

Sirius's Sacrifice

by caughtinblackseyes

On the eve of her engagement, Hermione and Sirius are captured by Death Eaters and taken before the Dark Lord. Sirius has discovered a previously dormant and powerful force of magic within himself. He struggles to control and harness the power to free them both from Voldemort and the plans he has for he and Hermione. But where does this magic *really* come from? Will Sirius learn to control it in time? Or will this unknown power destroy who he is and those he loves.

Engaging Hermione

Chapter 1 of 1

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I own nothing and make no money, it all belongs to Jo. Mucho thanks to my beta bookofsecrets32!!!

He turned her face slowly so that he could see it better. She was unconscious but, thankfully, still breathing. Other than a few scratches and smears of dirt, she looked relatively unharmed, but he knew that just because she looked unscathed did not necessarily mean anything. He, of all people, was well aware that there were other forms of torture more excruciating than any physical blow could ever impart.

Grasping her chin, he gave it a slight but fairly firm shake. It must have been just enough because an agonized moan slipped passed her chapped lips, and her thick lashes fluttered. Her eyes opened to mere slits, and he could see that beyond her glazed stare lay a lingering pain in their deep, dark depths. He scowled, a scowl filled with intense hatred toward those who had taken her from the safety of the Burrow. The place where her childhood friend and future husband was, more than likely, going mental with fear. Sirius knew just how he felt. He was afraid as well. Afraid for dear, sweet Hermione. Then she recognized him.

Her brow wrinkled in confusion as she whispered, "Sirius?"

He smiled. When she saw his infamous the-devil-take-you-or-I-will-grin, she sent him a weak grin of her own, her face clearing of all worry and fear. It broke his heart to have to tell her that they weren't safe, that it hadn't all been a bad dream, and that they were, in fact, being held captive by the vilest creature imaginable.

"Hello, love," he whispered back, tucking a few wayward strands of honey-coloured curls behind the delicate shell of her ear. He would put the truth off just for a bit longer. She was so tiny and fragile, and even through streaks of grime, she looked lovely, so very lovely.

But then to him, she'd always been lovely. He hated to admit it because, at the time, it had made him feel like some nasty pedophile. But he was certain that from the moment she had blown the gates off of his prison at the young age of fourteen, he'd been a tad bit in love with her. Imagine him, a grown man, having a crush on a teenaged girl. Remus would have laughed himself silly had he known. He would then have admonished him severely while issuing threats upon promises of threats. However, Sirius had needed no such threats; he had never touched her in anything other than affectionate friendship, treating her as if he were a benevolent uncle and

nothing more.

A year ago, on Hermione's sixteenth birthday, he'd given her a bear hug, lifting her high off of the floor, twirling her round and round, and giving her a resounding kiss on the cheek before placing her carefully on her feet. She'd giggled, blushed, and stammered a bit while Molly stood close by, her disapproval all too clear. So, even if he had wanted to do something about this attraction he felt, he couldn't have, he thought wryly. Molly's ever-watchful eye was upon him. Scrutinizing his every look or move, protecting her little chick from the big bad wolf.

He had been a bit offended by her attitude, and it annoyed him to no end that Molly thought so little of him as to think that he would seduce a girl who had been little more than a child. But then, Molly never had had a very high opinion of him. She remembered the days before his imprisonment. She'd thought him quite the Casanova and had been openly disdainful of his carefree bachelor's lifestyle.

Her opinion meant squat to him, but he was concerned that she would take it into her prudish head to spout a bunch of damaging drivel about him to Hermione. He guessed she hadn't because Hermione's attitude and the way she related to him hadn't changed at all. Still, he felt a twinge of unease every time Molly was alone with her. Some infantile part of him was deathly afraid that at some point Molly would convince Hermione of his nastily nefarious ways and deeds of debauchery. Now *that* was a truly frightening thought.

Hermione, now fully aware, glanced around. Her bottom lip began to quiver, and when her eyes met his eyes, they were once more filled with confusion, but it was a confusion laced with heavy overtones of fear.

"Shhh...." he commanded in tender tones while lightly grazing her quivering lip with his thumb. "Don't be afraid, love; I'm here with you."

He knew what she'd seen when she'd looked around her. Dozens of black-robed individuals hovered near them in a large semi-circle. Anticipation, a palatable and ripe entity, flowed through the room: a force weighing them both down, the air almost too heavy to breathe.

"What's happening?" Hermione asked in an agonized whisper, trying not to notice that the Death Eaters were closing in on them. Before Sirius could explain another voice intervened.

"Move aside, Black. The Dark Lord would like a closer look at the Mudblood."

Hermione's eyes widened. She'd recognized the slick, aristocratic sneer-filled voice. Lucius Malfoy. Sirius grabbed her hand, giving it a comforting squeeze. "I won't leave you," he stated emphatically, staring deeply into her eyes, willing her to believe him.

Hermione was deathly afraid and not just for herself. Things had been hazy when she'd first opened her eyes to find Sirius's face close to her own. She only wished everything else before that was just as hazy, but it wasn't.

She had perfect recall of having been at the Burrow. It had been a family dinner, one of many she'd been to. The house, which seemed to be filled to its fullest capacity when only half the Weasley clan was present, had seemed fair to bursting at the seams with all the Weasleys in attendance. Moreover, that was without counting the friends who were also stuffed in here and then. Molly had been thrilled when all of her children, and little Victoire, who was the shining light of Molly's life, had managed to see their way to the family home. Hermione had wondered what the big occasion was and had been startled when she had realized that the majority of eyes had been trained on her throughout most of the evening.

