

The Ghost And Mrs. Krum

by ancientgirl

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Chapter 1 - The Encounter

Chapter 1 of 11

Hermione Krum has just lost her husband. She has found a small home for her and young Viktoria Krum. But she soon finds a big surprise shortly after arriving in her new home.

This story is an adaptation of a movie called The Ghost And Mrs. Muir. It stars Rex Harrison and Gene Tierney and if you have never seen it, I urge you to do so.

I recently saw this movie again after several years and thought it would make a wonderful little fic for our Severus and Hermione. I only hope my little fic does the story justice.

As always, all canon characters belong to JKR.

Thank you to June for her beta work, and also to Deviantauthor for pointing out some of my bad habits. I appreciate the help you both have given me.

The Ghost And Mrs. Krum

Chapter one - The Encounter

Just that very morning, Hermione Krum purchased the small brick row house on a cobbled street named Spinner's End. After she moved in all of her belongings, and made sure Viktoria's room was set up, she left the little girl to play with her dolls while she began to unpack the rest of the house. Being a witch came in handy, especially a witch who was an expert in charms - Shrinking charms, to be exact. In Bulgaria, she had been able to pack all of their belongings into a small hatbox. Within two hours of their arrival here, the empty house was transformed into a lovely comfortable home.

When she first saw the house she knew it would need a bit of work, but a few simple spells would make it just like new. It was rather run down and wasn't in the best of neighborhood, but she had hoped - since there seemed to be many new homes springing up just down the road - that this would eventually become a good investment. She loved the look of the small house, as well; it had potential. What she especially liked, however, was the potions laboratory in the cellar. The house seemed to have been built on some sort of incline, since there was a window in the cellar that actually allowed her to view the backyard. She hoped to get back to the one thing that had always given her so much happiness; making potions.

The love of her life was now Viktoria, her six-year-old daughter. Wanting to experience motherhood to its fullest, she had not made a potion since her daughter's birth, other than the usual things needed for colds and stomach ailments that children often got.

She had been married to Viktor Krum for almost seven years, until a Quidditch accident had taken his life. Several years ago, Viktor had gained ownership of a once quite prosperous team several years ago, yet in the last two years, the team had been what Hermione called a money pit. Viktor's sisters owned several teams of their own, which for them were quite successful. While he knew the game well, Viktor didn't have the business sense his sisters had; and the team eventually ended up taking most of

their earnings. What little money Hermione had when she married him was gone. In order to pay the hospital debts as well as funeral costs Hermione was forced to sell the team. She knew she would not be able to maintain it on her own.

Hermione loved Viktor, but never deeply and passionately as a woman should love a man to whom she is married. They were married shortly after her parents had died; she needed comfort, and he gave it to her.

It was her parents' death that sparked the Final Battle. Seeing how grief-stricken his friend was, Harry decided that Voldemort needed to be gone for good. With the help of the Order they had managed to come up with a plan; and on a cold January morning at the front gates of Hogwarts, the battle began. The rest, as they say, is history. Harry won, and luckily, few lives were taken on the side of the Order. Those who fell were mourned, including a snarky Potions Master whom everyone had doubted, yet he came through in the end for their side. Harry, Ron, and all her friends then got on with their lives; Hermione had nothing and no one except Viktor.

After getting the upstairs of the house settled, Hermione went to the cellar. She blew away some of the dust on the large wooden table and began to unpack her equipment. Suddenly, she felt a chill behind her; she ignored it. It was expected for a cellar to have chill spots, so she went on about her work of setting up her new potions lab.

"And just who the hell are you?" asked a menacing voice behind her.

She stiffened as she cursed herself. She had checked the house for any possible intruders, but failed to look in the cellar. She readied her wand and turned quickly, only to come face-to-face with someone long dead.

"Professor Snape?" she exclaimed, astonished.

Severus scowled.

"Who are you?" he asked again as he stood imposingly in front of her, just as he had always done when she was a student.

"H...Hermione Krum, well Krum now, but you knew me as...."

"Hell. All this time I thought I had avoided it, but I am obviously in hell." He threw his arms up in the air and shook his head. "So this is it. This is how I am to spend eternity," he sighed heavily and shook his head, "Well, at least it isn't Potter, although your incessant questions will most probably make me wish I had a dozen Potters haunting me."

"Um...sir, this isn't hell. This is my home. I just moved in."

"Your home? I think not. You, Miss Granger, are...Mrs. Krum? No, please do not tell me you actually married that oaf?"

"He was not an oaf! Viktor was a good man and a wonderful father."

"Was? Ah, so he left you? No doubt you drove the man insane with your constant chatter."

"My husband died two months ago. And don't you dare speak about him in any way other than with respect."

"I will speak about anyone I wish, in any way I wish, in my home."

"I didn't know this was your home at one time. Professor, you do know that you are...dead?"

He rolled his eyes.

"Of course I bloody know I'm dead. And I was quite happy as well, until I began to hear a commotion going on all about. Why are you here? This is my home, and I insist you leave here immediately!" shouted Severus

"This WAS your home. I purchased it this morning; here are the papers to prove so." Hermione took a scroll out of her pocket and placed it on the table next to her. "Why are you here, anyway?"

"I don't know why I am here now, do I?" He scoffed. "And anyway, it is none of your concern. I don't give a damn what those papers say. You are leaving here at once. Am I to never have peace? Not even in death?"

