

# The Twelve Days of Snape's Christmas

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Hermione decides to do the twelve days of Christmas for Severus. Will he survive all of the attention?

## Twelve Days

Chapter 1 of 1

Hermione decides to do the twelve days of Christmas for Severus. Will he survive all of the attention?

*Disclaimer: The story's mine, but the characters are not. I know that the real twelve days of Christmas begin with Christmas day and follow thereafter. My family, however, when we have chosen to do this holiday gift giving idea, have always done it the twelve days before. I'm not really sure why, but no one has ever complained! So, therefore, this twelve days also begins before Christmas.*

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*On the first day of Christmas, my Severus gave to me: A kick that sent Crookshanks up a tree.*

Hermione ran after Severus, stopping him in the hallway. She handed him a package.

"Merry Christmas!" she cried.

Severus arched an eyebrow at her. "It is not yet Christmas," he droned.

Hermione smiled. "It's the Twelve Days of Christmas, Severus. It's an old Muggle tradition to give gifts for the twelve days preceding Christmas."

"It sounds tedious," Severus drawled as he ripped the bright red paper off the package and opened the box. Inside was an action figure of Harry Potter. Severus lifted it up and sneered at Hermione.

"I know of your great love of Harry Potter, so I thought you might enjoy a little figurine to abuse."

Severus lifted the figure up and looked closely at it. The Boy-Who-Was-Incredibly-Annoying grinned at him. Severus had an intense desire to wipe that ugly smirk right off of his face. Unfortunately, he was distracted by a creature rubbing against his legs. He looked down to see Hermione's cat wrapping itself in between his legs.

He sneered and kicked at the cat. Crookshanks spit at Severus and shot away from them at alarming speed.

"Can't you keep that creature locked in your room?" he snarled.

Hermione gave him a stern glance. "He was just saying hello!" she cried as she turned and ran after the half-Kneazle.

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*On the second day of Christmas my Severus gave to me: Two painful sighs, and a kick that sent Crookshanks up a tree.*

Hermione passed a small box to Severus during dinner the next night. He sighed as he took it. Tearing off the blue paper filled with Santa Clauses, he found a bezoar placed on top of a strip of cotton. Another sigh painfully left his lips. What had he done to deserve such attention from the Know-it-all of Hogwarts? Was he always destined to be annoyed by everyone he came across?

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*On the third day of Christmas my Severus gave to me: Three mean scowls, two painful sighs, and a kick that sent Crookshanks up a tree.*

Hermione knocked on Severus' door. The door was yanked open, and a scowling Severus Snape stood in front of her. Hermione smiled and handed him a gift. Severus' scowl deepened as he stepped back, trying to refuse the gift.

"Severus, it's tradition. Please accept this gift," Hermione pleaded.

If it were possible, the scowl on Severus' face grew darker. He snatched the gift from Hermione and slammed the door in her face. She eyed the door for a moment before shrugging and turning away.

Inside his room, Severus glared at the new package. He tore the gold paper off the box and opened it with a sneer. Inside he found a picture of Albus Dumbledore. Great he thought. Just what I wanted.

Atop the photo was a package of darts. Upon removing the darts, he found that Albus' picture had a beautiful red target placed over his heart. Severus smiled. She had found the perfect gift for him. He placed the photo on the wall with a Permanent Sticking Charm and took aim. He sent a dart flying straight into the bull's-eye centered over Dumbledore's chest. The picture's eyes widened, and Albus stared down at the dart protruding from his chest. Severus smiled again. Perhaps this wouldn't be such a bad day after all.

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*On the fourth day of Christmas, my Severus gave to me: Four mumbles of 'chit,' three mean scowls, two painful sighs, and a kick that sent Crookshanks up a tree.*

Hermione ran and jumped on the carriage just before it took off. She had almost missed the Hogsmeade trip, and she was set to chaperone.

"Insufferable chit," Severus muttered under his breath.

Hermione only smirked at him.

oooOOOooo

Severus sat alone in the Three Broomsticks nursing a butterbeer. He was enjoying his solitude when Professor Granger sidled into the seat across from him with her own butterbeer.

