

A Slytherin Concession

by fizzabella

A series of 6 100 word drabbles featuring Severus's idea of negotiations.

Conversations in the Hospital Wing

Chapter 1 of 5

A series of 6 100 word drabbles featuring Severus's idea of negotiations.

Authors Note: A series of Drabbles that jumped out of my keyboard the other day.

Thanks to Sunshine (Southern_Witch_69), who unscrambled my mixed up tenses. This is the first time I have come close to writing a drabble; I talk too much to be good at them but this practically wrote itself.

A Slytherin Concession

"I am not falling in love with you, you know," he says with determination while she feeds him a spoonful of soup.

"That would be unthinkable," she agrees, smiling.

"I will concede that the soup is good. If you actually prepared it, I compliment you."

"I made it from scratch—except for the noodles."

"And you don't slop it all over my nightshirt."

"Of course not, that's dreadful!"

"You occasionally have something interesting to say."

"So do you."

"When I have recovered, I will no longer need you to be eyes and hands for me."

"Of course you won't, sir."

~OoO~

"I want dessert."

"Not till you finish these carrots."

"They're inedible and you're horrible to expect me to consume them."

"They're healthy."

He decides to try distracting her.

"If you care to finish reading aloud to me, I will point out the flaw in the new 'improved' formula for Dreamless Sleep."

"Not till you eat these carrots."

He pouts for a moment then offers a Slytherin concession.

"Then you must read me two articles—of my choice—to make up for the carrots."

She glares at him, though he doesn't see.

"Shall I tuck you in, too?"

"That sounds intriguing."

~OoO~

"I baked you some biscuits."

"And I care because..."

"You ate the ones I left here for you last night. I can smell the candied ginger on your breath."

He is silent, weighing and pondering.

"Come on, now, eat the carrots. They'll help your eyes heal."

With a sigh, he opens his mouth and dutifully eats the carrots.

"That's not so bad, is it?"

"I have never read anything which justifies the existence of carrots."

She changes the subject.

"Why would you care if I was falling in love with you?"

"Unfair to you if I can't ever return your feelings."

~OoO~

"My feelings are my own responsibility, you know."

"But it isn't right to allow you to cherish unrealistic expectations."

"So far, my expectations have been spot-on."

He turns his face away from the spoon.

"I really detest carrots."

"One more spoonful. Please?"

"If I must."

Silence reigns for a moment or two.

"Would you like biscuits and ice cream or apple crumble for dessert?"

"Ice cream." Suspiciously. "What kind of biscuits?"

"Ginger or chocolate chip."

A pause.

"Don't let it go to your head. Ginger."

She feeds him a small bowl of ice cream while reckoning her chances.

~OoO~

"Why couldn't you return my feelings, assuming I had them?"

"I don't know that I couldn't. I just don't want to—" To what? He is at a loss for words.

"Perhaps you might change your mind, in time."

"It's not completely outside the realm of possibility."

"Another biscuit?"

"Just one. They're quite good, actually."

"I found your recipe for candying the ginger and used it. I hope you don't mind."

He smirks.

"Let me wipe your mouth for you."

"I wish... mphhhhh."

She applies a warm, damp cloth to his mouth.

“Here, lean back so I can read to you now.”

~OoO~

“I suppose... if anyone were to fall in love with me...”

“Yes?”

“I could certainly do worse than you.”

“Reflect on my finer qualities and see if that adds to my appeal?”

“I don’t dispute your appeal, though I might question your sanity.”

“Was that a confession that you find me appealing?”

“I suppose it was.”

“You’re quite fanciable yourself, sir.”

He makes a sound halfway between a cough and a snort.

“That’s a first.”

“Then all other witches are senseless and stupid.”

A long, long silence.

“Well? Have you fallen in love with me?”

“I haven’t decided yet.”

~Finite Incantatem~

Silly Witch

Chapter 2 of 5

By popular demand-the sequel.

Author’s Note: Back by popular demand. More drabbles, more concessions, more snark.

Many thanks to Southern_Witch_69 who suggested I add this as a second chapter rather than post it as a separate story.