"I will not be forced out of here, Professor. I love this house. I loved it the moment I first saw it. I spent my last galleon buying it. I have nowhere to go and I will not be pushed out by the disembodied spirit of a grumpy git!"

"Why, you insufferable little know-it-all! Fine, if you refuse to leave after I have asked you so nicely, I will just have to force you out."

"And just how do you intend to do that? You are no longer a wizard; there is no magic in your specter. And flying objects do not frighten me. So, feel free to move things all you wish, as I can easily put an anchoring charm on everything."

"I do not need magic. All I need to do is scare those who live here."

"I am not afraid of you."

"You may not be, but the little child playing with her dollies upstairs is a different story." He had seen the little girl playing in her room before he came to the cellar.

At this, Hermione blanched. She knew that Viktoria had been through so much these last few weeks. She could not bear to hear the screams of her frightened daughter in the middle of the night, not when the girl had just only begun to come to terms with the loss of her father. Hermione had felt so strong until now. She hoped this new place would allow her a bit of peace of her own. But there was no fight left inside of Hermione anymore.

"No! Please, don't show yourself to her. All right, Professor," she said dejectedly and bowed her head. "You win. Viktor's sisters will be stopping by tomorrow. I...I will speak with them and ask if Viktoria and I can stay with them." She turned and walked out of the room quickly, not wanting him to see the tears falling down her cheeks.

Severus stood by the window with his arms crossed and his head held high. He would finally be able to enjoy the peace he deserved. He was glad she had not called his bluff. Much as he had once loved making the children's lives miserable when he was still teaching at Hogwarts, he had no desire to haunt Mrs. Krum's daughter. He found that all he wished for now was to be left alone.

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The following day, Hermione prepared for the Krum sisters. *'Oh Viktor, what am I to do? Why did you have to leave us?'* she thought sadly. She had no family of her own, and she could not go to Harry or Ron, since they had their own wives and children to care for. Her only option was to take up residence with Viktor's sisters.

She looked around the small house. It would have been so wonderful to see herself spending her days here. She had lost so much, and now, even this was lost to her. Hermione would now have to endure living with Viktor's sisters. Two more horrible women, she had never met. Next to them Dolores Umbridge was Mary Poppins.

Hermione looked out the window and saw the small burgundy coach approach. She then took a deep breath and steadied herself.

"Good. I see your ride is here," said a deep voice behind her.

Hermione closed her eyes and willed herself to remain calm.

"Please, leave. It will be difficult enough for me to speak with them about my situation. The last thing I need is for them to see you here, as well."

"Why would I leave when this is obviously going to be quite a delightful show? Besides, they cannot see me or hear me. Only you can."

"Lucky me," she mumbled, as she heard a hard knock on the door. She walked out of the small living room and into the hall. As she opened the front door, she heard the two women talking about the home.

"Dreadful." Said Katerina.

"This is smaller than the horse stalls in our summer home," hissed Nadia. The two women looked up and smiled. "Hermione, how could you have spent Viktor's money on this, this..."

"Outhouse," finished Katerina. The two women shoved their way in and walked to the living room, where Severus stood in the corner, wearing his best Potions master scowl.

"Outhouse? Did that harpy just call my home an outhouse?" asked Severus as he approached Hermione.

"Nadia, Katerina. It's so nice to see you," she ignored Severus and walked past him, "Please have a seat. I'll bring in some tea."

"No, tea for us, we have just come from the Habishams. They live five miles up the road. I almost thought you had made a good investment, until we started down that dark road and we came upon this," said Nadia looking around the room in disgust.

"Hermione, if Viktor could see you and Viktoria here, he would be mortified." Katerina looked at Hermione, and then noticed she was wearing a navy blue skirt and a white blouse. "Where are your mourning robes?"

"Well, I thought it was time for me to put them away. Viktor never liked the mourning process. He would not want me to wear mourning robes for longer than a couple of months. And there is no need to wear them inside my home."

"No, that simply will not do," said Nadia as she walked towards the window and unknowingly stood next to Severus. "And you have a draft! Why, it's freezing here."

"That Madam is the problem with reptiles. They suffer from no body heat." Severus looked at the woman in disgust. Never before had he been in the presence of two such horrible women. Even Bellatrix could have taken a few lessons in bitch from these two.

Hermione looked towards Severus and shook her head.

"Quiet," she said, before she realized that the Krum sisters could not hear him.

"Well, I was only pointing out the draft. You don't have to be so rude."

"Oh, no, I'm sorry. I wasn't speaking to you. I...oh, never mind. Please come sit down. I wanted to speak with you both about the possibility of...."

"Hermione, before you say anything, we want you to know that we have decided that Viktoria needs to begin her schooling."

"But she's only six years old. She won't be getting her letter for another five years."

"Yes, we know, but we have found a lovely school just outside of Italy. She will only be gone for six months of the year. And besides, you will be too busy helping us with our Quidditch teams. We forgive you for selling Viktor's team, but after all, you do need to earn your keep, you know."

"But, I don't know anything about Quidditch. I hate Quidditch."

"Well, you married a Quidditch player. You could not have hated it that much." said Nadia in a huff.

"Hermione, don't tell me you actually think you can manage on your own? Why, you have not had a job since you married Viktor. Do you think toying with those syrups and herbs...."

"I was a Potions mistress, and a very good one," said Hermione through gritted teeth.