"Hi, Severus," she said cheerfully.

"Insufferable chit," he mumbled.

"What was that?" Hermione asked.

"I said you're an insufferable chit."

Hermione tossed her head back and laughed. "That's why you like me so much."

Severus scowled but made polite conversation with the witch who could seemingly not take a hint.

oooOOOooo

Once again, Hermione bounded toward the coach. She knew she needed to hurry because the carriages were getting ready to return to Hogwarts. She noticed Severus' frown as he watched her running and jumping up into the carriage.

She grinned at him widely as she settled down right next to him, bumping his knee in the process. She handed him a long, rectangular box wrapped in silver paper with Christmas trees on it.

"Insufferable chit," he muttered as he took the box and ripped the paper off. He opened the box to see a sleek, new quill staring up at him.

"It's an auto-correct quill. It will correct your papers for you."

Severus stared down at the quill. It was quite a thoughtful gift.

"Thank you," he muttered under his breath.

Hermione's sharp hearing allowed her to hear his mumblings, and she smiled happily.

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*On the fifth day of Christmas, my Severus gave to me: Five groans of exasperation, four mumbles of 'chit,' three mean scowls, two painful sighs, and a kick that sent Crookshanks up a tree.*

Severus groaned as Hermione approached him in the hallway.

"Professor Snape, a word, please?"

Groaning again, he turned to her. She placed a box in his hand.

"Merry Christmas!" she said cheerfully.

Severus groaned as he accepted the gift, groaned when he heard students snickering as they passed by, and groaned again when he lifted the mug out of the box. Gazing at it, he read the inscription and gave Hermione a withering look.

*I like my coffee black, just like my mood* was inscribed in green letters on the black mug.

"Very funny," he glowered.

"I thought you'd like it," Hermione said as she turned and bounced away.

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*On the sixth day of Christmas, my Severus gave to me: Six stuttering apologies, five groans of exasperation, four mumbles of 'chit,' three mean scowls, two painful sighs, and a kick that sent Crookshanks up a tree.*

Hermione approached the teachers' table in time to hear Severus complaining to Flitwick. Her heart sank when she figured out he was talking about her.

"She thinks she knows everything. She is an annoyance and should be banned from the school!"

"Now, now, Severus," Flitwick replied. "Aren't you being a bit hard on the poor girl?"

"The Headmistress should have been sacked the minute she let her through the doors. She's an embarrassment to this school."

Hermione gasped loudly enough for the two men to hear her and turn around. Tears filled her eyes as she dashed out of the room. Severus looked quizzically at Flitwick.

"What's with her?"

Flitwick looked back in horror. "She thought you were talking about her!"

Severus' face fell. "Oh, crap," he exclaimed before bursting out of his seat and running after her.

He saw her hurrying down the hall and called after her. "Hermione, I'm s-sorry!"

Hermione hesitated, then continued hurriedly through the hall.

Severus caught up with her and pulled her around to face him. "I... I'm sorry, Hermione. You don't understand... I wasn't talking about you!"

Hermione narrowed her eyes. "Who else would you be talking about? You're always saying I'm a know-it-all!"

"I was speaking about Penelope Varga. I would never badmouth another professor in that way!"

Hermione folded her arms and glared at Severus. Severus grasped her by the arms. "I... I'm sorry, Hermione, please! I didn't mean to upset you."

"It's just that I thought..." Hermione tried to explain herself.

"It wasn't about you. I don't think about you like that anymore. I'm sorry I ever did."

Hermione arched an eyebrow at him in surprise.

"Most of that was an act. I had to keep up appearances. I'm sorry I had to do that. I... I'm sorry that I made it seem that I belittled your intelligence."

Hermione softened her expression. She fished in her pocket and pulled out another gift. "Happy Christmas anyway, Severus."

He took the gift tentatively and watched her walk away. He opened the small package and found a Calming Draught in a clear, crystal bottle. There was a note underneath the bottle.

"I know these gifts have been making you crazy. This is just for when you can't take me anymore."

Severus smirked at her insight.