Many thanks to everyone who reviewed chapter one and encouraged me to continue the saga.

And of course, this would not be possible without the fabulous J.K. Rowling, whose characters these are. I make no money from my use of her wonderful universe, but I am exceedingly grateful to be able to take her characters out to play for the afternoon.

And a special acknowledgement to Your_Worshipfulness, from whom I borrowed the description of Hermione’s ‘intractable’ hair.

~OoO~

“Did you eat all the biscuits again?”

“I did. They were very good.”

“It’s nice to know I can do something well.”

“You do many things well.”

“I do?” She nearly stabs him with the fork.

“You had a special talent for waving your hand in the air.”

There’s no possible way he could have seen the fork.

“Well, you never called on me. I—felt I had to prove...”

“Prove what?”

“That a Muggle-born witch could do well.”

“You never needed to prove that to me.”

“You can’t mean that?”

“Why can I not mean that?”

"You can't."

~OoO~

"I can't see you."

"The bandages will come off in a few days."

"I find it strangely frustrating."

"Really? Why?"

"Perhaps I wish to verify that your hair is as—intractable as ever."

She frowns and he fancies he feels the temperature drop.

"Is that all I shall ever be, then?"

"Explain yourself, witch. All you shall ever be?"

"To you. Will I ever be anything other than the child you disliked?"

"Silly witch. " His voice drops to a purr and she shivers.

"I didn't realize."

"You have not been paying attention."

"I have. I haven't quite dared to hope."

~OoO~

"You've been here all day."

"You noticed."

"I always notice you."

"Ah, but you miss me when I'm not here?"

"What would you do if I said yes?"

"Probably faint with shock."

"Then I shall not tell you."

He hears something clatter and thump as it falls to the floor, and smiles.

"I hope you didn't drop something important."

"Just a bowl of carrots."

"Don't expect me to apologize."

"I think you did it on purpose."

"Did what on purpose?"

"Told me you miss me so I would drop the carrots you detest."

"You think me that devious?"

"Actually, yes."

~OoO~

"I think you're a little bit fond of me."

"Why do you say that?"

"You continue to bake biscuits for me."

"I like to bake."

"You come to visit every day and stay for hours."

"I have nothing better to do."

"I heard Minerva say that you have dropped your classes at university."

"They were boring. As boring as Divination was in my third year."

"Do I amuse you, then?"

Silence for a long moment.

"Not exactly amuse, no."

"Irritate?"

"Frequently."

"Interest?"

"Since my first year."

"Anger? Disgust?"

"Absolutely not."

"I believe I am growing fond of you."

"Thank Merlin!"

~OoO~

"I want you to try these."

"What are 'these'?"

"Candied carrots with ginger."

"You used my candied ginger for carrots?"

He couldn't have sounded more disgusted.

"I made my own candied ginger. I... er... used all you had in the storeroom."

"Wasted it, you mean. On carrots."

"I want your eyes to heal." Her voice is very soft.

"You must forgive me. I am unaccustomed to having people feel concern for me."

"Get used to it."

"Why is that?"

"Because I am not going to go away."

"Ever?" He sounds hopeful.

"Never, ever. Resign yourself to being stuck with me."

~OoO~

"If I am 'stuck with you,' it's implicit that you are also stuck with me."

"You say that like it's a bad thing."

"I have never been—popular, you know."

"If I wanted popular, I would chase after Harry. Assuming I could get past Ginny."

"I have a bad temper."

"Ron says my temper is scary."

"What could you possibly see in me?"

Her voice is steady and as warm as melted caramel.

"Honor. Courage. Intelligence. I wonder what you see in me."

"The same things you see in me. And... "

"And?"

"You're lovely. Lovely enough to take my breath away."

~OoO~

"I believe I have succeeded in leaving you speechless."

"I used to wish you would say something nice to me and you never did. But I think you just made up for seven years of snarky comments."

"I hope I have. There were many times I wished I could speak to you... like this."

She touches his hand above the bandages that wind around his palm. He shivers.

