. “I know you are being an ass to try and protect me because you think you will hurt me, but you won’t get rid of me that easily. You don’t scare me, Severus Snape.” She crossed her arms as she straddled him and waited for his next move, still looking at him defiantly.

He was torn between the warmth he felt spreading in his chest with how much she cared for him, and the twitch in his boxers with her bossy, know-it-all tone his dick seemed to love. Not to mention her heat on him. No, you can’t be doing that yet.

“Ten points from Gryffindor. Get out. This is over.”

She rolled her eyes. “I see you are determined on being an ass.” She rolled to his side and got under the covers. “Go back to sleep, grumpy Severus. When you are all healed up you can be rid of me. No sooner than that.” She turned her back to him and snuggled under the sheets.

What an infuriating woman! But after a few minutes of looking up at the ceiling and huffing, not able of thinking of anything short of forcibly removing her from his room to convince her, he gave up. He couldn’t take the angst that had filled his chest when speaking to her like that, so he embraced her, completely ready for her to pull away from him in anger and disgust. But she just smiled as he breathed in her scent, and snuggled back into him.

“I’m glad Sev is back,” she said cheekily.

He felt something akin to joy because she had refused to budge. She understood him, saw through him and didn’t abandon him right there, like most people would have. Lily had refused to forgive him after his outburst, even though he apologized most sincerely, like he never had or would from then on. He had felt horrible already and she only made him feel worse. And they were supposed to be friends… But Hermione… this wonderful witch only made him feel better, even when she was pissed off. How did this come to happen? She’s a student. Could it last? And for the first time he allowed himself to hope it would.

A few more days went by. She repeated her ritual of tending to his wounds which were now mostly healed and didn’t even need bandages any more. The one on his back was completely healed. The one on his chest was still slightly raw and angry, but it had shrunken to about one fourth of the size it was when Hermione first saw it. Thin pink lines still spelled traitor on his forearm, over the Dark Mark. It bothered him more than it should, but Hermione now took to walking around with her scar uncharmed, even outside his room, and he knew it was intended for him to feel better somehow. He couldn’t remember anyone ever being so… nice and considerate to him.

His nightmares had dialed down. He would still wake up sweating and in a slight panic, but there was no more gripping Hermione or pointing his wand at her.

It was Sunday night and he woke up with a start. He hadn’t had a nightmare though. Apparently his cock was feeling neglected of late. It had been over a month since it had gotten any attention. And without the constant pain to disturb him and with the lovely witch in his bed beside him… it sprang to life.

She felt it poking her bum and woke up with a smile. She turned to him.
“Hello,” she smirked.

“Just ignore it, kitten. I’m not sure it’s wise to… yet.”

“What if…” she slid her hand down his chest, “I did…” she pulled the waistband of his pajama pants down and let his cock out, “all the work? You wouldn’t exert yourself.” She stroked his cock.

He grunted as she gave his hard-on the attention it so needed, stroking him at just the right speed, with just the right pressure, her thumb rubbing the tip of his cock from time to time. She smiled and kissed his lips deeply, passionately, as she continued to stroke him in between their bodies and he was completely lost. All he could do was feel her warm palm on him, his cock throbbing at her every touch. She had him completely under her control, her mercy, and he didn’t much like the idea of losing control. But then again, didn’t she already have him under her control in so many other aspects?

He lifted her shirt and palmed one breast in an attempt to regain command, but her hand worked so divinely, the other one now joining the one and playing with his bollocks, that he didn’t do much. He just felt her marvelous tit in his hand, her warm skin, and it made his arousal greater.

“Do you like my tits?” She asked mischievously.

“Yes. They’re perfect,” he panted as he gently squeezed them.

He came quickly, all over her stomach with a groan.

She smiled as he got his wand from under his pillow and scourgified her.

“Feeling better?” She smiled and kissed his lips, her hands running up his back.

“Yes. Now I need to thank you,” he was still panting, still too weak for more.

“No no, rest up. Save that thanks for another time,” she smirked.

Two nights later, his cock woke him up again. He nuzzled her neck while she slept. While he pulled her hair back with one hand, his other hand traveled down her body, staling on her thigh when he nipped her ear and kissed her neck. His hard-on was pressed against her behind.

“Sev…” She said in a sleepy voice still. “You can’t… what if…”

“The only thing that will happen to me,” he said in a low rumble in her ear, “Is I will come extremely hard in your sweet… tight… wonderful cunt. If you let me.”

Fuck, it had been too long. That jerk off the other night relieved him a bit, but was nothing compared to being inside her. Her warm, tight, wet center. It had been too long for her as well. Excitement pooled between her legs as she nodded under the pressure of his face against hers, kissing her neck and cheeks. His hand slipped into her knickers and two fingers dipped into her. He growled when he felt how wet she was, and he hadn’t even done anything yet. He vanished her knickers as he spread her moisture on her folds and clit and began to rub her. Up and down, just like she liked it. She moaned and his dick twitched. He couldn’t wait any longer. He guided his dick inside her from behind while still rubbing her clit and reveled in her warmth. She let out that drawn out moan he so enjoyed hearing and he was dangerously close to coming right then. Fuck. It had been too long. Four, five thrusts and he was having a very hard time controlling himself.
“Kitten, I can’t… I can’t wait,” he said with labored breathing.

“Then don’t,” she answered in a whisper. Eight, nine thrusts and he came like a schoolboy, before giving her pleasure, gripping her hips while she reached back and sank her fingers in his hair.

“Fuck!” He exclaimed in anger after he came down from his high. The only thing he could do properly, offer her, and he hadn’t.

She heard the frustration in his voice and turned to him, and saw it in his eyes.

“Sev, it’s fine,” she caressed his cheek and brushed back a lock of hair from his eyes.

“It’s not fine, this is the only thing…”

She knew he was going to demean himself so she claimed his lips with hers.

“I love you,” she said into his mouth.

His hand found her core again and two fingers slipped inside her, his thumb rubbing her clit.

“Severus,” she started, already slightly out of breath, “You don’t have to…”

It was his turn to quiet her with a kiss. “Let me make you come, kitten.” He continued to move his fingers inside and around her, hitting both spots that drove her insane simultaneously. She nodded her acquiescence and lifted a leg to his hip, giving him better access. He continued his ministrations as she also eagerly rocked her hips against his fingers, seeking the friction, craving it. He lips devoured hers and her hands tugged on his hair, sank into his shoulder. Pretty soon she was right there and dove over the edge, splashing all over his hand and sheets.

“Oh Sev. You’re so fucking good to me. Thank you”, she kissed his lips.

“Thank you,” he said into her mouth, smirking.
Ok folks, if I don't choose to change anything (because I have been in a mood lately and thinking everything should be changed, but not having the ideas to do it), this has about 15 more chapters to go, 13 of which are already written. The final two are plotted in my head, I just need that urge and confidence to write it.

Once again I sat down to edit this, and edit only, thinking I was going to read it again tomorrow and make it better to post, but I just couldn't wait. Therefore... I hope it's good and has no mistakes, but sorry if it isn't and it does.

Hermione had been on a revision schedule for NEWTs since the second week of Snape’s stay in St. Mungo’s. With a bit of news provided by McGonagall and Draco, she could breathe easier and began to focus more. Since she had finally seen him, she had tightened the schedule to compensate for her lack of focus in the beginning. So it became very tiring, studying long hours in the library or common room then sneaking to Severus’ quarters to ensure he was well. And now he was. His wounds were healed and the nightmares were sparse and not violent at all. She thought maybe it was time to go back to sleeping in her own bed for a few nights a week. She would rest more, since she wouldn't wait until late at night to safely go to his rooms, and she wouldn't have to wake so early to sneak back to hers. Yes. She would sleep with him on weekends. She would miss him terribly, but it would be better. And he might be fed up with her in his hair every night as well.

But tonight he was already expecting her. She would go tonight and make sure he was absolutely and one hundred percent well, and then tell him she would be back on Friday. She decided to risk it and go straight from the library, and Ginny would know to cover for her.

She got to his room and she was a mess. She asked to use his shower, to which he just shrugged without looking up from the parchments he was angrily marking.

Hermione undressed in his room and left her clothes all over the floor, so tired she was, and stomped to the shower already naked. She turned on the water and let it hit her face, careful not to wet her hair. It would be relaxing to wash it, but it was too much of an ordeal to do there.

As the water trickled down her face and body, soothing her slightly, she thought a shag would also help her take the edge off. They hadn’t shagged properly since before he was attacked, the night she found Lily Potter’s picture. There was that shag a few nights ago where he had to finish her off with his fingers, but she missed the whole mind blowing experience he had always provided. She missed coming on his cock and screaming his name. But she couldn’t initiate anything. She wasn’t sure if the nervous strain being submitted to so many Crucius had caused was completely healed, and she would not ask. She did not want him thinking, as he apparently already did, that was all he was good for and all she wanted from him. She would just need to have a good wank tomorrow, when she was alone in her four -poster. She hadn’t had that either, since her worry and panic and stress had not let her get a truly good one in.

She was in the shower contemplating these things and barely washing herself when she heard him step in behind her and close the glass door. She smiled to the wall, hopeful, then felt his hands around her waist, his nose and lips on her neck, which was exposed because her hair was up in a
“I believe…” he kissed her behind her ear, “I have some compensating to do.” He nipped her ear as his hand dropped from her stomach to her mons, lightly caressing it.

“You don’t…” she swallowed hard as she quivered, “have to. Are you…” she swallowed hard again as his fingers parted her slit and began circulating her clit. “Are you feeling well? Completely?”

“Yes,” he whispered with that silky voice in her ear and it was enough to make her whimper. She then felt his hard cock on her back and the ache in her core multiplied by a thousand. He quickly turned her to face him, and lightly brushed his lips against hers, then sucked on them, begging for entrance, which she granted immediately. He plundered her mouth as she gripped him by the waist and desperately sought friction for her wet pussy, which was not wet only due to the water running over them. He turned her to press her back against the glass and kneeled before her, hoisting one of her legs over his shoulder. He buried himself in her slit, his tongue playing at her clit as she let out loud, copious moans. He sucked her bud of nerves and caught it gently between his lips before lowering his tongue to her soaking wet entrance, his nose taking over the teasing of her nub. She buried her hands in his wet hair and encouraged him, rolled her hips on his face, but not for long.

“Severuss. Sev. I’m going to come.”

“Come, kitten,” he said into her and she screamed.

“No, no. I want to come on your delicious cock. Fuck me, Sev. Fuck me now, please.”

He stood quickly and she hoisted her legs on his hips as he kissed her lips again and she could taste the muskiness of her juices. With her back still pressed to the glass, she pushed her hips forward, desperately seeking friction, but he only lowered his lips to a breast, his hand on the other, biding his time. He sucked on one nipple as he gently twisted the other and her breathing gave away in desperation. His tongue trailed circles around her nipple and she cried out. He smirked.

“Please. Please, Severus, I need you inside me;” she pleaded pushing her hips forward and gripping his neck. He entered her and she exhaled in relief, biting her bottom lip and then moaning his name. He thrust inside her and her hands draped on his shoulders. He kissed her deeply as he pulled in and out of her, burying himself to the hilt, and she moaned into his mouth so sweetly he could stay right there forever.

With the glass aiding him in supporting her, the water splashing on his back, he moved one of his hands from her ass to her clit, to further help her along. It didn’t take long at all. He pushed her over the edge and dove right after her, their lips locked as their bodies convulsed in rhythm against one another.

As they came down from their haze, he lowered her to the floor and pulled her under the splash with him.

“Severus!! You wet my hair! It’s going to be a disaster now!”

He sniggered and reached for the scrunchie that tied her hair and let it down. He then reached for his own shampoo, which he apparently brewed himself. Dumping some on his hand, he commenced massaging her scalp. She didn’t think a shampoo brewed for his hair would be adequate for hers, but she didn’t care. She would not stop him. This felt wonderful and was so… sweet. And thoughtful. His fingers… were magical in more ways than one. He then pulled her under the spray again and rinsed it out, only to massage the conditioner on her hair. While it sat, he took a bar of soap
and rubbed her body. She smiled and took another bar that sat there – for he now left one for her, since her presence was so constant – and proceeded to washing his whole body as well, her hands gliding over his chest, his stomach, his scars, his back and buttocks before finally reaching his cock and stroking him gently, making him groan quietly. His cock stirred of its own will.

He rinsed her hair and turned his back to her to wash his own. She kissed his shoulder blade, then the other, kissing his newly obtained scar. She then slipped her hands under his arms to reach his chest, caressing him down to his stomach and then stroking his cock again. He growled. He turned the shower off when he was done with his hair and summoned a towel for himself. He dried himself off and stepped out of the shower, opening the towel to invite her into it, into his arms. He dried her off and after combing her hair – more like struggling with it - his dick was still slightly awake due to her ministrations in the shower.

He carried her to bed and she insisted on blowing him, her soft velvety mouth engulfing his cock and making him hard again in record time. She then impaled herself on him and rode him slowly, her fingertips sinking into his chest as her tits bounced beautifully before his eyes, begging to be touched and teased, which he did. They both came rather quickly, she gripping the headboard and throwing her head back, making those wonderful sounds he enjoyed so much, he gripping her hips and pulling her down to his cock, to feel her magnificent pussy clamping on his cock more thoroughly.

Afterwards, they fell asleep in each other’s arms.

Hermione of course only intensified her studying in the following weeks. Severus felt it was ludicrous that she overworked herself so much and slept so little. She is a talented, intelligent, extraordinary witch and would certainly do well on her NEWTs without this insane schedule. He told her as much, not in so many words, but she wouldn’t pay him any heed, which made him irritated and impatient. But his praise of her did not go unnoticed and she would blush every time. She would sleep in his room once or twice a week, on weekends, and would, more often than not, arrive disheveled and tired. He would give her potions to restore the health she was clearly neglecting and ask for food from the kitchens, and afterwards would cuddle her and let her rest. She would always ask for him to wake her so she would go back to the library, but he wouldn’t, allowing her to oversleep.

NEWTs came and he did not see her all week, not even in the Great Hall for meals, and worry filled his mind. Was she eating and resting properly? This was a weird feeling. Very foreign, forgotten. The last time he had worried for someone’s well-being as such was when he knew Riddle was targeting the Potters. He hoped and wished and calculated for Lily to be well, but it failed. His efforts went unrewarded. Of course this level of worry was nothing compared to what he felt back then, but still… And then he remembered when Hermione had been attacked. He had worried. He had. He still did. School would be out soon and she would be out there, and anything could happen. But he did everything in his power to keep those thoughts at bay, because no good could come of it. Nothing ever worked out for him, with him, and she, she was half his age. Just one more impedance to add to the fact that it just simply would never work out. He had had too long with her already, which could only mean it was closer to coming to an end, as it always did in some way. And he was now in far deeper than he wished, though he had tried to stop it, he had, because he knew the suffering that would result of this. For both of them.

But she had wormed her way in. And now he worried. And the school year was at an end and what would happen then? This couldn’t be carried on outside these castle walls. She would travel with her parents during the summer and meet someone, age appropriate, happy and not moody, dark and
bitter like him. Someone who deserved her. She would start a new job or university and meet plenty of blokes and wizards. And he would go back to his dark and meaningless existence. All the better for her.

She reemerged after the exams and would wait patiently, reading one of his books as he graded exams from other years. They would have great sex or make love, though he would not admit to himself that is what it was, and sleep peacefully.

It soon came to an end, though. She was getting on the train on the following day.

“May I owl you?”

“Yes.” Please.

“Where should I owl you?” She smiled, trying to get some information of where he lived, what he would be doing in the summer.

“I’ll be here for another week or so.”

“Right. I’ll be on a trip with my parents, they only have a week off since they are still rebuilding their practice and then… May I… may I visit you?”

A sudden surge of shame of having her in that house at Spinner’s End filled him. He wondered if that would be what finally repelled her.

“Severus? Will you… be away?” She asked, insecure. She wanted to be with him, always, but it was too presumptuous to assume he would want to see her again. Just because she loved him didn’t mean he owed her anything. He might very well be her Great Love, but he already had had his.

“I might take a trip, later in the summer.”

“So, can I visit?”

“Sure,” he shrugged, trying to hide his shame.

“I’ll owl you this next week and you owl me your address then?”

“All right.”

Why are you worrying? She won’t go visit. It’s the perfect time for her to move on to better things. She will. She’ll meet someone else, wonderful witch that she is. You should not even owl her back. Don’t get in her way. Don’t be selfish. Let her be, let her go.

She had already fallen asleep on his chest, smiling. He did not sleep well with the prospect of not seeing her again.

He watched from the astronomy tower, the wind making his robes billow, as the Hogwarts express departed. He watched until he could no longer see a tiny red dot in the horizon. How ridiculous. He couldn’t even go see her off. Of course not. What did he expect? That her friends and everyone would be open to this and it would work out perfectly? No. He was nothing but the perverted teacher who took advantage of a student, the Death Eater who deflowered the young Gryffindor princess. That is all anyone would see. Luckily, no one would have to know. Ever. He
didn’t deserve to be this content in life. He didn’t deserve her. And sooner or later it would all collapse and escape his grasp anyway. This was not the worst scenario, not the worst that could have happened to part them. Just let it go.

Minerva had requested a meeting with him before the one with the whole staff in the afternoon. He supposed he should just go down and get it over with. As he descended, his old demeanor returned almost at once. He was brooding. There was nothing left to give his heart the lightness it had experienced of late, which his colleagues had seemed to notice and which apparently made him more… approachable. He had developed slightly better relationships with everyone, more so with Minerva, who sought him out tiringly. He had no more objections to being in that damned office that had plagued him during possibly the worst year of his life – though there were many to choose from – and had even indulged the old man in the portrait in conversation. Dumbledore had even apologized, in a way, his own.

He arrived at the gargoyle and gave the password. It moved out of the way and he ascended the spiral staircase.

“Severus!” She greeted from behind her desk. “How are you today?”

He just grunted and sat down. She harrumphed and continued to scratch whatever it was she was writing with her quill on a long piece of parchment. Dumbledore appeared in the portrait behind her.

“Severus,” he nodded.

“Albus,” Snape barely looked up from Minerva. “Minerva, can we get to it? I do have other business to tend to. I don’t intend on being in this castle one minute longer than necessary.”

Minerva looked up over her spectacles and smirked. “So, I take it was a student.”

Snape arched an eyebrow. “Pardon?”

“As I have told you before, you’ve had a significant improvement in your… ways lately. I imagined many scenarios but the most likely one, I found, was that you were seeing someone.”

“I haven’t the slightest idea of what you mean.” He managed to keep his countenance impassive, if not slightly annoyed.

She ignored him and went on. “I assumed you were going out on your days off or sneaking some witch into the castle, but seeing as it has been a little over forty minutes since the train has departed and you are already brooding, I think it’s safe to say my assumption… was wrong.” She smirked again.

Snape looked at her, trying to hide his surprise and find an appropriate answer. Words escaped him. Dumbledore stepped into the conversation.

“I believe, Minerva, you owe me some money.”

The old man knew as well? They had bet on it? Snape was outraged on the inside and still could not find the words.

“And how exactly do you expect me to pay you, Albus? Have an artist paint the galleon on your hand?” Minerva said a bit annoyed.
Dumbledore chuckled. “That could be feasible. I’m sure we will find a way.”

“Am I…” Snape interrupted, impatient, “Being sacked? Would you be kind enough to get it over with? Is this what this is?” If she knew, why not do it sooner and call Slughorn to replace him for the rest of the year?

“That depends. No harm was done to the school, no word got out. I take it she is overage – has been from the beginning – and was consenting?”

“Minerva, what kind of monster do you think I am, exactly?”

“I don’t think you are a monster at all, Severus. At all. I just have to be sure, due to my position.”

He rolled his eyes. “Of course she was overage and consenting. As if I was in the habit of perusing students.” He scoffed. And getting rejected is what he thought but did not say.

“Who is she?”

“Why must you know? So you can tell me how undeserving I am of her? Believe me, I know.” He crossed his arms over his chest. “Besides, it’s over. You need not worry. I won’t ever tell anyone and I doubt she ever will, so your precious school’s reputation remains intact.”

“I think it would be harder to find someone deserving of you, Severus. I’m only asking as a friend, you don’t need to answer. It’s just because you’ve been so… happy. And I’m glad. You deserve to be.” Dumbledore nodded behind her. “I’ve never seen you so approachable and not scowling since… well, I think not ever. Not even when you were a child and I was teaching you. I just wanted to know who it was that managed such a thing.” She smiled.

Snape snorted. “I doubt you would feel the same if you knew who it was.”

“Try me.”

“It was your golden girl, Hermione Granger.”

Minerva’s face was unreadable for a moment before it opened up, her eyes wide, her smile warm.

“She is truly a remarkable young woman, I’ve always known. And she is one deserving of you, I think. I certainly hope you can work out whatever… issues arose?”

“I believe, Minerva, that is another galleon you owe me,” Dumbledore interfered.

“Well that’s not very bloody fare, is it? When you can lurk these halls undetected skipping from portrait to portrait. It is quite easy to know everything now, is it not? I would like to know how you managed it when alive. That is the great mystery.”

Dumbledore just smiled.

Snape watched the whole scene in disbelief.

“What… am I here for? If not for being sacked or ridiculed?”

“Oh. I need your help with these before the staff meeting.” She placed a stack of parchments in front of him. “Let’s get to work so we can finish before lunch.” She smiled and hummed as she dipped her quill in ink.
Minerva’s reaction had certainly been… unexpected. *He deserved to be happy.* He scoffed. It did not change anything. The woman was clearly delusional.

Hermione had owled him three times the week he had stayed in Hogwarts. He had been weak and selfish and replied once. He asked of her trip and wished her to be happy and having fun, but was careful to not mention her visit to his sad excuse of a house or give her his address, or any hope. She deserved a chance to forget her delusions about him, of love. Forget… him, and be happy. Find some deserving bloke who would do right by her. Hearing from him would not help her with that.

He was ready to get out of that blasted castle, finally, and to put it to the back of his mind for at least two months, but there was still one thing to be done. He knocked on the headmistress’ door. She called for him to come in.

“What can I do for you, Severus? I thought you would be gone already.”

“Almost. I was just wondering if you would do me a favor.”

“Of course! What is it?”

“Please see that this,” he pulled some folded papers from his travelling cloak “gets to Potter?” He handed it over to her.

“Sure, Severus. But that is something you could do yourself. You can find Potter at Grimmauld Place, I assume.”

“Yes, well… I don’t think that transaction would go smoothly. He will clearly prefer to see you. Will you see to it?”

“I will.”

“Thank you.” He turned to leave.

“May I ask what it is?”

“It’s not sealed, Minerva,” he said over his shoulder as he descended the steps to her office.

She unfolded the papers and gazed at its contents with a smile.
Chapter 36

Hermione sat in the kitchen of Number 12, Grimmauld Place. She had been back from the trip with her parents for a week now, and she was discussing details of her staying at Harry’s for a while. It was closer to the Ministry than her parents’ house, it was connected to the Floo… She was trying for internships and jobs at the Ministry soon, so it would be really easier for her to live there for a time. With a job and income, she could see what she would do. Harry and Ginny sat with her, chatting away. Ginny had taken advantage of the fact that Ron was on a date and therefore could not be sent to chaperone her. Hermione also felt Ron’s absence was an advantage. She sat there with her friends at the kitchen table when she broke down in tears.

Severus hadn’t answered her owls anymore. He hadn’t given her his address. She missed him, she wanted to see him. She loved him. But he didn’t care for her.

“I know,” she said, sobbing, “I know I wasn’t it, you know… that I’m not… I’m not… his Great Love. I could never… compare to…” she looked at Harry who sat across from her, holding her hand, while Ginny sat beside her and caressed her shoulders and back. Harry nodded. He understood. “… but I thought that maybe I could be… something. That I had gained a place, a tiny one at least…” The sobbing did not stop. Ginny produced a tissue with her wand and handed it to Hermione. “He doesn’t care… I’m not… I’m just not… enough.”

While Hermione sobbed into the tissue, Ginny and Harry exchanged knowing looks. Ginny nodded and Harry stood, going into another room. Ginny hugged Hermione trying to comfort her.

“Hermione, don’t cry. It’s all right. I think you might be overreacting a bit.”

“Overreacting? I haven’t heard from him. He’s ignored my owls and has probably left Hogwarts already and I don’t… I don’t even know how to reach him!”

Harry got back into the kitchen and sat down across from her holding a piece of folded parchment.

“McGonagall came to give me this a couple of nights ago. She said Snape had asked her to give it to me when they were leaving Hogwarts but she only had time to stop by now.”

Hermione looked at him, a raised inquiring eyebrow. Harry sniggered at how much she already acted like Snape, and then grinned. He slid the parchment across the table to her.

“I think you should see it.”

She picked up the parchment hesitantly. She looked at Harry once more for confirmation, and Ginny as well. They both nodded. She opened the paper. Inside was the torn picture of Lily Potter she had found in Severus’ drawer. The paper itself was the end of the letter Lily had written to Sirius. The part which had her love. Both of which Severus had stolen from Grimmauld place over a year ago.

“This… doesn’t mean anything. He could have made a copy and…”

Harry scoffed. “I don’t think Snape is the considerate type.”
“You’re wrong! You don’t know him! He is very considerate and kind and sweet. Don’t talk about him like that!” She was agitated and tears began flowing from her eyes again.

“Harry!” Ginny scolded him. “Hermione, what I think Harry is trying to say in his own clumsy way,” she looked at him disapprovingly again, “is that we don’t think Snape would have made a copy for Harry’s sake. If he wanted to keep it, he would have just kept it. He has been holding on to it all this year even knowing that Harry knew he had them… I don’t think he would have bothered to have a copy made, you see?”

“Yes, Hermione. Besides, him keeping a copy would defeat the whole purpose, I think…”

“But why would he… why… I don’t…” Hermione seemed confused.

“I don’t think he needs these anymore, Hermione. And I think… the reason… it’s you.”

“You should go talk to him,” Ginny said. “And stop crying. There might be hope yet.” Ginny smiled.

“But I don’t… know where to reach him.”

“Draco or his mother probably know where he lives,” Ginny offered.

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Severus Snape hadn’t slept very well in two weeks, which only contributed to his foul mood. He would brew in the mornings in his basement. Hermione… Hermione… had given him some incentive to work on his potions and sell them. It wasn’t a bad idea. Poppy had always praised his potions, claimed they were better than any other the castle bought or received or that anyone else had brewed for her, even if he did only give her the standard potions that were available in any health care facility. With his minor tinkering, of course. Maybe there would be interest in his potions outside of Hogwarts. And if he sold his creations… granted that not many people would have use for potions that could relieve the effects of torture, but he did have other concoctions. So he studied during the school year in his spare time and made notes and learned from the ancient, rare book she had gifted him. And now he experimented. Damn her sweetness, allowing me to hope.

If it worked, he could maybe stop teaching for good and occupy himself with this. If it didn’t… well, then at least he was brewing, he had something to distract his mind, to soothe it. Of course she was always there, in his mind as well. It had been her idea… the book, her gift.

When he brewed, his hair would be tied back. It was tied back with one of her bands, one she had left behind in his lavatory in Hogwarts. It was too stretched out to properly hold his greasy thin hair, and he had to make it go round at least three times and still, after a while, locks of his hair would be falling to his face. But he liked to have this little piece of her with him. Fool.

In the afternoons, he would make improvements to the house in Spinner’s End. He had managed to do a little each summer, magically and manually, in the last twenty years, when he wasn’t under one of his masters’ command, but it still needed work. That old, rickety thing. He had improved it so it would not fall on his head, but also so it would remind him less of his shitty childhood. His shitty life. He had done enough changes to his parent’s bedroom that it actually looked like it belonged to a better home. Slightly posh. He had added a lavatory up there, since the only loo before was downstairs. He slept in his parent’s room because it was the larger one, and the
one that held the least memories, since he never was allowed in there as a child. He did not witness the horrors that happened in there.

His old room, just across the hall, was the one he had changed the least. He had no idea what to do with it. He had just restored the bed and stripped the wallpaper to paint the wall white, and added new drapes. He stored some boxes in there, his records, some books.

The basement had been worked on from the start, and was a fully functioning lab for years now. The kitchen was also very much restored, though it still had a vintage look to it. But it was brighter than it had been when he was a boy. The sitting room walls were all covered in bookshelves, except for the wall with the fireplace and the small window next to the door. He had his armchair in there and a sofa, though he didn’t know why, since he never had company. The small back garden had a bed with herbs he frequently used in the lab and in the kitchen, and a table with a couple of chairs and fairy lights, as he used to read out there and still liked the idea of doing that.

When he was done with his tweaking and improvement of the house, he would make himself dinner and go upstairs to crawl into bed with a book. But he never actually read now. Hermione would take over his mind. Was she well? Where was she? Had she already forgotten him? Would she ever forgive his ways and his shitty decision? The owls had stopped coming. Of course, you fool, She doesn’t know where to send them.

He had also started wanking like a bloody teenager. In any room of the house, Hermione was his favorite fantasy. The thought of any of their nights together was more than enough to make him come quickly. He would also imagine what else he could have done to her – with her – were things different, were life perfect and blissful.

He had been back to Spinner’s End for nearly a week now. He had been brewing all morning and stopped to fix himself a sandwich for lunch and had now returned to the basement to clean up. There was a knock on the door to the house. He sighed impatiently as he climbed the stairs and rearranged his hair in her red hair tie. Who the fuck could it be? Was Minerva already set on bugging him, because he “needed to get out more” or was it some wretched salesperson? The downsides of living in a muggle area.

“Who is it?” He called briskly from behind the door. There was no answer, only more impatient knocking. He gripped his wand for good measure and pulled the door slightly open, poking his head outside.

On his doorstep stood Hermione Granger, looking very irritated, her hands on her waist. She wore a flowered sundress and her hair down, her curls neatly tamed.

“No knickers, Hermione?” He smirked. “I thought you had come here to scold me,” he teased her neatly trimmed pubic hairs and she bit her lip, needing his touch to go deeper.

“Maybe I just have another appointment later on,” she said, annoyance and desire mixing in
“Oh do you?” His thumb parted her slit and found her clit and he began to circle around it. She sucked in breath through gritted teeth. “Then perhaps I should stop. I wouldn’t want you to be late,” he let out sardonically.

“Stop and I will kill you,” she said before her lips crashed down on his.

He carried her further into the room and pressed her against his bookshelves. She was hungrily undoing the buttons on his white dress shirt as she rolled her hips forward, seeking friction from his hand, his trousers, his imprisoned cock, anything, everything. She pushed the shirt off his shoulders as he pushed her dress up to her waist before vanishing it, his patience wearing off. He took one of her breasts in his mouth and rolled his tongue on her nipple, making a desperate moan escape her lips. His fingers found her folds and he could feel her entrance was already slick and ready for him. He took her moisture and spread it around her labia, up to her nub, which he began to tease tenderly.

“Do you want me to fuck you against the books, you little bookworm?”

“Yes… yes!”

“It’s no Hogwarts library, but…”

“Yes. Fuck me. Now. Please!”

As he undid his trousers, her fingers took over the task his had been performing on her bud of nerves. He slid into her and she let out that drawn out moan as he grunted in desire and relief of being connected to her again, finally.

She looked at him with some despair in her eyes as he thrust into her, her hands on his neck. He didn’t understand it. Her body was responding as it always had to him, but her eyes…

He delved into her mind and felt a strong feeling surrounding all her thoughts, stronger than the lust she felt for him right there. Love. Trapped inside. She wanted to express it but was afraid it was not welcome. That it would scare him away.

“Say it,” he ordered as he thrust into her over and over again, her back thudding against the shelves. The deep black pools that were his eyes bore into hers. “Say it.” He thrust vigorously as his thumb teased her clit.

“I love you,” she moaned. “I love you so much.”

His lips claimed hers and with one more thrust, he chased her over the edge. He nipped her lip as she clenched around his cock, gripping the back of his neck with both her hands, and it spilled all of him inside of her.

As their panting bodies recovered from their high, she twirled her finger in his hair, her hair tie had already slipped off it and was on the ground somewhere, and she asked teasingly “Did you miss me?”

He just growled as he pulled her off the bookshelf and carried her upstairs.

“You did miss me, didn’t you?” She teased as he was entering his room, and he threw her on the bed and splayed her. His tongue found her clit and went to work, licking her up and down just as she liked it, slowly, as a hand reached up and teased her nipple. She squirmed on his bed and her
fingers became embedded in his hair, the other hand clawing at his shoulder, encouraging him. His tongue slipped down to her entrance, and he could taste the mix of her and him as his nose rubbed her clît and made her arch her back, going insane with need and pleasure. That, along with her moans, made him... could it be? He was getting hard again. Yes, he was. He devoured her pussy, taking everything he could into his mouth, sucking her mons, her labia, her clît, making her body quiver and squirm and twitch on his mattress. From her lips, the most delicious sounds escaped, mixed with long cries of his name. Her thighs pressed to his ears and trembled, and in one quick second she was coming all over his mouth and he was hard again, even harder, even though he had wanked earlier and had fucked her just now. *This wonderful fucking witch.*

He moved quickly, his cock throbbing, and lay on top of her, pushing his hard cock against her entrance once again, slowly entering her, and she winced due to the tenderness of the orgasm she had just experienced as her fingertips sank into his shoulder blades. He moved slowly, patiently, his cock plunging in to the hilt, his hips rocking against hers before he pulled his cock out, but not entirely, and repeated the process. He wished to make it last all afternoon if possible. He kissed her lips, sucked on them, the tip of his tongue gently nudging her mouth open so he could plunder it as he did her pussy, allowing her to taste herself, her muskiness on his lips and in his mouth. Her hands traveled down his back, grazing it, then trailed their way lightly back up his side to touch his cheeks, her fingers in his hair that curtained down his face and brushed against her cheeks.

“Tell me if you’ve missed me,” she insisted with a smile after their lips parted.

He pulled himself up and out of her. He turned her around only to enter her again from behind. *Make it last.* He held her close up against him, one hand on her stomach and the other on her breast, caressing and teasing as he thrust. They were facing a mirror.

“Turn me around, Sev” she gasped sweetly.

“Why? Am I hurting you, kitten?”

“No, I... the mirror. I don’t like... seeing myself.”