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*On the seventh day of Christmas, my Severus gave to me: Seven arched eyebrows, six stuttering apologies, five groans of exasperation, four mumbles of 'chit,' three mean scowls, two painful sighs, and a kick that sent Crookshanks up a tree.*

Yet another Yule Ball for Severus to stand through. Luckily, they only happened once every four years. He stood on the sidelines, watching the students twirl on the dance floor. He noticed a very beautiful Hermione Granger in flowing gold robes coming through the doors and arched an eyebrow at her. She smiled at him.

She was immediately accosted by a seventh-year, who swept her away for a dance. She beamed at the young man, and Severus found his eyebrow raised again at her joy. She glanced his way, and her smile brightened.

Soon the dance was over, and Hermione grabbed a drink and came over to where Severus was standing.

"Severus, you look very handsome tonight," Hermione told him.

He arched an eyebrow at her but said nothing. He took in her upswept hair and beautiful golden dress. Finally, he found his voice.

"You look quite nice, too, Miss Granger."

Hermione rolled her eyes. "How many times do I have to tell you, Severus, my name is Hermione!"

Severus arched his eyebrow yet again. "I'm fully aware of what your name is... Hermione."

Hermione got up very close to his face. He could smell her perfume, and it muddled his senses.

"Then use it!" she told him sultrily.

He licked his lips nervously, but she was drawn away by Hagrid before he had a chance to respond. Severus scowled as the huge man almost dragged her onto the dance floor. He was so large, Hermione had to place both of her feet upon his left foot to be able to keep up with his large, quick steps. Severus watched her giggle and chat with Hagrid. Their friendship seemed so easy, where every one of his interactions with Hermione was fraught with tension. He wished it was as easy to talk to her as the half-giant was making it look.

That dance ended, and Hagrid gently removed Hermione from his foot. She smiled and hugged him before turning back toward Severus and giving him a wicked grin. Severus' eyebrow shot up involuntarily at her expression, and he wondered what she was up to.

She strode up to him and grabbed his hand. "Severus, dance with me," she demanded.

His eyebrow rose once again at her audacity. "Hermione, I don't dance."

"Oh, come on, Severus, it's Christmastime. Dance with me, please?"

Severus frowned but allowed Hermione to lead him to the dance floor. She pulled him close, and they began to dance. He looked down at her, and their eyes locked when they met. They held the gaze for a long time while they swirled around to the festive music. Severus felt his heartbeat quicken at her sultry look. Finally, he arched an eyebrow at her, silently asking what she was up to.

Hermione smiled. "I'm just surprised that that was so easy, Severus. I thought you'd put up more of a fight."

Severus smirked. "I'm not as bad as I seem, Hermione."

"Oh, I know that," Hermione murmured. "I just enjoy seeing you riled up."

Severus' eyebrow rose at her admission. No one else actually enjoyed his grumpiness. Hermione Granger was certainly a different sort of person if she enjoyed his snark.

The dance ended, and Hermione placed a chocolate frog in his hand with a bow on it.

"Happy Christmas, Severus," she said and left the dance floor.

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*On the eighth day of Christmas, my Severus gave to me: Eight looks of shock, seven arched eyebrows, six stuttering apologies, five groans of exasperation, four mumbles of 'chit,' three mean scowls, two painful sighs, and a kick that sent Crookshanks up a tree.*

Severus rounded the corner and nearly crashed into Hermione. His look of shock made her giggle. His spy work usually left him unaffected by anything, so that wide eyed stare had been quite a surprise. Hermione set a goal to see how badly she could shock him today.

At breakfast, she shocked him by stating that he looked sexy with his black robes and that little hint of white around his neck. He almost choked on his porridge.

During his first class, she shocked him by running in at the beginning of class and telling the entire group of first-years that they shouldn't fear him because he was as gentle as a teddy bear.

In between the first and second classes, she shocked him by Transfiguring his cauldron into a Christmas tree.

At lunch, he was so shocked he turned red when she told him how much she admired his scowl.

While walking to classes afterward, his glare of shock was something to behold as she'd explained that she always thought his hands were beautiful.

