

# Just Look Up

*by MomoDesu*

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## Just Look Up

*Chapter 1 of 1*

If anyone had told Hermione that on Christmas Day she would be snogging her Potions professor in a dirty closet she would have laughed. Now that it had happened, laughing was the last thing on her mind.

"Can you please remind me while I haven't killed you yet?"

"Because you don't have your wand?"

"I could snap your pretty little neck if I felt so inclined."

This was exactly how Hermione wanted to spend her Christmas. Well, she was at Hogwarts at least; one of her Christmas wishes had been fulfilled. Being trapped in a broom closet with a rather irate Severus Snape, though, hadn't been on the agenda. Having a spot of gillywater with Minerva; discussing possible uses of cloaking charms with Filius; asking Pomona to help her salvage her wilting African Violet that wasn't taking very well to the conditions down in the dungeons; those were all things she could be doing right now. But no. She was stuck with a ranting and raving Snape, both of them without wands.

It had all started when Remus, having recently returned to Hogwarts to take his position as DADA professor once again, had asked her to retrieve a gift he'd purchased for Minerva and hidden in the broom closet off of the staff entrance hallway in the back of the Great Hall. In the back of her mind, she'd wondered why he didn't go get it himself. Regardless, she did as he'd asked her to do. Not thinking about how he brushed against her when he asked her to go to the closet (she had assumed he was a bit tipsy), she'd happily left the holiday party to run his errand. It wasn't until she was in the closet, with the door firmly shut and locked behind her, that she realized that Remus had lifted her wand off of her with all of the stealth and skill of the most seasoned pickpocket.

She was going to give him a stern talking to after she got out of there. Maybe more than that, depending on her mood. She hadn't physically attacked anyone since she'd punched Malfoy in her third year, and socking the last remaining Marauder in the nose would make her feel loads better, she suspected.

Banging on the door didn't seem to do any good; neither did screaming until her throat was raw. The staff party was in full swing, holiday music blaring on a near ancient wizarding wireless. Someone had to notice her absence eventually. It wasn't like Hogwarts had so much staff that it was easy to overlook someone. In the mean time, Hermione busied herself looking for the gift that Remus had sent her in after. When she found no gift after twenty minutes of searching and only finding boxes of supplies and dusty old brooms, Hermione realized that she had been set up. But why, she asked herself. Why would Remus set her up to be locked in a closet for the night? There was the extremely short fling they'd had after she had left Hogwarts, though that didn't seem to make much sense to her. The two of them had a good laugh about it now: it had been the little push that Tonks had needed to finally take charge, and in the end get the man that she desired.

It wasn't until the black bat of the dungeons himself came into the room that she truly realized that she had been had.

The door flew open and Hermione launched herself off of the crate she had settled on. Salvation!

At the top of her lungs she screamed at him. "Don't shut that -- "

BANG

"--door." The last word came as a near whisper. Somewhere, deep inside, she had a feeling that Remus had also put him up to 'gift hunting'. Yes, she and Severus had worked closely together after the war. Yes, they did end up becoming what she could only call kinda-friends. Her friends teased her endlessly about it, and Albus' portrait seemed to think that there was more to it than just friendship. There had been no heated midnight liaisons in the dungeons, no stolen kisses during Order meetings, nothing inappropriate for an apprentice and a master. Just a comfortable working relationship, and the occasional dinner if they traveled together. Nothing more, nothing less.

Why he would choose Snape of all people to lock her in a small room with was completely beyond her.

"What are you doing in here, Miss Granger?" He raised an eyebrow, a gesture that she knew meant 'Spit it out, already'.

"I could ask you the same, Professor Snape." She returned the eyebrow gesture.

"Hunting for you. It's been half an hour since you disappeared."

Hermione narrowed her eyes. "Who sent you to look for me?"

"Your werewolf pal."

"Did he bump into you?" This was getting richer and richer.

Severus nodded. "Rather hard. He's completely pissed. The bastard has never been able to hold his alcohol."

Hermione cracked a small grin. "Hand me your wand."

He shook his head. "You have your own wand, so you have no reason to have your hands all over mine."

"Just do it, alright!"

Just like she had seen him do many times, Severus reached into his robes to produce his wand, but came out empty handed. His face twisted in anger. "That..." He charged to the door and banged his fists on it. "Remus! You fuck! Let us out of here before I --"

"It's not going to work," Hermione interrupted in a sing song voice. "I've tried it already. I've tried knocking the door down, which didn't do much other than make my shoulder hurt, I've tried using the bit of wandless magic you taught me, I've tried screaming, setting the door on fire... Nothing has worked."