“Why not? You’re fucking gorgeous,” he purred in her ear as she quivered against him when his cock thrust back into her. “Gorgeous.” She whimpered with the smooth sound of his silky voice as her head fell back to his shoulder. “You should come just by watching yourself, kitten. So beautiful.” He nipped her earlobe. “And sexy.” He kissed her neck before nipping the flesh between it and her shoulder. “Delicious.” He sucked on her neck again, slowly thrusting his cock into her all the while. “Look at you.” His hand glided down from her stomach to her mound, lightly grazing her skin as it did, and his fingers parted her once more and drew out her clît, massaging it as his other hand pinched her nipple, his cock sliding in and out of her all the while.

“Watch yourself, kitten,” he whispered.

She squirmed against his chest at his ministrations, the image in the mirror of both moving as one, so slowly, so sexy, making her more aroused indeed.

“Come with me,” he nipped her ear and suddenly she was achieving her orgasm yet again, clamping down on him, milking all his essence from him as he bucked into her.

She collapsed forward onto the bed, but he wasn’t done with her yet. She turned to face him and he was already lowering himself to her breasts, taking one in his mouth and rolling her other nipple in between his fingers. His teeth gently grazed her peak and she quivered.

“Sev. I can’t. I can’t,” she panted.
“I think you can,” he smiled as his lips trailed their way down to her mound. He lightly licked her nub again and her hips rolled to meet his lips involuntarily. He impaled her with two hooked fingers and as he hit that spot inside her over and over, she moaned, her chest rising and falling, her breathing labored.

“Uuuhmm…” she licked her lips before biting it. “Sev… Severussss… oh fuck yes.” Her hand was once again in his hair, pulling his sweetly to her core.

He worshiped her, goddess that she was, and licked, sucked on her clit as his fingers fucked her. Her moans were always sweet music to his ears.

“You come so beautifully, Hermione. I love to watch you come. Come for me again,” he said against her clit, in between licks, his fingers still inside her. He caught her clit in between his lips, sucked on them with so much hunger still. “Come all over my mouth, my face. I love to taste you.”

And she did come undone under his touch, squirting on his hand and mouth as her screams filled the room and her hands pulled on the sheets under her, his fingers hitting the spot inside her after every wave, triggering another wave of pleasure, his lips now on the lower belly, his teeth grazing the flesh below her navel as she came. He kept at it, his fingers inducing wave after wave of pleasure, until she had given him all she could give.

He climbed up to lay beside her as she tried to recover, staring blankly into the ceiling with a smile on her face.

“I did miss you,” he said quietly as he watched her. “Every day. You high jacked my fucking mind. All I could think about was your warmth, being inside you, and how fucking good, right, it felt.”

She turned to face him and smiled. “Then why didn’t you answer my owls?”

“Because I’m a bloody fool.” She caressed his cheek and brushed back a lock of hair. “I thought this would be an opportunity for you to… move on. Meet someone else. More appropriate.” *More deserving.* “I did not wish to get in the way.”

She smacked his chest once, twice, three times. He gripped her wrist midair before she did it again and gave her a warning look, with a raised eyebrow.

“Severus Snape! You fucking idiot!” She said, exasperated. “Let me make my own fucking decisions, will you? I don’t want to meet anyone else. I want you, you ass. I’m yours.”

He smiled and pulled her closer by her waist. “Mine” he growled into her ear before they fell asleep.

Chapter End Notes

I remember at least two of you wonderful readers suggesting he brew with her band tying his hair. I was finally able to make it fit! I need to go back in the comments to remember exactly who you were, but thanks for the idea!
Hermione woke up with a smile. Relief filled her being. He had missed her. He was not in bed with her but a delicious smell took over her nostrils and she could hear him down in the kitchen.

Sunlight, though very dim, shone into the room. It was probably going to be dark soon. His bed was so comfy and soft, she didn’t want to get up. She surveyed her surroundings as she stretched. It was a simple room and, as his quarters in the dungeons, tidy. To her left she saw the windows, thinly veiled by sheer – and surprisingly – white curtains. In the corner next to the window was a full-length mirror, the one that had a part in their afternoon play. In front of the bed was a chest of drawers and next to it, a door to the hallway. To her right, a closet and the door to the lavatory. It did not match the old dark house she saw in his memory. The walls were white and clean. The furniture was either new, like the bed, or had been restored. He had clearly done some work there.

He left a fresh towel for her on the foot of the bed, so she took it as she sat up to move into the bathroom. It was simple and tidy as well. She showered, being careful not to wet her hair ‘cause she didn’t have any of her supplies there, though she would love to wash it.

She came out of the shower wrapped up in the towel, remembering that her dress, the only thing she had to wear, had been vanished. The only thing that remained were her flats she had kicked off – or had fallen off her feet – at some point downstairs. She hesitantly opened his top drawer. Would he be mad? Would she find… something she didn’t wish to? But she couldn’t go downstairs wrapped in a towel… or naked. Though she very much doubted he had company. She found a pair of black boxer shorts, one of many, and pulled them on. In the second drawer, she found a few T-shirts. T-shirts! Severus in a T-Shirt was a very hard thing to imagine. She selected a white Led Zeppelin one, which was very thin and worn. It barely covered her breasts, made all the worse by the fact that she was still damp. Well, at least he wouldn’t be mad at her with such a sight.

She walked across the hall, to the only other room there. It was the room she had seen in his memory, where little Severus was under a desk, hiding, holding his broken arm. He had done some improvements in there as well, but it was clearly a room that wasn’t much used. The twin bed was still in there, but so were stacks of books on the floor, a few boxes, his old desk with a record player on it and a crate with an impressive record collection. They were mostly from the 70s’. She recognized quite a bit of them, thanks to her parent’s ritual of listening to records every Saturday night while drinking wine and talking. She quite enjoyed these records.

When Hermione was finally descending into the sitting room, which she had already seen on arrival, with his imposing bookshelves and impressive book collection, he had already heard her in the shower, and the floorboards that creaked under her feet while she explored the upstairs. He was slightly embarrassed of his house, of her being there. He had always been embarrassed of it. Not even Lily had ever been there. Of course at that time, there were other things to be embarrassed about. Other… dangers that would not allow him to have anyone there even if he wanted to.

She arrived at the kitchen and he had his back to her. He faced the stove, stirring something that smelled divine.

“Have a seat,” he said still with his back to her, “dinner will be ready in a little while.”

She sat on a stool that was pushed up to the island in front of her. He looked very relaxed.
His hair was pulled back and tied at the nape of his neck. He wore black sweatpants and no shirt. He turned to her and she smiled.

“I… found something to wear, I hope you don’t mind.”

He brought a glass to the island and picked up the wine bottle next to the stove, to pour her some, and took a sip of his own glass, which had been next to the stove. He carried it to the island and watched her, the rim touching his lips, as she sipped the wine as well. She was not accustomed to drinking so she took it slowly. She didn’t want to seem like a fool. Or a child.

“I don’t mind.” He began to chop some onions. “Though I would rather you wore nothing at all,” he smiled.

She sniggered. On top of it all, the man could cook. Without magic.

“You like muggle music.” She stretched down the T-shirt as she looked at it.

“Yes. Who bloody likes wizard music?”

She laughed. “I don’t know. Wizards and witches who were brought up having no contact with muggles?”

“No. Not even them, I believe.” He smiled.

“Is there something I can do to help?” She asked as he dumped the onions into the pot.

“Can you cook?” He turned back to her with a smirk.

She stuck her tongue out at him. “I’ve never had the opportunity to properly try. I only cooked mushrooms I picked in the forest during my… adventures in the war.”

“Then perhaps you can properly try some other time. I am absolutely famished and I would like for this dinner to be edible.” He smirked as he took his glass to his lips.

She picked up a dish cloth that rested on the island top and threw it at him. After a moment of his chuckling, she asked

“So… this is where you grew up?”

The smile was stricken from his face. “Yes. I’m sorry I have nowhere better to receive you.”

“Don’t be gloomy. It’s nice. I like it.”

He snorted. “You are being too polite.”

“I’m not. I really do like it.”

“Perhaps not growing up here has that effect then.”

“Looks like you’ve made it cozier.”

He just shrugged.

“How… how was it? Growing up here?” Surely there must be some happy memories?

He was chopping tomatoes and did not answer, just became fiercer at his chopping.
“You… you don’t have to answer, Severus. I just thought I could get to know you more… I don’t know… but it doesn’t matter, it’s okay. Don’t get weird.”

He shouldn’t open up. It would just make it harder when she left. Would she leave? If he told her everything, his experiences, his memories, his most inner fears and cravings, she would most certainly leave. It would repel her. Scare her away. I’m yours, he remembered her saying earlier. Not sharing and keeping her at bay could discourage her as well. Plus, he felt the urge to talk to her. To share. And this wasn’t the first time. He had been fighting it for a while now.

“Don’t do this. It will hurt thrice as much when she moves on from you.” Don’t do this. It will hurt thrice as much when she moves on from you. “My father worked – when he worked – doing small manual work here and there. It wasn’t really enough to have… much of anything, really. And he drank. Quite a bit. That along with his frustrations in life earned me an almost daily beating.” Hermione suppressed a whimper. She looked at him and her pain was evident on her face. But he did not look at her. He just stared at the counter, at his hands, at his chopping. “My mother…” he couldn’t stop now that he had opened the gates. He never had talked about this and apparently it had been begging to come out. “… lost the will and strength to try and change things early on. She mostly just sat in sorrow and impassiveness. When she had some will or when my father would force her to, she would sew and earn us a bit more money.” He turned to dump the tomatoes in the pot.

“I’m so sorry you had to go through that,” Hermione managed to say without crying. “And are they…”

“Dead? Yes.” Snape turned from stirring dinner and started to clean the island without using magic. “During the summer after my fifth year, the gods were finally kind enough to kill him. Liver disease.” He really couldn’t stop himself now. “Since I had gotten all Os on my OWLs, I had the hope of making something of myself and providing my mother with some small measure of happiness and comfort. But it seems she was just holding on to make sure I would be okay and wouldn’t be left here alone… with him, at his mercy, because not long after she just… she got sick… and I couldn’t… I wasn’t able to…” Silent tears rolled down his cheeks and Hermione quickly made her way around the island, sitting herself on the counter before him and pulling him into her arms. She held him like he probably had never been held in his life. She rubbed his bare back and then her hands slipped up to stroke his hair as he breathed in deeply, taking in her scent, his face nuzzled in her neck.

She regretted asking him about his childhood because it pained her to see his beautiful smile fade away. But at the same time she felt privileged that he had opened himself up to her. She doubted he had ever told anyone this, ever let anyone see this much of him. He must really trust her. Warmth spread in her chest.

She kissed his shoulder tenderly and trailed her way up to his neck and cheek and reached his lips. She gave him a long, comforting kiss and it made him feel like he never felt so close to anyone in his life. He let her go and turned to check on the risotto and she just sat there, watching him. She reached out and caressed his back again.

“Can you get plates in the cabinet over there?” He pointed to a cabinet over the sink, trying to pretend nothing had just happened, and she jumped down from the island top to do as he bid. She set them down on the island, as there was no table – and no room to have one – in the kitchen. And no dining room as well. He served them. After setting the pot on the stove again, he opened a drawer and handed her cutlery. She dug in, her stomach growling, and hummed.

“Oh God, Severus… This is delicious! Sooo good.”
He chuckled and took a sip of his wine, watching her eat with such hunger, he thought it was endearing.

“Your turn,” he said as he put down his glass and took a forkful to his mouth.

“My turn?”

“Yes. Your childhood. The parts I did not witness, of course.” He sighed. “Old creep that I am.”

“You are not! Stop that!” She took another bite, as did he. He looked up and arched an eyebrow, waiting as he chewed.

She felt embarrassed to share her happy childhood after making him open up like that. “There isn’t much to tell… My parents are dentists, they always did okay… I’m an only child and they had me relatively late, so I guess you can say I’m… spoiled.” She smiled.

He snorted. “So they are older than I am? That makes me feel slightly better. What else?”

“We had a dog.” She shrugged. “You’ve seen a lot during Occlumency lessons. That’s basically it.”

“And when they discovered you were a witch?”

She was getting all warm and fuzzy inside that he was taking such an interest in her. This was like… their first real date. She smiled. “Surprised. Shocked. But happy. Then they began to remember things from when I was a toddler that were weird, inexplicable. Lights going on and off out of nowhere. The fridge door would open on its own when I was hungry. Apparently I was climbing a tree in our backyard once, when I was five and was going to fall and certainly break something. They rushed to try and catch me but I managed to land lightly on my feet and skip off. It all made sense then.”

He smiled timidly and she was glad to see his good mood coming back.

When they were done with dinner, he washed the dishes without using magic, and as he did, she dried them off manually as well. The plates she knew where they went, so she placed them back. She didn’t quite know where the pots and utensils went though. She asked, but he just waved his wand – which had been stowed in his sweatpants – and they floated into place.

He remembered that she was a young little chit, just out of school, so she probably lived with her parents and of course they wouldn’t appreciate her spending the night out, especially not with a man twice her age. He wondered if she was going, if there was somewhere he could walk her to, at least. He didn’t… quite know how to put it, though.

“Are… you staying over?”

He wanted her to leave. Of course, she was invading his privacy already. But she didn’t have anything to wear. Her wand was lying on the sitting room floor probably. “If you want me out of your hair, I can just…”

“That’s not what I meant, Hermione. I want you to stay. But do you have to go?”

“Oh,” she smiled. “No, I can stay.”

“Good.” He started up the stairs, pulling her by the hand.
“Wait!” She rushed back to pick up her wand and then took his hand again.

It was already dark, and he lit up the stairway and the bedrooms with a flick of his wand, leading her into his bedroom. He then left as she sat on the bed. He went across the hall to his old room, the spare room, to put some music on. It had been so long since he had taken the time to listen to his records. The last memory of it he had was a summer he was home from Hogwarts, before his mother died. That’s when he would lie in bed and listen to his records, during the summer. Of course at first, it could only be while his father was at work or passed out drunk. It was unacceptable to him that his son would get a part time job and save money to waste on such rubbish. So his records would stay hidden and he cast a spell to camouflage the record player. When his father came in to deliver his beatings, he saw nothing but a pile of school material.

His mother did not mind the music. He suspected she even enjoyed it. On her best days, when she wasn’t completely buried in her own thoughts and sorrow, she would even hum along to some. Especially after his father had passed. She would sometimes listen to her own little radio in the kitchen when he wasn’t home as well. The little radio still sat on the counter in the kitchen.

In homage to Hermione’s choice of clothing that evening, he put on one of his Led Zeppelin albums. He went back to his room, placed his wand on the nightstand she had already placed hers on and laid in bed with her to listen to it. She quickly snuggled closer to him and rested her head on his chest, her hair taking over his face. He put an arm around her and took in the scent of coconut that always irradiated from her head, and then just stared at the ceiling, very content. It was probably the first time he had ever felt good inside that blasted house. He was surprised to learn she knew the lyrics to most of the songs, along with drum fills and guitar riffs. She sang and hummed along. She had a very nice singing voice. He quite enjoyed it, it soothed him. He stroked her hair as she sang.

“Does it bother you?” She looked up at him and asked.

“Your singing? Not at all. It’s… pretty. How do you know all the lyrics? A little before your time…” He chuckled.

“Good parenting I guess.” She smiled. “Thank you, for saying my voice is pretty. But that’s not what I meant.”

“What then?” He looked at the ceiling still and stroked her hair.

“When I… tell you I love you. Does it bother you? Because I feel the urge to say it more often, but I don’t want you to…”

“It doesn’t bother me,” he said a little stiffly.

“I’m glad,” she smiled, caressing his chest, tracing the scars there, then placing a kiss on it.

“What bothers me is the fact I am undeserving of such… feelings.” His eyes did not leave the ceiling and the light fixture there.

“Don’t say that! You are very deserving. You are a brave, sensitive, charming, handsome…” He scoffed and she swatted his chest. “Brilliant man who deserves to be loved. And to be happy.” He snorted.

She straddled him so she could look him in his eyes. “You are wonderful and I love you.” He said nothing and just stared up at her with soft, soothing eyes. “Now, repeat after me,” she continued, “I am a brave, sensitive…”

“I will not,” he scoffed.
“Say it,” she ordered.

“Absolutely not.”

“Say it!” She pinched his nipples.

“Witch, are you insane?” He tried to grab her hand but she was quicker than him and pulled it away.

“Say it!” She managed to pin both his arms over his head. “Say it!” She smiled.

“So is this how it’s going to be? Now that we are no longer in Hogwarts and I am no longer your professor, you will be the bossy little witch?” He smiled.

“Well, it is in my nature…”

He flipped her onto her back and pinned her arms over her head.

“Very cute that you actually thought you could hold me down, witch.” She tried to free herself but couldn’t. “Now, while I appreciate that you are deluded enough to think of me like that…”

“I am not deluded! You are all that and more. Don’t think so little of yourself.” She locked her legs around his waist and managed to hold him in place so she could kiss his lips. He let her arms go and gave in to the kiss. When they broke for air, she added. “If you ever belittle yourself again, I will hex your balls off, Severus.” She reached down and grabbed his balls, not so hard it would actually hurt. His dick actually stirred despite this being a threat to its safety.

“You wouldn’t. You enjoy them as much as I do,” he smirked.

“I also enjoy your tongue and fingers. I’ll make sure to leave them intact,” she smirked.

He claimed her lips and she said into his mouth “I’m serious. Don’t belittle yourself. Don’t make little of my love for you.”

He pulled back to look into her eyes and they were pleading, desperate and slightly hurt. He just swallowed hard and nodded once.

She reached for his lips again.

In truth, they were both still tired from their wild afternoon. Neither wanted to go through with the play they started. So they just snogged in bed like bloody teenagers until the record played out, and they fell asleep.

Chapter End Notes

Hey!

So okay, back when I was writing this chapter, in like June, I was also reading The Return, by CeleryThesis, and it was soo angsty (but soooo well written and with a happy ending!) and I was too sensitive because lord knows, so it really stuck with me for a while. And in that story (and other stories by CeleryThesis), Snape is very into music and stuff. So as a way to get it out of my system and not cry any more, I added
that to my Snape. lol. Hope that's okay, Celery! (If you're still reading this).

Link to the work: https://archiveofourown.org/works/11675088/chapters/26275404
Chapter 38

Chapter Notes

So apparently, this fic has gotten popular enough to now receive hateful comments from anonymous trolls. To celebrate such a milestone, you nice people get a new chapter :) Hope you enjoy.

His cock woke up before him. He may have been too tired to do anything the previous night, but he was very well rested now and his cock had a memory of all the dry humping they had done like bloody teenagers.

He pressed himself closer to her, they were spooning, she with her back to his chest, and he nuzzled her neck, nipping her earlobe as his hand slipped into her shorts and caressed her mons. She stirred in her sleep and he took his hand to his mouth and sucked on two of his fingers before he returned them to the inside of her shorts. He parted her slit and his fingers easily found their way around her bud of nerves. It wasn’t long before she woke with a gasp, her breathing already heavy.

“Uuuh. Severusss. Do you wake all of your house guests like this?” She smiled and reached behind her to sink her fingers in his hair.

“I never have house guests,” he rumbled in her ear as he continued to rub her.

She could feel his hard cock poking her behind and she turned to face him, to kiss his lips and stroke his cock. She stroked once, twice over his sweatpants as she kissed his lips and he rubbed his fingers on her clit, around it, slid it in between his digits. She moaned into his mouth, then she reached in his trousers and freed him, pulling him over the waistband. He groaned against her lips when he felt her warm palms on him. She then pushed him to lie completely on his back and turned to take him in her mouth, leaving her ass in the air next to his head.

She licked his whole length, taking time to feel every ridge with the tip of her tongue. She then began to stroke him as she licked and sucked only the tip of his advantageous cock, enjoying the grunts and groans she caused to escape his lips.

“Oh, it’s like that, is it witch?” He managed to say.

“Unhmm,” she hummed with his cock in her mouth and he let out a growl.

He caressed her buttocks and pulled down her shorts a bit before finally casting a seam-splitting spell so it would peel off her easily. His finger stroked her from end to end, taking time to rub her clit again before dipping into her folds, causing her to lose a bit of concentration in what she was doing. He lifted her to straddle his chest, leaving her slit open for his lips and tongue to tease. He licked her from end to end, sucked on her very swollen clit, then dipped his tongue into her core, tasting the excitement that pooled there and making her moan loudly as she pumped his cock and tried to continue to suck him.

He grazed his teeth on her ass cheeks as he took his fingertips to her back entrance and teased it, cleansing it with a silent spell. He then took his tongue to it and teased her, licking her puckered hole.
“Oh fuck, Severus,” she moaned as she continued to stroke and lick him, now more slowly. He spread the excitement from her folds to her puckered hole and inserted one finger. She moaned with his cock in her mouth and the vibration was driving him insane.

“Stop, kitten, stop. I want to come inside you, I want to make you come with my cock.”

She stopped and swiftly turned to face him. She was about to impale herself on him when he turned her to be on all fours, facing the headboard. She held it to brace herself as he pushed himself into her, and held the headboard as well, his hand next to hers, touching hers. Leaning down, he lifted her T-shirt to touch her breasts and teased her nipples. Then he kissed what was exposed of her shoulder blades. She moaned as she bucked back into him and let go of the headboard to support herself on the bed.

He gripped her hips and rocked into her, groaning. His hands spread her cheeks, and again he traced his fingers on the outside of her back entrance. She leaned further down, resting her head on the pillows.

“Do it!” She moaned.

He slowly slipped one finger inside her and moved it, stretching her. She groaned and rocked gently back into him, feeling his cock and finger both fill her simultaneously. He inserted a second finger and began to slowly thrust his cock in her wet core, alternating with his fingers in her bum. She had thought his advantageous cock in her cunt was the height of fullness, but along with his fingers in her puckered hole, she felt a whole lot fuller. It was overwhelming, but wonderful at the same time. He thrust ever so slowly, in rhythm, and her pleasure mounted inside her. She managed to take her fingers to her swollen clit and rub herself, heightening the whole experience, speeding up her mounting arousal. He continued to thrust into her and grunt his pleasure, and it wasn’t long before hers exploded inside of her, making her come with a wail and repeated cries of his name. Her pleasure dripped out of her, her core clamping around his cock so exquisitely it made him come with her, as she repeatedly milked him of his essence.

She slumped on to the bed and he pulled out of her, slumping on top of her. After a few moments he rolled over to her side, his hands caressing her arm, her sides, brushing back her hair from her face. She had tears in her eyes.

“Are you alright, Hermione? Was it too much?” He asked, genuinely worried.

“I feel wonderful. That was…” she exhaled, still trying to catch her breath. “How did you get so fucking great at this? Fuck, Severus, you delicious, magnificent man.”

“Well…” he smirked.

“No, you know what? Don’t even tell me.” She put her index finger to his lips. “Just let me imagine that there has only ever been me,” she smiled.

He caressed her cheek. There is only you. And then he kissed her lips tenderly, sweetly.

They showered together and went down to breakfast. She wore another one of his T-shirts and boxer shorts.

“I should go home,” she said as he scrambled them some eggs and the kettle with the water for tea whistled.
“Why?” He asked.

“Because… I have no clothes here. You vanished the only dress I came in. I have no knickers…”

“You don’t need any of those items,” he said smirking as he pushed scrambled eggs onto her plate.

“Severus!” She playfully reproached him with a smile. “I don’t have any toiletries either and…”

“I can provide those for you.”

“You cannot provide every item a lady needs,” she said with a crooked smile.

“Very well, we will go out and shop for them. For all of it. Clothes and knickers and what not.”

She was a little taken aback. “But that… we would be seen together and…”

“It’s fine, if you don’t want to be seen with me you can…”

He was looking down at his plate and she could sense he was trying to hide the hurt he suddenly felt by putting his walls back up and speaking to her dryly.

“It’s nothing like that,” she cut in, “I…”

“No, no, It is best. Being linked to me can put you in harm’s why anyway. Dolohov is still out there and might still want to come for me, and there are others…”

“Severus! Don’t be daft!”

He looked up at her and raised an eyebrow.

“If you will remember, I was attacked before you were, and before we had anything going on! You will not put me in harm’s way. And I am not ashamed of being seen with you! I thought you wouldn’t want to be seen with me…”

“And why would that be?”

“Because you like your privacy. And there would be reporters everywhere snapping photos of us. We aren’t exactly anonymous, are we? And this… you want it casual and casual does not entail going shopping for my shampoo with me.”

“I want to go shopping for your shampoo with you,” he said after a moment of silence.

She smiled and tried to hold back the tears of joy that were coming to her so she wouldn’t look like a sappy fool.

“Under one condition. You can’t ever stop using that coconut one.”

She smiled. “And… what about your job?”

He shrugged. “Minerva knows. And she hasn’t sacked me, so…”

“Wait, Professor McGonagall knows?”
“Yes.”

“How?”

“I have no idea. She and Albus even had a wager between them, it seems.”

“Professor Dumbledore knows?! Dear God, how mortifying.” She covered her face with her hands.

“So, not embarrassed to me seen with me, are you?” He scoffed.

“I’m not!” She went around the island in the kitchen to hug him. He slowly and reluctantly wrapped an arm around her back. This was very nice. So much physical contact. Someone, a beautiful woman, wanting so much of it with him. And he enjoying it.

“What’s mortifying is them knowing I was sneaking into a teacher’s quarters and…” She sighed deeply against his chest.

“So,” he said as she pulled away from him to get back to her breakfast, “you are the only one who could have worries on that account… your friends…”

“Harry and Ginny already know.”

“Your parents.”

“They sort of know too,” she said in a small voice.

He raised an eyebrow and slightly tilted his head.

“Well, they wanted to know who I was writing to on our vacation… and why I was crying… and I always wrote to them from Hogwarts, at least twice a week, and… you made the narrative.”

“Merlin! You tell your parents EVERYTHING?”

“No! Not everything! God, no. I just began telling them about detention, and then about how you saved me… and how you were becoming nicer to me. And on Christmas break, how I helped you brew. But it wasn’t till your attack, when I wrote to them exasperated every day that they suggested that perhaps I should be careful because it seemed like I was falling in love…”

“And they, of course, have reservations.”

“Only because they think you don’t want anything to do with me and I was reading too much into everything… because they don’t know we have actually been… together. If I were to explain…”

“That should be interesting,” he snorted uncomfortably.

“Never mind that now,” she quickly said. “I need knickers. I could go to Grimmauld Place and get some, if you want me to stay here. And I should feed Crookshanks.”

He narrowed his eyes. “Grimmauld Place?”

Yes, well, I’m staying there. It will be easier to commute to the Ministry when I get my N.E.W.T.s results and find a job.”

“Well, if you are staying at Potter’s, there is absolutely no reason you cannot stay here
instead. And what is a Crookshanks?"

“It’s my cat.” She smiled as he raised an eyebrow.

“Kitten has a kitty?” He smirked.

She rolled her eyes. “How long do you want me here?”

He sighed. “Must everything in your world be planned out, witch? Just stay and see how you like it.”

She smiled shyly. She really shouldn’t push him, and should just accept what he offered, which was already much more than she expected he could, and probably much more than any other witch had gotten from him.

“Will you go with me to Grimmauld Place then? To pick up a few things?” She smiled pleadingly to him.

“To Potter’s? Must I?”

“Would you?”

“Fine,” he rolled his eyes.

She continued to grin, looking at him.

“What?” he asked.

“Does this mean you’re my boyfriend?”

“Oh dear God. I hate that word.” He rolled his eyes.

“My manfriend?”

“That somehow makes it much worse.”

“My lover.” She was teasing him.

“I’m going to change, Hermione,” he said as he left the dishes in the sink and headed for the stairs. “You can do the dishes while you are thinking of nonsense.”

*My wizard,* she smiled and said to herself.

Hermione had nothing to wear, so she put on one of his dress shirts, a black one. With one of his belts and a few magical adjustments, it made for a pretty nice dress. He wore what she had grown accustomed to seeing him in at Hogwarts, substituting the frockcoat for a black waistcoat. She smiled, thinking they made for a very handsome couple.

The years of being in the Order had made him very proficient at apparating to exactly the doorstep on which the wards were still not effective at Grimmauld Place, and so he did, Hermione going by side-along with him.

She knocked as Severus stood behind her. Harry opened the door slightly to see who it was.
“Hermione!” He smiled as he opened the door wider. “Oh, and Professor,” his smile faded a bit and he stepped outside and pulled the door behind him. He hugged Hermione.

“I am no longer your professor, Potter, thank Merlin… assuming you did not cock up your NEWTs,” Snape said with a drawl.

“So… should I call you Severus?” Harry grinned.

“Not… if you wish your tongue to remain attached to your body.”

“Severus!” Hermione frowned at him.

“See? Why can she do it and not me? Doesn’t seem fair, does it?” Harry grinned wider.

Severus rolled his eyes and sighed. “Snape is fine.”

“Harry,” Hermione cut in before Severus made any other remarks, “I’m going to spend a few days at Severus’ and I want to get a couple of things. Why… why are we still out here?”

“Yes, Potter, how very rude of you,” Severus drawled.

“Well, uhm… Ron is here and…” Harry looked nervously from Snape to Hermione, “He’s in a temper because the girl he had been seeing… dumped him.”

Severus snorted.

“And he doesn’t know about you… this yet.,” Harry finished in a whisper.

“And you think I’m afraid of Weasley?” Snape raised an eyebrow.

“No, no. I’m afraid he will say something stupid and you’ll kill him. Actually…” he looked now at Hermione, “either one of you could kill him.” Harry grinned.

“Let us in, Harry, he’ll find out sooner or later.”

Harry sighed and opened the door, leaving the way open for them to go inside. As Harry closed the door, Ron came into the hallway. Ginny followed. Before he was actually there, they could hear his voice asking.

“Who is it, Harry?” He stopped dead in his tracks and gapped at Snape. “What is he doing here?” He asked, disgusted. He then dropped his gaze and saw Hermione’s hand holding his behind her. “Him? He is the one you’ve been…”

“I would choose my words very carefully if I were you, Weasley,” Snape spat, his gaze menacing.

“Severus and I are seeing each other, yes.”

“But… he’s… a murderer! How could you…”

“That’s right, I have killed. You would do well to remember that,” Snape threatened with narrowed eyes. Hermione gently squeezed his hand.

“Did you cheat on me with him?” Ron’s face was as red as his hair in anger.

Hermione breathed deeply to calm her outrage and try to answer calmly. “Though you have
made it abundantly clear what type of woman you think I am, know that I wouldn’t do that.”

“You’re lying!” Ron let out.

“They’re not, mate,” Harry said.

“You knew? You knew and you didn’t tell me?” Ron looked to Ginny and she just shrugged.

“It wasn’t our place to tell.”

Infuriated, Ron turned to go back where he came from. Harry followed and Ginny pulled Hermione in for a hug.

“Hi, Professor,” she smiled up at him as she squeezed Hermione.

“Miss Weasley,” Snape nodded.

“I’m going to get a few things,” Hermione said. “I’m spending a few days with Severus.”

Ginny smiled widely, with a hint of ‘I told you’ in her eyes and Hermione smiled back.

“We’ll catch up when I get back down.”

Ginny left with an “Okay” and Hermione turned back to Severus.

“Do you want to go upstairs with me?”

“No. I’ll remain here, closer to the door, so we can leave faster,” he drawled.

“Severus… you will behave, right?”

“Like the perfect gentleman I am,” he smirked. She pecked his lips and ran upstairs as he watched her perfect ass with a smile.

Snape barely had the time to turn from the bottom of the stairs when a giant mass of redness came crashing down on him, taking him to the floor. Ron tried to strike him while Harry and Ginny yelled for him to stop, but Snape managed to defend himself and turn Ron to the floor, immobilizing him. He held his neck, not hard enough for him to actually choke to death, but hard enough that Ron gripped Snape’s hand with both of his, trying to pry it away from him.

“Do you have a death wish, boy?” Snape spat.

Ron, after trying once more to pull Snape off him without any success, let out “You don’t deserve her!”

Snape snorted. “And you do? After all the foul things you said to her? Called her?”

The anger seemed to fade from his eyes as shame filled it. Snape let him go, smirking, and pulled himself up, brushing off his clothes.

“I deserve her more than you do!” Ron said. “At least I’m not a murderer,” he finished in a mumble.

“That may very well be true,” Snape drawled, “but ultimately that is Hermione’s decision to make.” He narrowed his eyes at Ron and looked at him over his hooked nose as Ron stood. Ron
sighed and ran upstairs, clearly mad but not having anything else to say. Harry, Ginny and Snape watched.

“So… Professor. Would you like some tea? Coffee?” Ginny asked after a moment, leading the way into the kitchen followed by Harry.

Harry cut in. “He’s not our professor anymore, Gin,” he said grinning.

Snape followed them into the kitchen, reluctantly, and rolling his eyes.

“So what do I call him then, genius?”

“Not Severus,” Harry answered with a dead pan look on his face and making a horizontal gesture across his neck.

“Snape is fine,” Severus sighed.

“Okay… so, Snape. Something to drink? Cookies?” Harry and Ginny were sitting at the kitchen table now. Snape leaned on the door frame. He didn’t really enjoy being there in the mutt’s house. It reminded him of the dire times when he had to go there for meetings and briefings. And how much everyone fucking hated and mistrusted him.

“No, I’m fine, Miss Weasley.”

“Ginny,” she said.

“Ginevra,” he replied. Ginny was too damn personal.

She grimaced. “Fine. I’ll allow that, for now.”

“Have a seat,” Harry offered.

“I’m fine right here.” Snape said. “Thank you,” he managed after a moment.

“Don’t mind Ron,” Ginny said. “He’s… difficult. But we… well, I am very glad to see you and Hermione together. She seems very happy.”

“Yeah,” Harry cut in. “I don’t think I’ve ever seen her like this… and if she’s happy, I’m happy,” he smiled. “And you… seem different. You don’t… scowl as much.”

Snape gave a half smile, more to himself than anything else, remembering how wonderful and right his little witch made him feel. Unlike he had ever felt before. It also helped that her friends didn’t seem to despise him, or the idea of them together. That meant he had more chances to make this work with her. Don’t get your hopes up too high, fool. It all comes crashing down on your head at some point.

Harry and Ginny exchanged looks and tiny smiles as the saw Snape smiling.

“I’d like to thank you for… returning that picture of my mom. I don’t have many, so I really appreciate it,” Harry said shyly.

Snape sighed and his impassive mask was back on. “It was never meant for me anyway,” he said looking over Harry’s head, not daring to look directly at him.

“Still… thanks. And I never properly thanked you for all you did to help me… us. Putting your life at risk…”
“It was my job.”