At dinner, yet another shocking red faced look was directed at her as she wondered whether he wore boxers or briefs.

oooOOOooo

Hermione stood in front of his door, smiling. The day had gone well. She had showered him with compliments, eliciting the craziest looks from him, but not once did he yell. She definitely considered that a win on her part.

She knocked lightly on the door. Severus opened it a few moments later.

"I'm here to give you your present, Severus."

Severus rolled his eyes. He had hoped she had forgotten about the whole thing.

"I'm sorry, this present isn't wrapped," she explained, looking a bit anxious.

"That's all right," he acquiesced.

She grabbed his neck and pulled him toward her, pecking him on the cheek. When she released him, he shot up, looking with wondering awe at her and marveling at her audacity.

She grinned evilly. "Happy Christmas, Severus!" she cried and literally skipped away.

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*On the ninth day of Christmas, my Severus gave to me: nine snarky smirks, eight looks of shock, seven arched eyebrows, six stuttering apologies, five groans of exasperation, four mumbles of 'chit,' three mean scowls, two painful sighs, and a kick that sent Crookshanks up a tree.*

Minerva sat next to Hermione, chatting away about Hermione needing a man in her life. Hermione stared down at her breakfast plate, no longer hungry.

"Now, Hermione, a bright, young witch like you needs a good man in her life."

Hermione rolled her eyes.

"Whatever happened to you and Ron?"

Severus' ears perked up at the mention of the Weasley boy. He had wondered what had happened to him. The usual weekly visits had stopped several months ago.

Hermione sighed. "He's too immature, and we have nothing in common."

"But you both seemed so well-suited when you were students here!" Minerva commented.

"Well, with adulthood comes maturity. That's something Ron never seemed to acquire."

Hermione glanced at Severus and noted he was smirking. She shook her head.

"He thinks I should marry him," she admitted finally.

Severus arched an eyebrow, his heart clenching for some unknown reason. Minerva got excited. "Why, Hermione, that's wonderful!"

Hermione's head snapped to Minerva. "No, it's not. Do you know what my life would be like? Hordes of children to care for, no chance to teach, a husband who stares blankly as soon as my vocabulary gets too advanced for him, which is every other minute, it seems. That's not a life I would want, Minerva."

"Pity," McGonagall commented.

Hermione sighed and caught Severus smirking again behind his morning edition of the Prophet.

oooOOOooo

"Oh!" Hermione cried as her entire stack of essays were knocked out of her hand by a running student. Hermione herself was thrown to the floor. She looked up finally to see an extended hand. The hand was attached to a smirking Severus Snape. She grasped it gruffly and allowed him to help her up.

oooOOOooo

"You know, Miss Granger, your hair has really calmed down since you started using that shampoo I made for you. It's much more flattering now."

Hermione glanced up at Severus and noted his snarky smirk and glinting eyes. She blew a strand of said hair out of her face and continued down the hall.

oooOOOooo

Severus entered her classroom right before class started. He stood in front of the classroom and faced the third-years.

"The Headmistress wanted me to inform you that Professor Granger is needful of a new man in her life. Maybe one of you could come up with an Arithmantic solution to her problem?"

He turned and saw Hermione's horrified expression and smirked maniacally.

oooOOOooo

He caught her eye finally at dinner, smirking once again at his little joke in the classroom. She glared at him. Severus' smirk disappeared.

"I believe I owe you another apology," he stated finally.

Hermione glanced his way and then looked back quickly at her plate.

"I was just having a bit of fun. You thought it was hilarious to accost my classes the other day."

Hermione sighed. She was about to protest the difference between her actions and his but realized what she had done was just as embarrassing for him as what he had done to her. She glanced his way.

"It's all right," she said finally.

He smirked at her once again, and she huffed back at him. "Why must you look so smug all the time?" she ranted.

He got up in her face. "I enjoy winning, Hermione." He pulled back and yet another smirk graced his sarcastic face.

"And I suppose you think you've won?" Hermione retorted.

Severus smirked again. "If your gruffness says anything, yes, I did."

Hermione turned back to her plate. Instead of frowning, she smiled to herself. The man was infuriating, yet endearing all in the same minute.

"Fine, you win this round," she acquiesced.

Severus frowned. "It doesn't seem quite so sweet with you giving in like that."