Severus, who had been stiffly observing the entire scene, immediately dropped his crossed arms to his side. He had died before she had gone into Potions. She must have earned her Potions title shortly after graduating from Hogwarts. Other than him, she was probably the youngest to ever hold the title of Potions master.

"I can get a job working for the Ministry, perhaps. Or even make my own potions and sell them to an Apothecary."

The two women began to laugh.

"Oh, Hermione, be serious!" scoffed Katerina.

Hermione's eyes began tearing. Between her anger, and the emotions she had dealt with in the last several weeks, she felt she would explode any moment.

"I have heard entirely enough!" yelled Severus. Within seconds, he had grabbed each woman by the arm and was forcing both to their feet.

"What is going on here?" yelled Nadia as she was being hurled through the door.

"Oh, sweet Merlin, what is this? Hermione, help us!" begged Katerina.

All Hermione could do was sit on the small chaise and stare at the sight of Severus Snape, taking the two women and shoving them out the door, with his feet on their ass.

"You two are the vilest, aberrations ever to have walked this earth. I shall thank you to stay out of our house!" He yelled, momentarily forgetting they could not hear a word he had said.

Hermione ran to the door.

"And don't come back!" she yelled, as she threw their bags at them. She slammed the door and locked it. Then she rested her head against the door and took a deep breath.

Severus saw her shoulders shaking. Much as he hated to admit it, he didn't like the way the two women had treated her. He was the only one who could treat her like that; how dare they take what little joy he had away like that.

"Don't cry; they do not deserve your tears," he said softly, trying to calm her before she became hysterical.

Hermione turned around. To his amazement, she was not crying but laughing.

"Did you see the looks on their faces when you grabbed them?" She chortled. "That was brilliant, Professor, absolutely brilliant."

His lips twitched, and he smiled with a gleam in his eye.

"Yes, they did look rather aghast, didn't they?" he agreed.

"That they did." She looked at him for a moment. She had never seen him smile in life. He had a lovely smile. After they stopped laughing, she spoke. "Much as I enjoyed seeing them like that, they were the only two people who I could have stayed with. If you give me some time, I can try to find another place for Viktoria and me."

"No, Mrs. Krum," he sighed, thinking for once the he may have been somewhat unreasonable with her. "Perhaps it might be possible for us to co-exist without driving each other mad."

"Thank you, Professor. I promise, we won't be in the way. Viktoria is a quiet child; she spends most of her time reading. And I have been trying to get some freelance potions work, so I will most probably be in the lab quite a bit. Why, we may spend days not having to see one another. I will not intrude on your solitude."

"Very well, Mrs. Krum. See that you do not, and we shall get along fine." With that final word, he disappeared.

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I'm sorry, but when I first posted this quite a bit had been cut off. I'm not sure what happened.

I hope you enjoyed this first chapter. I'll try to have more soon.

Chapter 2 – Pounding the cobblestones

Chapter 2 of 11

Hermione is having a hard time finding work. Lucky for her Severus is there to help.

As always, all canon characters belong to JKR.

This story is an adaptation of The Ghost and Mrs. Muir. I am trying to keep this as close to the original movie as I can in the hopes of making this a bit of a different fic.

Thanks again to June for her beta help.

Chapter 2 Pounding the cobblestones

Two weeks passed quickly, and Hermione was at the end of her rope. During her first week in her new home, she applied for several job opportunities. The Ministry had nothing to offer her, much to her dismay. Her idea about working freelance for some of the apothecaries in the area didn't pan out either. Most of them already had their own potions makers in house; thus, her offer to work from home was no good.

She even tried applying at Hogwarts, yet Minerva sadly informed her that they had a full staff. Before she Apparated home after visiting with some of the other professors at Hogwarts, she stopped by Gringotts. Her account was in dire need of an infusion, and fast. At this rate, there wouldn't be so much as a single Knut in her vault by the end of the month. While the house was hers, she still needed money for food and clothing for Viktoria. Hermione did not spoil her child, but she also wanted to provide as much comfort as she could, be it with her favorite dessert or a special book or toy.

Hermione had asked Ginny to watch the girl while she went about her job search. Not wanting to spend too much time trying to convince Ginny and Harry she would be fine, she happily came to pick up Viktoria and let them know that she had been given several offers that very afternoon to mull over.

"Which job are you going to take, Mummy?" asked Viktoria.

Hermione didn't want her daughter to know that she had just lied to Uncle Harry and Aunt Ginny.

"Well, sweetie, I'm not sure yet. I need to think which one is best for me. After all, I don't want to spend too much time away from you."

The girl smiled as her mother took her by the hand and Apparated them to their home. Hermione sent Viktoria up to her room for her nap, and then she dragged herself to the kitchen and set a pot of water on the stove for tea. She sighed and sat down.

"Now what?" she said to the empty chair next to her.

Severus had been wandering the home for several days out of her sight. He now stood behind her, wondering if she had finally gone mad.

"How am I supposed to make any money if no one will hire me?" she said, shaking her head.

"Who on earth are you talking to?" asked Severus from behind her.

Hermione jumped.

"Professor!" she grabbed her chest, hoping her rapidly pounding heart would remain in its place. "It isn't polite to sneak up on people like that."

"Yes, I know," he said matter of factly. "Do forgive me, though, for interrupting your conversation with the chair. It looks positively enthralled."

She rolled her eyes.

"I wasn't talking to the chair. I was just thinking out loud."