“But you didn’t have to…”

“I did,” Snape said dryly.

Hermione came back in beside Snape and put her arm around his waist, leaning on him. His arm, which had been crossed over his chest until now, found its way around her shoulders automatically. She smiled.

“So, what are we doing?” She asked to the room.

“Having tea. But Snape didn’t want any. I think he deserves a hot beverage after being jumped by Ron and kindly not having hurt him for it, as he deserved,” Ginny grinned.

“What?!” Hermione asked, alarmed.

“It was nothing,” Severus replied.

“Ron… you know,” Ginny rolled her eyes. “You look great Hermione! How come I’ve never seen this dress before?” She changed the subject.

“Because,” Hermione stepped towards the table and pulled Severus by the hand with her, “I did a bit of transfiguration on one of Severus’ shirts,” she smiled.

“Wow! Really nice!” Ginny said as Hermione sat across from her.

Severus sat as well. A teacup was pushed toward him with a smile from the Weasley girl and that hateful house elf he remembered, Kreacher was his name, offered him cake with a bow. _Not so hateful anymore, it seems._ Hermione chatted away with her friends as he sat there beside her, highly uncomfortable. Sitting at a table with former students, who hated him not so long ago. Whom he didn’t treat particularly well. One of which looked remarkably like his former bully, the person he had hated the most in his life, who had ended up with the girl he had most loved in life. The only girl he had loved. He was Lily’s son. His mistake killed this boy’s mother and…

Hermione’s hand touched his knee under the table as she talked to her friends, and she squeezed. A warm fuzzy feeling spread inside his chest. He lost his train of thought and could only see her, chatting, smiling.

This wasn’t so bad, so unbearable. And he did have to endure it. If this was to go forward he would have to endure it. He couldn’t keep her to himself, however much he would love to. He wanted this to go forward. He wanted it so much that his stomach cramped up in knots. How… strange.

The girls got up to go see something. Snape hadn’t really paid attention to what. Potter took the opportunity to harass him.

“Don’t hurt her, Snape,” he whispered.

He wanted to snap at him. How dare he? But he couldn’t say anything other than what was simmering honestly in his heart.

“Believe me Potter, I strongly hope I don’t.”
Snape and Hermione were walking to an alley, to apparate, hand in hand.

“Home?” he asked.

“Actually… I need to exchange some muggle money at Gringotts…” She looked up at him and could see he stiffened a little as concern filled him. “But I can go alone, I’ll meet you at your house in a little while.”

“No, I need to go to the Apothecary, I might as well…”

“Are you sure?”

“Yes.”

They walked down Diagon Alley side by side, but not touching. They were both nervous but did not want the other to know. A few curious heads turned to watch them, and the expressions were mostly confusion. Snape stretched out his pinky and grazed her hand that swung beside his. She reached out her pinky as well and locked it with his. She then took a deep breath and placed her whole hand in his. He accepted it firmly. The expressions on people’s faces changed from confusion to amazement, startlement, awe, surprise.

They concluded their chores under the scrutiny of the wizarding world’s eyes, and left for Spinner’s End. Photographers had appeared at one point and snapped some pictures, and journalists tried to harass them for an interview, which only made Severus irritated and hurry to buy what he needed.

Upon arrival at his house, Snape told her to make herself at home and descended to the basement, where he stayed all afternoon without emerging. Hermione placed her things, which were shrunken and in her bag all morning, in his childhood bedroom. She didn’t want to be too much in his way and he seemed to not use that bedroom much. She then explored his impressive book collection. Much like in his rooms at Hogwarts, he had both muggle and wizard books, scientific and literature, poetry and prose, old – very old – and recent. Some she had copies of as well.

Her mind wondered to her and him organizing the shelves, making room for her books, getting rid of duplicates. *Stop it, Hermione!*

She began to feel hungry as daylight began to fade. He hadn’t emerged yet and she thought it would be very horrible of her to call him to cook for her. At the same time, she didn’t feel like venturing to cook tonight. So she made sandwiches and knocked on the basement door.

“Sev? Dinner! I made sandwiches.”

He emerged, looking tired.

“Sorry, I didn’t know I had been down there that long;” he kissed her forehead and butterflies fluttered in her stomach. That was new. They went to the kitchen and sat down.

“What were you doing down there?” She asked.

“I was… following your advice and working on my potions… to see if I can sell that rubbish.”

“It’s not rubbish! It’s brilliant. You are brilliant. And of course everyone will buy them,” she
smiled and caressed his hand over the counter top, proud he took advice from her. “Can I help you sometime?”

“Sure,” he said without a second thought. She smiled again.

They ate about half their sandwiches and then she started “Thank you for going to Grimmauld Place with me. And sitting there for a bit.”

He shrugged. “It wasn’t terrible.”

An owl pecked the kitchen window. Snape stood to go to it and took his copy of the evening Prophet, placing the payment, which he took from a bowl in the corner of the counter, in the pouch on the owl’s leg and giving it a cracker.

He threw the Prophet on the island top and Hermione saw a moving photo of them, hand in hand. She was giving him a sideways glance and a sweet smile, as if just looking at him made her melt. It really did. But she looked like a silly girl in love. He was looking forward, stoic. The headline read: War heroes an item?

She looked to him for a reaction.

“Well,” he started, “now that’s done…”

She held her breath, nervous he could regret all of it.

“…I believe…” he continued, “I should take you out on a proper date.”
Ok folks. According to my sketchy math skills, if I post two chapters per week, I can post the last one on Sev's birthday. How cool would that be? So that is the goal now. I just hope I managed to write the last one and type and edit and be happy with everything in time.

Hermione was so excited about her first ever proper date, outside of Hogwarts. And to have it with Severus. She would never have imagined him to be the type. He wasn’t, really. But he thought he should make the effort if he wanted her to stick around. He should try to keep her happy. And it would not hurt his ego to be seen with such a sexy witch by his side. Mine.

They agreed to go out within two nights, since she had already promised her parents she would have dinner with them on the night following his invitation. She didn’t even dream of asking him to go meet her parents because that would certainly be pushing him too far too fast. So he happily stayed in the lab working on his potions when she left midafternoon to go shopping for something to wear to their date before she headed to her parents’ home.

She ended up buying two dresses, since she could not decide which one was better. She then went to her parents’ and had dinner and chatted cheerfully, telling them – in part – about her first week of the living away from home – in a place that wasn’t Hogwarts or a tent – experience. They of course thought she was still staying with Harry, and she did not mention anything to let them believe otherwise. After dinner, her dad had the habit of watching the news on the telly, and she stayed back to help her mom with the dishes. It was then she began to broach the Severus subject. She reminded her mother of the letters she wrote, and how much she admired her potions professor, and that her mother herself had suggested she might be falling in love. She said she had fallen for him indeed, and that she thought he might feel something for her too. So much so that they had met a couple of times and he had asked her to dinner tomorrow night.

Mrs. Granger saw how excited her daughter was, and how happy she looked, and could only wish her all the best on her developing relationship. Hermione expressed her concern that her mother and father would chastise her about the age difference, and her mother said age was but a number. The important thing was he treated her well and made her happy.

“Do you think dad will feel the same?” Hermione asked after a long embrace with her mother.

“I’ll start working on him,” Mrs. Granger said with a smile.

They finished the dishes and went upstairs, where Hermione tried on the dresses she bought so her mother could see and give her opinion. She then charmed her hair in several ways, and her mother told her what she thought best for the occasion.

She got to Severus’ and inside with no difficulties, since he had changed his wards to recognize her. She did not call out to him, since she saw the light on in the kitchen. She approached the door to see him sitting on one of the stools around the island, reading the newspapers... muggle and wizard. He wore glasses with dark green frames that suited him very well. His hair fell over his
face as he looked down at the papers. She watched him with a smile saved for the moments when he was oblivious to her, but then he noticed her there and moved quickly to take off his glasses and try to hide them. He did not need to give her any more reminders that she was with an old man.

“Could you make yourself noticed and not sneak around, woman?”

“You wear glasses?” She asked smiling.

He sighed deeply as he pinched the bridge of his nose. “Yes.”

“Why have I never seen you in them?” She approached him and hugged him from behind, kissing his shoulder blades.

“I usually take a potion for my eyesight. I do not need to give students another reason for them to laugh at me. I just couldn’t be bothered to brew it today.”

“I very much like you in glasses,” she said as he turned to face her. “I find glasses very sexy.”

“You do, do you?” He arched an eyebrow. “Need I worry about Potter then?” He teased.

“Severus! Let me rephrase that then, I find you very sexy in glasses. And only you.”

The anticipated night arrived and after Severus had showered and picked out his clothes, she had banished him from his room, closing the door behind him while he stood in the hall with a towel draped around his waist and his clothes over one arm.

“Sorry, Sev, I need the mirror!” She yelled from inside. He rolled his eyes. **Cheeky chit,** banishing me from my room in my own house. But he smiled as he walked to the spare room to get dressed.

He sat downstairs in his armchair, waiting for her while he read the book she had given him, further instructing himself to better his potions. She finally came downstairs. He heard her heels on the steps before he saw her, and he began, standing up and taking off his glasses, laying them on the coffee table: “My God, witch! What took…” but he had then gotten up and turned to see her. When he laid eyes on her, he was lost for words. His jaw dropped. She was wearing a little black open-backed dress that hugged her figure formidably. Her hair was up in a messy but chic bun and her lips were dark red, pleading to be kissed. The dress barely reached her knees, showing off her gorgeous legs. In her hand, a little black bag and the bracelet he had given her on her wrist. On her feet, stiletto heels lace up strappy sandals that made everything look even sexier. She smiled shyly as he gawked at her.

“Do I look okay?”

“You look… absolutely stunning.” He was still looking her up and down, his mouth open.

“You don’t look so bad yourself,” she smiled as she came closer to him, caressing his arm.

He was wearing black denims which had buttons around his boots and a black turtle neck. His hair was pulled back and tied with a black velvet band. He pulled her close to his body by the waist, his other hand on her cheek and his thumb gently caressing her lower lip.

“Will I ruin this if I kiss you?”
“No, it’s charmed to stay on,” she smiled looking up at him.

“Fantastic,” and he pulled her in for a passionate kiss, taking both their breaths away.

He did not want to stop. He wanted to take her upstairs and peal that dress off her and take her in every way he could think of. But he had promised her a date. Fuck. Their lips parted and she whimpered with the loss of contact.

“Wait here a minute, kitten,” he said and rushed up the stairs. After a moment he came back down with a little black box in his hand. Her heart skipped a beat before she realized what she was thinking – hoping? – was absurd.

“I would like you to wear this… if you want.”

He opened the box and presented a pair of emerald earrings that would hang beautifully from her ears and match her dress wonderfully.

“Severus! This is gorgeous!” Her fingers traced the stones. “Where did you get this?”

“Family heirloom. One of the few things my mother managed to keep from the Princes before… they shut her out for marrying a muggle.”

She looked up at him and caressed his cheek.

“Do you want to wear it?”

“Yes! It’s beautiful. I’d love to. Are you sure I can?”

“Yes,” he smiled.

She took the earrings from the box and put them on.

“Gorgeous,” he said and kissed her lips once again. “They suit you well.”

They had decided to go to a muggle restaurant. That would give them some amount of privacy that would not be possible in a wizarding part of town. As they entered the muggle establishment, a waiter came to see them to their table. The waiter was going to pull Hermione’s chair out for her but Severus made a point of doing it himself. She smiled, pleased to see this gentleman side of Severus. He sat across from her and menus were placed in front of each, but he kept stealing glances at her, until at one moment, he couldn’t help himself and stared at her outright. He could not get over how absolutely ravishing she looked in that ensemble.

“You’re staring at me,” she smiled shyly.

“Am I?” He smirked and kept looking at her.

“You are. Undressing me with your eyes.”

“Forgive me. How very rude of me.” He smiled and looked down at his menu.

“I like it, though. Makes me feel sexy and desirable,” she sniggered.

“If you didn’t feel like that already, I’m obviously not doing my job well enough,” he raised an eyebrow.
She reached out to caress his hand over the table with a smile. “Have you been here before? What’s good? I can’t decide…”

The waiter came around to take their orders.

“I’ll have the steak and the lady will have the same. And a bottle of your finest wine. Thank you.” He took the menu from Hermione’s hands and handed both his and hers to the waiter. Hermione smiled, impressed with his take charge attitude.

Severus noticed some people stared a bit at them before returning to their dinners and conversation. Of course they did. She was so beautiful and young, everyone would wonder what she was doing with the likes of him. Little did he know that his time with her had made him look better, because he felt better, and some of the people who stared were actually thinking that they formed a quite handsome couple.

“So… Hermione, is it?” He asked feigning puzzlement after the waiter had left them. “Tell me about yourself.”

She sniggered. “What do you want to know?”

“What do you do?”

“I just finished school and I’m waiting for my final grades so I can apply for a part time job at the Ministry while I decide what I want to do for sure.”

“How very interesting and very well thought out. Are you always so… systematic?” He had a small smile on his face.

“Most seem to think so, yes.” She smiled herself.

“And what have you narrowed your career choices down to?”

“Magical creatures, potions or history of magic.” She could say all this because, of course, he had discreetly cast a *muffliato* around them.

“Potions? Really?”

“Yes, I had a very… inspiring teacher,” she smiled.

“Doubtful,” he snorted.

“It’s true. He made it all seem so interesting. I may pursue it.”

He snorted again and tried to move the conversation along. “Not interested in muggle studies?”

“No. That would be too easy. My parents are muggles.”

They kept playing at that throughout dinner and actually learned new interesting things about one another. She of course did the most sharing. But Severus seemed more open than his normal self since the exchange they had had in his kitchen the first night she was there. She did not want to push him too much. She was happy with things as they were.

After dinner, they were walking the streets when she was bold enough to place her hand in his, which hung limply by his side. It took him a moment of uneasiness before he actually took her hand and squeezed it lightly. She smiled.
They passed by a movie theater and she proposed they go in.

“Come on, you’ll enjoy it. I promise.”

“I _have_ watched movies before, Hermione,” he rolled his eyes.

“Really? Where?” There was no TV in his house. It seemed obvious he would have though, since his father was muggle, but… it also seemed strange, somehow.

“We used to have a telly… until my father broke it in one of his… moments,” he said quietly.

She squeezed his hand. “So, what do you say?” She smiled up at him.

He gave in as he rolled his eyes and was reaching in his pocket for his wallet. He wasn’t sure he had converted enough money to muggle money.

“No, I’ve got this one,” she said, since he had already paid for dinner.

They watched about half an hour of the movie before he rested his hand on her thigh and caressed it. They spent the next few minutes snogging like horny teenagers, not paying much attention to the screen. Then his hand finally slipped under her dress. He knew she had some exhibitionist fantasies, and since the theatre was relatively empty – no one sat around them, at least, as they sat in the last row – he thought it might be fun to indulge her in one. If an usher or anyone came to disturb them, he could always obliviate them. Of course he wouldn’t remind her of that and ruin the feeling of danger that would likely turn her on more.

“Severus!” She pulled away from him and whispered as she tried to push his hand away.

“No one is watching,” he whispered in her ear as he kissed her neck. “Don’t deny that you find this hot.” He nipped her ear and then her lower lip as he managed to place his hand in between her thighs again. Some action scene roared in the background.

She blushed. “Yes, but… someone might see us!” She let her whisper become a soft moan as he rubbed her over her very tiny knickers. He supposed that with a dress like that, the knickers had to be tiny, not to show.

“That just makes it more fun,” he smirked and continued to rub her, his fingers now venturing beneath the cloth that covered her mound, pulling the cloth aside.

He kissed her lips as to prevent her from moaning loudly as his fingers rubbed her clit. She spread her legs wider and he could dip his fingertips into her folds and wet them with her moisture, spreading it to her clit and making it slick and easy for his fingers to please her. His expert movements and the excitement of being in public all made her pleasure mount relatively quickly, and within a couple of minutes she was breathing heavily against his lips, mostly through her nose to try and refrain from moaning or calling out his name. Her breathing was all she could hear in her ears.

She came, gripping his shoulder, their lips locked tightly. After she came down from her high, their lips parted and he pulled her knickers back into position and caressed her mound over it before pulling his hand away from her and taking his fingers to his lips to suck them clean, smirking. She wanted to make it up to him but did not have the courage to jerk him off there, in public. So she pressed her lips to his ear with a smile and said “I promise I’ll make it up to you at home,” before nipping his lobe.

He, who had already gotten half hard while pleasuring her, had half a mind to drag her out of that movie theatre and apparate her home, so she could commence her making up to him. But they
did finish watching the movie, though a big chunk of it was lost to them.

When they were walking the streets looking for a deserted alley to apparate in, Severus’ cock straining against his trousers and begging to be freed only to be imprisoned again by her hot core, they were blind-sighted by Rita Skeeter. They did not understand why the hell she was in a muggle street, but she was, harassing them, and because it was such a street, she could not have her quick notes quill magically scribbling on parchment beside her. So she held a pen and paper.

“So, how did you two love birds get together? Did the hardships of war cause the brains of the Golden trio to have a breakdown? Did the turn cloak Death Eater imperious the Gryffindor princess? Don’t you think he is a tad too old for you, Hermione? And what about your long lost love, Lily Evans Potter, Severus Snape? Have you forgotten her? The one you said you would always love?”

Severus was using all his will power not to turn around and snap the bitch’s neck right there with his bare hands as they tried to move away from her quickly.

But Hermione was not so strong willed. She swirled around and discretely pointed her wand at Rita’s neck, standing mere inches from her face, so muggles would not see, “Do you want me to put you back in a jar again, you cow? For all eternity this time? Because I fucking will, don’t you try me,” she snarled.

“Miss Granger’s… association… with a…. former…. Death Eater…. has made her violent… and…” Rita scribbled on her paper, ignoring the threat of a wand at her neck. While she was at it, Severus pulled Hermione away, rushing around the corner and into an alley to disapparate her home before Rita could catch up to them. He could not deny that he felt proud of his little lioness’ approach to the situation, though.

They appeared in an alley on his street with a loud pop, and he held her hand so tightly as they walked down the street to his doorstep, as if he were afraid she would escape him. This is what her life would be if she stayed with him. People staring, harassing them, harassing her. Because it was so fucking unfathomable that Severus Snape could be interesting to such a smart, young, beautiful witch. She would grow tired of him and leave. He knew. And now… he thought he was past the point of being able to not care if she did.

They walked into the house and he closed the door behind him, making sure the wards were sound and up.

“That fucking bitch,” she said from behind him, heading to the stairs.

“I’m sorry,” he let out.

“For what?” She turned around.

“I wanted this… evening to be pleasant for you and…”

“It was! Severus, it was perfect. That slimy cow could not erase all the good, love,” she smiled. “Come, let’s go to bed.” She reached out her hand. “I’m absolutely knackered.”

He followed her upstairs and as she stopped in front of the full length mirror to take his mother’s earrings off, he sat on the bed to pull off his boots.

“Where should I put these?” She asked holding up the earrings but still facing the mirror as he came up behind her.
“Wherever you want,” he kissed her neck. “They’re yours.” He planted another kiss on her neck, then on her shoulder.

“Oh no no no, Severus, they were your mother’s! I couldn’t do that, it’s not right,” she started babbling.

“Hush, woman,” he whispered in her ear and then nipped it, his arms now around her waist.

“It’s a family heirloom! It should stay in the family, with you. It would be wrong for me to…”

“Hermione,” he rumbled in her ear. She nearly melted and stopped talking immediately. “I want you to have it.” He took the earrings from her hand and placed them on the dresser before turning her to face him. “They’re yours;” he said looking deep in her eyes, holding her face, then pulled her in to cover her mouth with his.

His hands slowly made their way down from her cheeks, caressing her arms, and reaching her thighs, where they began to pull up her dress, pealing it off her skin, his touch making her quiver, all while his lips tenderly intertwined with hers. She pushed up his turtle neck with much less patience, and they broke the kiss so she could pull it over his head. It was marvelous to be able to undress him and not have to face a myriad of buttons. She undid his denims and let them fall and pool around his ankles. He finally finished disrobing her, leaving her only in skimpy black knickers and heels. She bent one of her legs up, reaching behind her to take the sandals off while they kissed, when he asked

“How those… hurt your feet too much?”

“No, not too much,” she smiled.

“Then leave them on,” he whispered against her lips.

He fell back onto the bed pulling her with him and she happily obliged. Her red lips hungrily claimed his as she felt his cock become rigid beneath her, under the heat of her sex. With a light pull he ripped the tiny strings at the sides of her knickers and threw it to a corner, so he could fully feel her wet pussy on his pulsating cock. She sat up, supporting herself on his bare chest and took him in her hand, guiding him inside her, impaling herself with him to the base of his cock while she looked down at him, her mischievous smile breaking to show her desire as she bit her lip and closed her eyes. He gripped her thighs and groaned lowly as she engulfed him.

She slowly bounced on top of him, clamping his cock on the up stroke and easing herself down with sweet moans, and he looked up at her and smiled in the sweetest way. There was something in his eyes she had never quite seen there before, and it made warmth spread from her chest up to her neck and down to her belly, and her body quickened from that alone. His hands moved from her thighs to her hips, gripping her, encouraging her, the smile never leaving his lips unless it was to groan his pleasure at her efforts.

He sat up, his lips finding a breast and sucking on it as he palmed the other, making her moan softly. His lips then moved upwards, past her collarbone as he held her body close to his, and he claimed her lips as they moved as one, rocking and gasping, moaning together. His hand went to her hair and with a silent spell he made it fall from its bun over her shoulders.

With his hand firmly imbedded in her wild bushy hair, he pulled her head back gently, making her quiver and moan louder as she still rode his cock softly, and made her neck exposed to his kisses. After a while of her bouncing on top of him and clamping his cock, he flipped them both
over so he could be on top, and he slowly moved inside her, alternating kissing her lips with looking in her eyes. It was slow, smoldering and relatively silent, with the exception of their heavy breaths and soft groans and moans. She felt her heart swell and her chest constrict. She loved him so much.

He held one of her knees to his hips and she lifted the other voluntarily, her heels swinging in the air, and he began to thrust more vigorously. She couldn’t control herself any longer, she was going to come.

“Severus,” she panted. “I love you, Severus,” she said looking in his eyes before she pulled him to her lips. They came together as their lips were locked, she rocking her hips against his, prolonging her pleasure as her clenching core milked him dry. When they came down from their high, he kissed her once again before rolling to lie beside her and pulling her to him. He caressed her shoulder and drowned himself in her hair as she traced her fingers on his chest. There they silently remained until they fell asleep.
Thank you for the 1000 kudos! (Well, 997, but I like rounding things up). They are always welcome, as are your comments and reviews.

They fell into a routine in the next few days. He let her work with him in the mornings down in his basement lab. She would chop, slice, dice, crush as per his instructions while he stirred and brewed and took notes.

She asked questions whenever his brow wasn’t furrowed and he didn’t seem deep in concentration or thought. She learned what the potions were supposed to do, what it was that wasn’t working to his satisfaction and what his idea for correcting it was. She was so happy to share these moments with him. And of course, learning always enhanced any experience.

Their lunch was more often than not something simple like a sandwich, since they were tired from brewing all morning and not keen on cooking something elaborate. After a few hours of rest, reading, listening to music or perhaps lost in… other activities, they would finally leave the house. Hermione would visit her parents or Harry – and Ginny, who was often at Grimmauld Place – and check on Crooks as well. The beast didn’t seem to miss her much or care about anything really, as long as he was fed. Hermione had even had tea with Draco once, and Severus had joined them in the middle of their encounter.

Severus would more often than not just stay in and wait for her, worried about her walking around on her own with Death Eaters still at large – though there weren’t many of them anymore. But once or twice he had to meet Minerva and a few other colleagues. That was very new and unusual. In twenty years of working at Hogwarts, he had never once seen any of them outside the castle walls, unless it was in meetings of the Order. He feared their judgment about his… relationship, now that it was all over the papers. But they were all surprisingly supportive, very much enjoying his new-found well-being and good moods. Afterwards, he would shop for ingredients, though he grew most of what he needed in his small backyard.

After their little afternoon outings, they would go grocery shopping. Hermione had asked him to teach her how to cook, and so he would go to the store and pick out what their project for the evening would be. She wanted to learn how to cook both the muggle way and with magic, so they started with the former. He had started with something simple, like spaghetti and different sauces and was now up to a meal and a dessert, a chocolate soufflé, which he was pretty sure he would have to prepare himself. And now that she had nothing to hide and was not revising like a crazy person for N.E.W.T.s, she also asked for him to continue helping her practice Occlumency. And so they did, once or twice a week before going to bed.

It was an unusually hot day, which is why they had cut the morning in the basement short. There wasn’t much space to begin with, and the heat with the potion fumes made it all seem more suffocating. But she was rather enjoying it, despite all that. Every time he came up behind her to check her work, her stomach would churn in excitement. He would cup his hand over hers as she stirred, to dictate the pace at which it was supposed to be done, and she would quiver. His voice in her ear, giving instructions made all her hairs stand on end. If it was up to her, they would have left
the basement straight for the bedroom, or she would have gone down on him right there in the basement, have him take her on the work table, fuck her until her brains turned to mush from the heat of the weather and the heat he caused in her being. But he left in a hurry, a bit annoyed because of the heat and because the brewing didn’t go exactly as he expected it to. He went shopping for ingredients they had used up.

Now she stood in the kitchen, chopping some onions for the risotto on the counter next to the stove, and sweating a bit as he poured them some wine. He came close behind her and placed the glass in front of her as she chopped.

“Thank you, Sev.”

He kissed her neck and with it placed a cooling charm over her.

“Oh yes! Thank you very much. I love you.”

He then placed his glass on the counter as well and ran his hands up her thighs, then up her sides, casting cooling charms as she sighed in relief. He continued to place kisses on her neck and shoulders, exposed by the little house dress she wore. The arousal that had been suppressed in her since that morning rose again.

“Why are you being such a tease today, Severus?” She sniggered. “You do realize you left me here this morning aching for you, don’t you?”

“Did I?” He smirked into her neck and kissed it again. “Forgive me. Shall I make up for that right now?” His hands pulled up her dress slowly, grazing her skin as they did so, and found her mons, caressing it over her cotton knickers.

“That is countering the cooling charms, Severus,” she whimpered as she still chopped, though much, much slower.

“This is an area,” he dipped his hand into her knickers and his fingers caressed her mound and slit lightly, gently, “which I always want hot for me.” He parted her and rubbed her clit as he nipped her ear.

“Uuuuh. It always is. You can be sure of it,” she moaned.

“Good,” he rumbled in her ear and continued to gently and slowly stroke her clit.

“Sev…. That is…. rather dangerous to do right now.” She swallowed hard and had stopped her chopping completely, trying to steady herself, gripping the counter. “I’m holding a knife.” She gasped at his ministrations. “It will ruin dinner,” she managed to add in between moans as her mouth watered and she could only think of his clever fingers stimulating her clit and the tight string of excitement that seemed to pull her off the floor.

With his free hand, he pulled his wand from his trousers and pointed it at the pot on the stove, casting a stasis charm.

“I suggest you drop the knife then,” he whispered in hear ear, his breath making her hairs stand on end.

That she did, and turned her head to kiss his lips as his hand continued the pressure on her bud of nerves. His hand pulled away and he swiftly turned her to hoist her onto the island, next to his cook book, and locked his lips on hers again. As they kissed, one of her hands in his hair, the other stroking his cock over his trousers, he began to pull her knickers off. With their lips still locked, their
tongues still passionately dancing with one another, he pulled her legs to his side so he could pull her kickers off completely. She lifted her legs to aid him and he pocketed her knickers, undetected by her, as she blindly reached for his cock again to set if free. He plunged inside her with a low grunt.

“My favorite place in the whole world,” he said in a low tone as he pulled out and into her again slowly, relishing in her whimpers and moans. She smiled and pulled his lips to hers again. He held her legs around his hips as she rocked on the island top, rocked into him and moaned in his mouth, reaching for his shirt, sliding her hand underneath and caressing his abs and lower back. He rocked into her as well, his movements growing faster and faster as she held on to his waist, under his shirt. His thumb lowered in between them as they were now looking into each other’s eyes, she lowered her hand to his buttocks and pulled him further inside her, and he gently pressed on her clit, and it was enough to push her over the edge. She in turn made him come as her sweet, warm pussy tightened around his cock, milking it dry. They stayed connected for a while after their orgasms, their foreheads touching as they struggled to catch their breaths. He lowered her down to the floor, her dress falling to cover her, and he stored his limp but happy cock back into his trousers.

“What was that for?” She asked smiling as she washed her hands to return to her cooking.

“My new summer project,” he picked up his glass of wine and sipped it.

“Which is?”

“Fucking your sweet pussy in every corner of this house before the summer is out,” he smiled. “Happy memories everywhere,” he moved his hands around to indicate the room, still holding his glass.

“I see,” she smiled back. “I look forward to helping you with such a project. And if we work really… hard, I believe we can complete it before the week is out, and then start over.”

“I like the way you think, witch.” He lifted the stasis charm from the pot and checked on it. “Dinner is not ruined.”

“Yes, but you should probably wipe down the island before we eat on it.”

“I should have eaten you on it,” he rumbled in her ear.

“Severus! I won’t get dinner done if you keep teasing me like that!”

“Maybe for pudding then,” he smirked as he washed his hands. “Soufflé covered pussy,” he said as he chopped the chocolate for the soufflé.

*****

Severus woke up the next morning before the sun was up. It must have been a little after four in the morning, but Hermione wasn’t in bed. Through the open door he saw there was a light on somewhere downstairs and he heard some fumbling with pots and the stove. He got up and went down, pretty sure it was Hermione but gripping his wand just in case. She was making coffee, toast and eggs.
“Are you mad, woman? What are you doing up at this ungodly hour?”

“I’m anxious. Can’t sleep. N.E.W.T results come in today.” She said as she scrambled the eggs. “I have to go to Grimmauld Place to get mine.”

“I am sure Potter won’t be up for hours. And the Ministry will not send owls at 4 a.m.” he said sardonically, rubbing his eyes. “Come back to bed, you wonderfully insane witch.”

“No, you go. I’ll wait up until I go to Grimmauld Place. Sorry I woke you.” She was pushing eggs into a plate and barely looked at him, her mind racing in worry and making plans and wondering.

He sighed and walked up to the cupboard to get a plate and a cup for himself. He poured himself coffee and took the eggs left in the frying pan.

“You don’t have to stay up with me, Severus. Got to sleep.”

“And leave you alone to slowly drive yourself insane? In a kitchen no less? With knives and forks and a working oven? I think not.”

She sniggered as warmth spread in her chest, so appreciative she was of his understanding her. His company was soothing.

They ate and he convinced her to go back to bed and wait there, lying with him. In no time, with his kisses and his silky voice rumbling naughtiness in her ear and his clever, clever fingers dipping into her shorts, into her core, he made her forget about her anxiety and come, which prompted her to sleep, if only for three more hours.

When they woke up again, she began to change immediately, to go to Grimmauld and wait for her N.E.W.T results. They were in the kitchen grabbing a second breakfast when a snowy owl tapped its beak on the window over the sink.

“Hedwig II, I presume?” He arched an eyebrow and smirked at her before opening the window and letting the bird in.

Hermione shrieked nervously as he untied the roll of parchment from the bird’s claws, which made Hedwig look at her a bit frightened and tilt its head. Hermione took her roll of parchment and ran out of the room. Hedwig hooted indignantly and turned to Severus.

“She’s crazy, don’t worry,” he said to the bird, smirking. He then fed the owl a piece of toast which it took gladly. It gently nipped his finger in gratitude and flew out the window. Severus closed the window and went in search of his witch, a bit worried with the now absolute silence in the house.

He found her in the sitting room, curled up in his armchair, staring into the open piece of parchment in her hands. She did not look pleased.

“Hermione?”

She looked up at him, cheeks red. She looked as if she was holding back tears.

“What? What is it?”

She handed him the parchment without a word. He looked at it and saw a sea of Os and only one E amidst it. In History of Magic.
“This is great, kitten. Why are you not happy?”

She didn’t want him to think she was crazy, so she was trying to control her emotions. That made her not able to talk at the moment. She always worked very hard to be an excellent student and get top marks. Her anxiety made her crave it. It was something that was controllable, having good grades, and she liked to have control. If she studied, she got good grades. It was simple. So it was very disappointing to not have achieved that in one subject. A subject she was the only one to pay any attention in classes and take notes, no less. It made her feel like a failure.

She hid her face in her hands and breathed deeply. The disappointment was about to overflow through her eyes.

He sighed and pinched the bridge of his nose. “Must you excel at everything? Really?”

A resounding “yes!” burst from her lips. “It’s who I am! If I don’t, what else is there? What other quality do I possess?” She cried and tried to hide her face.

He awkwardly forced himself into the armchair as well and quickly they rearranged themselves so that she sat over him, her head nuzzled in his neck. He caressed her back.

“A myriad of qualities, you foolish witch,” he said as he comforted her.

“This will hurt my chances of getting the job I applied for.”

She had decided to apply for a position in the Ministry library and archives. The possibility of handling so many historical documents, so much knowledge, excited her. And it was part-time. She could study for an apprenticeship while she did it.

He snorted. “I’ll wager no one with a great record as yours has ever worked in the Ministry archives,” he said the last word with disdain.

“You must think I’ve gone mad,” she was still crying.

“No… I know you are mad. I’ve known for a while now. It’s one of your many qualities.”

He made her smile.

“Now, we’re going out to dinner tonight, to celebrate this.” He waved her N.E.W.T scores in front of her. “These are great scores no matter what you seem to think.” He pecked her nose and then her lips.

She wore a burgundy dress, the one she had bought with the black one for their first date, and her hair down this time. He thought she looked equally as divine as she had in the black one, and he wanted to peal it off her body with his teeth before they left the house. He transfigured one of his usual ensembles of trousers, shirt and waistcoat into something more similar to a muggle suit. Again they preferred a muggle location for more peace and privacy.

When their wine arrived, he poured it for them and raised a glass.

“To Hermione, the brightest witch of her time,” he smiled.

She smiled shyly and raised her glass as well.
The following night was reserved for celebrating with her friends from school. Harry threw a party for everyone, to put that phase of their lives behind them. She tried to convince Severus of going with her but he would not have it.

“Yes, every student’s dream, having the old bat from the dungeons at their wild party. That would surely hamper the fun,” he said, arms crossed against his chest.