Hermione laughed. "Sorry to disappoint you!"

Severus turned back to his meal, looking a bit peevish. Hermione noticed his change of mood.

"I have another gift for you, Severus. Would you like it now?"

Severus frowned. "Yes, you might as well get it over with."

Hermione rose from her seat and came toward Severus. She stooped down and gave him a huge hug. She squeezed him tightly and pecked him on the cheek once again. There were gasps from the students who had happened to be looking up toward the teacher's table. Severus stiffened, then relaxed into her warm embrace. When she pulled back, he smirked at her again.

"This time, we both won," she told him and tweaked his nose before leaving a startled Severus Snape gawking after her retreating form.

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*On the tenth day of Christmas, my Severus gave to me: ten curious glances, nine snarky smirks, eight looks of shock, seven arched eyebrows, six stuttering apologies, five groans of exasperation, four mumbles of 'chit,' three mean scowls, two painful sighs, and a kick that sent Crookshanks up a tree.*

Severus hadn't known what to make of Hermione the night before. Her affection for him seemed to be genuine. He had been shocked that she would kiss his cheek, let alone hug him in front of the students in the Great Hall. Of course, most of the students had already left after classes because of the holiday break, but there were enough to have the rumor mill in full swing when all the rest returned. Could it be that she had feelings for him? For that matter, what were his feelings for her?

At breakfast that morning, he cast a curious glance at Hermione when he thought she wasn't looking. She seemed preoccupied with her meal. He studied her face and noted how lovely she was. She looked up, and he cast his eyes toward his plate. After a little while, he stole another curious glance at her. He admired her hair. He knew he had made a comment about it the other day, but he actually thought it quite beautiful. He wouldn't mind running his hands through it.

Hermione gave him a quizzical look, and he averted his eyes and stirred his cereal. After a few more minutes another glance was cast her way. She really was lovely. He found his gaze straying toward her often that breakfast. Occasionally, he'd find her staring at him when his glance found her. Had she looked wistful? He couldn't be sure.

More glances were cast at lunch and dinner. Sometimes she caught him, other times she didn't. For him, each time he glanced at her, he noticed something different. Her hands were very delicate. Her left eyebrow was slightly higher than her right, giving her a beguiling quality. When she smiled, she had a small dimple near her mouth. She was absolutely enticing. How had he not noticed these things before?

As Hermione rose to leave the dinner table, she dropped a flat, rectangular gift into Severus' lap. She smiled at him as she left the hall. Severus hid the gift in his robes and quickly left also.

In the privacy of his own room, he opened the gift. It was a display frame. The frame was about an inch thick. It was rimmed in beautiful brushed silver. Severus lifted it out and marveled at the weight of it. It was a bit heavier than it seemed.

He noticed a note underneath the frame and lifted it out. He unfolded it and read it quickly.

*Dear Severus,*

*This frame is for your Order of Merlin. It deserves to be displayed prominently in your home. You are the bravest man I have ever known, and you should be proud of all that you have done for our world. Please, Severus, let something of your valor be seen. You deserve it.*

*Hermione*

Severus dropped the note in amazement. If this had been given to him a couple of years ago, he would have smashed it against the wall. Having been mellowed with time, he now was quite grateful for such a gift and its sentiments. He went over to his desk, and opened the top drawer. His Order of Merlin sat in the drawer, looking lonely. He

lifted it out of the drawer and placed it in the frame. Walking over to the fireplace, he mounted it above the mantle. Stepping back, he admired how the polished silver of the frame picked up the polished silver of the medal. It was truly a very thoughtful gift... one that would keep him thoughtful for the rest of the night.

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*On the eleventh day of Christmas, my Severus gave to me: eleven tentative caresses, ten curious glances, nine snarky smirks, eight looks of shock, seven arched eyebrows, six stuttering apologies, five groans of exasperation, four mumbles of 'chit,' three mean scowls, two painful sighs, and a kick that sent Crookshanks up a tree.*

Hermione threw herself into her seat next to Severus and began to furiously throw food onto her plate. Severus eyed her curiously as she seemed to be enraged at her ham sandwich and chips. She grabbed a pitcher and poured some pumpkin juice so violently that it shot everywhere but into her glass. She slammed down the pitcher in frustration, deciding to forgo the drink altogether.