"The first signs of insanity."

Hermione stood and walked to her now whistling teapot.

"Thank you, Professor. I can't tell you how thrilled I am to have my own personal therapist. It's so nice to know that no matter how miserable my day is, I can always count on your words to make me feel even worse" She readied her tea and sat back down.

Severus walked around the table and sat down in the empty chair in front of her.

"It is entirely my pleasure. Now, what were you on about?" he asked.

"Oh, I've been everywhere looking for work, but there just isn't anything out there. I've been to the Ministry, to the apothecaries, the bookstores; I even went to Hogwarts. There just isn't any work available, and at this rate I'll be out of money by the end of the month."

They sat in silence for a long while, until Severus jumped up and began pacing. He did this for several minutes, then stopped and turned to look at her.

"I believe I have a solution."

"You do?" asked Hermione hopefully.

"Yes. You, Mrs. Krum, are going to write a book," he stated simply.

"Me? Write a book? Professor, I read books; I don't write them. Besides, what would I possibly write about?"

"You will write about something that has never been written."

"And that would be...?" she asked expectantly.

"A book about being a Death Eater," he said.

Her eyes went wide.

"Well, you've done it," she said. "You have touched upon the only subject I know nothing about."

"You may not know," he leaned down towards her and smiled evilly as he quirked his eyebrow, "but I do."

"Oh, now, just wait a minute. No one will believe I know the first thing about being a Death Eater. Who would buy a book written by a Muggleborn about being a Death Eater?"

"No one will. But you have moved into an ex-Death Eater's home. It would be logical for you to have found papers or journals I may have written. No one would buy a book from a Death Eater either, but if *you* write the book about a Death Eater, using his own accounts, the profits will go to you, a war hero and member of the Order."

"You know, I think you're on to something," she said.

"I know I am on to something, silly girl." He walked to the window and noticed clouds in the sky. "We begin in the morning. I will dictate to you, and you will transcribe what I write in that infernal machine you have in your room."

"It's a computer, sir," she said blandly.

He waved his hands and shook his head.

"Yes, yes, computer. I will tell you where my journals are so that you can look through them, and some old notes I kept from my early days."

"Thank you, Professor. I really appreciate you helping us out."

"I am not helping you," he huffed. "This is just the only way I can get you to keep your mouth shut for longer than ten minutes." With those final words, he disappeared.

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Hermione barely slept that night. She wondered what stories Professor Snape would tell her. It was well known by all of the Order members that he had been a deadly Death Eater in his time. No one had ever really asked him about any of his past deeds in detail. She knew he had killed people, and possibly tortured a few as well. How much would she be able to listen to? Would hearing the accounts of his former life change the way she viewed him? She sighed and turned over on her side. He was an early riser in life, and ... knowing that ghosts needed no sleep ... she had no doubt he would be shaking her bed before the sun appeared on the horizon.

A few hours after she finally went to sleep, Severus glided into her room. He watched her sleep and remembered her childhood face. Her daughter looked very much like her. There was a bit of her father in the girl, but thank goodness not much. The girl had also inherited her mother's intelligence and love of reading.

Severus thought back on the day he died. It was on the front lawn of Hogwarts. He had been avoiding hexes all morning, and managed to even bring down several of his old cohorts.

At one point he began to think he would survive the battle. And then in a brief flash of light, he was gone. The next thing he knew, he was back in his small home. For days, he wandered about the house, remembering only bits and pieces at a time about what had happened. Then he realized he really wasn't sure how long he had been there. Time meant nothing to him anymore.

Another thing he wondered was why he was there? He had done all that was asked of him in life ... even things he did not want to do, one of which was to kill Albus Dumbledore. That was something he had never forgiven himself for, even if it had been part of the old wizard's plan. Severus had not been afraid to die, nor did he leave anything behind undone. Why was he still there?

He was shaken out of his reverie when he heard Mrs. Krum whimpering in her sleep. During the daytime, as he kept himself in the shadows and out of her sight, he was able to observe her. She cried every now and then, both for her husband and for the situation she now saw herself in. He would never have admitted this to her, but he felt sorry for her. Many times he himself had felt the misery of being alone in the world. He had Albus for a time, but even the old wizard was of little comfort to him, as the Headmaster was constantly worrying about running Hogwarts and the Order ... and keeping Potter alive.

Severus looked at the clock next to the bed and noticed it was six o'clock. Smiling, he stood in front of the bed and took hold of the footboard.

Hermione was dreaming that she was on a sailboat. The sea was calm as her body drank in the sun. All of a sudden, the boat began to rock. She sat up and tried to walk towards the steering wheel of the boat, yet the waves rocked the small boat so badly she fell overboard. She fell into the water, and her arms were flailing. She didn't know how to swim, and she began to sink into the water. The waves were crashing all around her. Suddenly, she bolted upright in her now shaking bed.

"Good morning," said a very satisfied-looking Severus.

Hermione blinked the sleep out of her eyes and looked around the room.

"Wha...what the hell time is it?" she asked.

"Six o'clock. Time to wake up, Mrs. Krum. We have work to do."

you were allowed to be a god. For one brief moment, you touched the soul of another, only to tear it to pieces.