"I'm glad you can speak like this now."

"I am impatient for the day when I can see you... Touch you."

Now she shivers under the caress of his black velvet voice.

~OoO~

"Have you decided yet?"

"Decided?"

"Whether you have fallen in love with me?"

"Yes."

"Yes, you've decided? Or yes, you've fallen in love with me?"

“Both.”

“I see.”

The hospital wing is silent for some minutes.

“I shall need the services of a house-elf.”

“A house-elf?”

“Perhaps more than one. My quarters here must be enlarged to make room for you, my house at Spinner’s End must be cleaned and refurbished, and I need to send a representative to my vault at Gringotts.”

“To Gringotts?”

“To get my grandmother’s engagement ring for you. “

“Are we engaged?”

“Silly witch.”

Chapter Three: In Which there is an Experiment.

Chapter 3 of 5

Hermione and Severus continue to explore their budding relationship.

Author’s Note: J.K. Rowling owns it all; my only profit is the joy of the journey and the pleasure of my readers.

~OoO~

“You just said we’re engaged.”

“Yes, I did.” She can’t see his eyes for the bandages that wrap all the way around his head, but his lips curve up in an amused smile.

He can hear the warmth in her voice and feel the tenderness in the hand that caresses his, even as she begins to speak.

“There’s just one small problem.”

“And that is...?”

“I heard a—statement. Not a proposal.”

“I’m not very good with words.”

“How hard is it to say, ‘I love you and want you to marry me.’?”

“Why, thank you, Miss Granger. I accept.”

~OoO~

“Sir, you do me great honor. But if you don’t come up with a PROPER proposal, I shall fling something at your head.”

“Tsk, ts. Such violence. And I’m not good at ‘proper’ in any case. I do much better with improper.”

She rolls her eyes, knowing he can’t see her.

“You just rolled your eyes, didn’t you?”

“How did you know that?”

“I am quite familiar with your mannerisms, my dear Hermione.”

“When did you have time to grow familiar with my behavior?”

“Have you forgotten you were my student for seven years, and my apprentice for another three?”

~OoO~

She is uncharacteristically silent while feeding him his lunch of roast beef, Yorkshire pudding, and candied carrots.

“Out with it, witch, I can practically hear the wheels turning in your head.”

“I just wonder if you have thought of a proposal yet.”

“Why does it matter?”

“I—want to know how you feel about me.”

“I eat the biscuits you bake for me.”

"True."

"I didn't reprimand you for wasting all my candied ginger."

"I haven't wasted it. You're still getting the benefit of it."

"I haven't hexed you for being an insufferable know-it-all."

"There is that."

"Indeed."

"You haven't kissed me, though. Not even once."

~OoO~

"What are you muttering?"

"I was counting backwards from one hundred."

"It's my fault, isn't it?"

"Your fault?"

"That you're—so—well, frustrated, I suppose. That you have to count backwards."

"Not your fault. More—the situation in which we find ourselves."

He hears the clatter of a utensil against the side of a porcelain bowl and sighs.

"If that's more carrots, I don't want any."

"Now, don't pout."

"I never pout."

"Then why are you counting backwards?"

He frowns.

"I didn't understand you."

"I said—I find it frustrating that I can't see you—touch you—or kiss you."

~OoO~

"So. You need to see me in order to kiss me?"

"Isn't that obvious?"

"No."

He's counting again.

"I do very definitely want to kiss you."

"Severus."

"Hermione?"

"Why do you have to see me to kiss me?"

"Because, with my bloody luck, I'd try to kiss you just as you scooped a forkful of candied carrots into my mouth. That would not work well."

His voice drops to a low, masterful purr.

"Put the carrots down, witch."

He hears the bowl clatter on the table.

"Now the fork."

A clinking sound.

"Now come here. Closer. Let me kiss you."

~OoO~

The kiss is soft and tentative. They draw apart slowly, both holding their breath.

"Severus?"

"Hermione? "

"Was that—satisfactory?"

"With time and practice we'll do—quite well, I'm sure."