"Hermione, what's wrong?" Severus asked.

Hermione turned to him and for a minute, he thought she would hex his privates off.

"Do you know what that cretin did?" she glowered.

"Which cretin, exactly, are you referring to?" Severus asked trying not to let his amusement come through his veiled sarcasm.

"Ronald Weasley, that's who."

"Ah."

"He sent me a singing parchment. It accosted me during breakfast right after you'd left. It sang this horrid song about loving me forever and wanting me to be only his. By the end of the song, I thought everyone at the table would die from laughing so hard. Three of the students had collapsed to the ground in fits of laughter."

Severus took her hand in his. "It's all right, Hermione. The guy is just smitten with you."

Hermione's eyes narrowed at Severus. "Smitten with me? He just wants someone to do his laundry. He can find some other wench to do that for him."

Severus took advantage of her rage to touch her some more. He moved his hand to her back and rubbed it lightly.

"You're not calling yourself a wench, are you, Hermione?"

She shook her head. "I should send him a Howler. I'm sure I can sound just as shrill as his mother when I want to!"

Severus moved his hand to her shoulder and rubbed it comfortingly.

"Don't let him bother you."

"Don't let him bother me?" she cried incredulously. "He made me a laughing stock. My students think I'm some lovesick fool, and I'm not even interested in that git!"

Severus' hand moved back to hers and grasped it. "If you're feeling the need for revenge, perhaps I can help. I do have a variety of Potions at my disposal."

She turned to Severus with a mischievous light in her eyes. "Would you do that for me, Severus?"

Severus nodded.

She smiled at him, and he was actually afraid for Mr. Weasley.

oooOOOooo

After dinner, they headed to his room to create the perfect revenge. On the way to the dungeons, Severus' hand rested on her back to 'guide' her. He then tentatively caressed her arm as he led her into his private lab. His hand just happened to brush against hers as she looked over the potions stored in his private stores. He rested both hands on her shoulders while she searched for the perfect revenge.

Suddenly, she reached for a vial and turned to Severus.

"How about this?" she asked with an arched brow.

His hand grasped hers as he too grasped the vial. He smiled at her. "I think it would be perfect."

"But how to get him to take it," Hermione thought aloud.

Severus raised an eyebrow. "The boy is a bottomless pit. All you have to do is lace some into a chocolate brownie. The mint flavor will seem to flavor the brownie, and he will be none the wiser."

Hermione smiled at him, and he moved his hand to her arm. Grasping it, he squeezed it affectionately. "He'll never know what hit him."

"I have a batch of brownies to make," Hermione told him with a smile as she turned to go.

She stopped suddenly and turned back to Severus.

"Oh, I almost forgot!" she exclaimed as she removed a small package from her robes. He moved next to her and caressed her cheek.

"Thank you, Hermione," he said.

Hermione looked slightly surprised, but soon her expression was normal again.

"Maybe you should thank me after you see this gift." She gave Severus a sly grin, turned, and left.

Severus ripped into the gift, revealing a pendant to fasten his cloak. His eyes narrowed at the gift. It was in the shape of a Gryffindor lion. Oh, that woman had cheek!

oooOOOooo

Ron had been excited to receive a plate of brownies from Hermione. He wondered if his song had struck a note with her. He gobbled down half the plate before he realized the cruel trick she had played on him. The Babbling Potion she had laced into the brownies did its job well. For two days, all Ron could say was, "I don't love Hermione, I love Seamus Finnegan. I want him for myself."

Ron hid himself away, but the damage had been done. He had been a laughing stock at the Ministry, where he had devoured down the infernal brownies, relaying his news to everyone on his floor before fleeing with his hand clamped over his mouth.