“Stop it! Don’t refer to yourself like that! And you’ll be going as my date. Harry invited you.”

“How very nice of him,” he drawled. “Still, no. You go. Have fun.” He kissed her forehead and went to the shower she had just vacated.

She went, but did not stay too late. As much as she loved her friends, she found she preferred to crawl into bed with Severus and lie in his arms to staying up all night drinking.

Then, the day of her interview finally arrived. Severus offered to go with her for moral support, but she didn’t want to seem like a child who needed someone there to hold her hand. Kingsley had offered to simply place her wherever she wanted in the Ministry, but she wanted no preferential treatment. She wished to be interviewed and earn her position as Hermione, not a member of the Golden Trio, and she told Kingsley to advise any and every one to that effect.

She left early, nervous as could be, and Severus waited at home for her, also apprehensive. He couldn’t even brew while he waited, so nervous he was for her. So he sat in the sitting room and read the same page of a book over and over until he heard her at the door.

“So?” He asked as she entered.

She burst into tears. “I didn’t get it!”

He ran to hold her against his chest, stroking her hair. “Fucking idiots! How is that even possible?”

She just sobbed into his chest.

“You’re too good for the blasted archives anyway. Overqualified.”

She continued to sob.

“It’s not the end of the world, kitten.”

It certainly felt like it. Years of hard work, getting wonderful grades, to be rejected from the first job she applied for, right off the bat. She felt like a huge failure. She never had a plan not go as she had envisioned, not in the education department anyway. Uncertainty did not bode well with her. She had had enough of it during the war. Now her friends would be going to their jobs, Harry starting Auror training along with Ron, Ginny training with the Chudley Cannons, Luna was writing for her father’s magazine for now, and Hermione’s life was stuck. At least things were good with Severus. This sweet man holding her right now. But there was uncertainty there as well. He could tire of this intimacy at any time. When summer was over, he would go back to Hogwarts and they would spend so much time apart… anything could happen.

“What other position piqued your interest?” He asked.
“Well,” she tried to control her crying and pulled away from him wiping her eyes. “There’s an opening… in the… Department of Magical Creatures. It’s a paid apprenticeship, to eventually become a researcher for them.”

“There you go. Much more deserving of you.”

“They interview in two weeks. What will I do until then? Besides going crazy with anxiety.”

“Well…” He looked a bit nervous and uncomfortable now. “I had a trip planned for next week.”

“Oh, yeah, you mentioned it.” She was already imposing on him. He would run away soon. “I’ll just gather my things and go back to Grimmauld Place, and then…”

“Don’t be daft, Hermione.” He rolled his eyes and she looked at him bewildered. “I’m asking you to come with me.”
Chapter 41

Chapter Notes

Ok. So, I was only supposed to post this on Sunday. But life has repeatedly crapped on my head this week, and I needed a little pick me up. Plus, I would have to post thrice a week on at least two occasions for my plan to end this fic on Sev's birthday to work out. So I guess this week will be one of those. And a song that is featured in the chapter after this one played on the radio today, so I took it as a weird sign. lol.

Also, I know such places as the one I describe in this chapter are usually going through winter when the UK is in summer, but it's still hot as hell. Trust me.

In a few days they were off. Before they left, she visited her parents and said she would be going away with him for a week, since she hadn’t gotten the job she wanted. Her mother had been talking to her father and he knew about the relationship. He was calmer about it, but not exactly happy. The trip only made him more irked, but he respected her decisions and recognized she was a grown woman, and very mature for her age, especially with all she had been through.

They arrived in a tropical paradise and the bellman was taking them to their little bungalow over the turquoise water, thinking it very odd that they had such… *small* luggage. Not even the most efficient packer could fit everything they need for a week in a little handbag.

Snape’s original plan was much less… luxurious than an overwater bungalow, since he was to go alone, but now that he was with her, he decided it was worth going the extra mile. He spoke French to the bellman as they were shown around the room and that alone had turned her on. That voice…. speaking French. So sexy, even though she didn’t understand a word.

The bellman left the handbags and saw himself out. She ran to the deck outside and enjoyed the sun on her skin as she admired the turquoise water and the beaches with palm trees further down the way. She wore short shorts and a button up white shirt, the last few buttons open so both ends could be tied at her belly. He came out behind her in his dark trousers and white shirt – shockingly untucked – and shades.

"Not bad, is it?" He sat down on a cushioned chair on the deck. There were stairs that led to a lower deck, so very close to the water. She turned to face him with a smile.

"It’s wonderful!” She hurried to him and straddled him. “Thank you for inviting me to come along.” This was just what she needed to relax a bit. She had thought about just staying home and studying for her next interview, but she couldn’t miss the opportunity of going away with him. There would be time to study when she got back.

She kissed him and rolled her hips on his dick, causing it to twitch. “Thank you,” she repeated when their lips broke apart.

“Well aren’t you the very grateful kitten,” he smirked as she continued to rub herself on him. The upper deck had a sort of wooden blind as walls on both sides, to shield them and provide privacy from the neighboring bungalows.
“I didn’t know you speak French,” she whispered and then nipped his ear, her hand sliding down his chest slowly, and opening his trousers when she reached it.

“You like that?” He smiled.

“Yes. It’s very sexy.” She pulled out his cock and began to gently stroke it. He was getting hard in her palm. He rumbled something in French in her ear and she didn’t even think to ask what he had said, she just groaned and dropped to her knees in between his legs, his cock at eye level as she stroked him and smiled up to him. She moved her thumb over his tip as her other fingers slid up and down his shaft slowly, causing him to grunt.

“Fuck, Hermione. Remind me to speak French to you more often.”

She smiled and continued her deed, the sun warming her back and his face and chest as his head lolled back. Liquid spilled from his tip and she spread it all over his length. She then licked him, taking time to explore the ridges on his cock, especially the one that marked where his head started, and take his bollocks in her mouth as she still stroked him. He forced his head to lift again, to admire her as she did this.

He pulled off his shades, to watch her with no interference, and grunted at her caresses. She then took him in her mouth, as far down her throat as she could handle, and sucked him slowly, looking up at him, smiling with her eyes. He caressed her cheek, brushing her hair away from her face, and smiled at her. Never had he been so at someone’s mercy. Never had he trusted someone so much. She owned him completely at that moment, and he didn’t mind one bit.

“Kitten, I’m going to… come rather quickly if you don’t stop,” he said through his labored breathing.

She continued.

“Kitten… I…” he grunted and lost control, coming in her mouth. She swallowed every drop of him and released him, smiling, sucking the tip of his cock as she took him out of her mouth for good measure.

“I wanted to fuck that sweet pussy of yours, kitten,” he said with some difficulty, still catching his breath.

“We have time. I’ll get you hard again, sweetheart,” she smiled, licking her lips. “Now…” she unbuttoned and dropped her denim short shorts, “it’s my turn.”

She sat on the chair opposite him, draping a leg over each arm, and pulled her bikini aside, splaying herself to him as she licked her fingers and took them down to her clit, rubbing herself slowly for him to watch. He did, intently, wetting and biting his lips as she did hers. He gripped the arms of the chair, still watching as she moaned and dipped her fingers into her folds, spreading her essence all around her swollen labia and nub.

“Don’t you want to help me?” She moaned.

“Fuck yes. I thought you would never ask,” he uttered in a growl as he got up and walked to her, kneeling in front of her.

He pulled on the knot on her shirt as she continued rubbing herself and it came undone. With one touch her buttons popped open and he pulled down her bikini top, exposing her breasts to his hungry lips. He licked and sucked, teased, enhancing her self-given pleasure until he could not resist her moans and whimpers any longer. He took her in his arms and took her into the room, dropping
her on the bed, white sheer curtains blowing with the sea breeze all around them.

He pinned her arms above her head and kissed her lips before his lips made their way back down to her breasts and continued to tease her nipples, driving her insane. He pulled on the strings on her bikini top and freed her tits completely under her shirt, then worked on the strings at her hips, pulling them undone with his teeth and tearing her bottom away from her as she pulled off her shirt.

He placed his face in between her legs, his tongue flat on her bud of nerves and watched, delighted, as she squirmed and moaned, rolling her head back. He inserted two hooked fingers deep in her folds and caressed her inner wall as he continued to lick and suck her clt, drooling on her and savoring her as if he was eating ice cream on a hot summer day. His other hand pressed down on her lower belly. Her ginger moans gradually grew into screams as she alternated teasing her nipples and grabbing his hair to encourage him. She pushed her slit against his tongue, his fingers, and rocked her hips.

“Scream for me, Hermione,” he said against her. She did. “That’s it. I want the whole island to hear you, kitten.”

“Oh fuck, that’s… so… gooood,” she moaned.

“Scream my name.”

“Severus. Severuuuuuss.”

Her legs began to tremble.

“Are you going to come, kitten?” He licked her. “Come hard on my mouth,” he sucked her clt, his fingers still scratching inside her. “I want to taste you, suck your delicious pussy dry.” He liked her, up and down again. “Come for me kitten.”

And with a wail, she did.

She was still coming down from her high as he kissed his way back up her body.

“You were right, kitten,” he whispered in her ear, which made her quiver. “You made me hard again, you remarkable witch.”

She made him feel like he was twenty years old again. He couldn’t even remember the last time his dick got hard so quickly so many times a day before her.

She smiled. “I always do.”

They kissed, their tongues gently massaging each other’s, and when their lips parted, he turned her on her side to face an open window with a beautiful view of the beach. He entered her from behind.

He thrust inside her slowly, their bodies moving as one, his hand on her breast. Her heart.

“Oh Sev, I love you. I love you so much,” she gasped.

He used to feel guilty. He did not deserve her love, yet he enjoyed it. It certainly could not be right. It plagued him. But now… Now it made him feel good, warm inside. He wanted to know what it was that he did that made her feel such pure and strong emotions towards him, because he needed to keep doing it, being that man she loved, always.
He kissed her neck, then her temple, as he grunted near her ear. Her pleasure was building again, so she took her hand to her core to help her along. He swatted it away.

“Mine,” he growled in her ear and took his fingers to her clit, pressing down on it and letting go.

“Fuck, Severus,” she whimpered. She wanted more. She took her hand back to her mound but he didn’t let her reach it.

“Mine. I want to make you come.”

“Then do, baby. Please,” she panted as he pounded into her, harder.

He held her leg up by her inner thigh, spreading her wider. He pressed on her clit again and let go, driving her insane, delaying her pleasure.

“Pleaaase! Severus!”

He touched her clit gently again, rubbing her so lightly. Her pleasure exploded inside her. As she clamped around him, contorting against his chest and holding on to the back of his head, he came as well.

“Fuck yes, Hermione,” he groaned in her ear as he did.

“Merlin yes, that was fucking delicious. Thank you,” she panted as her grip on his hair loosened and became a caress.

They laid there with their bodies intertwined for a while before she tried to get up.

“Where do you think you’re going?” He held her back against his chest.

“Outside. To get a tan, swim a little. Enjoy this paradise. Come with me.”

“I thought I just did. Let’s sleep.”

“Sleep outside then. Come on.” She managed to disentangle from him and found her bikini parts scattered around the room and pulled them on.

“Yes, sleep out in the sun and die of insolation.”

“Come on, grumpy pants, put your bathing suit on,” she smiled.

They spent the afternoon lying out on their lower deck on the sun loungers that were there. She was in the sun, trying to get a tan while he sat in the shade of a sun umbrella. When the sun was going down on their marvelous day, she managed to convince him to go out to the restaurant for dinner, even though he would rather order room service and keep her all to himself. He was afraid to have people staring at them, such an… unusual couple they were. She was beautiful and young, he old and awkward. But they blended in nicely enough, because little did he know that in addition to feeling like a twenty year old again – much happier than he was when he was actually twenty – he also looked much younger and charming. Everything he had been through in his life had made him look grim and much older than his actual years. With the end of the war and the weight that had lifted from his shoulders, he had already begun to look healthier. But when Hermione waltzed in, his improved mood and almost lack of sulking and scowling, and his occasional smiles made him look years younger than his actual age. They actually made for a rather enchanting couple.
She of course got sunburned, since she stubbornly lay in the sun too long, and without reapplying sunscreen. Fortunately, her partner was a brilliant potions master and always carried various concoctions with him. He had just the one to help with her pain and burns, help her sleep. He smeared it all over her, gently, and if she hadn’t been in so much pain, she would have jumped him and fucked him again.

On the following morning though, she woke before him, a nice summer breeze blowing through the windows, her burns completely healed. She straddled him in his sleep, rubbing herself on his cock, waking it and him up. She impaled herself on him and rode him, slowly at first, then hard as he palmed her bouncing breasts. She made herself come quickly, and he grabbed her hips and pulled her down on him twice more and came himself. She crumbled on top of him and laid there as he caressed her back.

“Bloody hell, Hermione. Is it the heat, the tropical scenery? Just being away from home? What makes you so deliciously insatiable?” He smiled.

“I guess a bit of everything. And being here with you, of course.” She nipped his ear.

“I might have to move here, then.”

“So far from me?”

“The point is you coming to visit and using me wantonly,” he chuckled.

“Let’s go outside,” she said after she kissed his cheek.

He arched an eyebrow and moved his head to look her in her eyes.

“I’ll go put on some sunscreen,” she smiled, as she got up and went to the table where he had laid several of his concoctions.

They spent the next couple of days enjoying the heat and sunshine, mostly on their deck, but she managed to drag him down to the actual beach a few times. When they were alone on their deck he wore a black bathing suit. But on the beach, he wore trousers and a shirt, scars concealed, displaying the most murderous looks he could muster to the blokes walking by with a wandering eye, gawking at his witch sunbathing in her little bikini.

One late afternoon, they were both lying on the lower deck. She was topless, relaxing in the fading sun, her hair in a messy bun atop her head, and he sat in the shade. His intention was to read a book, but he was distracted by her breasts in the orange sunlight.

“Can you not do that?”

“What?” She asked without moving an inch of her body.

“Expose yourself. It’s very distracting.”

“Read your book, Severus,” she smirked.

“That’s what I’m bloody trying to do!” He turned back to it.

Out of the corner of her eye, she caught someone walking out onto the deck on the neighboring bungalow. It was a gorgeous blonde, topless as well. She pinned her silky long hair up and laid her
petite, perfect frame, with not one ounce of fat, down. Hermione looked at Severus to see if he saw her as well. His eyes remained fixed on the book.

“What were you going to do here?”

“What do you mean?” He asked, turning the page and continuing to read.

“This trip. It had been planned for a while, right? You only invited me last minute. Were you going to… expand your horizons?”

He looked at her and saw she was sitting up, facing him, but her gaze went beyond him somewhere. He followed it and saw the neighbor lying in the sun. He looked back to her and closed his book.

“Yes, this trip was planned since last year. I actually wanted to take it last summer. Had Poppy not been so infuriating and released me from her care, I would have. I think it’s safe to assume that yes, I would be looking to… expand my horizons, since I think I deserved some rest and some… fun after all that happened. But circumstances have unexpectedly changed since then.”

“Was it a pleasant change?” She asked, looking very insecure about herself.

“Of course it was a pleasant change! I wouldn’t have allowed it to bloody go on if it weren’t.”

“Then why did you only invite me a few days before coming?” She looked sad now.

He sighed and pinched the bridge of his nose. “Hermione, what the hell brought on this insecurity now?”

“I saw how better your options would be without me here.” She looked at the blonde who lay there, oblivious to them, and then down at the floor. “And you have avoided my question.”

“I didn’t want to interfere with your plans, woman. You had everything lined up to be working right now, I wasn’t going to be the bastard who took you off your meticulously planned path.”

She smiled halfheartedly, as if she didn’t really believe him.

“I very much wanted you to come with me, I’ve… thought about it since before the end of school. And if you were not able to come, I would have cancelled the whole thing, witch. Stop looking at me like that.”

She stood, walked to him and straddled him, smiling. “You would really give your much deserved holiday up because of me?” Her hands caressed his chest.

“Yes.”

“What about your fun and…” she looked at the neighbor’s deck again “… expanded horizons?”

He held her chin and turned her head to face him again. “I’ve never had more fun than I do with you, in every sense, and I do not need to expand my horizons when I have the most delicious pussy in the whole world right here on top of me.” He touched her mound over her bikini bottom and smiled. “I’d have to be mad to want to give this up.” He twitched his thumb over her mound and she quivered.

“So… what we have here… it’s sort of serious?” She smiled.

He furrowed his brow and looked at her over his shades. “Do you honestly think…”

She bit her lips, afraid of what she was about to hear. Maybe she had taken it too far, pushed him too
much.

“… that I would allow myself to be photographed walking hand in hand with just…. Anyone? Honestly, witch, I thought you were brighter than that. What we have here…. stopped being just fun a while ago now. I very much enjoy your company.”

She smiled widely and leaned down to kiss his lips, pecking it over and over again. She then kissed him deeply, her lips traveling down to his neck as her breasts rubbed against his bare chest. She felt his cock stir and slowly harden between her legs.

“Bonjour, monsieur,” she purred in his ear. That was about the only French she had picked up.

“You can’t expect to rub those perfect tits on me and not have me… react,” he smiled.

“Let’s go skinny dipping,” she whispered in his ear and then sat up, still straddling him.

“Oh, you want to put on a show for our neighbor, do you? Exhibitionist little witch,” he smirked.

“I know you, Severus Snape. You probably had wards up on this place while you were speaking to the bellboy when we arrived. I doubt she can see us.” She rolled her hips on his cock, gently.

“You may be right. But perhaps we will swim beyond the wards.”

She got up and took off her bikini bottom, looking at the blonde to check if it caught her eye. She didn’t stir. Hermione jumped into the turquoise water, now lit by some lamps that were placed around the bungalow. She swam away from the deck a bit, and beckoned with her fingers for him to join her.

He descended into the water slowly, sitting on the deck and slipping in, still in his bathing suit.

“No no, I said skinny dipping. That means no clothes.” She supported herself on his shoulder with one hand and caressed his cloth covered cock with the other. He growled and pulled off his trunks, throwing them on the deck. He pulled her closer to claim her lips, and swam pushing her further away from the deck as he still kissed her.

“Severus, are we going outside the wards?” She asked, sounding worried.

“I don’t know… are we?” He smirked.

“No, Severus, don’t…”

“Hush, woman.” He pushed her against one of the pillars that supported the bungalow, the most outer one, and started to kiss that sweet spot on her neck as his clever fingers circled her clit. She was aroused by his touch, but also by the possibility of being heard or seen. She was not sure if he had pushed her outside the wards or even if he had wandlessly taken them down. She tried to control her vociferation of the pleasure she felt as he dipped two fingers in her slit and rubbed and pinned her clit in between them. She bit her lip, but he noticed, and began to work harder on her. He flipped the hood of her clitoris and rubbed the exact right spot that drove her insane. He then dipped his fingers in her folds and worked both her inner wall and her nub.

“You will scream for me, kitten. I know you want to,” he whispered into her neck.

She did want to. So badly. And she couldn’t control herself any longer, so she did let out a loud moan. He smiled. He then sunk his cock into her folds, prompting her to moan so sweetly and louder than she had intended. She clasped her hand on her mouth as the other supported her on his shoulder,
and looked to the bungalow next door, to see if she had roused the blonde or anyone else. She saw nothing. She couldn’t even be sure she was still out on the deck.

“No, no. Scream for me kitten,” he said as he kissed and nipped her hand in an effort to move it away from her lips. “Show her how much fun you’re having. Show her that only you can have this much fun. Make her envy you. Show her that I am all yours.”

And with that, she completely forgot all her worries about being heard and seen.

“Mine,” she smiled.

He smiled back as he plundered her, pounding her against the pillar. She soon came with a wail. He enjoyed himself, but didn’t come. It was getting so very dark, so they swam back to the deck and hurried into the shower. She turned it on and stroked his cock under the spray, kissing him, until he was fully hard again.

“Mine,” she gently squeezed his cock, making him growl and then swiftly turn her around. She leaned with both hands on the glass window that faced the ocean as he entered her again from behind. One of his hands let go of its grip on her hip to follow hers and lean beside it on the glass as the other wrapped around her waist while he thrust into her. She moaned freely in there and lifted one of her legs, stepping on the ledge of the full window, to provide him with better access.

“Rub my clit,” she panted. “Make me come again. I want to come with you, Sev.”

He happily obliged and they both came hard under the spray. They then washed one another and headed out to have dinner, hand in hand.
They returned from the trip and Hermione immediately started cramming for her interview. Though Severus thought it was insane and a bit useless to study so much for a job interview, especially since she was Hermione Granger, know-it-all and member of the Golden Trio, he let her study through the days, stopping her for lunch and a couple of hours before dinner, demanding she rest to not go insane. He did not ask, but she always helped him in the kitchen, taking the chance to learn some more things. This went on for four days, and then her interview took place.

He waited at home, just like the last time for the same reasons, and was apprehensive as last time too.

She was a bright young witch and deserved the blasted job, but it wasn’t always so easy to get one, and it didn’t mean she was not brilliant and hard-working if she didn’t. Of course she wouldn’t see it as such in case she didn’t get it.

He heard the door and stood. She walked in and stopped in her tracks in front of him, looking him in the eyes with an expressionless mask much like the one he wore for the outside world – a little less frequently since he had started up with her.

“Well? Say something, witch!” He pleaded impatiently.

“I start on Monday,” she said, and then she smiled. She ran to him, shrieking, and jumped into his arms, her legs wrapping around him as they kissed.

“That’s great news, Hermione. This is a position more deserving of you and your intellect,” he smiled.

Once again, he took her out to dinner to celebrate.

She worked mornings and while she did, he spent time in his lab, working on his potions. She would have lunch with Harry at the Ministry at least twice a week, which unfortunately would entail having to put up with Ron, but he mostly stayed quiet, and they would often be accompanied by their peers in Auror training, so Ron would have someone else to pester. In the afternoons, Severus would continue to work for a while in the lab, she would join him, always eager to learn. She was reaching a point where she was confident enough to propose solutions and ideas to his problems, and he did try some of them out, perfecting details she could not think of, and a lot of them helped him reach the level of perfection he deemed necessary in his potions.

They would finish working earlier on some afternoons, when she would go visit her parents or he would go meet with McGonagall for coffee, or more of his colleagues. Hermione had even tagged along in some of those meetings, the first of which Minerva badgered her to make sure she was indeed happy with Severus when he got up to use the loo. They also sometimes met with Draco. And any spare time she would use to, of course, study what she had learned that week in her apprenticeship/job.

After a few weeks of this routine, several of his potions needed absolutely no more work, but he continued to have doubts. She encouraged him to sell them, and after much insistence and badgering,
he did. Having been a constant customer at the Apothecary, he had developed a sort of relationship with the shop owner. So it was relatively easy for him to sell a batch of a few potions for him to sell in his shop.

She was still mostly staying with him since he hadn’t kicked her out. But her things were in her bag in the spare room. One thing or another was scattered around the house. She would take laundry to do in her parent’s house when she visited, and would pick up something new and leave other things. She would do the same at Grimmauld Place, where she still had stuff as well, and felt bad when she forgot laundry there and would come back to find them clean on the bed of what would be her room. Certainly work done by Kreacher. She wouldn’t do the laundry at Spinner’s End because she did not want to impose too much, since technically she was only a house guest.

Severus’ potions sold very well at the Apothecary, and customers were demanding more. They weren’t advertised as being his, that perhaps made them sell better, he thought. So now the apothecary owner wanted to meet so they could come up with an arrangement, a contract where he would supply the store with the needed stock. Severus went to this meeting one afternoon and Hermione stayed at his house, anxious, unable to focus on her studies. So she cleaned.

She wasn’t proficient yet at some household spells, so some things she had to clean the old-fashioned muggle way. This led her to want to shower, which she did, and then to go through his drawers to find a T-shirt and boxers she could wear. She had taken to wearing his clothes around the house, especially when he wasn’t there, to feel closer to him.

His supply of clean T-shirts was running low and she thought to look in his another drawer of his dresser. Maybe he had more in there. She opened the drawer bellow the one she was used to looting, and she found a small wooden box concealed by some clothes. Curiosity ate at her, but she also feared she would find in there something she did not wish to see, like the episode with Lily’s picture and letter. She took a deep breath and decided to open it anyway. It might be nothing, and if it was something, best that she know already, to get rid of any and all illusions and high hopes she might have developed lately.

She opened the box to find a curious little collection inside. Slytherin green knickers he once took from her. The collar she wore when she dressed as a kitten for him. Her pink lace bra he said the Hogwarts house elves must have taken. The diadem she wore on Christmas. The torn red and black knickers she wore on his birthday. The plain cotton knickers she wore one day, right there at his house, when he took her in the kitchen. Pictures of her and of them, cut out from the Prophet. Her heart sung in joy. He had little keepsakes from her, a box full of Hermione. She smiled as her hopes reached the highest level they ever had. He might actually love her, since he kept all of this. He perhaps just couldn’t bring himself to say it, due to all he had been through in his life. He might not realize it, or know it was love. She stored the box back where she had found it, the smile never leaving her face, and continued her search for a T-shirt. When she found one, she went down to get dinner started, her cheeks hurting because she smiled so much.

She was now even more anxious than before, to know if his meeting went well and just to see him after such a discovery. Only after starting dinner did she realize he might want to go out to celebrate if all went well. They should go out to celebrate. But she continued to cook anyway, it was something to distract her mind and soothe her. It also served as practice. Since it was the first time she was cooking something that was not a simple breakfast on her own, she would probably screw it up and they would need to dine out.

She did not hear him come in and he didn’t announce himself. He leaned on the kitchen doorway and quietly watched as she absently chopped and stirred with her back to him. She was listening to the old little radio left on the counter, one his mother would listen to while she cooked. On the good
days anyway. It was tuned to a muggle station, and Hermione would hum to the songs and sometimes sing one line or other. A romantic pop song played as he smiled observing her.

♪...won't you show me your heart

Like you should ♫

He crossed his arms on his chest and continued to smile, wondering what it was he did so right to win her over. What did he do in his life to deserve her? Such a brilliant, sexy, sweet, beautiful witch. His. Willingly. She cared for him. Loved him. Him! He could not fathom why.

♪...whenever you want me

You know that I will be

Waiting for the day

That you’ll say you’ll be mine ♫

She cut her finger and swore, taking it to her lips and sucking on it before pulling her wand from the bun it held together on top of her head to heal her finger. Her hair fell down to her shoulders. He smiled more widely. She could be feisty as well. Very feisty. She made him so… peaceful. Soothed. Content. Happy.

The song played out and after the announcer babbled something, another song started.

♪You don’t have to touch it to know…♫

She made him feel so good, unlike he had ever felt before, probably. Except with Lily. Did you feel this with Lily? All I remember now is angst and frustration and sorrow. But it was good, before that. It was. Wasn’t it? But this… is better. Is it? It was. Better. Deeper.

♪Open up your eyes and you will see…♫

She wanted him. Craved him. Accepted him and his affections, his caresses, his body against hers. Accepted him as he was. Supported him. Pushed him to be better. That alone made it so much better. The thought of not having her anymore… he hadn’t really allowed himself to really ponder this, any of this, but that thought hurt more than any pain he remembered ever feeling. He wanted to go to her right there and hug her, smell her hair, cling to her all night long. What was this? He didn’t remember ever feeling this before, not so strongly, not even for Lily. You love her. Bloody hell, you love her.
He was overwhelmed with this realization, not knowing what to do with that very real information he had stumbled upon. She turned to retrieve something from the fridge and saw him. She smiled and walked over to him.

›Love is just to be close to you…«

“Hey,” she hugged him around his waist and continued to smile, looking up at him.

“Hi,” he smiled in spite of himself, wrapping his arms around her shoulders.

“Dance with me,” she said.

“I don’t dance.”

“Okay.” She didn’t stop smiling. She couldn’t. “Have you been there long?” She gently started swaying, still holding on to him.

“Not along,” he answered. He was swaying with her, inadvertently.

“Why didn’t you tell me you were home?”

“I was absorbed, watching you.” He took a hand to her cheek and brushed her hair back, tucking it behind her ear.

“Severus?”

“Hmmm?”

“I hate to be the one to break it to you, but you’re dancing.” She smiled as she swayed to the song with him.

›Love is love is nothing without you

Love is love is everything you do "

He chuckled. “I guess I am.” He leaned down and gently brushed his lips against hers.

Since the song had ended and a noisier one had begun, she turned off the radio so she could chat with him.

“So… how was the meeting?”

“Fine.”

“Fine? That’s all you have to say? Really?”

She walked back to the stove to check on the pots as he sat down on a stool.
“We came to an understanding. I will be brewing on my down time at Hogwarts and he will buy everything I manage to deliver. Apparently the customers are demanding more of my stuff.” He smirked.

“That’s wonderful news, Sev! We should go out to celebrate.”

“Absolutely not. I want to eat the dinner you are slaving over for me,” he smiled.

She stuck out her tongue at him. “I hope it’s edible.”

“I’m sure it is, dear,” he teased, but her heart thumped in her chest. He had never called her that before. She turned back to the stove before she showed too much emotion.

“You should speak to Madam Pomfrey, ask her about that contact in St. Mungo’s you said she mentioned.”

“No.”

“Why not?! Supplying St. Mungo’s with its potions would be…”

“Very time consuming. I would need to leave Hogwarts for that.”

“And isn’t that what you want? You hate teaching, and you would be doing something you love.”

He smiled. She knew him so well, despite the fact that he did not make himself open to be known. She had changed that a bit, though.

“Yes, but I have to give Minerva some notice. I think I will have to finish the next school year. I owe her that much.”

Hermione shrieked, excited.

“Anyway…” he continued as he rolled his eyes, “we shouldn’t get ahead of ourselves… the customers at the Apothecary might be going crazy over the potions, but St. Mungo’s is a different story.”

“They’ll fucking love it, Severus. You are brilliant. You’re going to rule the world with your potions.” She was now serving them dinner.

“So… how is it?” She asked after his first bite.

“Marvelous. Delicious.”

“Really?”

“Yes. You excel at anything you put your mind to.”

“So I can be considered a cook now?”

“I believe so.”

They ate in companionable silence before going up to bed, where they each read a book before falling asleep.
One Friday afternoon, they were in the sitting room reading when Severus got up to grab a glass of water. He had not yet learned how to deal properly with the discovery he had made the other day, that he loved his little witch. Her every word and move since then had only served to make him surer of it. But he hadn’t expressed it to her yet. Was he even allowed to be in love and happy? It seemed like an affront to someone. It seemed to make his life up to last year completely wrong, pointless, foolish. After everything he had done, he certainly couldn’t have that. If he gave into this, something would happen to rip it away from him.

He heard a tap on the kitchen window and turned to see a snowy owl begging to come in. He opened the window to let it in, untying the small roll of parchment from its leg and finding a cookie to feed it. It gently nipped his finger in gratitude and left.

He walked back into the sitting room and handed Hermione the roll.

“What’s this?”

“Snowy owl delivered it. I assume it’s a note from Potter,” he shrugged.

She took it and unrolled it. “It’s for you.”

“What?”

“Harry wants to see you. He’s asking if you could go there this evening.”

He took the piece of parchment from her hand and read it. “What on earth would Potter have to discuss with me?”

“I don’t know. Want me to come?”

“Bloody hell yes, I want you to come. He’s your friend.”

“He’s your friend too.”

He snorted. “Unlikely.”

“You are both in my life so you both need to get along!”

“Calm down, witch. We do get along. That however does not a friend make.”

When Harry opened the door, he seemed somewhat surprised to see Hermione. Like maybe he was hoping she wouldn’t go. He hugged her tight, then looked at Severus, not sure what to do.

“Potter,” he uttered with an unfazed expression.

“Snape,” Harry retorted.

Harry led them to take a seat.

“So, how have you been?”

“Potter, would you please cut the pleasantries. I’m sure you have seen Hermione at work today and you don’t truly care how I’ve been. So just spit it out. I don’t much appreciate being summoned, especially here.” Memories of the days the Order met there were plaguing his mind right now. What the fuck could Potter want?
“Severus!” Hermione chided.

“It’s fine, Hermione. He’s right. Sorry. I should have given more details.”

“Then do,” he arched an eyebrow.

“Right, okay.” Harry cleared his throat. “I was… practicing some new charms we learned in training, some new revealing charms and such when I accidently discovered a box.”

Severus crossed his arms and held his tongue as to not upset Hermione, but he had not come here for story time.

“It seems Dumbledore had a few more items to leave me and saw fit to hide them here. There were things he found at… Godric’s Hollow, probably after my… that night.”

Severus was now intrigued, as was Hermione.

“Among these things was a sort of… journal my mother wrote.”

Severus held his breath inadvertently and Hermione saw the change in his demeanor, his interest. She grew sad, despite herself. She knew he cared for her, she felt it. But was this going to be it? Would she feel like crap, jealous and not good enough every time Lily Evans Potter was mentioned? Would she always be only second best?

“It’s… it’s sort of for you, Snape. It’s about you some, with something or other in between. It seems there came a time when she wanted to talk to you, about you, while they were in hiding, but there was no one to talk to. So she wrote. I thought… I thought maybe you would like to read it?”

Harry fetched the beat down old journal from a corner of the kitchen counter and handed it to Snape. He held it and stared at it silently for a few minutes before he got up, still without a word, and hurried out of the room. Hermione tried to follow but he was too fast, and he locked himself in the library. It was where he felt most comfortable in that damned house. It was where he used to gather his thoughts during the days of the Order. It was where he wouldn’t be bothered.

Hermione let the tears that had been pricking her eyes for a while now fall. Harry put his arm around her shoulders as she tried to hide her face.

“I’m sorry, Hermione. I thought it was the right thing to do.”

“It was.” She was sobbing now. “It’s fine. It was. You did right, Harry.”

“Don’t cry. It means nothing, he’s just weird like that, but he cares for you and…”

“Harry,” she cut him off, still sobbing. “I’m sorry but I really have to go.”

She wiped her eyes a bit as she sniffed and hurried towards the door.

Chapter End Notes

1. https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=GwGlhJV75Vc
Chapter 43

I was so sure about this chapter when I wrote it (in July). Then I wasn't. Then I was. Then I wasn't. Then I was. Ad infinitum. But I couldn't think of an alternative or something to add to make me positively sure about it. So here it is. Hopefully it won't disappoint.

Severus sat on a sofa in the library, holding the journal, oblivious to everything else. He opened it to the first page.