Severus stopped banging on the door and cursing Remus. "Setting it on fire?"

Hermione shrugged and cocked her head to the side. "Muggle matches. Never know when you're going to need a fire."

"After you set me on fire your first year, I should have taken you for a pyromaniac. Of all people I would have thought you'd know about the spells cast that protect the castle from arsonists." He pursed his lips. "Well then, what do you suggest we do?"

She closed her eyes and took a deep breath. "Frankly, at the moment I'm not sure. Wait it out?"

"Like I want to be stuck with you longer than I have to," he grumbled.

"What is that supposed to mean?" Hermione laughed at herself; maybe that tentative friendship that had been formed was nothing more than a figment of her imagination.

"All I wanted to do this evening was make an appearance and return to my quarters where I have a bottle of Ogden's waiting for me." He moved from the door and sat down on a sturdy looking crate. "I only came after Minerva insisted I attend and stayed because she blocked my path as I tried to leave." He brushed some dust off of the crate. "The way she headed me off so many times tonight, it's no wonder she was top notch at Quidditch as a student."

Hermione crossed her arms over her chest. "If it makes you feel any better, I thought I would be opening presents right now with my friends and future colleagues, not stuck in a closet with *you*." She pouted for effect, though she knew it wouldn't do any good when it came to the scowling man perched on the dusty crate.

"You voluntarily spend months with me in the lab, and now you have an issue being with me?" He stood from the crate and marched over to her.

She uncrossed her arms and placed her hands on her hips. "At least in the lab either of us had the option to leave voluntarily if the other starts getting under our skin."

He shook his head. "I'm not doing this, not now." He returned to his crate. "Eventually, somebody will take notice of our absence and let us out of this bloody closet. Hopefully before there is bloodshed."

Twenty minutes later, Hermione began to get antsy. Severus was sitting perfectly still on his crate, seemingly unshaken. He didn't move at all, for that matter. No nervous twitching, no shuffling feet, twiddling thumbs. How he could sit so still given where they were bothered her, if only because she wasn't a fan of tight spaces. Even the compartments on the Hogwarts Express and lifts in the Ministry building were enough to make her skin crawl with anticipation and nervousness. The only tiny bit of comfort she was given was the window in the back of the tiny room. *'Who puts a window in a closet?'*

She took to pacing.

Ten rounds of the room and Severus snapped. "Will you stop that?" he yelled, halting her in her tracks.

Hands back on her hips, Hermione looked at him. "If you have any better ideas, then by all means please share with the rest of the class."

For a moment he fished around in his robes. "At least the wolf only got my wand," he mumbled as he pulled out a small package, wrapped in green foil paper. "You can open this and shower me with praise."

Hermione snorted, yet accepted the package. It was small and rectangular, yet a tad long. Something that looked almost like a bracelet box in shape, but she knew that wouldn't be something he would be giving to her. He had jumped on her more than once for coming to their daily brewing sessions wearing any sort of jewelry on, citing that it could possibly react with potions they were brewing, or dangle down into the potion in the case of necklaces. Carefully, she started popping the corners of the wrapping, keeping the paper as intact as she possibly could.

"Oh, for Merlin's sake, just rip into it already!"

Following his instruction, Hermione ripped the paper off and wadded it up, tucking it away into her robe pocket. The box was velvet, just like a bracelet box from a jeweler. Could he? No way... Jewelry wasn't something exchanged between sorta-friends. She flipped the lid open. "Severus, this is perfect!" she beamed.

Severus looked pleased with himself. "I thought you would find that useful," he said, smiling rather smugly.

With a smile on her face, Hermione admired the glass stirring rod set that sparkled back at her in the miniscule light of the broom closet. On the inside of the lid, stamped

into the black fabric with gold ink, was the name of one of the biggest names in potions suppliers in the industry. "I don't know what to say."

"Thank you would be appropriate."

Just as carefully as she'd opened it, she closed the box and tucked it into her robes. "Thank you!" she said, throwing herself at him and crushing him into a hug.

Severus stiffened at first, but soon relaxed into her embrace and returned it with one of his own. "You're welcome," he replied. "I wish my master would have been kind enough to gift me with such a thing."