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*On the twelfth day of Christmas, my Severus gave to me: twelve passionate kisses, eleven tentative caresses, ten curious glances, nine snarky smirks, eight looks of shock, seven arched eyebrows, six stuttering apologies, five groans of exasperation, four mumbles of 'chit,' three mean scowls, two painful sighs, and a kick that sent Crookshanks up a tree.*

Severus had been waiting all day for her to give him his gift. She had not done so. It was now almost nine at night. She had never given him his gift so late. Maybe she had forgotten? Maybe she had decided he wasn't interested, so had decided not to continue? But this was the last day. It was Christmas day, and she hadn't given him anything.

She had been acting oddly all day, averting her gaze from him. She had turned and wished him a Happy Christmas at breakfast, but that was the last he'd seen of her until dinner. Her conversation had been a bit stilted. He had wondered about that, but he had not been able to bring himself to ask her about it. She had practically buried herself in the feast that the house-elves had prepared for Christmas.

Now he paced in his room, awaiting a present he was unsure would come. His musings were disturbed by a knock on the door. He rushed to the door and flung it open, only to find no one there. He gazed up and down the hallway but saw no one making a hasty retreat from his door. He grumbled that the students were playing tricks on him before he saw the letter affixed to the outside of the door. It had his name inscribed on the envelope in Hermione's flowery handwriting.

He pulled the envelope from the door and looked up and down the hall again. Assured that she had not lingered, he closed his door and tore into the letter.

*Dear Severus,*

*I know you have been puzzled as to why I would choose to give you these gifts for the twelve days of Christmas. I wanted to tell you why. Ever since I started teaching here, I have been watching you. I know you find me exasperating, but I cannot say the same for my feelings for you. I find you to be the most fascinating man I have ever met. I have longed to get to know you better, and I think my little gift giving frenzy has helped us to form a friendship. I hope that you feel the same way. If not, maybe you should just stop reading right now and throw the rest of this letter into the fire.*

*The reason I say this is that my gift to you is this letter. In it, I would like to share my innermost feelings about you. I have found myself unable to stop thinking about you, Severus. I wonder how it would feel to have you run your hands through my hair. I wish I knew what it would be like to have you spend time with me just for the sake of being in my company, not because we have some joint task to accomplish.*

*I'm sorry. You are probably mortified by my admission. Being Christmas, I wanted to give you something without strings attached: my love. You can do with it what you wish. You can ignore it, reject it, or accept it. The choice is yours. I don't want to pressure you in any way.*

*So, Happy Christmas, Severus Snape. I hope that it has been all you have wished for.*

*Love,*

*Hermione*

Severus' hand was shaking by the time he finished the note. He read it again, just to be sure he understood everything she had said. Dropping the letter, he rushed out of his room and up the stairs.

oooOOOooo

Knocking on Hermione's door, Severus felt fear grip him. He chased it away. He knew her feelings for him, so he was not setting himself up for rejection. His heart beat wildly as he awaited her.

Hermione opened the door and looked tentatively at Severus. He knew she thought he was going to yell at her, call her a fool for loving him, or say something equally terrible. She was mistaken in her thoughts. That was the last thing he wanted to do.

Before Hermione even had a chance to say hello, Severus had rushed to her side and took her into his arms. His lips crashed down on hers, and he kissed her passionately. Hermione stiffened with shock before throwing her arms around his neck and returning the kiss.

"Hermione," Severus murmured in between kisses.

"Severus," Hermione managed to murmur back.

Severus pulled away from her and gazed into her eyes. He knew his own eyes were filled with affection for her.

"Thank you, Hermione, for a wonderful twelve days of Christmas."

Hermione smiled up at him. "I was sure you were going to hate me after that letter."

Severus pulled her even closer. "You managed to worm your way into my heart with your thoughtful gifts... except for that lion pendant."

Hermione fingered the pendant, which held his cape fastened over his shoulders. She grinned at him.

"It doesn't seem as if you object too much to having a Gryffindor symbol adorn your robes."

"That's simply because a Gryffindor has bewitched me."

Hermione smiled lovingly at him, and he could hold himself back no longer. He kissed her over and over again, filled with a feeling he hadn't felt in a long, long while... love.

**The End**

*A/N: Thanks to Liliith Kayden, who did a fine job looking this over. This story popped into my head this weekend and had to be written down. It started out as just a play on lyrics and grew into a full story.*