There were many innocents taken and corrupted the night Severus was initiated. Those who wished to join had to bring their own victims. Most brought young adult males and females, yet many had taken children. During the ceremony, he took the life of a young woman, ripping through her virgin membrane all the while bleeding her with his Athame. As the initiates all chanted together in that dark moonless night, the ground seemed to tremble. It was as though the earth wanted to shake itself away from the evil that was growing above it. As though it wanted to clean itself of the filth, yet no cleansing waters came, and it was left bloodied and dirty with the echoing cries of the dying slowly ebbing away.

After it was over and they had washed the blood from their hands, they all looked at their bodies and noticed the Mark. Never had Severus felt so lost as he did that night, yet he looked for no guiding path. That path would not be visible for many long nights.

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As Hermione typed, she willed herself to hear the words yet not listen to their meaning. *'Words, Hermione,'* she thought to herself, *'they are just words.'* She didn't dare actually listen to what he was saying, knowing that if she did she would never be able to sleep comfortably again.

The two worked until it was time for lunch. Severus felt it was also time for them to stop for the day. They had only worked several hours, yet he could feel her emotions were troubled. He knew that what he told her had been difficult to hear, and he did not want to overburden her mind with visions of death and doom for too long. He would leave her to transcribe the parchments of notes he left her earlier. The information in there was fairly general and somewhat tame, compared to the words he spoke that morning.

"We can begin again in the morning," he said brusquely. "I believe we have made good progress for today. The notes will provide sufficient information for you to put together a bit more of the mysteries of the Death Eater mind. I gather you are growing tired of the sound of my voice" He tried to make light of the situation, hoping it would boost her mood.

She smiled and saved her work on the laptop.

"I could never grow tired of your voice, Professor." She flinched. *'I did not just say that out loud,'* she thought. Even though he had been a stern professor, his voice always held a sort of calming affect on her. It was so deep and smooth. She loved hearing him speak, even when he was being a nasty sarcastic git.

He smiled but said nothing as he disappeared. If she loved to hear him speak, then she would get an earful the coming week.

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I'll be working on another chapter in the next few days. I will not be going into too much detail as far as the book goes, so one more chapter with a few bits and then on with the story.

Thank you for reading.

Chapter 5 - Diary of a Death Eater

Chapter 5 of 11

Severus and Hermione put the finishing touches on their book, and Hermione asks a question Severus is not prepared to answer just yet.

All canon characters belong to JKR.

I'd like to thank of course my lovely Beta June for her help and suggestions.

Chapter 5 – Diary of a Death Eater

The days passed quickly. Severus and Hermione formed a sort of unspoken routine. He would come and shake her bed at six in the morning and they would work until nine o'clock, when Hermione would feed Viktoria breakfast and then spend a few hours with her daughter. After lunch, Hermione would come back to her room, where she and Severus would work until late afternoon. It was surprising the amount of work they were able to accomplish. By the end of two weeks, she had amassed a huge collection of stories and information.

Hermione rarely interrupted him while he spoke. He was very detailed in his explanations of the intricacies of both the actions of Death Eaters and the many raids he participated in, as well as observed. He finally explained the truth behind many Death Eater myths — no, Death Eaters did not share their wives; no, not all Death Eaters were Slytherins; yes, there was a charm on the mask to incite fear. And most importantly, there had never been any such thing called a Dark Revel.

Severus also wanted to include the history of Tom Riddle. He said it was important that people really know who this man was, before he became Voldemort. Severus described what happened the night Voldemort

tried to kill Harry as a baby, as well as the night he used Harry's blood to regain his physical form.

Hermione typed on, and briefly wondered how Severus knew so many details about the night Voldemort tried to kill baby Harry.

One day though she grew incredibly curious about two things. Severus had become a Death Eater not long after graduating from Hogwarts, yet he was really only a full participating Death Eater for what seemed to be a period of about two years. The first thing she was curious about was how he lured his victims. While he did not kill many during his years with the Death Eaters, the few people who did die at his hands were young women barely into their twenties. The other question was: why did he stop?

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"Professor," she said as she looked to him. His place was always the same: next to her desk, on the large leather chair. "How did you lure the Muggle victims Voldemort sent you to kill?"

He turned his head slowly towards her.

Thank you to June for her help and for being my beta.

Chapter 6 Mercury's Wings

Hermione spent the weekend thinking on Severus' words. He didn't show himself to her for the rest of the weekend, and she thought that perhaps he wanted to be alone. She kept herself busy by reading over a few things in the book that she had made notes to herself to go back to. Every so often, she would hear Viktoria in her room, talking to her dolls. She had taken to giving them tea parties as of late.

Monday morning, she dressed Viktoria warmly and dropped her off at Harry and Ginny's. She knew that her book would never make sense to Muggle readers, so she decided to peddle her and Severus' combined efforts to wizarding society. There were three publishing houses that seemed to be the most open to new writers, so she thought it would be best to approach those to begin with. At the first house, she waited in a small room with several other would-be authors; she left after waiting over two hours. Hermione decided to try her luck with another firm just down the street, where she waited three hours. Hoping that the third time would be a charm, she Apparated to the last firm on her list, which was just a ways down the street from the Three Broomsticks.

Mercury's Wings was a small publishing firm. It was located in a building that looked as though a weak wind could blow it down to the ground. Hermione walked into the building, and found a balding chubby man sitting behind a very old desk, reading that day's copy of *The Quibbler*.

"Do you have an appointment?" he asked gruffly, not even bothering to look up from his paper.

"No, sir. I don't." She looked around the small room and saw that she was the only person there other than him. "Do I need one?"