"They had to have cost a fortune!" She pulled away from him. "I feel almost bad taking them!"

"I've already got two sets, so you have no choice."

Hermione smiled, amazed he had remembered a small comment that she'd made months back about this particular maker of glass potion making supplies, how she preferred theirs over any other but the cost was a bit of a deterrent.

Thinking for a moment, she frowned. "I left yours out on the gift table at the party," she said, then nibbled at her bottom lip.

"How many times must I tell you that nibbling your lip like that isn't becoming on a young woman. I tire of making you lip balm to dull the pain and stop the bleeding." He shifted on the crate. "It's fine, Miss Granger. I will retrieve it once we are let out of this prison."

They fell into a comfortable silence again, Severus on his crate, Hermione on a crate by the window. "You know, if I could climb out of this window..."

"Don't even consider it."

"There are brooms." She was hopeful.

He shook his head. "I've seen you on a broom," he replied. "Draco, at three years old, had more command over a broom than you currently do."

If it wasn't the truth, Hermione might have felt more insulted. "True, I can't even hover. Buy *you* can fly." He could get them out of here on one of the school's brooms. If it were Malfoy, he'd probably thank her for the idea and then drop her off the side.

He shook his head once more. "Just because we are trapped here with brooms doesn't mean that they are magical brooms of any sort," he snapped. "How do you think Filch cleans?"

"Using students?" she asked, sarcastically. Never once had she seen him do anything other than stalk the halls with his mangy looking cat Mrs. Norris, then use children for manual labor during their detentions.

"Give the man more credit, Squib or not."

Then there was more silence. So much so it was deafening.

Severus finally broke the silence again. "Can you please remind me while I haven't killed you yet?"

"Because you don't have your wand?"

"I could snap your pretty little neck if I felt so inclined."

"You wouldn't do that."

"Give me one good reason."

"You would have a third set of stirring rods; you said you didn't need any more."

"I could regift them."

"You louse."

At first, the sound that came from the dark man sounded like choking. As the moments passed, the near wheezing noises turned into what could only be described as cackling laughter. "That, Miss Granger, is a new one for me."

It wasn't an oddity for her to hear him laugh. He had done that many times during their apprenticeship so far, usually over something stupid written on an essay written by a firstie. Those were always golden. It was an oddity for him to laugh with so much mirth, though, so it felt like someone had dipped into the polyjuice potion to impersonate him and had finally broken the act.

Soon his laughter slowed to chuckles before it stopped altogether. "At least something humorous came from this night. It is a shame the wolf couldn't see it before I rip him to shreds."

Hermione rolled her eyes, highly doubting that he would seriously harm Remus. Only because there wouldn't be much left to harm after this. She couldn't believe that the man could conceive of such a plan. She had a feeling that one Mrs. Nymphadora Tonks-Lupin *had* had a hand in it. Tonks, as she *still* insisted on being called, was still very much unchanged even after her marriage to Remus. Clumsy, silly sense of humor, loved using her abilities to shape shift to entertain the younger kids. Since she had finally found the love of her life, she had been trying to 'help' out the rest of the people around her who were still single. If she didn't have a hand in this, Hermione would be utterly surprised.

"Let's get Tonks too," Hermione added. "I think she had a part in this."

"I can't do that," he replied. "She's a mother. I won't harm a mother."

And silenced reigned again.

Both of them shot off of their respective crates hopefully when they heard footsteps down the stone walkway. Severus was already at the door banging on it by the time Hermione crossed the small room.

"Let us the fuck out of here!"

The footsteps stopped and laughter filtered through to them. Partially drunken laughter, but laughter all the same.

"Oh, Severus! It's a shame you missed the party! It was quite the roof raiser, as Muggles say."

"Remus, if you don't let us out of here this instant I'm going to-- "

Remus laughed heartily. "You're going to do what, Hermione? Scream at me? Kick the door?"

"I'll tamper with your wolfsbane. I make it, you know." Of course she wouldn't seriously mess with it; a silly prank was no reason to endanger his entire family.

Severus growled. "Remus, we're not joking."

There was more laughter, a feminine voice joining him.

"There is something the two of you must do before you will be set free."

Hermione recognized that slurred Scottish brogue.

"Minerva," Severus started, taking a deep breath as if he were trying to keep himself calm, "if you do not release us now you will be short a Potions master for the rest of the term."

Hermione was shocked. Her uptight, straight laced former mentor was in on this?