Dumbledore told us today that he hired Severus Snape as a professor at Hogwarts. But I heard he was a Death Eater! He certainly fell in with that crowd when we were at school. I hope Dumbledore knows what he is doing, for the sake of those children. There was no time to talk more and I can’t very well speak to James about Severus. He would just become annoyed. He actually becomes annoyed when speaking of anything and everything related to the war. He can’t even read the papers because we have to stay in hiding. It makes him mad not to be able to participate, to help. So here I am, in the solitude of this hiding place, writing a journal like I’m twelve again. I’m just so worried one of his followers will be teaching children, I had to….

Snape snorted. As per usual, he was always the bad guy, unworthy of the benefit of the doubt. He skimmed through some pages, annoyed, and stopped on another bit ahead.

The Order has apparently been getting real good intel. Dumbledore says he has a spy. I wonder if it’s Severus. I wish I could have more contact with the outside world.

A few more skipped pages.

I can’t take it, being cooped up in this house anymore! Why the hell should I stay here when Dumbledore won’t explain anything? I want to leave. I want to fight!

Severus’ stern features were assaulted by a small smile. She would indeed abhor being told what to do and being locked up like that. Evans.

Dumbledore said it was imperative for Harry’s safety that we stay in hiding. I’ll do it. For
Harry. Dumbledore says Voldemort wants to kill him and will kill us as well. Why, though? How is he so sure? He says he has it on good authority, from someone who cares for me and wants me safe. Sev, if it is you, thank you.

Something burned at the pit of his stomach and crawled up into his chest. He wasn’t sure if he wanted to read more, to cry, to throw the journal into the fire and forget it ever existed. Despite himself, he flipped to another page.

... I’ve been worrying about him. If he is really the spy... he must be! Why would Dumbledore hire him? IF it’s him... the danger he’s putting himself in! Oh God, I hope he’s alright...

It was unnerving to go through this journal. He should stop. What difference would it make in his life to relive such a horrible time, only in the eyes of a woman he loved... had loved, and had gotten killed. But he couldn’t. Something inside him made him flick through the pages and stop on another one. He skipped more of them this time, angry, desperate to have it done with. Most of the things he skipped were about Potter senior or how little Potter was growing up so fast and all the cute things he did. It only made him feel worse.

... I remembered today how awful I was to Sev. Yes, he called me that awful name, but he begged for my forgiveness and I did not give it. And he seemed so sincere... I wish I had forgiven him. He was angry at the time, he didn’t really mean it. We were only stupid kids, and he always did snap when he got mad...

Severus recalled how awful he did feel, lashing out at her when she was trying to help. But the humiliation her felt when she did it... they would certainly taunt him even more, saying he needed a girl to defend him. He did not know how to control his anger, sorrow, fear. He never did. And it came out in the wrong way, as if often did as well. But what hurt more than that, what hurt for years, was losing her friendship. And not even having her forgive him, ever. It just went to show that nothing he ever did was good enough and he would never deserve a second chance. As he pondered this, a small comfort spread through his chest as he remembered how Hermione understood him and brushed off most of his harshness and bad moods, and forgave him the times he had gone too far. Which were surprisingly very few since she pulled him out of what would have been his tomb. He lost focus as he looked out the window thinking of this. After a few blank minutes, he returned his attention to the journal.

... if I had forgiven him and continued to talk to him, could I have stopped him from joining those awful people? He just needed a friend, someone to talk to and understand him... maybe he thought he had found that with them. I could have given him that.

Snape sighed deeply. It was overwhelming, to learn she thought all of this only now, and that
she didn’t die hating him. But knowing it sooner could not change anything, most likely. His stupidity would still have gotten her killed. She still would be only his friend and end up in the arms of his worst enemy. He still would feel the need to make something of his sorry self and think that could be achieved by following that megalomaniac.

... I forgive you, Sev. I’m sorry I wasn’t a better friend. And now here you are risking your life for me, for my family. For the world.

Severus was emotional. His eyes burned. Towards the end of the little notebook he found

... I hope we can talk, when this is over. I hope we can be friends again, when I’m free, when we’re free. I hope you find a girl who makes you makes you as happy as James makes me, Sev. You deserve that. To love and be loved. To be happy. I hope you have a little brat and he can play with Harry while we catch up, all these years we… I haven’t spoken to you. It will be over soon. I can feel it. And I will come find you. I hope I find you happy, as you deserve to be.

A tear fell down his cheeks for Lily, for her hope of getting through all that alive, something he fought for but couldn’t achieve. But he also sighed, relieved. He felt freed, like a huge weight had lifted from his shoulders all at once. He also felt sorry that she couldn’t be there, living the happy life she too deserved. For so long he had hoped and wished that life could be with him. But it could never have been. She was happy with that idiot, and he, Severus Snape, angry and confused, probably could never make her that happy back then. He wouldn’t know how and would only become frustrated and angry that he was failing, thus making her unhappier. But he was happy now. So much happier than he ever thought he could be, than he deserved to be. And he was free to be happy. She had forgiven him. She knew he only meant well, though his good intentions only led to bad things.

He wanted the life he had only reserved for his deepest fantasies, in the corners of his mind he would access when weak. But it wasn’t a hopeless fantasy anymore. He did not want it with a dead woman who had never wanted him. He wanted it with a lively witch who wanted him as he wanted her, who taught him how to love again. Hermione.

_Hermione. Where is Hermione?_ 

He finally woke up to his surroundings and saw she wasn’t there. He left the journal on the sofa and hurried out of the library into the kitchen. Potter sat there with Weasley. Just them.

“Where is Hermione?” He asked with desperation.

“She left a while ago,” Harry answered. “I tried to stop her but she was really upset…”

“Fuck!” Severus slammed his hand on the counter next to him in anger. How could he have been so stupid?

“I also tried calling you, knocked on the library door, but there was no answer,” Harry continued, worried that he had done something beyond stupid by showing him that journal and ruined his friend’s, and his… _savior’s?_ happiness.
“Just let her be. You don’t deserve her, this just goes to show…” Ron started saying.

“Shut the fuck up, Weasley, or I swear to God I will rip your tongue from your throat with my fucking bare hands, you imbecile!” Severus screamed and looked at Ron menancingly.

Ron became quiet. Snape’s look was serious and he believed he could very well do that right there and then and not feel remotely bad about it. Severus hurried to the door after ascertaining he had instilled enough fear in Weasley, even though he himself was scared out of his mind of losing Hermione. He had to find her. Explain. What Weasley was saying was not true. He would do everything in his power, *everything*, every day, always, to deserve her.

He apparated home and stormed in calling for her. She didn’t answer but he heard the floorboards creaking upstairs.

She was grabbing her things, scattered around the rooms, still sobbing. Most of them were already in her bag in the spare room. Just one or two items she was still trying to locate. In her state, it was hard to think straight. And she could not, would not go back to get them later. She doubted she had it in her to do that. She got his mother’s earrings from her bag and was walking towards his room, to leave it on the dresser when he came up the stairs, taking the steps two at a time.

“What are you doing, Hermione?” He tried to control his voice, his fear, so it didn’t come out harshly and he fucked this up even more.

She got to his room and left the box there then came out towards the other room again. He put himself in between her and the next door.

“Hey, hey, what is it?” He asked, trying to hold her but she pushed him away. She was still crying, her face red and puffy.

“I’m going to my parents’,” she managed to say.

“Why?” He said with a touch of despair.

“I need… I need to think things over.”

“Think what over? Why?” His desperation was becoming more evident very quickly.

“I thought… I thought I could live like this,” she sobbed, “that having a part of you was better than having nothing at all… but I don’t think I can… I can’t live in the shadow of a dead woman! I can’t keep competing with the great love of your life…”

“No, no. There’s no competition,” he held her close to him despite her fighting to get away, “there’s no competition,” he cupped his hands on her cheeks and lifted her gaze to him, “because there is only you Hermione. I love you.”

“Don’t say that if you don’t mean it!” She shouted through her tears and tried to push him away.

“I love you,” he said, now through some tears of his own. “I love you,” he kissed her lips. “It’s true. I mean it,” he started to push her back towards the bedroom, “I love you,” he kissed her lips again. “From the bottom of my soul, with my whole heart, I mean it,” he kissed her desperately again. “You have *all* of me. I love you. Please stay,” he kissed her, “please don’t leave me,” another kiss. “Stay. Stay,” he said as he pecked her lips, her cheeks, any part he could reach. He was
crying.

She, whose tears were now of joy, caressed his cheeks and brushed back his hair looking up into his eyes as he pushed her into the room.

“I’m here. I’m here. I’m right here,” she repeated.

He laid her on the bed and lay on top of her. She spread her legs to accommodate him as he kissed her lips deeply and with such desperation, as if it would be the last time, as if he wanted to memorize her taste, eternalize it on his lips. He moved to her neck and as he planted kisses on it, he smelled her skin, her hair, taking in her scent, wishing to memorize that as well.

She slid her hands in his shirt to caress his back as she kissed his neck, and one of his hands slid down to her thighs, pushing her sundress up to her waist then sliding his back down to caress her thighs and bum as he kissed her collarbone.

He pulled away from her suddenly to push her dress all the way up. She arched her back and lifted her arms above her head to help and soon she was left only in her lilac cotton knickers, which matched her dress. He began to hurriedly undo his buttons on his white shirt, afraid she would vanish if he took too long, that she would run away from him, and she reached up to work on his trousers. But he lost patience and vanished all his clothes with a wave of his wand, and then placed it on the nightstand, sinking back into her, kissing her lips.

His desperation and hunger, and his hard cock rubbing on her cotton covered core made her arousal grow, and he was soon pulling off her knickers, still with hurried despair. He heard himself moan softly in unison with her as he sank himself into her warmth. He wanted her, needed her so much. Being with her, inside her, was the best feeling in the world. It was the only place he wanted to be. Connected to her, body, heart and soul.

As he thrust slowly inside her and looked deep into her eyes, he let his feelings escape his lips. “I love you, Hermione,” he whimpered.

It wasn’t a familiar or comfortable feeling, being so vulnerable, not having control. It frightened him. She smiled and cupped her hands on his cheeks. Her warm smile gave his heart the confidence it needed.

“I love you too, Sev.”

He leaned down to kiss her lips and she dug her heels on his buttocks, pushing him further into her, making them both moan softly again. She sank her fingertips into his shoulders and he embedded his hands into her mane and cradled her head as they moved slowly now, smoldering, as one. With a couple more thrusts they were both on the edge. He touched his forehead to hers and kissed her lips. They both came whispering each other’s names against one another’s lips.

He rolled to her side and pulled her to him, his head resting on her bosom as he held her tight, so very tight, still afraid to lose her.

“Stay. Stay.” He mumbled as he was falling asleep.

“I’m not going anywhere, Sev,” she said as she caressed his head, close to her heart.
When she woke up, he still clung to her, and still slept. She smiled and gently caressed his cheek. A small fear of the previous night having been just a dream filled her. Or of it having been true but going to hell as soon as he woke up. Was he the type to declare love and have it normally, constantly in his life? Or would he now close himself off again, completely, and break her heart?

She tried to pry herself away from him, slowly, but he felt it and woke, pulling her back to him without opening his eyes.

“Good morning.” she said softly. “I need to get up, Severus.”

His face was still impassive, sleep like. “It’s Saturday,” he said without opening his eyes.

She waited a while and when it seemed he was asleep again, she tried to get up undetected. He pulled her back to him.

“Stay in bed, Hermione, my love.” He said softly, his eyes still closed.

She smiled widely. “Call me that again.”

“Hermione,” he said, disappointing her. She tried to get out of his embrace and up again, more harshly this time, and he once again pulled her back.

“My love,” he rumbled in her ear and she smiled. He still didn’t open his eyes.

“I need to go, Sev. I need to get ready to go to my parents’”

That prompted him to open his eyes, surprised.

“Your parents’? But I … I thought…” He looked stricken, puzzled, hurt, and desperate.

She cupped a hand on his cheek and rushed to interrupt him. “For the day! They are having a garden party and I promised to be there.” She kissed his nose.

He sighed in relief and touched his forehead to hers. “Don’t you ever scare me like that again, woman.”

“You know… you could come too,” she suggested.

He snorted. “I wasn’t invited.”

“I’m inviting you.”
He just snorted again.

“My parents won’t mind. They want to meet you. They always ask about you and when you’ll be going around there. They’d love it if you went.”

“Yes, I’m sure,” he said sardonically. “They can’t wait to meet the old man who corrupted their sweet daughter,” he scoffed.

She ignored his comments and continued “And if you are truly serious about me…”

“I am,” he said seriously, holding her cheek. “I am, love,” he pecked her lips.

“Then you’ll have to meet them sooner or later…”

He sighed. “I’ll go.”

She smiled and kissed his lips. “Thank you.” She got up and walked towards the bathroom. “So you’ll get breakfast going while I shower and get ready?” She looked back over her shoulder at him.

He got up and followed her, admiring her fine naked body, then turned her to face him and kissed her lips deeply.

“And miss the chance to shower with you? Never.”

“Sev,” she said in between kisses, “we’ll be late. I promised I would help them set up. And I have to do some of my laundry.”

He stopped kissing her and just looked down at her, a hand on each cheek. “You know, you can do laundry here.”

“Now I know. I didn’t want to impose before,” she smiled.

“I’ll show you where the laundry room is after we shower.” He continued to kiss her and slide his hand down to her firm little bare ass.

“We’ll be late.”

“Why? You’ll do laundry here, later. That buys us time. I thought we’d settled this,” he said into her mouth, in between kisses.

“I have to wash my hair.”

“I’ll wash your hair.”

“Sev… I’m coming back.” She said sincerely. “You don’t have to worry. I’ll be yours all through the night,” she smiled.

Yes, that was done then. She could see right through him, completely. He had no more walls, no protection whatsoever. Although he thought, hoped, he wouldn’t need protection from her, it was disquieting to be this bare. He no longer had any control. He was indeed worried that she would regret any and everything and just stay at her parents’ house. That their dislike of him, which was a given, would cause her to see the things she hadn’t before and just walk away.

“I will collect on that promise,” he replied, trying to maintain an impassive face and pretend he did not know what she had meant. He pecked her lips once more and grabbed last night’s
trousers, which he pulled on before heading down to make breakfast.

She was shampooing her hair, thinking maybe she should have accepted the shower with him and been a little late to her parents’ house when he pushed open the shower curtain and stepped in the tub. Since she wasn’t actually using the shower at the moment, he stepped under the spray and wet himself, his hair included.

She smiled as she started to kiss his shoulder blades and stand on her tiptoes to kiss his neck, her hand trying to reach his cock.

“Oh no no,” he held her hand that crept down his lean, muscular stomach, “we’ll be late, remember?” He smirked.

“I don’t think a little tardiness will kill anyone,” she said as he turned to her, shampooing his hair.

“No. Why have a quick go now when I can slowly plunder you all night, savoring you, like you promised?” He leaned down to whisper that in her ear and made her body quiver. He then kissed her, his hand finding her mound and teasing it with light fingers. He stopped and turned to rinse out his hair.

He joked to hide his fear. He was terrified that whatever happened today would push her away. Her parents’ approval was important. And there was no way they would approve of him. He finished showering before her, despite starting after. “Breakfast is ready and will get cold,” he said as he stepped out, grabbing his towel.

When she stepped out of the bathroom, he had dried his hair and tied it back, and was already donning his black trousers and white dress shirt. He had cast a concealment charm on his Dark Mark and the word carved over it, and on the scar on his neck, so he could wear the sleeves pulled up and a couple of buttons undone, since it was an extremely hot day.

“You don’t need to do that, you know. I’ve told them about you. A lot.”

He took a deep breath, trying to not get more nervous than he already was. “But I assume there will be more muggles there? They need not stare at me. More than they naturally will,” he said as she caressed his forearm, standing behind him while he looked in the full length mirror in his room.

“I know you’ll be uncomfortable doing this, so thank you very much for going. I love you for it. And just for being you.”

“Anything for you.”

Warmth spread in her chest at his sweetness. She was glad he was not pushing her away, and showed love freely. “Just don’t mention I’ve been staying here so often. They think I’m at Grimmauld and only go out on dates with you,” she smiled.

He snorted. “Do they think you’re still a virgin?”

“I don’t know. But I never insinuated otherwise,” she smiled widely.
They left after a late breakfast and as they walked to the apparition spot, he squeezed her hand tightly. He held her close to him, very close, while they side-apparated, and then he squeezed her hand as they walked up to her parents’ door. He wanted to ask her to not leave his side, but wasn’t brave enough to show such juvenile weakness.

She simply walked in without knocking and pulled him by the hand behind her. It was a beautiful home, and he immediately felt embarrassed of only having that little house at Spinner’s End to welcome her into while she grew up in this place.

“Mum? Dad?” She called out and they came in from the kitchen smiling before they saw Severus was there and changed their expressions to one of surprise. “I’d like you to meet Severus,” Hermione smiled.

Her mother was the first to smile and reach out her hand. “Severus! Lovely of you to stop by. We’ve heard so much about you. Welcome to our home.”

“Thank you, Mrs. Granger,” he said and Hermione was amused by seeing him so shy. She had never seen Severus Snape like this.

“Colleen, please,” Mrs. Granger replied with a smile.

Severus just nodded once as he offered his hand to her father.

“Mr. Granger.”

“Mr. Granger is fine,” he said coldly as he shook Severus’ hand.

“Richard!” “Dad!” His wife and daughter chided simultaneously

“That’s fine, Mr. Granger, I completely understand. Sorry for intruding in your home like this.”

“It’s no intrusion at all,” Mrs. Granger interrupted. “I’ve been asking Hermione to bring you around for a while now,” she smiled. “Come in, come in! I hope you don’t mind us receiving you in the kitchen, we are still getting a few things ready.”

He followed then into the kitchen and as Mrs. Granger began arranging things on a tray, Mr. Granger began

“So… you were Hermione’s teacher?”

Hermione squeezed Severus’ hand and looked at him apologetically. He squeezed her hand back.

“Yes,” Severus cleared his throat, “and I want to assure you, both of you, that it is not what it may seem.” He paused. “I love your daughter and I have nothing but the best intentions towards her.”

Hermione came close to him and put her arm around his waist, smiling, as he reluctantly put his arm around her shoulders.

“Well, there you go, Richard,” Mrs. Granger broke the silence. “Now, take these out back and stop harassing our guest,” she smiled.

Hermione and Severus were both given tasks and got to them, and pretty soon the backyard was full of neighbors. Severus was introduced to a few people but mostly kept quiet in a corner. Hermione kept him company but also moved around, talking to childhood friends and what not. It was on one of those moments when he sat alone that Mr. Granger accosted him.
“I hear you saved Hermione. More than once, probably.”

Severus was startled. “I… It was nothing, I didn’t really…”

“Thank you. For being there for her when we couldn’t be.”

Severus just nodded once.

“It baffles me how she’s… smiling all the time now,” Mr. Granger continued, gazing out onto the yard, at Hermione. “She was never unhappy before, but never… quite in a great mood. Carefree, I think is the word.”

Severus snorted. “I think I know what you mean, sir.”

“Richard. As long as you are good to her.”

“Richard,” Severus nodded.

He needed a bit of peace. He wasn’t comfortable being around so many people for such a long period of time. While Hermione was mingling, he snuck back into the house only to find her mother there, in the kitchen, juicing lemon for the lemonade.

“Huh, forgive me, I…”

“It’s fine, come in!”

“Do you need help with anything?” He offered. At least in there, there was only one person.

“No, no. Unless you have some trick for juicing these lemons faster and without making such a mess,” she joked, laughing softly and forgetting she was actually speaking to a wizard.

He looked to the windows and sliding glass door that led back to the yard to make sure that no one was looking or coming. He then touched his wand in his trouser pocket and waved his other hand discretely. With a silent cooking spell, the lemons all squeezed themselves into the pitcher. Even the one that was in Mrs. Granger’s hand lifted itself from her grip. She was left to watch, amazed.

“Well… that’s handy!” She smiled. “Thank you. Shall we go back outside?” She was taking the pitcher towards the sliding doors.

“I… I’ll just stay here a while if that’s all right with you. I’m not very… comfortable in crowds.”

“Sure. If you need more quiet, Hermione’s room is upstairs, second door to your right.” She smiled and headed out.

“Mum, have you seen Severus?” Hermione asked after a few minutes.

“He seemed to need some solitude, so I sent him to your room.”

“Did you ground him?” She giggled.

“No, not like that… He just…”
“I know what you mean, Mum,” she smiled. “So… what do you think?” Hermione asked hesitantly.

“He’s nice. I lot less... intense than I thought he would be.”

Hermione sniggered. “Do you like him?”

“Do you like him?”

“I love him, mum.”

“Then I like him, sweetie,” Mrs. Granger smiled.

Severus was surveiling her childhood room, unable to fathom how a child could have so many things, so much happiness. The room was all painted white. The bed was white. Stuffed toys watched him, perched on their shelves and she had many books here, some of which he also owned a copy of. She had gathered almost as much books as him in only half the lifetime. She had a telly in her room and a few movies on video. Pictures, so many pictures on the walls, the shelves. Potter and Weasley were moving in quite a few of them.

Hermione opened the door. “Hey, love.”

He turned to face her. “Hey.”

“You all right?” She walked up to him and pecked his lips.

“Yes.”

“I missed you out there.”

“I came to explore your very girly room,” he said with a sneer as he pointed around with a feigned look of disgust.

“Well, I am a girl,” she sniggered.

“Thank Merlin for that.” He let his fingers lightly graze her thighs and then her mound over the light cloth of her sundress.

“I’ve been craving you since this morning,” she smiled mischievously and sat him on her bed to straddle him.

“Hermione, I’m not fucking you in your childhood bedroom. With stuffed animals watching me. Imagine the trauma.” He smirked and then let his hand slide under her dress and his fingers lightly play with her labia a bit, despite his words.

“Then make love to me in my childhood bedroom.” She pushed down and tried to grind harder against his fingers.

“I won’t do that either,” he took his fingers away and she groaned. “Your parents and neighbors are right downstairs, you little exhibitionist.” He smirked.

“They won’t come in without knocking!” She whined.

He stood up, hoisting her and holding her a bit before he put her down on the floor. “Come. We’ll be missed.”
“Let’s go say goodbye and leave then.”

“No. We should help your parents clean up, don’t you think?” He smirked.

It was early evening when they got back to Spinner’s End, and Hermione was going insane craving his touch. She was excited it all went well, she was excited he really loved her and expressed it, she was excited by the little light touches he had placed on her pussy throughout the day. She wanted more. Her pussy wanted more.

Hermione hurried upstairs and started undressing. She was hot, and it had been a very hot day as well.

“I believe I owe you a shower,” she said to him, already stark naked and pulling on his belt.

“Yes, I believe you do,” he smirked.

She undressed him very quickly, then caressed his scars, saying the incantation softly to lift the concealment charms from them. She had gotten pretty good at wandless spells around him, and of course the bracelet helped as well. She never took it off.

They climbed into the shower and she kissed him under the spray, her tongue dancing with his as her hand traveled down from his shoulders, past his chest, to his cock. Before she reached it, however, his fingers were more agile in reaching her mound and labia, teasing them and then parting her slit and pressing her nub. She sighed in ecstasy.

“I’ve been waiting all day for this,” she said as he slowly rubbed her.

“Have you?” He asked smirking and stopped so he could reach the soap and sponge. He then began lathering her whole body up, slowly, erotically, maddening, his hands lingering lightly over her mound, making her gasp and spread her legs, hoping for more. He washed her privates slowly, in a way that had her going insane and that prompted her to wash him as well, only quickly, hoping he would fuck her sooner. He stopped washing her and stepped under the spray to rinse himself off and she groaned, disappointed.

He pulled her under the spray to rinse her off as well and his fingers grazed over her nipples, then went back to teasing her clit as he purred in her ear.

“Are you nice and clean, kitten? So I can get you very dirty?”

“Oh yes,” she cried desperately.

“How do you fancy coming tonight?” He asked as he stood behind her, his hands between her legs, one finger now circling her entrance.

“Hard,” she panted as she stroked his cock behind her.

He smirked and took his hands off her once again, stepping out of the shower to dry himself off. She turned off the spray and hurried after him, puzzled.

He was waiting for her with a towel to dry her off, and that he did, his fingers lightly tracing her labia as he dried off her privates, making her whimper.

They were both still damp but she pulled him down for a kiss, forcing him to drop the towel. He
kissed her and pushed her back into the bedroom, onto the bed where she fell with a smile. He lay on top of her, lightly brushing his lips on hers, the pressure of his body on top of her enough to make her whimper as she spread her legs to accommodate him. He took her hands above her head slowly as they kissed, and pinned them there, one after the other. Suddenly, invisible ropes tied her hands together to the headboard. She smiled mischievously as she felt them.

“You have to teach me that spell,” she stated against his lips.

“Never.”

He knelt beside her and leaned down to suck on her breasts as his hand made its way down her stomach to her mound. She spread her legs eagerly and his lips kissed hers as his fingers rubbed her exposed clit up and down, side to side, in circles and her body squirmed with his ministrations as delicious whimpers escaped her lips into his mouth. He dipped two hooked fingers into her folds as his lips touched her collarbone and she moaned. He rubbed that sweet spot inside her and she could feel her pleasure mounting fast. Her orgasm was there, within her grasp, she need only reach out and grab it, and he withdrew is fingers and just held her pussy as the orgasm slipped away from her.

“Severus!”

“All right, love?” He grinned.

“I was about to come!”

“I know,” he smirked.

“Why did you stop?” She whined.

“Are you in a hurry, kitten? You promised me all night, I’m going to take my sweet fucking time.”

“And torture me?”

He started to tease her nipples with his tongue again. “You said you wanted to come hard, kitten.” He sucked on her breast and she gasped. “Just relax and enjoy the ride.” He caught her other nipple in between his teeth. “Have I ever let you down?” He sucked on it as well.

“Nooo,” she moaned.

His lips trailed their way down her stomach and she splayed herself for him. He placed himself between her legs and his tongue flat on her clit. She moaned loudly in relief. He licked her up and down, sucking her mound along with her clit at times, making her scream and her head loll back. He stuck his tongue inside her and his nose took over the attention her bud of nerves needed. She was close, so very close again as he licked her entrance, then licked the length of her slit before settling on her clit once more. It was right there again, her orgasm, and he pulled away from her. She pulled her hand down to rub herself but it didn’t budge.

“Fuck. Severus… you’re going to kill me,” she gasped.

He caressed her thighs, which remained splayed, and smirked. After she had come down almost completely, he pressed the tip of his cock against her clit and made her moan again. He then plunged inside her and moved slowly, sinking in and pulling out, rolling his hips against her from time to time, making her moan his name. He lowered his thumb to her clit and rubbed her bud to move her along, his shaft also rubbing her so swollen she was, and when she was once again on the edge, he pulled out and away. She whimpered and rolled her hips, trying to reach his receding thumb or cock, craving friction.
“Is there something you need, kitten?” He asked smirking as he kissed her lips, her collarbone, then sucked on her breasts, one after the other.

“Yes,” she panted.

“What, love?” He continued to tease her nipples with his tongue.

“That wonderful tongue of yours on my clit. Eat me. Lick my pussy and make me come. Let me come, Sev. Please.”

His lips trailed down to her clit and played with it. He murmured a spell as he caressed her back hole, then entered her with two fingers in her folds and another in her back entrance. His other hand pressed down on her lower belly. His tongue, still on her clit, and fingers moved in synchrony, bringing forth her screams, her moans, her passionate calling of his name. She prayed to the heavens he would let her come this time. And he did. She came harder than she had ever come before, spraying on his mouth, his sheets, her weak trembling legs forcing themselves shut but that he strongly held open, making her even more aroused. He pulled away but continued to rub his thumb on her clit, enhancing the aftershocks of her orgasm, making the experience all the better.

“Fuck, Severus…” She was still panting. “I love you so much.”

“Was that worth the wait, love?”

“Oh… so much. Make me come again. Bury your sweet cock inside me and make me come on that delicious cock of yours, Sev.”

He plundered her as he kissed her lips, allowing her to taste her essence. “How many more times do you want to come, kitten?” He purred in her ear as he slowly moved inside her.

“I promised all night long, did I not?” She smiled.

He rubbed her clit with his thumb as he ravished her and she lifted a leg to his shoulder, making herself more open to engulf his whole advantageous cock. He began to rock faster and harder against her as he caressed her lifted leg, her hips moving against his in the same speed, and he made her come hard again, soaking his cock and wailing his name. He managed to keep control as she clenched around him.

“Untie me, Sev,” she gasped as she was coming down. “Let me ride your cock.”

He did as she pleaded and she quickly sat him back on the bed, straddling him and impaling herself on his still hard cock. She rolled her hips on him, rode him slowly, kissing his lips.

She hung her head back clinging to his neck. “Suck my tits,” she ordered and he obliged. She moaned as she moved up and down on his cock, her swollen clit getting stimulated as well in between their bodies, on his length, on his pubic bone.

“I’m going to come again, Sev. Come with me,” she pleaded, clutching voluntarily around his cock and grinding faster on him. He grunted. “Come with me, love.” She clenched again. “Come with me.”

She came and drove him off the edge with her furiously clenching pussy.

They panted into each other’s necks, catching their breaths, her hands still sinking into his shoulders.

“You are the most wonderful witch in this world, Hermione. Fuck, I love you.”
September was almost upon them and in a few days, Severus would have to go back to Hogwarts. She started to gather her things. She passed him in the kitchen as she made her way to the little laundry room he had added in his reformations. He was preparing dinner. She came back out with a bundle of clothes in her arms and was heading upstairs.

“Hey. Hey,” he stopped her by placing his body in front of hers. “What are you doing?”

“Packing.”

He lifted an eyebrow.

“You’re going back to Hogwarts the day after tomorrow, Sev. I need to go back to Grimmauld Place. Or to my parents.” She stopped talking and looked outside, seeming to be deciding which was better. “Or maybe I should rent a place. Although… I don’t know what an apprentice’s salary will get me. Anyway, we have to work out when and where we will see each other now…”

“Move in with me.”

“What?” She asked, shocked.

“Move in with me.”

“How… how?”

“Well, how it usually works is, I make room for you to properly store your belongings instead of leaving everything in a bag in the spare room. You’ll pick up the rest of your things at your parent’s and Potter’s. I’ll probably have to throw half my books and clothes away. You already took over the loo, so that’s settled. And you’ll continue to stay here, always.”

She sniggered. “But you’ll be at Hogwarts!”

“I have a couple of nights off a week. I can come here. And I’ll ask Minerva to set up the Floo so you can go there the other days, if you want. You can have stuff there as well. Or you can just stay here and get much needed away time from me. Whatever you want.”

“I never need time away from you, silly.” She was giddy.

“What do you say? I know this house is not much, but…”

“I love this house. I’ve had very good times here. I know you haven’t, but if you let me, I’ll try to help you make some good memories.”

“You already have,” he smiled and kissed her nose, then her lips.

“What about Crookshanks?” She asked when their lips parted.

“Bring the beast as well.”

Chapter End Notes

And may Santa Claus (or the Holiday Armadillo) bring you all steamy surprises such as
the ones in this chapter. XD
On the next morning, Hermione went to her parents’ and to Grimmauld Place to pick up things she had left behind, and to give then the good news. Her parents were thrilled – more her mother than her father – but what most warmed their hearts was the complete happiness that irradiated from her. Harry and Ginny were also very happy for her – for them – and Ginny asked her all the details of how it happened as Ron sulked in a chair close to them in the kitchen with his cup of tea. He had hoped that with Snape going back to Hogwarts, Hermione would move back to Grimmauld and he would have a chance to win her back, so this didn’t bode well for his plan. But at least they weren’t married. He might still have a chance, he thought. Harry didn’t have much interest in the girls’ conversation and the finer details girls always liked to know and tell, but he ended up sitting with them anyway. It was better than to suffer Ron’s mood and mutterings.

Meanwhile, Severus met with Minerva to ask if the arrangements for Hermione to live at the castle with him could be made. Minerva just looked at him and smirked.

“What is it, Minerva?” He asked, annoyed. “Can she or can she not move into my rooms? Or will that soil you precious students’ innocence?”

“She may, yes. With a few terms, of course.”

“Such as?” He arched an eyebrow.

“There can be no displays of affection in front of students, though she can roam the castle freely.”

“Naturally. I’m not one for public displays anyway.”

“I didn’t think you were one to live in close quarters with another human being, but here we have it,” she smiled.

“What are the other requirements, Minerva?” he crossed his arms and knitted his brow.

“You will bring her along to our social outings. She is a dear and all the teachers love her. All those who matter anyway,” she added, thinking of Agnes Gwendoline, who would still be a nuisance to her for the better part of next year at least. “You were the only one who took a while to catch up.”

Severus rolled his eyes.

“I am extremely happy for you, Severus. Both of you. You deserve this.”

“Yes yes, well, the Floo will have to be open, from my rooms to the Ministry and to and from my house at Spinner’s End.”

“Of course, that will be done. When do both of you intend on settling in at Hogwarts?”

“Would tomorrow be too inconvenient?”

“No! Not at all! It will be working for you to come in.”
“Good.”

Their meeting continued with other subjects, but the smirk on Minerva’s face did not fade.

Hermione got to Spinner’s End – *home* – before Severus did, since he also had a meeting with the Apothecary to discuss the sales of his potions and what needed to be brewed in the next batch he sent them. She began to unpack her things, all of which she had packed into her trusted beaded bag. The bulk of her possessions consisted on clothes and books, though she also took a few records she owned to add to his collection. He certainly would not approve of her mostly pop collection mixing with his rock albums, but she just smiled and made room for them in the back of the crate.

She had shrunken the book case she had in her room and packed it as well, with her parents’ permission. She set it up in the spare room, arranging her books on it, though a few did not fit and still had to be stacked on the floor next to his. Crookshank’s bed was set in the spare room as well, though she didn’t know why she bothered as he never slept on it. His litter box she placed in the loo downstairs no one ever seemed to use.

He came home and approved of what she had done, and they proceeded to clearing out some of his clothes and magically expanding the closet to make room for her. He also cleared two drawers in his dresser, finding room for the clothes that were in them in the other drawers. He had to move his box, the box with her keepsakes. She knew what it was, but he didn’t know she knew. She asked what it held to see what he would say.

“Can’t I have one ounce of privacy, woman?” He asked, annoyed, as he stuffed the box in his side of the closet.

She smiled and pulled out a similar box from her bag. The only thing she had managed to keep of his was the wrapping paper from her bracelet and a candle from his birthday cake, but she intended on keeping much more. She placed it in her drawer.