The man looked over to her and set the paper down. Just then, another man walked through the door. He looked at Hermione and tipped his hat. He reminded her of Bill Weasley, except he had dark brown hair instead of red.

"Good afternoon," he said as he smiled.

Hermione smiled, and then heard the man behind the desk clearing his throat.

"You can't be seen without an appointment," he said.

"Can I make one now?" she asked.

The man rolled his eyes and opened up a wired book that had been closed. He took his quill and dipped it in ink.

Hermione looked down at the book and noticed that there were no appointments made for the entire day.

"Fine, for when," asked the gruff man impatiently.

"I would like an appointment for December eighteenth at two o'clock."

The man frowned and looked up from his writing.

"That's five minutes from now."

"Yes, it is," she agreed.

"You can't make an appointment for five minutes from now."

"Wilfred, stop giving this lovely young lady such a difficult time. Just have a look at what she has. It isn't as though you have anything better to do," said the man behind Hermione.

"You stay out of this, Reg. It's enough I have to deal with you hanging about; the last thing I need is more no-talent dimwits waltzing in here, thinking they have written the next *Merlin's Chronicles*," huffed Wilfred.

Hermione narrowed her brow and stepped forward.

"How dare you say that. You haven't even given me a chance to show you what I have."

"At least allow the lady to show you her work." The younger man took a step forward and looked at Hermione. "I must apologize for old Wilfred here. As you can see, he's in a rather nasty mood today. I gather he's lost last week's profits after the Chudley Cannons' loss yesterday." Wilfred crossed his arms and pursed his lips. "My name is Reginald Warren, aspiring best selling author," he said as he bowed slightly and took Hermione's hand. He then motioned to the chubby man. "And that cranky old coot is Wilfred Mercury."

Wilfred mumbled beneath his breath, "All I need, another bloody romance novel."

"Pleased to meet you, Mr. Warren. I'm Hermione Krum."

Wilfred's face then brightened suddenly.

"Krum? Were you related to the Quidditch player, Viktor Krum?" he asked.

"Why, yes, he was my husband," said Hermione quietly.

"Well, perhaps I can have a look at what you have," said Wilfred.

"Really?" said Hermione, excitedly.

"Oh, now you're interested," shot Reginald.

Wilfred ignored the other man and reached out for Hermione's manuscript.

"Just what sort of book is this?" Wilfred asked, hoping it really wasn't another sickeningly sweet romance novel. He turned it to face him, and his eyes opened wide as he read the cover. "Death Eaters?"

Hermione smiled. She knew that was the last thing he expected to see.

"You wrote a book about Death Eaters?" asked Reginald.

"Not just any old Death Eaters. This is about Severus Snape."

Wilfred looked up at Hermione, like a child opening up a Christmas present. "Wait! You used to be Hermione Granger."

"I still am. I'm not dead, sir," she said, still standing but now with her hands on her hips.

"I mean, you also fought in the war. You knew him? You know Harry Potter?" Wilfred asked excitedly.

"Yes, I knew Professor Snape. And I do know Harry Potter."

Wilfred moved the book closer to him and read the title fully.

"From the title, I gather this is a tell-all book, but Severus Snape has been dead for years. He died in the war. Where did you get the information for this book?" he inquired.

"I have recently purchased a home he once lived in. I found several journals and notes written on parchments. I arranged them all by date and began to write this book. Everything in there is documented in his own writing," answered Hermione hopefully. She could see the man becoming more interested by the minute. For a brief moment she considered taking him to meet Severus but pushed the thought from her mind. Severus was not an ordinary ghost like the ones at Hogwarts. He made it clear to her from the beginning that he wanted to be left alone. He would appear only to Hermione.

"Those journals must be something," said Reginald.

"They are quite fascinating, actually. Professor Snape was a brilliant man. There is so much about him that is misunderstood, and many unwarranted rumors," answered Hermione, smiling.

"All right, Mrs. Krum. I'll have a read. Come back Wednesday afternoon."

"Do you think it's something you can sell? Would people be interested in reading something like this?"

"Are you kidding me? Next to nothing is known about what true Death Eaters were all about. All other Death Eaters are dead or were given the Dementor's Kiss. If this book is what I think it is, then you have yourself a goldmine here, Mrs. Krum ... a goldmine."

~*~*~*~*~*~*~*~*~*

Hermione stepped out of the building with an extra spring in her step. She couldn't wait to get home to tell Severus that Mr. Mercury was incredibly interested in the book. She felt a drop of rain and looked up into the sky. At that very moment, there began a torrential downpour. As she was going to turn back into the building, she bumped into Reginald, who had just opened a rather large umbrella.

"I'm sorry, I was going to go inside and cast a rain repellent charm."

Reginald laughed.

"But umbrellas are much more fun, don't you think?" he smiled, then realized he had his arm around her waist.

Hermione realized it too, and moved away from him slightly, yet kept herself under the umbrella.

"And may I ask where you procured this very Muggle item?" She thought it interesting to see an umbrella being used in Hogesmead, only ever seeing wizards and witches keeping the rain off of themselves by way of charms.

"My mother is a Muggle. She gave this to me several years ago for Christmas. Would you like to accompany me for some tea? I would love to hear about your book."