"Professor McGonagall," she said through the door, "let's try to reason here."

"You and Severus need to reason, my dear! The only people in the whole of Hogwarts that can release the both of you now is yourselves!" More tipsy laughter followed by footsteps indicated that Minerva was leaving.

"You hag, you know how to let us out!" Severus screamed. "Has the role of Headmistress made your brain deteriorate? I've noticed you eating your share of sherbet lemons lately!"

The footsteps finally faded and Hermione put a hand on Severus' arm while he continued ranting like a mad man. "She's gone, Severus."

"--you're making Dumbledore look like the picture of sanity! And--"

"Severus," she said, tugging on his sleeve. "She's gone."

Defeated, Severus stopped his shouting and leaned his head against the door. "We're never going to get out of here."

"Yes you will, Severus!" Remus' bright voice said from the other side of the door. "Just look up!"

With that, footsteps started and footsteps faded, leaving the two captives alone once more.

"Just look up? What the bloody hell is that supposed to mean? That drunk..." It was Severus' turn to pace, leaving Hermione standing by the door.

"Maybe it means just that," she offered. "Look up."

Severus didn't stop his pacing, clearly not wanting to listen. *'Stubborn bastard...'*

Hermione tilted her head back and looked at the high ceiling. "I don't get what I'm supposed to be seeing." Exposed beams, cobwebs, some really wicked looking spiders, but nothing else that she could spot. "Do you see anything?"

"I'm not going to bother," he replied, stiffly. "He's clearly pissed, so there probably isn't anything there. We just wait for Argus to come by in the morning and release us."

"I don't want to sleep in here!" she cried. "I want to be in bed, with my cat!"

He snorted. "I would like to be in my bed with a woman, preferably, but look where we are."

Searching around, Hermione found a crate marked 'Quidditch'. She hoped it was warmer robes or something of the sort. As the hour had grown, the temperature had dropped more and more, sending chills straight to her bones. Her knees even began to throb painfully, a reminder of the war that they'd won and the injuries she'd sustained fighting it. "Help me open this," she commanded him, pointing to the crate.

He held up his empty hands and wiggled his fingers. "With what, exactly?"

She searched the shelves and reappeared with a small pry bar. "This?" She handed him the steel bar.

It was apparent that he didn't wish to assist her, but he did anyway, probably to get her to leave him alone. Side by side, he pried up the wooden top until it was completely free, then tossed aside.

Hermione was suddenly in heaven. Even though the box was marked 'Quidditch', the crate was filled with neatly folded woolen blankets. "Jackpot!" One by one she pulled blankets out, making a warm little pallet on the floor. "You're welcome to join me if you wish. It's not quite your bed, but I *am* a woman if it's any consolation."

She knew there were goose-bumps covering her skin. When she'd chosen the tasteful hunter green robes, she hadn't been thinking about being warm. She'd been thinking about looking nice. Now she was regretting the decision. He must have seen the goose-bumps, too. He pulled off his robes to reveal a woolen coat underneath. He made quick work of unbuttoning the many buttons that ran down the front before he took it off and passed it to her. She pulled it on and started buttoning it up, finally stopping just below her chin. It was large on her, of course, but warm and still held the scent of his soap.

Finally, she lowered herself to the floor and tucked herself into the pallet. "There's plenty of room. You're going to get cold yourself now that I have your coat."

"Nonsense," he replied.

She knew it wasn't nonsense, as he had his arms wrapped firmly around his torso. "The offer is always open."

Before she knew it, she was toasty warm under those woolen blankets. They smelled musty, but the coat she wore helped block some of the disgusting smell. While people loved to joke about Severus' personal hygiene, they didn't know the half of it. He used some of the finest herbal soaps galleons could buy and personally created some of the best shampoo she had ever used in her life. It wasn't his fault that he had overly active sebaceous glands.

She rolled over and began formulating a new shampoo for him in her mind and slowly drifted to sleep.

When she awoke again she was firmly pressed into a hard chest, two muscular arms wrapped around her. Sometime during the night, Severus had crawled into the pallet with her. She smiled and pulled away a bit. *'Oh, bugger, I drooled on his chest...'* She grimaced at the small puddle that stained his crisp white shirt.

With a good bit of effort, Hermione managed to weasel her way out of his grasp and roll over onto her back. Nothing like a good morning stretch and a nice yawn to start the day.

That's when she noticed it.

Immediately she shook her bed-mate. "Severus, wake up."