She sits back in her chair, her fingers hovering over her mouth.

"Hermione?"

"Yes, Severus?"

"Infidelity is unacceptable to me."

"I shall be faithful, Severus."

She hesitates, then says very softly, "I want a child. Perhaps two."

He smiles. "I never expected to have a wife or children, but I find the idea very appealing."

"I believe we are compatible."

He holds open his hand.

"I love you, Hermione. Marry me?"

Unveiling

Chapter 4 of 5

The bandages come off.

Author's Note: Back by popular demand. More drabbles, more concessions, more snark.

Many thanks to CharmedForce, who beta-read this for me, and suggested that Severus hardly needs to SHOUT his comments. A simple italics command (like a whisper) is all the emphasis he needs.

And of course, this would not be possible without the fabulous J.K. Rowling, whose characters these are. I make no money from my use of her wonderful universe, but I am exceedingly grateful to be able to take her characters out to play for the afternoon.

My muse is whispering there should be one more chapter, possibly two. I hope I can make use of her inspiration when she whispers it to me.

Chapter Four: Unveiling

~OoO~

"Poppy says the bandages come off when she gets back from St. Mungo's. She is bringing an eye specialist with her."

Silence.

"Have you run away?"

She sits on the edge of the bed and wraps her arms around him.

"I'm here. I just had to find room to sit. This is a small bed."

His lips quirk up at the corners.

"You're not fond of small beds?"

"They look so... flimsy."

"I'm sure this one is. But it isn't intended for long term use."

"Long term use?"

"The bed in my family home has been there for five generations."

~OoO~

"You've gone quiet again."

"I needed to catch my breath."

A significant pause.

She frames his face with her hands, and kisses him very softly.

"I take your breath away, witch?" A very satisfied, very *male* smile curves up the corners of his mouth.

"Ever since we began working together at Grimmauld Place. And I forgive you for gloating."

Her hand caresses his hair, then tugs, none too gently, on a long lock.

He captures the tugging hand and presses a kiss into its palm.

"My own sweet witch... You take my breath away, too."

His voice wraps her in warmth.

"When do you want to marry?"

"Two weeks ago is good."

~OoO~

"You don't insist on a long engagement, then?"

"I haven't much patience."

"That's my line, witch."

"It applies equally well to me."

He hesitates then says, gently, "I suppose I don't wish to give you time to change your mind."

"I want to be married to you, Severus. Only then will I believe this hasn't been some wonderful dream."

His hand strokes possessively over her hair.

"I've never... had anyone... belong to me. I hope I don't... frighten you with my... expectations."

"I don't scare easily."

"No, I would suppose not. But I believe in fidelity, Hermione. And expect it. From both of us."

"So do I."

~OoO~

Poppy Pomfrey bustled in to the hospital wing followed by a Healer from St. Mungo's.

"Ah, Severus, are you ready to go without those bandages?"

He nodded his head, outwardly composed, but Madam Pomfrey didn't notice how tightly he clutched Hermione's hand.

She squeezed his hand gently in return.

Madam Pomfrey drew screens around the bed and cast a charm that curtained the window and lowered the lights.

"Alright, I'm removing the wrapping. Don't touch the eye pads."

The gauze wrappings unwound themselves, and a flourish of Poppy's wand moistened the pads over his eyes.

Skilled fingers dragged the moist pads away, and Severus Snape opened his eyes.

He blinked at the light but waved away the oculist and Madam Pomfrey. He had to see Hermione.

"Miss Granger. My Hermione."

~OoO~

She looked a mess. Her hair was more unruly than usual, and her clothes were rumpled. There were purple circles under her eyes.

She was gorgeous.

"Severus."

He smiled.

"You're ..." Where were the words he needed? His voice dropped to a whisper. "I'm very glad to see you."

And now that she could see his eyes, she heaved a sigh of relief.

"Hermione?" There was a question burning in those dark eyes.

She waited an instant, then crawled into the arms opened to welcome her.

And Severus gathered her in, stroking her hair and murmuring her name.

He held her tight.