Hermione was flattered to be asked to tea. She never dated much as a teenager, and only had a brief relationship with Ron; Viktor was the only other man she had dated. She also felt a slight tinge of guilt. What would Severus say if he knew she was having tea with some strange man? Why would Severus think anything? He would probably be pleased a nice man had shown interest in her. Still, she hesitated.

"I really should be getting back home. I have to pick up my daughter. I left her with some friends of mine, and I don't want to get home too late."

"Oh, please, I promise I'll only keep you a short time. I really would love to hear about your book."

She thought back on the stories Severus told her. But she could certainly not live her life wondering if every man that approached her was out to attack her. She smiled and nodded.

"All right. One cup of tea, then."

They walked down the street together under the umbrella.

~*~*~*~*~*~*~*~*~*

I hope you enjoyed this chapter. I'll try to have more some time this week. Thanks to all of you who have read so far. I'm very happy you are enjoying it.

Chapter 7 - Goldmines and Golddiggers

Chapter 7 of 11

Hermione gets some good news about the book and runs into her new friend.

All canon characters belong to JKR. The plot of this story is taken from a movie called "The Ghost and Mrs. Muir." I thought it would be interesting to write something a bit different for our favorite couple.

Thanks to June for her beta work and the wonderful suggestions.

Chapter 7 Goldmines and Golddiggers

Hermione had more than one cup of tea with Reginald. They talked for almost two hours. She finally left after looking over his shoulder and seeing the time on the clock against the wall. With a rushed apology, she bid him goodbye and practically sprinted out of the shop, then Apparated to Harry and Ginny's to pick up Viktoria.

into the field behind the house. Hermione watched as Reginald attempted to fly a kite he had brought along with him, for Viktoria. As she sat on the blanket, she felt a chill.

"What in blazes is he doing now?" asked the familiar deep voice behind her.

She smiled and looked over her shoulder to see him.

"He is flying a kite."

"Why?" asked Severus, as he sat next to her.

"Because it's fun," answered Hermione.

Severus rolled his eyes.

"Fun would be flying on a broom. Fun would be blowing rose bushes to bits. Look at him," Severus said, nodding his head towards Reginald, who was now entwined in the kite string. "At this rate, the man will wind up hanging himself before he even gets that thing up in the air." He began laughing.

"Oh, stop." she said, chuckling. The two sat there in silence for several moments. Curiosity got the better of her, so she decided to ask him what had him so absent that week.

"I hope you weren't upset because of Reginald. I've hardly seen you this week," she said as nonchalantly as she could.

"I had not noticed I was gone long. I do live in a different plane of existence; time for me is of no consequence." He lied. He knew exactly how long he had been avoiding her. Severus felt a stabbing at his heart when he saw Hermione clapping at the fact that Reginald finally was able not only to disentangle himself from the kite strings, but he actually got it off the ground. Viktoria was laughing and running after the kite, reaching for it.

"Well, at least he seems to know how to do something right," Severus huffed.

Just then, an owl flew down and settled itself on the blanket. It was a large brown owl, one she had never seen before. She took the note it offered her from its leg, and she instantly beamed.

"It's from Mr. Mercury!" she yelled. Viktoria and Reginald immediately began to run towards her. She turned to look at Severus, but he had already disappeared.

"What does it say, Mummy?" asked Viktoria excitedly.

"It must be about the sales. Didn't you say the book would be on sale today?" asked Reginald.

Hermione unwrapped the note and began to read it out loud.

Dear Hermione,

You are a success! The book sold out within an hour of its release. People are going mad, demanding more copies. I will contact you this coming week so that you may pick up your first payment from the sales. Congratulations!

W. Mercury

Severus stood behind a large elm tree and smiled. All this time, he thought his life had meant nothing ... that the sacrifices he made for the betterment of the wizarding world would be forgotten, and that no one would care. And now, his life's story was the talk of the wizarding world. Today was a happy day for him. He looked at Hermione, being hugged by Reginald, and his happiness was replaced by envy.

But his envy was not towards Hermione, it was towards the buffoon that now had his arms wrapped around her and Viktoria. Severus turned towards the house and walked away, finding he couldn't stomach the scene any longer.

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Sorry, for some reason this chapter got chopped up.

Chapter 9 — What a Beautiful Dream it Was

Chapter 9 of 11

Hermione's life takes an odd turn.

All canon characters belong to JKR.

Thanks to June for her suggestions and beta work.

Chapter 9 What a Beautiful Dream it Was

Hermione's book was indeed a success, not only for her but also for Mercury's Wings. Wilfred was able to move his office from the tired-looking dilapidated building to the second floor in a well-preserved and very stylish Victorian-looking building. His company also began attracting serious authors who didn't write fluffy romances.

Harry and Ginny threw a party for Hermione after the book had reached number one in the best selling book lists in the Quibbler, the Daily Prophet and the Hogsmeade Post. She had asked Reginald if he would accompany her to the party, but he couldn't due to a business trip. They had grown close during that last month. He came to dinner at least once a week sometimes twice, and every so often she and Viktoria would have picnics with Reginald in the yard.

Hermione now stood in the corner of Harry and Ginny's living room, with both Harry and Ron at her side.

"Hermione, I can't believe I'm saying this, but this book is fantastic," said Ron.

"Why can't you believe it? Because the book is about Professor Snape?" she asked him. Ron smiled, knowing he had to tread carefully. She had always been one of Snape's staunchest defenders.