“What’s that?”

“Nothing. I have private things too,” she smirked.

The most different addition she made to the house in Spinner’s End was the telly she had in her room in her parents’ house. She missed watching movies and her TV shows, and she convinced him to have it in their room. That night, they snuggled and watched a tape of one of her favorite movies. Severus found it not so good. It was supposed to take place in England, but the hero didn’t even bother trying an English accent. The acting was not impressive, with the exception of the villain who pretty much saved the movie. But what was important to him is that she enjoyed it. He enjoyed eating popcorn and having her lie on his chest as she watched and laughed, though he could have lived without the orange beast curling up at their feet.

They Flooed to Hogwarts the next afternoon when she came home from work. She took a few outfits and personal affects and thought she could take more of what she needed as the year progressed. She would be at Spinner’s End a few afternoons at least – she did not fancy sleeping away from Severus. He didn’t say anything but he too did not want to sleep away from her.

When they were done tiding up their rooms, she thought they would go to bed, but he took
her to the library under the pretense of finding a book he needed, with her help.

“Between my books and yours, you certainly have anything you may need!” She said as he hauled her down the corridors. “And this late? Are you going to read it now?” She didn’t understand why he wanted to do this after such a full day. Tomorrow was Saturday, it could be done then.

“Hush, witch and just come and help me will you?”

They got to the library door and it was closed.

“There. We’ll come back tomorrow,” Hermione said.

Severus tapped his wand on the lock and it clicked open. “I am deputy headmaster. I have access to every part of this castle save the headmistress’ quarters,” he smirked, pulling her inside, pushing the door closed behind them.

“Fine. What book is it?”

He led the way to one of the aisles further in the back. “I believe it is around here… somewhere,” he said as they turned into an aisle.

He looked at a shelf behind her head as if focused on the titles on it and she looked at him, exasperated. “Severus! I thought I was supposed to help…”

“Oh yes, here it is,” he said as he pushed her against the shelf and claimed her lips with his.

She gave into the kiss, drowned in it, melted into him, and he pulled her leg to his waist. She was already wearing her nighty when he pulled her from their room, so she just threw a robe on top of it and followed him. As he pulled her leg to him, it exposed her core, and the hand that did not hold her leg slid down from her neck where he held her, to her breasts, stomach, until it found its way in between her legs and his fingers grazed her mound and labia.

She pulled away from his lips and gasped. “No, Severus, someone might come in.”

He kissed her neck. No one would come in. Most of the teachers would only arrive tomorrow, and Irma, whose quarters were in here somewhere, hadn’t arrived yet. But Hermione didn’t know. Nor would he tell her. The danger made her more aroused, he knew.

“Isn’t this one of your fantasies, kitten?” He asked in a low rumble in her ear as his fingers ceased the teasing of her mound and parted her slit to work on her clit.

“Yes!” She cried out when he hit just the right spot, “but some fantasies are supposed to stay that, just fantasies,” she ended in a whisper when she realized she had been too loud.

“Not with me.”

“Someone might see us!” She said, again in a whisper.

“It just makes it hotter, kitten.” He claimed her lips again as his hand continued to pleasure her. He took a finger to her entrance and teased it gently before dipping into her.

She clung to his shoulders and threw her head back until it hit the books behind her. She whimpered as he thrust his fingers into her and planted kisses on her neck. One more thrust and she let out a loud moan.

“Shhh. There will be silence in the library, Miss Granger,” he rumbled in her ear and then
nipped it.

“Oh fuck, Severus,” she whispered and bit her lower lip, then fist his frockcoat and continued biting her lip as to not make a sound.

She was getting so wet that his fingers made a slushing sound in her core, and with the dead silence in the library, it seemed rather loud.

“Oh fuck kitten. Your delicious soaking pussy is going to drip all over these books,” his low rumble in her ear made her body quiver and her entrance tighten on his fingers. She closed her eyes and breathed deeply, trying not to scream.

“Do you want my cock?” He asked before kissing her lips.

“Yeeeass,” she managed to whimper as his fingers hit all the right spots.

“Say it,” he rumbled.

“I want your cock, love.” She kissed his lips. “I want your big, delicious cock deep inside me.”

He undid his trousers quickly and lowered her onto his hard dick. She bit her lips and her moan remained caught in her throat.

He gripped the shelves behind her as he thrust into her, her body gently thudding against the shelves as she supported herself on his shoulders. One of her hands slipped down, trailing his buttons, and they popped open.

They were standing next to a small study table that sat in the aisle, pushed up to the bookcase, and he turned to sit her on it. He then began to thrust into her with more speed. His thumb found her bud of nerves and circled it once, making her emit a loud moan.

“Silence, kitten,” he said into her ear, smirking. His voice alone was reason enough for her to moan.

He thrust slowly now, letting the tip of his cock hit the sweet spot inside her as his thumb rubbed her clit with the exact right pressure. He rolled his hips and she clawed his back and bit his neck as to not scream as she came. He groaned in her ear as her clenching pussy drove him off the edge as well.

“I’m sorry,” she said after they both came down, rubbing his neck where she had bit him as he buttoned up his shirt. She had bit close to his scar, and it left a mark.

“I’m not,” he smirked. She had jumped down to the floor and looked around to ascertain no one had walked in on them. He slapped her ass playfully. “Let’s go.”

As they were leaving, closing the door, Minerva walked by.

“Is everything quite alright?”

Hermione froze and didn’t know quite what to say. It took half a second for her to remember she was no longer a student and their relationship was not a secret. And it was that. A relationship. She smiled.

“Yes, everything is fine, Professor.”
“Minerva, please, Hermione,” the headmistress smiled.

“Minerva,” Hermione smiled once again.

Severus faced the door during this interaction, as he was closing it, and quickly enlarged a book he had in his coat pocket and produced it as he turned around.

“Quite alright. I just needed a book. Good night, Minerva.”

“Good night,” the headmistress replied looking puzzled as he took Hermione’s hand and the girl smiled back her goodnight following her wizard.

On the following night, the last before the students arrived, Severus took some time to organize things in his classroom. He had always been very organized and left everything ready before leaving for the summer, so there wasn’t that much to do. He was standing behind his desk, looking down at some papers when he heard someone clearing their throat.

“Professor?”

He looked up and saw Hermione coming in from their rooms, donning her school uniform, shrunken as it once had been, barely covering her body. He could see she did not wear a bra underneath her tight white shirt, her hard nipples very evident, pointing at him. He arched an eyebrow.

“I have something to confess,” she said coming forward, looking very innocent holding her hands behind her back.

“Yes?” He said in his cold, teaching tone, trying very hard not to smirk.

She hoisted herself up on the first work table, up front, the one she had shared with Harry, Ginny and Ron a year ago. She faced him and opened her legs slightly, smiling mischievously. She wore nothing underneath her short, short skirt, and he could see her already swollen pinkness. His cock sprang to life. The effects this witch had on him were astonishing.

“I stole from your stores, professor. I’m really sorry.” She pouted.

He stepped towards her.

“Still… you do understand I will have to… punish you nonetheless? So you’ll learn.”

“Oh yes. I understand.” She smiled.

“Step down from the table.”

“Okay.”

“Is that a proper way to address me, Miss Granger?”

“No, sir. I’m sorry.”

“Unburden yourself of your shirt,” he ordered.

“Right away, sir,” she said smiling as she swiftly undid her buttons and let the shirt drop to the floor. He turned her to face the table on the shorter side and pushed her feet apart with his. He
reached down behind her knees and caressed her thighs upwards, one at a time, as invisible ropes appeared and tied her ankles to the legs of the table. She quivered and whimpered at this touch.

He adjusted the height of the table with a touch and leaned her over it, tying her arms down to the opposite side her legs were tied, though her arms did not reach the other side of the long table. This exposed whatever little piece of her buttocks and slit her skimpy skirt had managed to cover.

He lightly grazed his fingers on her buttocks, where it joined with her legs, coming dangerously close to her slit but never actually touching it. She tried to push herself in the direction of his fingers but her restraints did not allow it. She grunted in frustration.

He slapped her bum once. “There will be no impatience in this classroom. Is that clear?”

“Yes sir,” she said with a smile, her cheek against the wooden tabletop. He slapped her other ass cheek.

“I am in charge here, understood?”

“Yes, sir.” She felt her arousal pooling near her entrance.

“Now, what do you think is a proper punishment for you?”

“You are in charge, sir. You should decide. I am at your mercy.”

A grunt caught in his throat. He slapped her bum twice, swiftly. She couldn’t restrain herself and let out a long moan.

“You are not to enjoy this,” he smirked and hit her again. She moaned again. “You naughty witch,” he slapped her again.

“Yes I am naughty. So naughty. Please hit me again, sir.”

He slapped her repeatedly and she moaned and tried for friction against the table, the only thing remotely close to her clit, but it was impossible. She couldn’t even rub her legs together. And she was getting absurdly wet, she could feel it slip out of her, to her thighs. Her pussy was extremely close to dripping.

After hitting her repeatedly, caressing her cheeks in between slaps, making her crave his touch even more, her buttocks burning and red, he finally, finally took his fingers to her entrance, teasing it. He dipped into her and spread her juices all around her, even on her inner thighs.

“Looks like kitten enjoyed her spanking.”

“So much. I’m sorry. You should spank me some more, since I wasn’t supposed to enjoy it,” she said smirking against the wooden table, trying to see him over her shoulder and lightly swaying her bum, still craving so much more of his touch and friction on her center. He began to trace her labia and rub clit gently as she spoke and she tried to push back into his hand as she whimpered. He then began to gently tap her clit, rhythmically.

“Yes, yes, yes,” she moaned.

“Yes, I believe you should be further punished,” he said as he continued to slap her clit lightly.

“Oh fuck… yeeees,” she whimpered as she gripped the ropes that tied her arms.
“Language!” He tapped her again. His cock was straining against his trousers as he admired the view of her soaking pussy open to him. She bit her lip to muffle a moan.

“I have just the punishment for you, naughty Gryffindor,” he leaned down to whisper in her ear. “Accio crop,” and he stretched out a hand just in time to catch the riding crop that came zooming in from their chambers.

He whacked he table in front of her to show the force of the crop and she flinched. Yet, she could feel her core soaking, her clit pulsating, craving his touch.

He grazed the tip of the crop down her spine, slowly, and she quivered. He reached her covered ass – barely – and continued trailing it down the back of one thigh, reaching her calf and coming back up. It made her quiver over and over, her hairs standing on end. He did the same down the other leg.

He caressed her bum and broke character for a moment when he said “Tell me if this hurts too much, love,” and he whacked her ass where he had been caressing.

It stung more than his slaps, because he never did slap her particularly hard, but it still felt so damn good.

“I need more punishment,” she said, smiling cheekily.

“Then ask properly.”

“Please?”

“Please, what?”

“Please sir.”

“How many?”

“Uhm… one? Please, sir.”

He whipped her again. She pulled in air through clenched teeth.

“One more, please sir.” She moaned.

And he hit her on the other cheek.

“Two more, please sir.” And he hit her swiftly, one on each cheek.

“One more please sir,” and he whipped her bum and then gently tapped her clit with the crop.

“Oh yes! Two more please.” And he smacked each cheek and tapped her clit. That process repeated itself two more times before he thought her bum as getting too red and put the crop down, rubbing the small of her back instead. It was soothing, relaxing. She whimpered as she exhaled.

“What do you need, kitten?” His hand glided its way down her crack to her slit and finally her clit and rubbed.

“Uuuuhhh… that. I need that. Please make me come.”

He squatted on the floor to touch the bonds on her ankles and undo them, and as he did he licked her clit, sucked on it, then licked his way back up where his hand had come down.
“Yes. That. I need that please sir.”

He climbed on the table, kissed his way up her back, to her neck, and reached to undo the bonds on her hands. She quickly turned to face him and pulled his lips down to hers. He smiled when their lips parted and he trailed his way down to her mound in kisses, stopping at her breasts to suck and roll his tongue on them most delicately.

He stood in front of the table and pushed her back to the middle of it, and she winced because of the fresh marks on her bum.

“Sorry. I can heal that for you.”

“No, don’t,” she smiled.

He leaned on the table deep in between her legs, and he went to work. He took his time tasting her, sucking her mound, her nub, licking her labia and her entrance. He savored her, the muskiness of her juices, driving her insane. She rocked into his mouth, his nose, chasing her orgasm. She reached it, and reached it hard, wetting his face and the table as she wailed.

He smiled as he pulled her closer to the edge of the table. She winced again but hungrily reached for his buttons as he undid his trousers and buried himself in her.

“So, you like the schoolgirl fantasy, do you?” He grunted as he slipped in and out of her slowly. She continued to undo his buttons.

“It appears you do to, Professor,” she smiled when she was reaching his chest and caressed it.

“I’m ashamed to say I do.”

“I want you to remember this, me coming on this table, in this room, on your mouth and cock, and never ever look at any other frisky girl that waltzes through that door,” she gasped.

“Oh, Hermione. There is no one else, love. There is no one else. There will never be anyone else. There is only you, love. Only you.” He said, thrusting into her slowly, rolling his hips against hers.

She smiled at him and latched onto his lips and didn’t let go until she came.

“Oh Sev, I love you. I love you.”

He was still hard when she was through, so she pulled him up to his desk and sat him on his chair. She crawled under the desk and proceeded to sucking his cock, licking its ridges, savoring him slowly as he did her. His head lolled back and he groaned.

“Oh yes, fuck Hermione. You do that so well.”

She hummed on his cock and he let a moan slip his slips.

His head sprang up when he heard a knock on the door. Whoever knocked did not wait for an answer and walked in. Good thing he managed to wave his hand up his chest and magically close his buttons before they did.

“Severus!”

Hermione heard Minerva’s voice from under his desk and froze. How mortifying to be seen like this, naked, kneeling under a desk, with a cock in her mouth. But it was only half a second
before she realized that she could not be seen under there. So she got more aroused and continued to
blow him. He grabbed the edge of the desk and glanced down with a warning stare and she just
smiled cheekily and licked the length of his delicious cock.

“I knocked on your room but there was no answer,” Minerva continued.

“Yes,” Severus cleared his throat as he tried not to groan. “Hermione… must be asleep
already. I was just… going over some papers.”

Hermione stroked his cock and massaged the tip with her thumb before licking just the tip,
gently.

“Well, everyone has finally arrived and we were thinking of having lunch at the great Hall
tomorrow. Before the feast and the students. Hermione should come as well.”

“Yes, she should. She will. I’m sure she will find that a splendid idea.” He glanced down and
saw she teased her nipple as she sucked his cock, drooling on it, savoring it.

“Is that all, Minerva? I believe I want to go to bed as well.”

“Yes, yes. I’ll see you tomorrow then.” She turned to leave and saw the table they had been
playing on, Hermione’s juices still making it damp.

“Looks like you had a spill here.”

Severus grabbed his wand and waved it, quickly scourgifying the table and taking the
opportunity to vanish the uniform shirt that had been forgotten under it and had been making him
tense all these long minutes she was there.

“Yes. I was tinkering with something and forgot to clean that up.”

“All right.” She turned for the door again. “Good night. See you tomorrow.”

As she left he cast a charm on the door behind her and locked it.

“It seems you weren’t spanked enough.”

She took his cock out of her mouth and smiled. She then climbed up and straddled him on his
chair, rubbing her once again wet pussy on his cock.

“The risk of being caught made me horny again,” she said cheekily.

“I can feel that,” he gripped her hips and pulled her closer to his cock.

He plunged himself inside her and she rode him slowly, voluntarily clenching his cock,
making him grunt. She kissed his lips deeply as she did this, and he took his thumb to her clit and
pressed on it just right. Their lips parted and he couldn’t help but utter “I love you, you wonderful
witch.”

She came again, moaning in his ear and he was glad for it because he was having a hard time
maintaining control. He came hard inside her, holding her down to him.

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maintaining control. He came hard inside her, holding her down to him.

She led them to the shower and they washed the sweat and sex off their bodies before
crawling into bed. Luckily, her orange beast missed the castle, and was roaming around somewhere
and not bothering him. She lay on his chest and he had his arm around her, almost falling asleep
when he felt something warm and wet on his skin where her head lay. She sniffed.
“Hermione?” He looked down at her and she looked up.

“Yes?” She smiled, but he could see that tears were in her eyes.

“What is it, love?” He tried to think if he had done something stupid and hurtful without noticing, as would be so very typical of him, but he couldn’t think of anything.

“What?”

He wiped a silent lonely tear that ran down her cheek and showed his hand to her.

“Oh, nothing. I’m just overwhelmed… with happiness.” She smiled. “I never thought I could be so… and have it all like this. And you…. I was sure you would never… love me.”

“I do, kitten. So much.”

She smiled and kissed his chest. “I’m so lucky.”

“I’m the one who is lucky to have you, perfect wonderful witch, love me.”

Chapter End Notes

In case you didn't realize it, the movie I was trying to describe was Robin Hood: Prince of Thieves. It stars Alan Rickman, of course - LOVE HIM - (actually I think the STAR is supposed to be Kevin Costner, but... ugh) and it's worth a watch if you haven't seen it. Alan is fucking great and funny.

Also, if you were born before the new millennium, you will remember we taped movies (well I did, still have a bunch of VHS tapes around here somewhere). If you don't understand or remember that, you are probably too young to be reading this fic. CLOSE THE TAB Ó.Ó lol
Chapter 46

Chapter Notes

Happy New Year, folks! I hope 2019 is filled with pleasant surprises. :)

Life went on nicely as classes started. Hermione would go to work in the mornings and often have lunch with Harry at the Ministry or with her parents. She would sometimes also go back to Hogwarts and eat with Severus. The students all gawked at her sitting at the Head Table, especially the older ones she actually knew quite a few of. But she didn’t mind. Severus would stare them down with his cold stony eyes when he caught one at it and they would soon disengage.

During the afternoons, she was often at Spinner’s End tidying things up, making it cozier. She had added plants to the house, at least one pot in each room, and she bought magazines on how to properly care for them and also asked for her mother’s advice. They brought life to the house. She had also gotten an old camera from her parents’ and started harassing Severus to take pictures with her. She caught him by surprise, taking pictures of him on his own as well. He feigned irritation but most pictures came out pretty nicely. He was never scowling and even smiled in a couple. And when she developed them – she had bought a kit at Diagon Alley to make them move like a magical photo although the camera was muggle, and worked in a corner of the basement at Spinner’s End – she found that he took more pictures of her without her knowledge than she of him. There were pictures of her sleeping, reading, cooking and she even found one of her in the shower. When she confronted him about it, he just snatched it from her hands with a smirk and said “I need that for… reasons,” and stowed it in his wooden box that held tokens of her.

She hung pictures of them on whatever wall space she could find – which was mostly in the stairway – and also some at Hogwarts in their quarters. She found a nice picture of his mother in the back of the wardrobe in the spare room. It had an expensive looking frame, though it looked old. She cleaned it up and hung it too. He was surprised by it, but not mad.

Some afternoons were reserved for studying in the Hogwarts library. Studying for her job, which was also an apprenticeship. She was already excelling at it, learning everything that needed to be learned at an impressive rate, unlike her boss and mentor had ever seen, but still she studied until her head hurt.

On the afternoons in which Severus did not have a full schedule of classes, he would brew to sell and also for Poppy’s stores when she needed it. Hermione would help him. Brewing was a special moment with him, she liked it very much. It was on an afternoon like that in early September that he had taught her to brew her contraceptive potion to last the whole year again. The evenings were spent at Hogwarts, except for the two nights a week he had off. She had never known he had nights off before because during the last year, he would always stay at Hogwarts to see her.

So while he was on rounds, meetings or overseeing detention, she would read for pleasure or study some more. He then would come back to their rooms and they would cuddle and sleep, often after great sex. On the nights he had off, they would sleep at Spinner’s End and often watch a movie in bed.

Severus often seemed annoyed by Crookshanks being on their furniture or anywhere around him, really. So she would mostly keep him at Spinner’s End while she was at work and during the
afternoons, only taking him to Hogwarts when it was close to bedtime. Crooks enjoyed exploring the
castle, so he wouldn’t disturb them on most nights. One day, when Hermione had to work a full
day, she got home to Spinner’s End in a hurry late in the afternoon, worried he had gone too long
without food. She went straight into the kitchen and set his bowl down before calling to him. He did
not come. She looked around the house and could not find him. Desperate, thinking something had
happened to him, that he had somehow gotten out and got run over or something, she passed through
to Hogwarts to ask Severus if he knew of the cat’s whereabouts. She came out of the fireplace in the
sitting room to find Severus lying on the sofa, napping, and Crooks on his stomach doing the same.
His bowl was empty yet dirty on the floor, indicating he had indeed been fed. Hermione smiled, and
of course, took a picture of the moment before waking Severus up to tease him.

Hermione of course got along very well with all the professors at Hogwarts, which were
what could be called Severus’ friends – some far more than most. She was always invited to any
gatherings they might have in the teacher’s lounge and always had someone to talk to at the Head
Table. Severus was… civil to Hermione’s friends. Not that he hated them, but he always felt
awkward about the age difference, and still thought they were mostly imbeciles with very few
conversations worth having in their heads. So he preferred it that she met them on her own, and only
tagged along when absolutely necessary.

It was mid-September. Severus sat in his office correcting essays, Crookshanks rubbing
against his leg under his desk and purring, the door to the sitting room open so he could know
Hermione was there reading and be soothed. There was a knock on the door that lead straight to the
hall from the sitting room. Hermione found it strange, but got up to answer it.

“Granger? What are you doing here?” Draco, looking dapper as always, was at the door. She
figured he knew of its existence due to the habit he had had of asking Severus for Sleeping Potions
in the middle of the night for the last years in Hogwarts.

“Hey!” She closed in to hug him and he awkwardly patted her shoulders with one hand
while the other remained in his pocket. He was still always surprised when she did that. “I live here
now,” she continued. “Well, here and at Spinner’s End.”

“Oh do you?” He smirked.

“Yes, she does. May we help you, Draco?” Snape drawled from behind Hermione.

“Do you want to come in, Draco?” Hermione smiled.

“No, no, my business is fast. Mother will send a proper invitation, but I’ve come to warn you
that there will be a ball at Malfoy Manor to honor all those who were granted an Order of Merlin.”

Though they had received the money shortly after the war, the ceremony where they would
actually receive the medals and honors was only finally set for next month, now that the Ministry
was once again in order and running smoothly.

“What?!?” They both exclaimed.

“I know. Mother is a stickler for… maintaining status and appearance. I told her it was
insane… But since she has donated much money for rebuilding this castle and the Ministry, I’m
fairly certain some people will show. And others will show in the spirit of forgiveness and union.”
He rolled his eyes. “I’m here to beg you two to go. It would be nice to have people who don’t fully
hate me there and who I can talk to. Good thing you’re here, Granger. Saves me trying to find you at
Potter’s,” he sneered.

Hermione didn’t know what to say. Severus, knowing she had been tortured at that house, and trying to shield her from the pain, started “We will… think about it, Draco. But you must know there are circumstances…”

“Yes, I know. I know. Just think about it, will you?” He asked quietly.

“We will, yes,” Hermione said.

“Great. Have yourselves a good night then,” Draco said walking away already. “And remember, Granger, I want dibs over Potter.” He looked back and smirked with a wink.

“What is he talking about?” Severus asked.

“Nothing,” Hermione sniggered.

September nineteenth was a Saturday. Hermione was sure Severus was not aware it was her birthday, she had never told him. And she kept meaning to mention it that week, especially since her parents wanted them over for brunch and Harry invited everyone they knew from Hogwarts for a party at his place later in the day, but it kept escaping her. It had been a very stressful and full week at work and dutiful outside of it. Whatever time she had left, she just wanted to sleep. She thought she had been able to mention lunch with her parents and going to Harry’s later in the day, but she doubted he knew it was for her birthday.

She slept soundly when she felt his breath on her neck, followed by his kisses. She smiled with her eyes still closed, and snuggled back into him. She then felt something hard against her bum.

“Happy birthday, love,” he breathed in her ear and returned his lips to their task of kissing her, this time behind her ear.

“You know?” She turned her head, surprised.

“Of course I bloody know.”

“How?”

“You bloody told me.”

“When?” She couldn’t recall having such a conversation.

“A year ago when you almost ruined my potions with that god awful ring and attacked me in my classroom, making me taste your deliciously sweet lips, putting me on the path of helplessly falling in love with you, witch.”

“And why did you restore this ring for me? I was always curious…” She lifted her hand and showed it.

He shrugged. “Can’t the old bat from the dungeons be nice for no apparent reason?”

“Of course he can,” she smiled. “He is. My sweet Severus.” She took her hand to the back of his head and turned her head more, to be able to kiss him. She then turned to face him completely. “And you remembered it was my birthday… sweet sweet wizard.” She kissed his lips. The kiss deepened and their breaths were becoming labored already.
“Let me unwrap my gift then,” she smiled mischievously and reached for his sleeping trousers. It was then she realized that what she felt hard against her was not his cock, but a long thin box wrapped in red paper with a gold ribbon.

“What’s this?” She pulled it out.

“Your gift,” he smiled. “I’m atrocious at picking them out but you can exchange it, I won’t mind.”

“I’m sure it’s lovely! I would never exchange anything you give me. Never,” she said unwrapping it, sitting up in bed as he got up and went to the loo. “I will cherish everything, always.” She finally got it open and in the box lay a simple gold chain with a heart-shaped pendant. “It’s beautiful, Sev! I love it.” He came out of the lavatory with a smile. “Put it on me, please?” She asked.

He came forward and took the necklace from the box, placing it around her neck from behind, closing the clasp. He kissed her neck.

“I love you, kitten,” he whispered.

“I love you, Sev.” She turned and kissed his lips. “You know we have to go to my parents’, right?”

“Yes, dear.”

“And to Harry’s later?”

“Yes, dear,” he drawled and rolled his eyes.

“Great. Now let me unwrap the present I was most eager to,” she smiled mischievously as she reached for his cock and released it, stroking it.

He smirked. “That is always available for you to unwrap, kitten, you can be sure of it.”

After their morning play and small breakfast, they moved into the bathroom to get dressed for brunch with her parents, and she found another package on one of the shelves in there, the one with her things on it.

“Severus?” She called him. “What is this?”

“That one you cannot exchange, unfortunately,” he said as he came into the bathroom and leaned on the doorframe, smiling.

“You already gave me a gift!”

“Well, that’s another, and probably rubbish anyway.” She opened it to see it was a bottle of perfume. A quite pretty bottle, with light pink fluid in it.

“Did you make it?” Her eyes shined with happiness.

“Yes.”

She uncorked the bottle and smelled it. “Oh, Sev! It’s so good! I really love it! I’m going to put it on right now. You’ll have to make this always. And tell me what’s in it.”
“Maybe,” he smirked. “Now, we should really get ready.”

They had a nice, quiet lunch at her parents’. She showed off the necklace that was a gift from Severus proudly, and received a book from each her parents.

Severus felt relatively relaxed there. Her mother was always nice, and since her father learned they lived together, he took it as a sign of real commitment from Severus’ part and gradually accepted him more. For some extra peace of mind, Severus had used Legilimency on them to know exactly how they felt, and saw relatively good things amidst the concern a parent always has towards their child – or at least what he imagined good parents would have. He only dreaded the day they would have to be invited to Spinner’s End to see how he did not offer what they did to their daughter, all she truly deserved.

Because he was unguarded and relaxed, many signs that made her parents’ hearts beat easier could be seen, chiefly the way he looked at her when she spoke – and when she was quiet – with absolute admiration. Something sparkled in his eyes even. They had yet to see the man smile, but the way his lips curled slightly when he looked at her was the closest thing they ever saw.

He pulled out her chair for her, cleared her plate when she was done, caressed her back or shoulder from time to time most naturally. They could see he treated her as he should, as she deserved to be treated.

Later in the afternoon, they finally left the Granger household to go to Grimmauld Place. There, Severus was not at ease. He walked around a bit with her as she said hello to the vast crowd, but he was stiff and uncomfortable. Who wouldn’t be, among former students who most likely hated your guts? They didn’t let completely loose either, feeling like they were being chaperoned. When Severus decided to clear away from view and hide in the library, was when they began to run amok as they would.

Potter and Ginevra, who already walked around the house as if she were its mistress – and she practically was anyway – were kind enough to go in with beverages and finger food from time to time, and they made some sort of small conversation. Hermione too checked in on him and stole kisses often. On about the fifth time she did, he started

“I’m going home, love.”

“Oh, okay,” she said a bit disappointed. “I’ll just go say my goodbyes and…”

“No, no, you stay. Enjoy your party.” He pecked her lips. “Don’t let your fun be spoilt by me.”

“You could go and mingle, you know. Add to the fun.”

He snorted. “I doubt they would be comfortable with that.”

“I don’t want you to go home. It makes me think I’m abandoning you in favor of my friends!”

“You aren’t. I want to go home. I love you and I’ll wait for you there. Have fun.”

Harry came in as they shared a deep, passionate kiss goodbye.

“Oh, sorry, I was just…”
They disentangled and Severus began “Potter, can I trust you and some of your gang of hooligans,” he rolled his eyes, “to see Hermione safely to an apparition point when she wishes to leave?”

Harry grinned. “Yeah, Snape, no problem.”

“Very well. Good night then,” he walked towards the library door.

“Thanks for coming, Snape. You really give life to the party,” Harry teased, still grinning.

“I’m lucky to be alive after eating your food, Potter.” Ginny and Harry had cooked alongside Kreacher as to not overwork him, as they knew Hermione would have liked.

“I would never poison you, Snape. Hermione wouldn’t approve of that.”

“Perhaps not on purpose.” Snape opened the door. “I hope you get a cookbook for Christmas. Lovely as always, Potter,” he said sardonically and left. Harry just sniggered and shrugged it off.

After about half an hour of him leaving, Hermione started to quickly realize that her feet hurt from walking up and down trying to find and talk to everyone, her friends were getting too drunk to carry any sort of interesting conversation and the music was too loud and annoying. She much rather spend what little was left of her 20th birthday in bed with Severus, be it quietly or having her brains fucked to mush. So within the hour, she was gathering the gifts she had received and stuffing them into her trusted beaded bag to head home to Spinner’s End, where they had agreed to spend the night.

She got in firmly believing he would be in bed already, but as she was heading towards the stairs, she saw lights shining in from their small backyard. He must be out there reading then. She headed outside to see the fairy lights on, some charmed to change colors slowly. A song could be heard coming from the window upstairs as well, where the record player sat, though it wasn’t too loud. It was a nice slow tune, romantic.

He sat at the garden table admiring the night sky and the stars, and on the table was a cake, her favorite kind, along with a bouquet of red roses in a vase.

“What’s this?” She asked smiling and walking over to him.

“It is your private birthday party, madame,” he said. “Although I didn’t expect you home so soon. I haven’t prepared everything.”

She smelled the roses before sitting on his lap, an arm around his shoulder and her other hand on his cheek. She brushed her lips against his. “You didn’t have to do any of this, Sev.” She smiled.

“I wanted to.”

“It’s perfect as it is.”

He pulled out his wand and made candles appear on the cake, then lit them.

“Happy birthday to you,” he sang in his silky low rumble, “happy birthday to you.” She sniggered and kissed his chin, remembering how she did almost the same exact thing on his birthday. “Happy birthday dear kitten… happy birthday to you.” She kissed his lips.
“Now, make a wish,” he said.

“I have everything I could wish for,” she smiled and held his chin, pecking his lips again as he held her close to him.

He cut a piece of the cake and fed it to her, and they repeated the ritual of licking frosting off each other’s fingers and lips as they delighted themselves in the sweetness of the cake and each other’s kisses.

“Let’s go to bed,” she whispered in his ear and nipped it after their third piece.

“I need to tell you something first,” he said seriously.

She looked him in his eyes, apprehensive.

“I never… I never thought that I could one day win over the heart of such a wonderful, intelligent, sweet, kind, beautiful witch like you, Hermione. I really thought it wasn’t in the cards for me.”

“Nonsense,” she smiled. “You are the most wonderful man in the world. I love you.”

“But here you are, saying you love me, saying you’re mine, sharing my life with me, making me happy, making me whole.”

She caressed his cheek as he pulled out a tiny box from his pocket and placed it on the table. Her heart stopped in her chest, her breath caught in her throat, and she stared at it as he opened it. Everything seemed to be happening in slow motion now. Inside the box was a beautiful white gold ring, a blue butterfly composed by diamonds and sapphires. It was similar to the one she had dropped in the potion a year ago, and he had restored for her, but much, much prettier and more delicate. It was real jewelry after all.

“I love you, Hermione, more than I have ever loved anyone, more than I even thought I was capable of. Marry me.”

She was speechless for a moment, until she turned and kissed him desperately.

“Severus, I love you, I do…”

“But… you don’t want to marry me.”

“Shut up and let me talk! I know, I know with every fiber in my being that you’re The One. I want to spend my whole life with you. But I’m too young to get married now! I haven’t even started a career properly!”

“And I’ll hold you back?” He wasn’t annoyed, just hurt.

“No, no! You would never. You give me incentive, you raise me up, it’s just… that married life is…” She stopped what she was saying when she realized she pretty much already lead a married life, living with him. And it wasn’t harder. She had time for her studies and career. Granted they’d been at it for not too long… but he would never… he was her true love. She knew it, in her heart. Anxiety was eating away at her, clouding her judgment. She didn’t know what to do.

“If you were to say yes, it does not mean we would get married tomorrow. We can set a date whenever you want, five or fifty years from now. It’s just my promise to you that I will always be here, committed to you, waiting for you. There’s no one else for me, nor will there ever be. But I
won’t force you to do anything.” He finished on a disappointed note, closing the box.

“What do you think you’re doing?” She scolded, her eyes swimming in tears. “Open that box again, Severus Snape! I’m a fucking idiot. I’m sorry.” She touched her forehead to his temple, caressing his cheek. “Let’s pretend the last five minutes never happened. I didn’t say anything. Please. Ask me again, if you still want to,” she said quietly.

His lips curled up in a small smile. “Hermione Jean Granger, love of my life, will you marry me?” He opened the box again, exposing the custom made butterfly ring.

She still had tears in her eyes and a smile on her lips. “Yes! Yes, of course I will, Severus.” She kissed him, deeply, passionately, cupping her hands on his cheeks. “Yes.” A kiss. “Yes.” Another peck. “A million times yes.”