~OoO~

Poppy and the Healer did a few tests and finally left Severus and Hermione alone.

"What did you mean, you've never had anyone belong to you?"

"I never have. Through my own stupidity, I lost Lily. I didn't indulge in—relationships—after that. I couldn't afford to. But I always wanted to marry. To give my wife my name—and a child, if she was willing."

"Children."

"Children, then." Another very *male* smile. "If you take my name, witch, and take me to your bed, you will belong to me."

"That's everything I want. Where do I sign?"

A Secret Smile at Christmas

Chapter 5 of 5

Another chapter of my drabble. Holiday sweetness a bit late.

Author's Note: Many, many thanks to my Beta reader, CharmedForce:) To those of you who have asked if there was more, I hope this chapter was worth the wait. And thank you for the wonderful reviews and the interest you have taken in my little series of vignettes.

As always, I make no profit from this story except the enjoyment of my readers and my own pleasure in crafting the plot and selecting the words. It all belongs to J.K. Rowling, to whom I owe an unmeasurable debt of gratitude.

Chapter Five

A Secret Smile at Christmas

"You've strung the lights crookedly on this side."

Anyone else might have snapped a response. She crossed the room to frame his face in her hands and place tender kisses on his eyelids.

He closed his eyes at her touch, filled with joy that went soul deep as her hands and her lips touched him reverently, as though he were fragile, breakable, and infinitely precious.

"How do you do that?"

"Hang the lights crookedly? I forget I'm a witch and have a wand to use."

"Not that. How do you make me feel so... loved?"

"I love you beyond reason."

~OoO~

They sit on the squashy comfortable sofa in the parlor at Spinner's End, watching the fire in the fireplace, admiring the Muggle lights on the Christmas tree.

"You've changed my entire life, you know." A pause. "I have never known whether that was what you set out to do or if it just... happened."

Even in the firelight he could see her cheeks redden, but she said nothing.

His eyes widened with interest.

"Your silence intrigues me, Madam."

"Would you believe me if I told you that it's not a very interesting story?"

"Not in the least. Tell me, witch."

~OoO~

She moves closer, snuggling into his lap and sighing in contentment as his arms close around her.

"I didn't set out to change *your* life because I didn't know it was you who advertised for an assistant. But *hoped* it was you."

He nods. He hadn't used his name in the advertisement that brought her back to Hogwarts.

"Why did you *hope* it was me?"

"Who wouldn't want to work for the most intelligent, snarky, sexy teacher at Hogwarts?"

"Try again, Madam, I'm sure you didn't think that at the time."

"That's my story, and I'm sticking to it."

~OoO~

"You *have* changed my life, though, my witch."

"No more than you have changed mine, my darling Potions master."

They kiss, a soft kiss that hints of passion restrained for now, to be all the more beautiful when it is allowed full reign.

When they break apart, he picks up his wand and points it at the tree, murmuring, *Accio* Hermione's package."

"This came today while you were out. I want to watch while you open it."

Her mouth forms an "O" of surprise.

"You already gave me a present."

"Can't a wizard give his witch more than one present?"

~OoO~

The package is large and flat, festively wrapped in silver and gold paper, tied with red and green satin ribbons.

Hermione opens it carefully, and when she has folded back the paper, her eyes widen, and her mouth drops open in surprise.

The package holds a book bound in midnight-blue leather. Emblazoned on the cover in silver is the title *Hogwarts, A History: The Second Voldemort War*. Below that, in

the same silver letters are the names *Hermione Granger-Snape and Severus Snape*.

"Our publisher said it was a pleasure to read something that *wasnot* about potions."

~OoO~

The book holds pride of place on the coffee table. Hermione and Severus still sit before the fire, though the hour is growing late.

Hermione runs her fingers lightly over the cover, then sits back and smiles at her husband.

"It's lovely that the book was accepted." A small, secret smile lifts the corners of her mouth, and her eyes glow amber in the firelight.

"I have a gift for you, Severus, which goes nicely with the book."

"I have you. What more do I need?"

"Well, you can read our book to our babies, Severus, in about seven months."