"In a way," he said as he saw a flicker of fire in her brown eyes. "Don't bite my head off just yet now. I fully admit that even though Snape was a git, he did do right by us all in the end." Ron looked at the book and shook his head, as a sad look crossed his face. "He really went through a lot. I never realized how much."

"Neither did I," Harry interjected. "I guess it was just easier to believe he was an evil bastard. The book's dedication was nice."

A man should not be judged by the actions seen on the surface alone. Within these pages lies the story of such a man. I dedicate this book to Severus Snape, one of the forgotten heroes of the Great War against Lord Voldemort.

Hermione smiled and was glad she had added that after Severus looked at the final draft. He would never have allowed that dedication. She stayed at the party until after midnight, then made her way home with Viktoria fast asleep in her arms.

As she walked up to the house, she wondered if the professor would be around. Hermione wanted to talk to him and let him know how many people at the party enjoyed the book.

She put Viktoria to bed and walked into her room. Deciding not to turn on her lights, she lit a small candle next to her nightstand and jumped when she heard a rustling of clothes coming from the large leather chair.

"You're home rather late. I gather the party was enjoyable?" asked Severus from his spot.

"It was, yes," she answered with a smile, as she took off her outer robes.

"And was the buffoon there?" He couldn't help himself. Reginald's name would not go past his lips without making him want to grow ill. Or as ill as ghosts could get.

"Professor, he has a name. I would get used to using it, if I were you," she said, turning away from him.

"Why would I do that?" he asked.

"Because. He may be around more often, that's all."

"Again, I ask, why?"

"It's just that someday...well, that remains to be seen. Someday he might ask me to be his wife, and he may be living here." She waited for the explosion, but it never came. She turned back around to see if he was still there.

He was standing next to the window, looking out into the night. The moonlight coming through the window gave him an almost ethereal glow.

"You asked me once," he spoke softly, "why I chose to turn my back on Voldemort. My mother was the only person who I felt ever loved me. In her eyes, I was the most beautiful child in the world. In her eyes, I was perfect. My fondest memories of her are of the times we would walk through fields covered with bluebells."

"The night Voldemort killed Potter's parents, I arrived at the house just before he killed Lily. I saw her throw herself in the path of the Killing Curse. At that moment, it reminded me of what my mother had done to protect me and love me. I had always suspected my father had a hand in her death. I had my confirmation when I took his life." He didn't turn to look at her, but he knew she was shocked. "I used Legilimency, and I saw what he did to her. Yes, I killed him. When I saw Voldemort kill Lily, it was as though I were seeing my father kill my mother all over again. Only this time it was happening right before my eyes. Before I could do anything, he had his wand pointing at Harry. It was over before it had even begun, really. He tried to kill Harry and, well, you know the rest. I heard a commotion outside and saw Sirius running towards the house. I left before anyone saw me there. That night, I went to Albus and told him everything."

Hermione wiped a tear that had escaped down her cheek. She often wondered if he had been there the night Harry's parents had died.

"I don't trust him," he said suddenly.

Hermione was confused.

"Who?"

"Him, the buffoon, Reginald," spat Severus.

She sighed heavily.

"Professor, I'm tired. Can we please not get into this tonight?" She hoped that if she put him off, he would forget the entire situation. She didn't understand his intense dislike for Reginald, when the aspiring author had been nothing but warm and loving towards Viktoria and her.

"No, we will get into this now. Can't you see he is toying with you?" Severus hoped to make her understand that there was something he felt off about Reginald. He couldn't explain it, but there was something about the man he didn't trust. Severus acknowledged there was a bit of jealousy in his heart, but this had nothing to do with his feelings. He always had good instincts about people when he was alive; this had helped him survive as a spy.

"Why are you saying that? Why can't you be happy for me?" She closed her door, not wanting Viktoria to hear her screaming, and then cast a silencing charm.

"I am ecstatic for you and the freedom this book has allowed you. You do not need this man in your life. All he will do is hurt you!" he yelled.

"You always think the worst of people. I always defended you when Harry and Ron said things about you, but you know, they were right. You're just a nasty git, aren't you? Reginald likes me, and he likes Viktoria. He treats us well. At least he's..." She stopped herself, not wanting to make things worse.

"He's what? Go on, say it. He's a living, breathing man ... not some ghost haunting your daily existence. If it's a living, breathing man you want, why not just go to the Three Broomsticks; there are plenty of men there looking for..."

"Don't you say it. Don't you dare make this into something dirty and sex-driven! If I could, I'd slap you into oblivion." She was furious. How could he even think something like that? She looked down and closed her eyes as she took several long calming breaths. She then looked into his dark eyes. "I will not discuss this further with you. I am very tired, and I would like to go to sleep. We can discuss this when you are in a more rational mood. Now please, just go."

He disappeared without another word.

Hermione fell onto her bed and began crying. Did he even know how much he had hurt her with his words? She cried until she had nothing left inside of her. Exhausted from crying, she finally fell asleep.

The candle had just about burned itself out when the figure of a dark man reappeared in her room once more.

Severus walked to her bed and stood over her. Inwardly, he berated himself. She had been crying, the proof on her tear-stained cheeks and on the now wet pillowcase. His words had been harsh, and at the time he said them, that's how he wanted them to be. He wanted to hurt her the way he felt she had hurt him. He wanted to be that flesh-and-blood man she needed, but that was something that could never be. He felt her feelings for him, even now. She was dreaming of him, he knew that. Even as a ghost,