He took the ring from the box and she stretched out her hand, smiling. He placed the ring on her finger, opposite the one he had restored, and she realized she didn’t need to wear that one always anymore.

She smiled as he lifted her up to carry to their bedroom. They needed to sleep. Tomorrow they would be back at Hogwarts and there was a surprise party planned for Hermione in the teacher’s lounge. Much would be asked, much would be told. But first, they were going to show each other just how much they really did love one another.
Hermione was all giddy with the engagement. She was thoroughly satisfied with him declaring love and them moving in together; she would never have imagined a wedding proposal so soon after all of it. But she should have known that Severus would be intense in all his feelings. He had bottled them up for so long. She was also very glad that he hadn’t taken her refusal at first too badly and shut her out. It was idiotic of her. Just excitement and anxiety not mixing well together. Of course she wanted to marry him. Be with him forever. It would all work out. He would support her and she him. He wouldn’t demand she stay at home bearing his children as she imagined Ronald probably would. It was silly and risky of her to have panicked and refused him at first.

She flaunted her ring to any and everyone who would care to look at her for anything at all. She was so happy she could float on air. And her friends and co-workers were happy for them too. Ginny wanted to look at bridal magazines whenever they were together, and she – along with Arthur Weasley – even made most of the family come around to the idea. To be fair though, none of them really had anything against Hermione, they just didn’t get the chance to talk to her much anymore. Fleur helped as well, as she too was excited to tell of her experience and help plan everything. The fact that Hermione said the wedding was most likely a few years away didn’t make any difference. The only Weasleys who did not congratulate her or Severus were Molly and Ron himself.

No group was more surprised than the Hogwarts faculty. They had worked with Severus for decades, and the thought of him dating someone so lovable, warm and open and moving in with her was already extremely hard to process. Him actually proposing marriage, was almost unfathomable. But being surprised did not mean they weren’t also extremely happy for them, for him, that he found such happiness in life, finally.

At the end of October, they finally had the Order of Merlin ceremony. It was all you would expect from such an event, with everyone who was anyone there, emotional speeches and glamor.

Hermione was seated at a table with Harry and the Weasleys because apparently the Golden Trio just had to stick together. Thankfully, Harry, Ginny and George helped ease her discomfort by talking to her and cracking jokes. Severus was at the next table with other members of the Order, mostly the ones from Hogwarts, and he switched seats with a few of them so he could be close to his witch. She laughed at the fact he climbed to the stage when they called him, received his medal looking stoic as ever and stepped down without so much as a word. She had a speech ready when her time came, but didn’t mention him too much, at his request, only thanking him in his constant efforts in helping them, without which they couldn’t have done anything. She tried to avoid saying too much of Ron as well, letting Harry take most of the glory, as he should.

Afterwards, they had the ball at Malfoy Manor. They had agreed to go in the end. Severus, already in his dress robes, looking very dapper and sharp in the dark green velvet of his cloak, was good to go. Hermione needed only to transfigure the skirt of her elegant black evening dress so it would become a ball gown, off-the-shoulders and beautifully beaded. Her hair was up in an elegant hair-do, with sparkling hair pins on it and some curls dropping down, and she also wore Severus’ mothers’ emerald earrings, completing the look, in addition to, of course, her beloved bracelet.

Since it was Halloween, Narcisa Malfoy thought it would be fun to have a masquerade, something Severus thought was in extreme bad taste, considering the history in that damned house of hers and the parties, gatherings, meetings and other horrors it had hosted, with masked Death Eaters.
He shivered at the thought, the memory of those days as he placed his simple black mask over his eyes. Hermione had a black and silver Venetian mask with feathers and glitter. She looked absolutely stunning. He made mental notes to fuck her while she wore only the mask and heels later on.

They arrived at the Manor and Hermione clung to Severus’ arm, memories of her torturous evening there assailing her. The chandelier that had fallen was restored to its spot, elegantly lighting the room. Whatever furniture it may hold in normal circumstances was mostly gone, the hardwood floors free for dancing and mingling. Only a few chaises longues and confidante sofas lay around the open space, on marvelously posh rugs. The ample and high gothic-style windows she had never noticed before gave the room the final touch of elegancy.

Severus caressed her hand as they made their way through the small crowd to a safe corner. Minerva was not attending, giving the excuse of having to watch over the school, though that was a task he would have gladly taken on to avoid this wretched evening. But he couldn’t leave Hermione alone there, and she wanted to be there for Draco. Potter and the Weasleys of course absolutely refused to go. Draco being now her friend and having asked personally made her face the effort bravely with Severus by her side.

Narcisa and Draco finally found them, after Severus and Hermione had taken a glass of champagne from the floating trays around the room and had talked to Kingsley for a while. The rest of the room was made up of mostly Ministry officials.

Narcisa walked around arm in arm with her son, the Malfoy way of looking down and sneering at every and anybody on her face.

“Severus,” she drawled.

“Narcisa.”

She looked at Hermione from over her nose, from head to toe. “Wonderful dress, dear,” was her comment. “I hear congratulations are in order.” Her gaze stopped on Hermione’s ring finger.

“Thank you,” Hermione said graciously.

“I did not know you had it in you, Severus,” she turned to him, and from the way she looked back at Hermione and her ring, Hermione could not quite figure out if she meant she never though Severus would marry, if she never though Severus would marry a… mudblood, or if she thought Severus would be able to afford such a nice ring. She felt disgusted.

“Walk with me, will you Severus?” And Narcisa took his arm and pulled him away. He looked back at Hermione with an apologetic look, also conveying ‘I will be right back.’ He then looked at Draco and with a raise of an eyebrow told him he was not to leave her side until he did come back. Draco gave a nod.

“Forgive my mother, Granger, she’s…”

“A Malfoy.” She sipped her champagne.

“Hey! I think I turned out okay. In the end.”

“You did,” she grinned at him.

He looked her up and down. “You clean up nicely, Granger.”

“I choose to take that as a compliment.”
“So…” he took her hand and analyzed her ring finger. “Did I not tell you? I should be teaching Divination.”

She playfully punched his arm.

“That’s rude, Granger. You are a guest in my house,” he smirked.

“Sorry,” she rolled her eyes.

“I’ll accept that apology when it comes with an invitation to be Best Man at your wedding,” he said smirking.

“Don’t you have high hopes!”

“At the very least in the wedding party.”

“We’ll see, once we set a date,” she said smirking as well.

“Congratulations, Granger. He’s a good man.”

“I know.”

“And he would give his life to protect yours.”

“I know,” she smiled.

“Is Draco harassing you, love?” His silky voice came from behind Draco.

“No, Sev” she smiled. “He’s okay.”

“I am more than okay, Granger,” Draco sneered.

“Yes, yes you are,” she rubbed his shoulder.

A band started playing a waltz and Draco stepped away.

“I have to go open the festivities with mother. Save me a dance, Granger.”

Severus looked at him and arched an eyebrow menacingly.

“Don’t get jealous! I’ll dance with you too, Sev.” He grinned and disappeared into the crowd. Snape rolled his eyes.

After two songs, Snape reached out his hand. “Will you do me the honor?”

Hermione smiled. “I thought you didn’t dance.”

“I don’t. That does not however mean I don’t know how.”

She took his hand and he led her to the dance floor. He swirled her amidst other couples. Both smiled at one another with loving looks.

“You’re a great dancer, Sev. We will do this more often.”

“Doubtful.”

“I demand it,” she smiled. “We shall go out to dance constantly.”
“Where, might I ask?”

“Muggles have many places for that.”

“That sounds dreadful.”

“It’s not. You’ll get used to it,” she grinned.

“Very well…” he smiled.

There was a loud bang in the ballroom. For a moment, everyone looked at each other as if searching for an explanation. It was then the screaming began.

A group of Death Eaters had managed to break into the event. They wore their already known and feared masks and cast spells, some at the high elegant windows and chandeliers, breaking the glass, others hexed guests.

As soon as he realized what was happening, Severus hurriedly pushed Hermione out of the room, out of the commotion and into a dark hallway that he knew led upstairs, to the family’s quarters.

“Get out. Run. Go warn Minerva and whoever else you can.”

“And leave you here? I will not! I will stay and fight!”

“Hermione…”

“No, Severus, we’re wasting time here while people are getting hurt out there!”

He sighed, irritated. “Fine. I’ll send warning.”

As he moved to cast his Patronus to warn Minerva, Hermione thought to warn Harry, who was an Auror now after all. They cast their Patronuses at the same time, and two silver eagles emerged side by side and burst through the window at the end of the hall.

Hermione was lost for a second, thinking she had managed to cast a double Patronus somehow. But when she didn’t see his silver doe, she looked at him to see him staring at her, incredulous. There was no time for further elucidation, however, as there was another loud bang and the screaming intensified in the adjacent room. They ran out to help.

Not many Death Eaters were there. Not many Death Eaters were left on the run. Severus counted seven, along with that foul beast, Fenrir Greyback. The problem was that most of the people in the room were not trained to fight, or were paralyzed in fear. Some tried to defend themselves and were fairing nicely. Kingsley was fighting very well of course, and had already managed to incapacitate one Death Eater. Draco and Narcisa fought as well, which answered – for the time being – Severus’ question of whether this had been a set up.

Hermione saw Greyback attacking some defenseless desk employee and struck him with a stunning spell. It didn’t take, and he turned to attack her instead. As he charged in her direction, though, she managed to hit him with a *Petrificus Totalus* and he fell to the ground. Another one of Voldemort’s ludicrous followers saw this from across the room and hit Hermione square in the chest with a spell that threw her against a wall, making her collapse.

Severus charged towards this Death Eater, fueled by anger, growling, murder in his eyes. It was Dolohov, he could tell by the details on the mask he wore. That only increased his wrath and desire to see his body lifeless on the ground. As he crossed the room, Dolohov took his mask off to look Severus in the eyes, cynically. With a swift strike of his wand and an angry bark escaping his lips,
Severus hit him with a spell, a dark purple beam shooting from his wand and hitting Dolohov across his chest. For one split second, it seemed like the spell had had no effect. Dolohov had even had the time to smirk in victory. But then, he let out an agonizing scream as thick, black liquid began to ooze from his ears, nostrils, eye sockets and even from underneath his fingernails. His organs were slowly being liquefied from the inside out and pouring out of him. A hole opened in his chest and the black goo began to pour from it as well. The screams only stopped when his mouth was so filled with this liquid that it wasn’t capable of emitting a sound. He was soon just a dry husk, falling over to the floor with a horrified expression permanently engraved on his mummy like features.

Severus ran to Hermione and knelt next to her as dueling continued all around them.

“Hermione,” he called desperately, trying to bring her to. Blood ran down her cheeks from under her mask, so he ripped it off of her. “Hermione!”

She woke with a start and tried to get up to fight, but was too dizzy to do so and leaned back against the wall, with his help.

“I told you to leave, witch!” He cried, half desperate, half relieved she was at least conscious.

She smiled briefly, and quickly her expression changed to one of fear.

She saw, over Severus’ shoulder, a Death Eater moving to attack him from behind. As if in slow motion, she saw his wand lifting from his side, and the words *Avada Kedavra* being mouthed, as a green beam of light began to emerge from the wand.

“SEVERUS!” She yelled as her wand hand wrapped around his shoulders, trying to protect him, to pull him out of the way somehow, and green light traveled through the air towards his back.

Her sheer despair made her bracelet lift a shield around them, and the green ray bounced of it and hit the caster on the stomach, making him fall dead to the ground.

But apparently it wasn’t enough. Severus was unconscious on top of her, a trail of blood spilling from the corner of his lips. She did not have the strength to try and rouse him as she wanted to. Her despair, her recently obtained battle wound, and her exertion made her collapse under him as well.

Chapter End Notes

Uhm... Sorry? Don't hate me. We'll get through it.
But to be fair though, I did warn you to never forget the Death Eaters still roaming around.

This week will need to be one of three updates, so the angst won't last long, hopefully. Thursday or Friday should see the next chapter, then another on Sunday and the last one next Wednesday.
Chapter 48

Hermione woke up with a start, springing up immediately and gasping for breath. She quickly assessed she was in a hospital, judging by her all white surroundings and the small white gown that exposed her more than cover her, and the platter of potions beside her bed, next to her belongings – her bracelet, her earrings, her engagement ring and her wand – told her it could only be St. Mungo’s. Her head throbbed quite a bit. She took her hand to it and felt bandages. Her chest hurt as well, like it had been ripped in half. She could not discern if it was physical, due to Dolohov’s spell, or emotional, the fear of having lost Severus.

She stood, fighting the pain, and rushed out of the room – as much as she could at least – in which she was alone, probably to allow her some privacy due to her fame in the wizarding community.

“Severus! Severus!” She called out in despair through the halls as she looked through the little windows on the doors looking for him, her head pulsating with each desperate cry. But she pushed on anyway. She finally reached a portion of the hall where it widened, creating a small waiting room with an empty healer’s station, but did not pay much attention, focused on finding the next patient room, on finding Severus. She was supporting herself on the wall, trying to make it to the next door, when she was seen by Harry and Draco, who sat in the waiting room that opened up on the opposite wall – but not together – along with Ginny, Minerva, Narcisa and a few other who waited for loved ones who had gotten hurt one way or another. Harry and Draco stood promptly and rushed to her, followed by Ginny. Draco didn’t even bother himself with Harry’s presence; he was just worried about Hermione.

“Granger! You shouldn’t be out of bed.” Draco got to her first and held her by the waist. She accepted the help and leaned on one of his shoulders.

“He’s right, Hermione,” Harry said and startled Draco.

“Severus.” She panted, her head killing her. Her eyes weren’t even completely open. “Where is he? Please tell me he’s alive. Please. Please. He has to be!” She was now sobbing into Draco’s chest.

“Hermione, calm down,” Ginny said, rubbing her back.

“Snape is down the hall,” Draco said.

“But they won’t tell us anything. They didn’t even let Professor McGonagall in to see him,” Harry finished.

“I need to see him,” Hermione said through the tears.

“I don’t think we should be crowding her like this,” Minerva was now next to them. “In fact, we should call a healer to put her back to bed.”

“No! I need to see Severus!” Hermione raised her voice, as she was desperate.

“All right dear, calm yourself. It won’t do to be so agitated. Mr. Potter and Mr. Malfoy can perhaps help you to his room?” Minerva looked at them and they nodded. “They might let you in. Miss Weasley and I will leave you three to it then.” Minerva escorted Ginny back to their seats.

Each holding one side of her, Draco and Harry helped her to the end of the hall. She was
about to turn the doorknob to go into the room when a healer finally appeared on the floor. She was young, blonde, with bright blue eyes, and came running to them.

“No, no! You can’t go in there. You should be in bed.”

“I have to see him.”

“No. Only family members allowed. Let’s get you to bed.”

“I’m his fiancée!” Hermione cried, outraged.

The healer looked at her with a mixture of doubt and disdain.

“Right… Be that as it may… official family only.”

Draco left her to Harry and slipped away. But she couldn’t be bothered by this right now. Holding on to Harry, Hermione started “Don’t look at me like that! I have every right to see him! He has no official family,” she said enraged, her head throbbing so much she almost wanted to vomit.

“Can’t you at least tell us how he is?” Harry tried with a bit more patience and manners, trying to use his Chosen One charm as well.


A very large older woman came wobbling towards them, Draco and Narcisa Malfoy in tow.

“Let her in, Healer Hughes,” the woman said. She appeared to be the healer’s supervisor.

“But…”

“But nothing. You will let the nice lady in and see to it that she has the appropriate treatment for her wounds and the exertion she has suffered.”

The healer begrudgingly touched her wand to the doorknob and it unlocked. The supervisor wobbled back the way she came and passed Draco and Narcisa, who whispered something to her in her polite but superior manner and got a nod from the large woman in turn.

Hermione, Harry and Draco were the only ones left at the door now.

“Thank you,” she said to Draco with tears still in her eyes. She knew that it was his money or influence that had gotten this somehow.

“Don’t mention it, Granger. It’s the least I can do. I’m sorry this happened in my house. Again. I swear we didn’t…”

She squeezed his hand. “I know.”

She walked into the room to see Severus lying, still unconscious, on the hospital bed. A bowl next to him, like a small pensive with his blood in it, reflected a sort of hologram that worked much like the machines in muggle hospitals that measured the patient’s vitals. There was some potion floating over the bowl, being poured in slowly. Apparently that got it to his blood in his body somehow.

Hermione rushed to him and left Harry and Draco behind to pull the door closed and leave the lovers to it after she had entered.
“Severus!” She squeezed his hand. “Severus.” She caressed his cheek. “Severus.” She gently shook one of his shoulders. But he didn’t respond, nor did he open his eyes. He did not wake up. He was shirtless, and she could see there was a large bruise that must have started on his back somewhere and spread over his right shoulder. Perhaps the impact of the spell caused it. He also had a bandage on the middle of his chest she did not understand. They must have done that there, in the hospital.

Her bracelet had shielded them, he was alive. The killing curse must not have hit him, not completely. But did it have some effect? Would he ever wake? Where was the blasted cow of a healer when she needed her?

She lay beside him, partly because she needed to be with him, feel him, feel his smell of parchment and herbs and the peppery cologne he wore, his skin, his warmth, and partly because she could not support herself standing any longer. Her pains demanded she lie down.

Her head was on his shoulder as she caressed his chest and cried. “Severus… please, don’t leave me. Come back to me.” Her tears rolled down her cheeks and onto his chest. “I love you. I need you.”

After a few long minutes of silence and just her alone with her tears, her head on his chest, listening to his slow heartbeat, she heard him grunt in pain. She sat up quickly.

“Severus?”

He groaned in response. Then he slowly opened his eyes.

“Oh Severus! Thank Merlin! How are you feeling?” She asked in despair, caressing his cheeks and crying.

“That… does not matter. You… are hurt. Why are you… not being seen to?” He asked with difficulty, in a husky voice.

“Of course it matters, you dense man! Are you in pain?” She held her head. The throbbing was killing her, though she did not want it to show.

He swallowed dry and made a face. “You… are the one who got attacked. You were… bleeding.” He was trying to get up and help her.

She found his wand on the nightstand, as she had left hers in her room, and conjured some water for him to drink. “I already got seen and treated,” she said. “You… you got hit by a killing curse! Lie down.” She gently pushed him back to the bed and handed him the water.

His brows knitted. “And how… am I here?” He took tiny sips of the water and winced.

“I… my bracelet. It put up a shield.”

“Why don’t… I remember? Just you… bleeding.”

“Because it came from behind.”

“That explains the horrible pain… when I…try to breathe deeply.”

“I’m going to get a healer.”

“No, stay.” He managed to pull her down to his chest with a grunt of pain. “In my
experience… one will come eventually. I’m fine. You need rest.”

“I thought I was going to lose you, Sev!” She said, crying again.

“Shhh,” he caressed her hair, the part that wasn’t wrapped up in bandages. “I’m here.”

“I want to marry you.”

He managed to chuckle a bit. “You must…. have hit your head… pretty hard. We’ve already… settled that. We’re engaged. I think.”

“No, I mean now. Right away.” She sat up again to look him in his deep obsidian soothing eyes. “Not years from now when I’m settled in my career or whatever other crap I said. I don’t want to wait. Life is too short, we’ve seen that first hand time and time again. I want to marry you as soon as possible. I want to be able to get into your damned hospital room without having to have fucking Narcisa Malfoy exert her influence. I want to be official family. I want to be Mrs. Snape.”

He smiled and pulled her hand to his lips so he could brush them against her skin. “Okay. I’m happy you want… to be Mrs. Snape. Honored.”

“Maybe Mrs. Granger-Snape,” she smiled.

“Still honored.” The corner of his lips pulled upward a bit.

A healer, who appeared to be much nicer than Healer Hughes, walked in holding Hermione’s bag of belongings. She was a bit older than Snape, a bit stumpy, but still so beautiful.

“Miss Granger, here are… Mr. Snape! You’re awake!” She rushed to his bedside, placing Hermione’s belongings on the small table. “I need to exam you.”

Hermione slid off the bed and let her do her work while she looked on, apprehensive. The healer pulled her wand and waved it over his body. She then summoned a clipboard from the foot of the bed and a quick notes quill that wrote down what her wand assessed.

“Well?” Hermione asked.

“He… appears to be well. We were scared he would not wake, I admit. But now… he will need treatment still, because we had to magically suppress a portion of his lung. Could you tell me what sort of curse was used against him? We have never seen anything like it. Not much physical damage, except for the third of his right lung that seems to have… died.”

“A killing curse. To his back.” Hermione said, and held her head again. The healer widened her eyes.

“A killing curse?”

“Yes, but I… put up a shield. Apparently not a good enough one.”

“He’s alive! It was a splendid one. We have got to stop meeting like this, Mr. Snape,” the healer said, now turning to Severus.

He chuckled. Hermione looked puzzled and a bit jealous, and a jolt of pain ran through her chest. She held it.

“Healer Rookwood, could you please exam her? She seems… to be in pain. And stubbornly won’t lie down.”
“Of course! That is what I came here to do, actually.”

The healer pointed to the empty bed beside Severus’, ordering Hermione to lie down. She did, and the healer proceeded to her examination.

“You know each other?” She asked, biting her lip in embarrassment for being jealous at a time like this, of a woman who was just doing her job.

“Yes,” Healer Rookwood said. “I had to put up with his stubbornness for a whole month not a year ago. Around Valentine’s Day, was it?”

“I am the best patient… you’ve ever had.” He said.

She scoffed. “If I hadn’t been allowed to put you under induced sleep for long periods…” She rolled her eyes and sighed, then looked at Hermione and smiled. “Is this the pretty young lady you talked about back then?” She asked. “Feisty, beautiful head of curls, bewitching caramel eyes? Seems to fit.”

Hermione blushed red as Healer Rookwood ended her examination and wrote something down on a clipboard at the foot of her bed.

“I only blabbed so much because of your horrendous potions.”

“At first, yes. But then you blabbed freely, demanding to be released, impatient to see her, I remember well. Things were left in a bit of a… mess? It seems to have worked out in the end.” She smiled.

“Luckily for me, yes. It has,” he said.

“You, Miss Granger, need to stay in bed. And more pain potions. And some other stuff I’ll throw in for free,” she joked and winked. “But really, don’t get up. That was a nasty blow to the head, it needs rest.”

“Can I stay here, with Sev?”

“As long as you are both in bed – separate beds” she said warningly with a furrowed brow. “I don’t see why not. You must know how grumpy and insufferable he is when sick, so it is at your own risk,” she chuckled. Hermione sniggered, blushing, a warmth spreading in her chest upon knowing he had talked about her even back in February. That he had missed her.

“I’ll be back with the potions you both need. Kudos on putting up with him, Miss Granger.”

“This is patient abuse. I will… report you.” He smirked.

“Shhh, less talking from you. You need to rest that lung.”

Healer Rookwood left the room.

“You talked about me when you were here in February?” She looked at him, teary eyed.

“Yes. I was… constantly thinking about you. Sometimes it… slipped out.”

Hermione was smiling, lying on her side, looking at him.

“Your Patronus… it changed?” She asked.
“Apparently.”

“When?”

“I can’t say. That was … the first time I cast it in… a year, I guess.” He used to cast it quite often, to feel close to Lily somehow. He hadn’t felt the urge with Hermione in his life. “Yours… changed as well.”

“Yes.”

“When?”

“I found out in February. But probably before. When I fell for you.” There was a moment of silence. “You really love me,” she added.

“I’ve said so, witch. Does my word not count?”

“Yes, of course it does. I just didn’t know it was Patronus changing love,” she smiled.

“It’s life changing love, Hermione.”

She moved to sit up.

“Stay in bed!” He chided.

“I want to kiss you, you sweet man!”

“Later. You’ll have a lifetime to… do so, since you wish to be… Mrs. Snape.” It was still very exhausting to talk. He winced because of it. “Sorry. Mrs. Granger-Snape.”

“I think Mrs. Snape will do.” She was smiling, still watching him. She would sneak a kiss later. “I can’t understand the eagle though.”

“It was… my Patronus… before… Before.” He just left it at that. She knew what he meant.

She then had a realization, and her mouth dropped open. “So… yours must have changed back before mine! Or mine would have been a doe as well, no?”

“I… guess.”

She smiled wide. That didn’t exactly mean he had loved her all along, but it at least meant he had been… free from Lily Potter for a while. He didn’t truly… love her anymore. And wasn’t devoted to her for a long time now. Because of Hermione, he had long forgotten Lily at heart. Hermione’s happiness couldn’t fit in her chest. She clutched it when she felt a pang from the spell she had been hit with.

“Stop grinning, witch,” he said as he looked at the ceiling, as he had been all this time, unable to turn in bed without it hurting. “Get some rest.”
Chapter 49

Chapter Notes

This was supposed to go up only tomorrow but... hopefully it's well edited, cause today has been a long-ass day. I might be impatient, just a tad.

Extra long chapter for my standards I think, hopefully with enough fluff and steam to make up for any past transgressions and strain on your poor hearts?

So maybe keep some tissues around. For your eyes... and other parts?

The pair of them could receive visitors from the next day on. Minerva, Kingsley and Harry came – not all together – and filled them in on what happened after they were incapacitated.

Teams of Aurors came in, as did members of the Order, and the situation was contained rather quickly. Besides the two Death Eaters who were killed and a few injured on their side, there were no major issues. The remaining Death Eaters were in Azkaban as they spoke, and by all accounts, had been the last ones left on the run. They had taken the opportunity of the ball to try to instill fear and have the wizarding world believe they still had some amount of strength, biding time until their next move. The Ministry believed their main objective at that ball was to kill the Malfoys and Severus and Hermione. Anyone else was an added bonus. They also hoped Potter would show and that they would be able to finish him as well.

Ginny and a few Weasleys accompanied Harry to visit them, though they could only come in two at a time, and even Narcisa came with Draco to express her apologies. Severus was terribly annoyed by all the traffic in their room, but Hermione knew it was overwhelming for him – in a good way – to have so many people remotely care about his well-being like this. Other visitors included Luna and Neville, and much of the Hogwarts staff, on their odd afternoon off.

Hermione just needed rest for hitting her head. The wound to her chest, the reopened wound, caused by yet another spell from Dolohov, had been closed already. Severus, who had to have a portion of his right lung removed, needed more rest. After many impertinent demands, such rest was allowed to be had at home under the care of his wife-to-be, once Hermione had been discharged by St. Mungo’s.

While he rested in their room at Spinner’s End, she tinkered down in the basement in his lab every day after work. She researched how he had made her bracelet, which she cherished all the more now that it had saved his life. She even went to their rooms in Hogwarts, which they would only occupy after Christmas break now – when he would be apt to return to his teaching – to look for answers to her many questions on how to properly make and charm a stone like that. All her research paid off, and she was able to make him a ring with a small, yet powerful black stone, to protect him as the bracelet protected her. According to her research, his ring would be even more protective, since she made it while already harboring such love for him, while his was made when he felt a bit less strongly towards her, supposedly. She was extremely happy to have it finished in time for their wedding.

They were to be wed during the Christmas break, in the Hogwarts Great Hall. It was the closest opportunity they had with available time to take a honeymoon trip. It took place in Hogwarts
due to the privacy from the press, and also because it was where they had met, and where they had fallen in love, as much as it gave Severus chills to think of this and remember how much younger she was than him.

So on December 25th the Christmas decorations were slightly changed or moved to make room for and complement wedding ones. Everything was decorated in white and gold ribbons, with peach colored flowers. A small portion of the immense room had chairs up front for their few guests. An exception was made and Mr. and Mrs. Granger were allowed into Hogwarts for the event, and they finally got to see where their daughter had grown up all these past years. They arrived with Severus and Hermione, who had spent Christmas Eve with them. With all the wedding plans, it was easier to think of only two gifts instead of gifts for the whole Hogwarts staff. They would get theirs late, in January. And Severus and Hermione agreed they wouldn’t exchange any gifts that night either.

Hermione was in their rooms, which were unwarded for a few hours for her to get dressed with the help of her bridesmaids – Ginny and Luna – when there was a knock on the door. Whoever it was did not wait for an answer, and simply pushed the door open. The girls saw Snape poking his head in and immediately stood in front of Hermione, screaming.

“You can’t see her!” Ginny let out, exasperated. “It’s bad luck!”

He rolled his eyes as he entered anyway. He looked very dashing in his wedding dress robes – black, of course – and his hair neatly tied back.

“I do not believe in such foolishness.”

“You should,” Luna started in her dreamy voice. “If you see the bride before the wedding, it is known that bobblypops will haunt your lives every day.”

Severus just looked at her and tilted his head, aghast. “Yes… well, I think I will take my chances. We have had all the bad luck one can have in a lifetime, hopefully. I need to speak to you, Hermione,” he said to his bride now, who had been concealed by a wall composed by Ginny and Luna’s bodies up until then.

“No no,” they closed in on her as he stepped forward.

“I need to speak to my wife!” He said, irritated, and Ginny smirked. He took a deep breath. “… to be. Please,” he ended in a much more composed tone.

“Guys, it’s fine! I’m not even dressed yet.”

They reluctantly stepped away from her to reveal Hermione in a robe and slippers. However, her hair and makeup were already done and she looked absolutely divine. She had combs in her hair that had sparkly white flowers on them, weaving a web on half her head. Her hair was straightened and pulled up, soft curls falling from the top of her head. Her eyes had some makeup charm on them that made them look slightly like cat eyes, and her lips… voluptuous and shiny with lip balm, begging to be kissed.

“Miss Lovegood, Miss Weasley…” Ginny knitted her eyebrows, “Ginevra… may we please have the room for a moment?”

They looked at Hermione for an okay and she smiled. “Go on, give us a few minutes.”

The girls left, but stayed behind the closed door in the hall. Ginny had her brother’s
extendable ears on her at all times, and she stuck one under the door.

“I don’t think we should do that,” Luna said. “It might be something private.”

“We need to do this, Luna. What if he is going to break her heart, minutes before the wedding? We need to know before going back in, to console her. It’s our duty as bridesmaids.”

Is everything okay, Sev?” She asked with the most wonderful smile. His heart thudded in his chest. He was so in love with this witch. How much he was truly devoted to her was something unfathomable.

“Beyond okay,” he smiled and caressed her cheek. “There is just… something I need to say.”

Outside, Ginny and Luna held their breaths, apprehensive.

Hermione looked at him expectantly and he sighed deeply.

“I know we said… we would not write our own vows…”

“You said that,” she smiled.

“Yes. Indeed. Because I could never… I would not be caught dead saying such things in front of a crowd…” He sighed deeply again and rubbed his eyebrow. “I want you to know that I am very thankful to you that you pulled me out of the Shrieking Shack that day and saved me. If you hadn’t, I would have died without ever knowing that life could be so worth living. So I intend to spend the next hopefully several decades trying to make you feel that decision, and this one now, were worth it and wise.”

She had tears in her eyes, but she smiled. “Best decision I ever made, Severus Snape! For being called a bright girl all my life, it is very shocking that I was my smartest so late as eighteen. Because if I hadn’t pulled you out, I would have have gone through life without ever knowing what true love is.”

He grazed his thumb on her cheek as he held her face and smiled. He brushed his lips against hers. “I love you, kitten.”

“I love you too.” Her eyes were swimming in tears still.

“Shh, don’t cry. Don’t ruin that magnificent makeup.” He rubbed her cheeks with his thumb again as she held him by the forearms. “I’ll see you in a little while?” He smiled.

“Definitely.”

He walked away from her feeling lighter, so happy, and turned the knob on the door to leave. As soon as he pulled it open, Luna and Ginny grabbed him, one on each side of him, hugging him tight around the waist. Hermione giggled.

“That was so beautiful, Professor,” Luna said. Ginny just nodded, both still clinging to him.

“Can’t we have one ounce of privacy?” He asked, very annoyed.

“No.” Ginny said smiling. “You should get used to it. It’s what having friends feels like.” They still clung to him. He had his arms half lifted, trying not to touch them. Hermione felt warm inside with Ginny’s words.
“Miss Lovegood, Miss Weasley, must you do this?”

“Ginny.”

“Call me Luna, Professor.”

“Unhand me. I need to go, and certainly you must help Hermione get ready.”

“Ginny.” Ginny said again.

“Fine. Luna, Ginevra.” He reluctantly touched their backs, each hand on one, and patted once. “Let me go.”

Luna did step back with a dreamy smile, but Ginny held on to him. Hermione grinned, feeling very warm and fuzzy.

“Ginevra.” He said warningly.

“Gin – ny. I’m not letting go until you say it. Ginny.”

He sighed, annoyed. Then cleared his throat. “Ginny,” he said in almost a whisper, annoyed.

“See?” She stepped back grinning. “That wasn’t hard.”

He snorted. “Perhaps for you. I personally preferred when I could threaten you with detention.”

Ginny snorted and Severus left.

The guests were all there. Gold and white ornaments all around the Great Hall, floating around with the hundreds of candles that lit the room, peach colored flowers adorning the Hall and marking the way down the aisle. The few students who remained in the castle had also been invited.

Music started playing, Flitwick conducting the orchestra, and the bridesmaids, in peach dresses walked down the aisle with the groomsmen, who were Draco and Minerva – in a suit. Then came the bride and her father.

Hermione was in a beautiful white gown with gold trimmings. Absolutely angelic. He smiled, despite himself, and tried very hard to contain the tears that welled up inside. He would be so happy. He knew it. Happy beyond his wildest imagination.

It wasn’t a religious ceremony, of course. A Ministry official was there to officiate, but Hermione wanted the white gown dream anyway. As they exchanged vows – the generic ones everyone had to exchange in such ceremonies – she presented him with the ring she made him after Ginny, who had been holding onto it, handed it to her. He looked at her, puzzled, as she slipped it on his finger after the white gold wedding band, as he had slipped her engagement ring on after her wedding band.

“I made it. Call it a Christmas gift. For your protection,” she said with a smile and shook her bracelet on her wrist.

There was a reception afterwards, right there in the hall. The chairs were moved to be around
tables and space opened up in the middle for a dance floor. Everyone enjoyed themselves thoroughly, even though it was a wizard band playing, and the meals were delicious, prepared by the house elves. Hermione was of course against that, but had been convinced that it would be offensive to them to have a party there and not have them cook for it.

Severus, as requested, danced with her, stunning all around him that he actually could do it, and well. When they were both extremely tired and felt they had enjoyed their party enough, Hermione threw the bouquet – which Ginny caught to no one’s surprise, making Harry only grin and not at all feel despair – and the Snapes said their goodbyes, heading for their rooms in the dungeons while the rest continued to enjoy the party. From there, they took the Floo to a cabin in the French Alps, where they would spend their honeymoon.