He mumbled something and snored lightly, then rolled over to cushion his face on her chest and nuzzle his large nose into her breasts.

"No!" she cried, shaking him more. "Wake up!"

"Wha-- ?" he asked sleepily. He opened his eyes and was suddenly alert. "Miss Granger!"

"Look up!"

"I had enough of that shite last night!"

"No!" she shook her head almost violently. "Look up!" She pointed in said direction, to solidify her point.

Finally realizing that she was sincere, he looked up.

"Well, fuck me."

"I hope that isn't what they intended," Hermione said, humorously. "I was saving myself for marriage," she added dramatically.

Up on one of the highest beams was a sparkling bud of mistletoe that had been hidden last night by the shadows.

"You've got to be kidding me!" Severus covered his face with his hands. "This is a sick joke. It has to be."

"You call it a sick joke; I call it meddling a Headmistress."

He set up in the pallet. "Well, let's get this over with. It may be the hols, but we still have brewing to do."

Hermione braced herself as he neared her. "What if it doesn't work unless you mean it?"

"We will have to take that chance, won't we?"

He unceremoniously pulled her to him, giving her a perfectly chaste kiss, then backed away. Quickly he tried to make his way out of the pallet, got tangled in the blankets, and nearly tripped on his way to the door. Eventually he made it.

The door was still shut tight.

"What a crock."

"Like I said," Hermione reminded him in her best know-it-all voice, "maybe you have to mean it."

Severus sighed and returned to the pallet. "Mean it? I don't have any particularly earth shattering feelings for you, and I'm sure you have the same sentiments."

She thought for a moment. There was one thing. "Respect."

"Pardon?"

"Once you told me you only took me under your wing because of a respect you had for me, for my desire to learn. I have a respect for you after all you did for the Order, risking your life time and time again." She smiled. "Maybe that will do it!"

Again, he pulled her toward him gave her a perfectly chaste kiss. She concentrated on her respect for him, hoping that he was doing the same for her. When he pulled back, he went to the door again.

Still locked tight.

"Fuck!" Hermione winced as he kicked the door with all of his might. He hopped about on one foot for a moment, like one would do after they stubbed their toe on a wayward piece of furniture in the middle of the night. "Do you have any better ideas?"

Once again Hermione thought. She felt him return to her side on the pallet, watched him cross his arms out of the corner of her eye. "Maybe it functions off of baser instincts? Instead of feelings, maybe it will unlock if the passion between two people is created?"

He considered it for a moment before he spoke. "Possibly."

"Try it?"

He shrugged and pulled her in again. Instead of perfectly chaste like the other two kisses had been, this was far from it. For someone who she had figured never had any sort of relations with the opposite sex in his life, he was one hell of a good kisser. Warmth flooded through her body as his tongue sought out hers and he rolled his body on top of her. She ran her hands through his sleep mussed hair, tugging on it lightly and delighting in his groan.

If anyone had told her that on Christmas Day she would be snogging her Potions professor in a dirty closet she would have laughed. Right now, laughing was the last thing on her mind. All that was on her mind right now was the man on top of her kissing her senseless, the hand that was worming its way through her clothing to find her breasts, and the movement of his hips that was sending shock-waves to the centre of her being. Under different circumstances, she would be more than happy to do this with him again.

His nimble fingers had finally come into contact with one of her painfully tightened nipples when they both heard the door click open.

"Merciful Zeus! Professor Snape! Miss Granger!"

They snapped up at Argus Filch's shocked words. Just like when he had protected her from Remus in his werewolf form third year, Severus snapped into action and pushed her behind him, his arm holding her in place. "Argus! What are you doing here!"

"This is *my* closet! What are *you* doing here?"

The poor man looked like he was going to have a heart attack. Hermione tucked her clothing back into place and spoke up. "We were trapped here all night."

"Looks like more than that to me!"

Severus stood, helping Hermione up with him. "Please excuse us, Argus, while we take this to a better venue."

Calmly the two of them left the broom closet, leaving Argus behind irritably ranting about the mess the two had created overnight.

"Well then, Miss Granger," he said, for the first time in her memory looking like a nervous school boy.

"Professor Snape," she replied, in the same tone.

He took a deep breath. "Brewing is cancelled for the day, for a much more enjoyable activity."

Hermione raised an eyebrow, a little trick she had adopted from him.

"My quarters, five minutes."

She grinned. "It's a date."

*End*