It belonged to the Malfoys, who had let them have it for as long as they like, as an apology for the troubles they had been through in Malfoy Manor. And because Draco was thrilled to have friends in an actually healthy friendship – though he acted nonchalant about it – and didn’t want to lose them.

A cabin, Draco had said. But they should have known that nothing owned by Malfoys would be so simple. It had six bedrooms with lavatories, a dining room for about fifteen people and a luxurious kitchen, certainly meant to be handled by a full staff. Draco had offered to send a house elf with them but Hermione declined. Severus and she could cook and clean up whatever they needed perfectly well. But she could see elves had made the house ready for them. Outside the sliding glass doors to the family room, on a wooden deck, was a large hot tub as well, the kind with jets and seats for quite a good party. For someone so blood prejudiced, Lucius Malfoy certainly enjoyed muggle inventions. Severus could imagine perfectly well the kind of “parties” Lucius probably had had there in the absence – and perhaps even in the presence and with the consent and participation – of his lovely wife.

They chose the room that occupied the whole of the smaller third floor – certainly meant for the masters of the house – and decided to sleep, since both were tired from the long, but fun, evening they had had. There was no harm in not having sex on their wedding night. Although Hermione was a bit apprehensive. They had only had sex a couple of times in the last two months, since he was recovering. The few times they had had sex were against the healers’ orders, and she had to be on top and take it very slowly. He had gotten winded easier than before, still, even with the exercises and spells he had been going to St. Mungo’s once a week to do. She hoped not having sex that night did not mean starting their marriage off on the wrong foot in that department.

He changed into his sleeping trousers and she took his sleeping shirt, as was now their ritual, and she cuddled him, caressing his hair and back as he fell asleep with her bushy hair tucked under his chin on Malfoy’s huge king size bed with fine linen sheets.

Hermione woke up when sunlight was streaming through the enormous floor-to-ceiling windows that let them enjoy a wonderful view of the snowy mountain tops. The light hit her eyelids and made her wince. Before she actually opened her eyes and gave up completely the idea of going back to sleep, she smelled fresh tea and eggs. Then, there were kisses being placed on her neck, and a hand caressing her thighs from behind.

“Good morning, Mrs. Snape,” she heard her husband’s low rumble in her ear and excitement pulled immediately at her core. Mrs. Snape. She smiled.

“Good morning, dear, dear husband,” she replied as she opened her eyes and saw a tray on the nightstand beside her with the breakfast she had smelled. She turned to face him and kissed his
lips, her hand trailing its way lightly down his bare torso as her lips hungrily devoured his, her excitement growing stronger and pulling tighter from her navel to her core. She could feel her entrance growing slightly wider and swollen, craving his hard and large cock.

“Will you bring me breakfast in bed every day for the rest of our lives?” She asked smiling when their lips parted.

“Every weekend at least, when I don’t have to eat in that damned Great Hall.”

“I will collect on that promise,” she said as she sat up and pulled the tray to her lap.

They shared their breakfast, she eating relatively quickly, and before either could finish she started:

“Don’t eat too much. I thought you might fancy… a dip in the hot tub this beautiful sunny morning?” She wore a mischievous smile.

He smirked and leaned in to nip her ear instead of finishing his toast. “I did not pack a bathing suit since I was not aware I would need one on a mountain top in the middle of winter.

“Not a problem,” she said pushing the tray to the bed and standing up. “Neither did I.” She pulled off his shirt and stood in front of him stark naked, her nipples hard peaks and not due to cold, since the fireplace and probably a few spells made it very warm in the room.

He growled but it caught in his throat.

“Are you… up for it?” She asked, smiling.

“Abso-fucking-lutely,” he said as he stood to pull off his trousers. She giggled and ran downstairs and as soon as he had his trousers off, he ran after her.

He caught her somewhere on the ground floor and hoisted her over his shoulder, to carry her out to the deck, making her laugh merrily. As her ass was next to his face, he slapped one cheek, which made her gasp in surprise, then he trailed a finger down her exposed slit, feeling her very swollen labia and wetness beginning to slip out. She moaned at his touch and lightly pressed her thighs together. They got outside and the deck was, of course, warded against peepers.

He set her down beside the tub as he waved a hand to turn the jets on, and she immediately sat by it, dipping her feet in for a few seconds. He still stood and his cock, only half hard, was at an excellent height to be sucked by her. She stroked him, looking up with a mischievous smile, then sucked on his bollocks. He pulled in air through clenched teeth and his cock was rock hard in her hand in record time. She summoned a pillow from a longue chair and placed it at his feet, where she knelt and proceeded to taking him into her mouth after slowly teasing his tip most deliciously with her tongue and soft plush lips.

She was so horny, even more now in the position she was in, her core completely exposed. She rolled her hips, wishing she could manage to rub herself on her heels, and rocked it onto the pillow as she sucked his cock and moaned.

Her moans with his cock in her mouth only drove him more insane, and he had to stop her before he spilled himself in her mouth. He did not want to take that chance and not have his cock bounce right back up to be in her delicious pussy.

She crawled backwards to step into the tub, licking her lips and looking up at him with a sly smile. Once inside, she glided to the opposite side, splaying her legs as she sat there.
“Are you… coming in?” She asked smirking and though he could not properly see her exposed pussy under the rushing water of the hot tub, his dick twitched.

“Definitely,” he said stepping in and gliding to her at once, his lips latching onto her breast as his fingers found her core and rubbed her clit.

She rocked her hips into his fingers as he sucked on her peaks, the tip of his tongue gently rolling on them from time to time, making her moan. His lips trailed up to hers, his tongue massaging hers sweetly as his fingers left her bud and circled her entrance, making her moan into his mouth. He then kissed her neck, his fingers rubbing from her clit down to her entrance, then up… and down again.

With his free hand he summoned the cushion from across the hot tub and placed it on the deck behind her. She did not notice, her eyes closed as she enjoyed his clever fingers on her clit and his lips on her neck.

“Get out of the tub, kitten,” he rumbled next to her neck.

“What?” She could not grasp what he asked. She could only hear her heavy breathing in her ear. She then understood, a second later, and moaned “whyyyy” as he hit a marvelous spot in her core.

“I don’t think I’ve ever had the lung capacity to go snorkeling for pussy. And I very much want to eat you. Right now.”

She moaned most deliciously, looking at him and biting her lip, and slipped up onto the deck and then sat on the cushion, quickly, spreading her legs and supporting her feet on the ledge of the tub.

Smirking, he lowered himself to kiss her mons as his finger gently traced her labia. He then sucked on her mound, taking her clit into his mouth with it, his fingers sinking into her.

“Uuuuhhh, Severusss!” She let her head fall back, her eyes rolling back into her head, and she hit her head on the deck. It didn’t even hurt, she was so close to coming. He continued at it as she squirmed on the deck, tugging his hair, crying his name. He smirked against her pussy, and as he licked her mound and labia, giving her clit a break it did not want, he took the thumb of the hand that was not teasing her entrance to her lips, caressing it. She pulled it into her mouth and sucked on it, making him suck in air through gritted teeth.

He returned his tongue to her clit, and his fingers into her core. It did not take long at all for her to come, legs trembling and threatening to shut close. He grazed his teeth on her inner thighs and on her mound as his fingers triggered more waves of pleasure.

When she was down from her high, she slipped into the tub beside him and stroked his cock as she kissed his lips teasingly. He wanted more, to plunge his tongue into her mouth, but she refused, smiling and only briefly pecking or sucking on his lips before pulling away and waiting a second before returning.

“I love you,” she smiled and kissed him again, still stroking his cock.

“All of me or just my pussy licking abilities?” He smirked.

“All of you,” she kissed him again and straddled him to rub her core on his cock.

“I love you too.”
She wanted to impale herself on his cock, but he flipped her before she could, having her bend over the deck as her legs were still in the water and he entered her from behind. She gripped the cushion that was still there as he plundered her, caressing her ass cheeks.

“Fuck, kitten. Have I ever told you… your ass is so… fucking perfect?” He slapped it and she bucked back into him. He grunted, gripping her hips. He reached under her to tap and rub her clit, making her pleasure mount again. He was so close to coming, and so was she, but he wanted to make it last longer.

He pulled out of her and flipped her back around, sitting in the hot tub and pulling her to sit on him, entering her once again. She kissed his lips, her tongue licking his lower lip, begging for entrance which was promptly granted, as she caressed his chest, trailed his scars with her fingertips, and rocked slowly on his cock, clamping it as she rose, moaning into his mouth as she fell, rolling her hips in circles before she started over. He placed his hand between them, his thumb on her clit, gently rubbing as she clenched his cock, his other hand on her back caressing her.

“I love being inside you, Hermione. It feels so fucking delicious.” He gasped against her lips and then nipped her lower one. “It feels like home.”

She smiled and leaned in to whisper in his ear. “And are you going to come in my sweet, delicious pussy, Severus?” He pressed her clit as he growled and she was so close to coming. Her breathing became very labored very fast. “Can you feel… how wet… and tight…” she clenched around him, “my little cunt… is for you, love? Thrust your… huge… throbbing… cock in me and make me squirt all over you.”

He absolutely could not resist it when she talked dirty to him, so he rubbed her clit as fast as he could, to make her come again before he did. It did not take long for her spray to get mixed with the rushing water of the hot tub, and thank Merlin for that because he came with a loud groan inside her, gripping her hips and holding her close to him. It had been too long. A month is too long. A week is too long. A week is too long to be away from her sweet and warm center. He hoped he would never again need to be away for longer than two days.

She unstraddled him and sat beside him, claiming his lips with hers. They remained in the tub for a good while, enjoying each other’s kisses and tender caresses, nipping each other’s ears and necks. They whispered sweet nothings in each other’s ears and he could barely believe he would be able to do this for always, that she wanted him to do it for always. Mrs. Snape. He could barely believe that the world was now in a place where hoping for a long future was not wishful thinking.

He rubbed her feet as they talked and laughed, and he splashed water on her as she tried to keep her hair dry. She rubbed his shoulders as she sat on the ledge of the tub, him in between her legs, laying his head on her thigh and kissing it, grazing his teeth on it, making her slightly aroused again. He had never been pampered before she came along, and he quite enjoyed it, he wasn’t too ashamed to say. And he most definitely enjoyed paying her back in equal measures.

When they finally gave up the comfort of each other’s embrace and the relaxing hot water, they decided to get dressed in their gloves, winter coats and hats, and go for a walk around the little village a little way down the mountain. It was muggle, which surprised Severus, that Lucius Malfoy would consent to own property so near muggles.

They visited shops and Hermione bought little souvenirs for their friends and for themselves, especially since they still owed them Christmas presents. They had coffee, then lunch, and all communication was made by means of Severus’ knowledge of French, which gradually got her very aroused again. Hermione asked for people to take pictures of them, gesticulating and pointing to the camera and themselves a lot, since Severus refused to do so in a way they would understand more
promptly: speaking. It was late afternoon when, after having had tasted cheese and wine and fondue, they decided to head back to their chalet.

After having bathed and gotten in his sleeping trousers, he stepped out of the loo to find his beautiful wife in a short, white, silk nighty. She lay on her stomach on the bed and waved her legs in the air. The attire dipped very low down her back, close to her buttocks, and had lace trimmings around the dip. Its length was above the knees, but since she was lying down, the hem rode up close to her ass cheeks, and he could see the thin line of lace white knickers covering her slit and being engulfed by her marvelous ass.

“Hi,” she smiled.

“Are you going to be insatiable every time we are abroad?” He smirked. “Because I will buy a house on every continent to take you away every single weekend.”

He started to head over to her and she pulled the covers over herself, still smiling.

“Do not be such a tease. You can’t show me that then take it away.”

“Come and get me,” she giggled.

He growled and crawled into bed with her. They kissed passionately as his hands caressed her waist, his thumb grazing her silk covered breast, and hers glided up and down his bare shoulders and arms and chest and back. It finally cupped his groin over his sleep trousers and he grunted into her mouth.

“Bloody hell, witch.”

“Don’t call me that,” she said in between kisses. “Call me what I am to you and you alone,” she said softly, smiling, caressing his cock over his trousers before she claimed his lips again.

“Wife,” he rumbled as his lips moved to nip her earlobe. “Love,” he said kissing her neck.

She smiled, her arms wrapped around his shoulders. “Sev,” she whimpered, his hands now on her bare back, tracing her spine down to where the V on the nighty allowed it. “Husband?” Her hand once again lowered to his cock.

“Yes?” He was kissing her neck.

“I… I want you in my bum,” she whispered. “Bugger me.” She felt his cock grow hard almost instantly under her palm.

He pulled back to look her in the eyes. “Are you sure, kitten?”

“Yes. I want to be yours… completely.”

He groaned and sucked on her lips, nipping the bottom one as they parted.

“Tonight?”

“Yes. I’ve… prepared, when I was showering.” He smirked and she blushed. “I read about the spells… and other muggle stuff.”

“My little witch… my beautiful wife… so curious,” he nipped her ear as his hand caressed and gently squeezed one of her ass cheeks, pulling it open a bit. He pulled up her nighty slowly, and grazed his fingers up her crack. She whimpered into his mouth, excitement pulling her core and
nael closer together.

“You can’t be an impatient kitty for this,” he said seriously.

“I know, love. Do with me as you please. I trust you completely.” She hooked her leg on his hips and kissed his lips, her fingers sinking into his hair.

His hand glided down between their bodies and began to lightly graze her mons over the lace knickers.

“Sev?” She whimpered.

“Hmm?” He was kissing her neck and teasing her over her knickers still.

She reached out her hand and said “accio” as her lips lightly brushed against his cheek. She was touching her wand under her pillow with her other hand. He stopped kissing her to look her in the eyes, mildly puzzled.

From her travel bag and into her hand zoomed a black anal plug. Nothing large, it had a green stone at the base. She showed it to him, blushing. “I… read it might help.”

He smirked and leaned in to ravish her mouth as he took the plug from her hand. Their lips parted and he analyzed the plug.

“Mrs. Snape… naughty, naughty witch,” he smirked. “Have you always had this?”

“No! I bought it while you were… convalescing.”

“Have you used it alone?”

“No.”

“Then let’s put it to good use, shall we?” He rumbled. She nodded vehemently, biting her lower lip.

He pecked her lips, her neck, collarbone, down her cleavage and encompassed a silk covered breast in his mouth and did nothing but breathe lightly. It was enough to make her quiver and gently nudge her hips against his imprisoned cock. He grazed his teeth on her breast, catching her nipple over the silk and she moaned. Before she had even realized it had happened, his head was between her thighs, and he licked, sucked, nipped and grazed his teeth over her mons and labia. Very soon, her knickers were moist with her excitement, and he pulled them up into her. She rubbed her thighs together as her knickers pressed against her swollen clit and she grabbed the pillow beneath her head with one hand and his shoulder with the other. He then slowly pulled her knickers off, grazing his fingernails on her legs as he did it, making her body quicken. Having her wet, swollen core exposed made her even hornier.

He took the plug to her lips and pushed it gently in. She sucked on it lavishly, drooling on it, wishing that it was his cock. He pulled it away and trailed it down her body, pushing her nighty to the side to circle her nipples with its wet tip. The trail led down her abdomen to her clit, which he rubbed with the plug. She sucked in air through clenched teeth, then moaned his name. He kissed her lips once, then sat back to watch her core intently as it swelled and called out to him as he rubbed the plug on her.

He took her hand and brought it down to the plug. “Play with yourself, kitten.”
She happily obeyed, rubbing herself with it, little jolts of pleasure making her whimper and quiver while he helped, caressing her labia, fingerling her folds, watching her with so much hunger in his eyes.

He sucked on his fingers and sunk them into her entrance, gathering the juices that pooled there and spreading it to the outside, caressing her folds, then finally sliding his fingers to her puckered hole and moistening it with her essence, circling his fingertip around it, lightly massaging it. He finally stuck one finger in.

“Oh yes, Sev. Finger my tight little hole,” she moaned, still playing with her clit and the plug. A groan caught in his throat.

“You’ll make me come with that filthy mouth, Mrs. Snape.”

“I do want you to come… in my bum.”

He caressed her back entrance with a second finger, preparing it for entry, and his thumb dipped in her folds. She couldn’t control herself any longer.

“May I come, baby? I’m going to come,” she panted.

“Yes. Come for me, love.”

And she did, juices flowing down his thumb, his name on her lips.

He took his hand away and proceeded to licking her folds and clit lightly again and her whole body quivered. He licked and sucked, keeping her clit nice and swollen, her folds so wet and slippery.

“Turn around, kitten.” And she did, eagerly, putting her ass in the air. He licked the length of her slit, up to her crack, and poured attention on her puckered hole. She lightly wiggled her ass in his face as she moaned.

He summoned a jar from his bag, with thick, viscous goo, and lathered it on and in her back hole. He slowly stuck a finger inside after banishing the jar to a table.

“Does this feel good love?”

“Yes. So much.” She gasped.

“If you want to stop just say so, at any time.”

She just moaned. He slowly massaged her opening and made room for a second finger.

“Fuck yes, baby. Never stop,” she gasped once his fingers were filling her. He dipped the plug into her folds and wet it in her juices. Once. She whimpered. Twice. She moaned. A third time and she could not contain her scream of pleasure at being thus full. He pulled the plug out and it came out slick in her essence. He pulled his fingers out of her bum. He caressed her cheeks, trailing his fingers on them, then he planted kisses on them. Alternated with the kisses, he tenderly grazed his teeth on her cheeks, then traced the line where her thighs joined her ass with light fingers, then with his tongue, all of which made her emit sweet noises of pleasure. He traced her slit with the plug after rubbing it on her bud of nerves, plunging it into her folds once more, pulling out the slick toy to stick in her bum. She moaned in pleasure.

“Are you alright, kitten?” He asked, caressing the small of her back as she sat up to be close
to him, her back against his chest. He kissed her arms as he caressed her sides.

“Yes, Sev,” she gasped. “I need you.”

He turned her around and brought her to his lap, and slowly, gently, he plunged himself into her core. She hummed her appreciation and bit her lower lip before smiling at him and kissing his lips.

She bounced on him, her fingers intertwined on the back of his neck as he pushed up into her in synchrony. They remained at it for a while, looking into each other’s eyes and kissing. He pushed up her nighty over her head and caught one of her nipples in between his teeth, palming the other breast before turning his attention to it and sucking on it while she still bounced, rocked and rolled on top of him.

She was on the verge of coming, as was he, when he finally pulled out of her and turned her on all fours again. “Push down, love,” he asked and as she did, he pulled her plug out, caressing her lower back.

Still caressing her back, he pushed the tip of his cock to her puckered hole, and she leaned down to touch her face to the pillows, leaving her ass further up in the air. He still massaged her back and caressed her ass cheeks as he pushed further into her, but never completely.

“Alright?”
“Yes,” she gasped.

He moved oh so slowly, never plunging his whole cock into her, and reached around to her clit, rubbing it and catching it in between two fingers as he buggered her, using his other hand to sometimes massage her back. He leaned down to kiss her shoulder, nip it, as he flipped the hood of her clitoris and rubbed that exact button that set her insane. It didn’t take long at all for her to come, her legs weak and trembling as he held her up by the waist, she moaning his name. He moved slowly inside her twice more and filled her bum with his cum and pulled out, kissing her lower back and making her quiver once more before letting her collapse on the mattress with a smile on her face.

He lay beside her and pulled her to his chest, embracing her and caressing her ass down to her thighs.

“I love you, Hermione.”

“I love you,” she ran her hands down his arm.

After a moment of silence, he started

“I wish I could see Lucius’ face when he finds out we spent time here and what we did on his precious expensive thread count sheets.”

Hermione laughed, which made Severus break down laughing as well.
Chapter 50

Chapter Notes

Happy 59th birthday, Severus!

I always get sad with the end of a story, but I know I can't string you guys along just to fill the voids in my soul. *nervous laughter*.

See the end of the chapter for more notes

The happy couple made it back home and back to Hogwarts in time for Severus’ birthday. She had already planned a little gathering in the teacher’s lounge and had asked Minerva to go ahead and execute it. Minerva had reservations but was ultimately very pleased that there would be some sort of celebration for his birthday, even if she doubted Severus had given his approval.

He hadn’t, as it was supposed to be a surprise for him. The only way Hermione had thought of getting him to the teacher’s lounge at the appointed time was to say she wanted to shag in there, that it was her latest fantasy now that she had finally been allowed inside it. He followed her but wasn’t very convinced. Still, there was a possibility of a shag with this amazing, delicious woman, so of course he was going to follow her.

When he got there and saw all the staff and food and drinks, he shot her a warning look. She just smiled and shrugged it off, as she would, knowing it was just instinctive for him, throwing his walls up because he had never had such an experience. New territory required shields. His colleagues also ignored his feigned annoyance and congratulated him one by one, handing him presents. Many books, lab materials, and nice bottles of wine were presented to him. By the end of the affair, he had accepted his fate. Hermione sat on his lap in the corner of the room where he was for a moment silently watching everyone chat, feeling a bit overwhelmed that they had even cared to be there.

“So… are you enjoying yourself? Am I forgiven? Or are you going to punish me this evening?” She smirked.

“The fact that you will always be forgiven by me and that I am not having such a terrible time as I thought I would do not exclude the possibility of a spanking,” he whispered, then kissed her cheek as she sniggered. “And you do owe me a shag in this room now,” he whispered directly in her ear.

“I do not,” she giggled.

“Oh, we shall see, Mrs. Snape. We shall see.”

When they made it back to their rooms, his presents floating behind them, there were three more packages on their table. She took the two smaller ones, wrapped in black with silver ribbons, and presented them to him.

“What is this?” He asked.

“Presents, of course. From me. You didn’t think I wouldn’t get you anything, did you?”
“You are already the greatest gift I could possibly ask for.”

She smiled and blushed as he kissed her lips before sitting down to open one of her presents. It was a leather-bound journal, with his name engraved on the lower corner of the cover, and a quill with a beautiful yet discrete peacock feather. He absolutely adored them.

“For you to write down your brilliance. Adaptations and perfections for old potions, discovery of new ones… perhaps even start your own copy of an Advanced Potion Making sort of book, so that teachers everywhere could be using your book in class in the not so distant future.” She smiled. He pulled her to his lap for a deep kiss where he sat, at the table, unwrapping the presents.

“Have I told you that you are an incredible witch?”

“No, today,” she smirked.

“Well you are. Thank you. For the party, for the gift, for believing in me. For loving me.” He kissed her again.

“Any time, love. Any time.”

He moved on to her other package. It was a navy-blue corselet with thigh-high tights, all lace, exquisite, see-through.

“You don’t expect me to wear this, do you?” He arched an eyebrow.

“No,” she laughed. “I expect you to peal it off me in a little while.”

He growled. “Gladly.”

There was still a bigger package on the table, wrapped in red with a gold ribbon. He grimaced. “And this?”

“I expect it’s from a Gryffindor. Maybe Ginny and Harry?” She smiled.

He took the card attached to it and it was indeed signed by Potter and his better half, along with Luna and Mr. Longbottom.

_We thought you might like some change after 40 years, and with the new millennium and all. Happy Birthday!_

He rolled his eyes. “What horror might this be?” He asked as he unwrapped it with her still sitting on his lap. “I should probably just toss it in the fire and not even bother to open it.”

“Severus! Be nice. You might, I don’t know… actually like it.”

He snorted. “Doubtful.”

It was new teaching robes. Instead of his always chosen black, this one was a beautiful shade of green, still dark enough that he wouldn’t feel horrible wearing it. He smiled. Never had he thought he would enjoy a gift from Potter and other former students.

“See? They’re nice,” Hermione said.
“Yes well… maybe.”

“And they like you.”

“Only because you like me. So they’re forced to.”

“No. They gave you a chance because of me. Now they like you for you, silly.” She smiled.

“Right.” He said disgruntled. “Well, I was still always right about disliking Weasley.”

She snickered at that before waving her wand and making a simple birthday cake that had been concealed in his office float in and set itself on the table. “Now, to the birthday cake.”

“There was cake at the party.”

“Not our traditional cake,” she smiled as she lit the candles with her wand and stood. “Happy birthday to you… happy birthday to you… happy birthday dear Severus… happy birthday to you,” she sang in his ear from behind. “Make a wish.”

“There is nothing more I could possibly wish for,” he said as he blew out the candles and pulled her back to his lap, so they could feed each other cake.

Life went along nicely. Hermione had decided to add to her workload and take on an apprenticeship in potions in addition to her paid apprenticeship in Magical Creatures. She wanted to study Potions with Severus, of course, and he would gladly have mentored her, but she was afraid of gossip and doubts about her true capabilities arising, since it would be her husband who would have conferred her the title. So she applied to another master, and would go over everything this master taught her with Severus on weekends and free periods, learning his tricks and improvements of that specific subject while helping him brew to sell and for the Hogwarts’ stores. She was so bright and hardworking that within a year and a half she already had her titles in both Potions and Magical Creatures, and was taken on as a research assistant in the Magical Creatures Department in the Ministry.

Severus continued to perfect his potions and sell in the Apothecary while he taught at Hogwarts. At the end of that school year, his potions had become too famous and well requested, so Minerva was forced to hire a new Potions professor, much against her will. The new add-on taught First to Fourth years, taking advice from Severus, since he was a young little thing and it was that professor’s first job. Severus remembered teaching him about 4 years ago.

Severus continued teaching Fifth to Seventh years, freeing up more of his time to brew. St Mungo’s had contacted him to provide them with a small part of the stores they needed, as a trial. It worked out marvelously well, and pretty soon he was brewing more than anything else, retaining the Seventh year classes only, and just because Hermione had, throughout the years, convinced him that he was an excellent teacher, and he rather started to enjoy doing it a bit, especially since some of the students seemed to agree. He really did enjoy doing it now, teaching, especially the few bright, driven and interested students that fulfilled the requirements to make it into his Seventh year courses. Severus and Hermione moved out of Hogwarts, and he would only come in to teach his classes and see old friends, passing on all his other duties, such as rounds and staff meetings, to the newer Professor.

It eventually became very impractical to brew everything on his own, even if Hermione did help him a lot when she had free time. So they decided to start a business, hire and train witches and
wizards until they were confident the employees could maintain the standards Severus set, and Hermione and himself would only supervise. And that they did.

Hermione was looking at a promotion at work and would have more flexible hours, more time to help. Later on, with their business already well established, she would use that time to research and develop, alongside Severus, potions for the care of Magical (and some non-magical) Creatures. It was a great addition to their catalogue, used by anyone between simple pet owners to Professors and game keepers like Hagrid, or people who worked with creatures in the field, like Hermione herself and her co-workers, and Charlie Weasley.

When they had been married for five years, their business going strong for two, and Severus’ book on Advanced Potion Making being revised by an editor to publish, Severus picked her up at the Ministry and took her to a posh, muggle end of town. She thought that they were looking for a new space for their company’s labs, though she thought what they had was perfectly fine and that working a lab in a muggle part of town wouldn’t be practical.

He stopped walking in front of a beautiful three-story home on a very quiet street.

“This is really lovely! But why are we here? This isn’t practical for our business, Sev.”

“This… is yours. Ours. Our new home.”

“What?!”

“If you like it, of course… I just thought it was perfect for us and went ahead and made an offer. But if you don’t like it…”

“But why? Our home is perfectly fine!”

“It is. You made it… home. But you deserve better. You deserve the best. And I would very much like to make this one home with you as well,” he smiled and kissed her cheek.

They walked through the house and Hermione loved it more and more by the second. The basement was perfect to transfer their private lab from Spinner’s End, and it would be much bigger. The ground floor had a great living room, a dining room, a family room and a proper kitchen for Severus’ great and still superior cooking skills. They would have room to entertain, which was more Hermione’s wish than Severus’, though he was happy to stay in the kitchen and cook for her guests and make her happy. The upstairs had four bedrooms, and the three extra ones beside the master could be transformed into guest bedrooms and an office for them. It was perfect. They moved in within the month.

On 31st December 2005, it was their duty to throw a New Year’s Eve party, because their house was the nicest and posh one, big and clean, without baby things and toys lying all around the floor. All her friends and workmates were invited, along with her parents. Minerva, being the headmistress, had the privilege of leaving the Hogwarts feast earlier and dropping by as well, though the Snapes wished more of the teachers could come (most did sneak out of the castle and drop by, taking turns doing it), and even Draco made an appearance with his very pretty new wife, a Slytherin that seemed to be as snobbish as his family would like, but that when you got to know her a bit more closely, was actually rather nice. The now Potters, Harry and Ginny, made an appearance after stopping by at the Burrow, and were just happy to have an evening to themselves, since they left their two toddlers, James and Albus, with their grandmother. They thought they would party the night away, but mostly they just sat and dozed off while others tried to talk to them. Luna and Neville were, surprisingly, together now, and made an appearance of their own. Many people that worked with Hermione and Snape in their business were also invited, and turned their house into a
Hermione had begun to entertain the idea of having a child. Her parents wanted a grandchild, and babysitting for Harry and Gin was always fun, and Severus was good with them, think what he might. She asked him what he thought about having some kids of their own someday, and he answered in a whisper that he valued his sleep and alone naked time with her, as they laid the Potter babies down for a nap. She decided she would think about it with care, make her plans and timelines and see when the best time was to start trying later on, and when she had it all worked out in her mind and day planner, along with expenses with everything from transforming one of the rooms into a nursery to paying for diapers and clothes and toys and school for 18 years, she would visit the idea with Severus again. But she had decided to go ahead and change her annual contraceptive to a monthly one, to give them more flexibility when they finally decided to go ahead with it, if they ever did.

The stress of planning their first ever big party at their house made her forget that the day of said party was exactly the day she was supposed to take the contraceptive potion. So when their guests had all left and there was a mess to clean up, Severus and Hermione got to it, drinking champagne and listening to music, dancing and having fun with each other on the first night of the new year. Their drunken playfulness led to a marvelous shag in their basement lab, something she had wanted to do ever since the summer after school she spent with him at Spinner’s End, but he took the lab too seriously to give into her. Drunk Severus, however, did not.

Severus Snape believed he had reached the absolute peak of happiness. Nothing could possibly make his life better. Until his wife informed him that with all the pressure and champagne of the New Year’s party, she had forgotten to take her contraceptive potion.

Ginny and Harry had gotten married after the Snapes had, but had gotten to making babies right away. So there had been, for almost two years now, a little bugger that would spend at least one Saturday afternoon per month at ‘Uncle Snape’s and Auntie Mione’ s’ house while his parents engaged in some adult conversation with the Snapes themselves or other adults, or went off to much needed alone time. Severus had warned Hermione they shouldn’t do this, for that alone time would certainly come back to bite them – Severus and Hermione – in the ass. And so it did. By the time 2006 knocked on their doors, there was a three month old Potter in the world. But Severus could not deny he liked being ‘fun uncle Snape’, though what Jimmy (Severus refused to call him neither James nor Sirius) found funny was mostly him being very put out. And he had been very touched that they had chosen to name their second kid after him, as a thank you and homage for his efforts during the war, though of course he only chose to show annoyance and bewilderment.

So Severus was over the moon – after the initial surprise, outrage and fear following her announcement – for the first couple of months of her pregnancy. If two Potter kids seemed to like him, surely one of his own would be easy to handle. He gladly accepted Hermione’s mood swings, held her hair in the mornings when she would vomit before she left for work, ran to the kitchen or out at odd hours of the night to satisfy her weird cravings, continued to absolutely ravish her in bed as she grew hornier and hornier, finding her beautiful and sexy no matter what, no matter how much she complained about how big and ugly she looked. He rubbed her belly, and her feet and back when they hurt, and kissed her constantly, expressing his love and appreciation at every hour. He consoled her as she wept, worried about being a terrible mother and not being able to do it and keep her career, horrified that she had not planned this properly before it happened.

At Hermione’s request, they would alternate doctor appointments at St. Mungo’s and a muggle doctor, and it was at the latter’s office that the announcement first came that they were to have twins. As Hermione was feeling better about all of it, thanks to his help and support, it was her turn to do the comforting. He started to worry that it was too much, that he and his odd ways would
be the source of hurt and pain for their children. It was double the lives to ruin. Especially since he had not had a good role model in his life. He did not know what it was to be a good father because he had never had one. He hoped that his children would never hate him as he did his father. He only had little experience, a few days a month, with someone else’s children, if you weren’t to count the awful years of overseeing hundreds of kids that were not his. And both the Potter children were boys. Hermione was expecting one of each. He would not ruin a little girl’s life, he could not. Hermione reassured him that he would be a wonderful father, that he had always been wonderful to her, and with their kids it would be no different as he had a good, generous heart. She was sure. And he would be strict when needed, and they would raise wonderful, well-behaved, loved children. They would be so smart, because there was nowhere to run from that. They would make them proud parents, and they would all love each other with all their hearts. She managed to calm him a bit, but the lingering fear remained underneath the surface.

Until a few months later, when it all faded in a quick moment in which a beautiful baby girl with curly black hair and kind brown eyes was placed crying in his arms, and just being close to him, hearing his heartbeat, had made her calm. The beautiful baby boy with chestnut straight hair and black deep eyes and – unfortunately, he thought, differently from his wife – a slightly hooked nose, was placed on his wife’s chest, and the picture made him tear up. This amount of sheer joy certainly could never be surpassed. And his poor beaten down – but then restored by his wonderful witch – old heart could not possibly hold any more love, more love than it had ever felt in his life, for these two precious babies and their beautiful, perfect mother.

THE END

Chapter End Notes

... or is it?
I have what are hopefully happy news. This really is where I intended on ending it, but just last week the muses bestowed upon me ideas for 3 or 4 chapters of our heroes (especially Snape) interacting with the twins, and of course, a bit more of married life. I will add them as part 2 of this, making it a series, and hopefully they’ll be ready sometime before the end of next month. I just want to ask you guys if you want more smut, or not?

Also, I have been working on two more stories with this favorite couple of ours. I think I have about ten chapters of each (don't think they'll be much longer than 20) and hopefully I'll know for sure where they're going by next month as well, and have at least one ready to start posting.

So what I'm saying is I've enjoyed you guys, your comments and kudos (though I did think the chapter before this one would get more comments :[ ), interacting with you, and if you've enjoyed reading my little scribblings, I ask you keep checking back and accompany me on a few other journeys soon. :)

Thank you, happy hump day.
Please drop by the archive and comment to let the author know if you enjoyed their work!