Her unease continued when Ron had hurriedly, and with great determination, pulled her away from chatting with Remus and Sirius. She had reluctantly excused herself, giving Remus a pat on the arm and Sirius a strained, awkward smile. The room, which had been a mass of loud conversations, had suddenly grown quiet as she'd followed Ron out into the back patio.

It wasn't unusual for Ron to get into a snit whenever she'd spend time with the last two remaining Marauders. It was perplexing. She just didn't get why Ron seemed to feel so threatened by the two older men. Merlin, one was a former Professor, and so clearly and utterly besotted with Tonks that even the dimmest twit could not fail to catch a clue. The other man in question was Harry's godfather. How much more innocent could it get? Nevertheless, Ron continued to give them both baleful looks whenever she was in animated conversation with them. Remus had appeared to find Ron's jealousy highly amusing. As for Sirius? Sirius, on the other hand, would scowl back just as balefully, no doubt annoyed that Ron would think such silly and outrageous thoughts.

Ron cleared his throat, and when he spoke his voice was high-pitched and slightly squeaky. "I was wondering if you would... well... that is," Ron stopped, pulling at his collar once more before continuing. "I was hoping that maybe we might, you know, maybe..."

She wished he would just get to the point; all this him-hawing around was annoying, and she really wanted to get back inside so that she could pick up where she'd left off on the fascinating conversation she had been engrossed in before Ron had dragged her away.

Sirius and Remus had been regaling her with stories on how Sirius and Harry's father had become Animagi. It sounded like an intriguing process, and she had been on the brink of asking Sirius to help her to become one herself, but then Ron had intervened. She sighed. It seemed as if Ron had some sort of inherent radar whenever she was with Remus and Sirius. It was remarkable, considering how oblivious he could be when it came to other people, situations, or interests that she might have. Interests that he had continuously and actively ignored or didn't deem important enough to become a part of even though they'd meant plenty to her. She had just put it down to him being Ron.

"What is it, Ron?"

Ron looked as if he were about ready to bring up the enormous dinner he had consumed and shuffled his feet as he continued to pull at his collar, gulping convulsively. She couldn't help but watch in fascination as his Adams apple bobbed up and down with each swallow.

When Ron knelt down clumsily while rifling around in the many pockets of his robes, Hermione's heart stopped cold. Was he going to do what she thought he was going to do? She tried to steady her breathing, but it was difficult. She had been in love with Ron for quite some time; well before he had even noticed she was a girl. But she wasn't ready to get *married!* There was too much to finish, too much to do; thoughts of happily-ever-after just weren't in the big picture at this point! Merlin's pointy beard, Ron should know that; sure he could be a tad dim on occasion, but this was the limit.

He looked up at her, his beautiful blue eyes so hopeful and fearful all at once, and Hermione knew that she wouldn't have the heart to refuse him. However, she would insist on a long engagement; she would *not* let Molly Weasley, manipulative matchmaker extraordinaire, railroad her into wedding before she helped Harry through this mess of a War or before she finished her studies.

She smiled, and that smile seemed to give him just the boost of courage that he needed to follow through with his proposal. Grinning from ear-to-ear, his eyes glowing with happiness, he held the small box aloft and waited for her to take it. And then, quicker than you could say, Blast-Ended Skrewt, everything had gone to hell in a hand basket.

Sirius was having trouble breathing. The fact that Rodolphus LeStrange had his beefy arm round his neck and was periodically squeezing it might have had something to do with that. Bella's sadistic husband could easily have subdued Sirius with magic, very few witches or wizards favored physical combat, but apparently his sick fuck of a cousin by marriage preferred the hands-on approach. When the occasion called for it, like back at the Burrow, Sirius himself wasn't averse to using physical violence. But, right at this moment, he'd have given his last gold galleon for his wand or any wand for that matter.

Hell, he'd even go so far as to say he'd rather be back at the Burrow watching Ron doing his impression of a babbling idiot as he proposed to Hermione. Sirius had been watching the scene on the patio unfold from the kitchen window, and a part of him had wondered how Hermione would react. All the people there that evening knew what Ron had been planning, and the majority had been thrilled to their toes; however, Sirius hadn't been one of them.

Remus, diplomatic as usual, had nothing but kind words to say when Molly had gleefully and, in Sirius' opinion, with a touch of eager malice, informed them all of the real reason behind tonight's dinner. But his good mate, Moony, couldn't pull the wool over his eyes. Moony thought Ron as unworthy of Hermione as he did. Moony just decided to hide it; that was his way. Added to the fact that Moony liked Ron, genuinely liked him, and so he pretended to be pleased.

Sirius had not been nearly as diplomatic. Actually, he hadn't been diplomatic at all, but he didn't care how he'd sounded. He ignored the dagger-like glare that Molly had sent his way when he'd let out a loud, barking laugh filled with derision. Ron's freckled hands had curled into fists, and a part of Sirius was just aching for him to take a swing. It would have given Sirius a valid excuse to retaliate in turn.

"Padfoot," Remus had mumbled under his breath while putting a restraining hand on Sirius' shoulder. Remus had seen that look on his friend's face before, and it had led to disaster each and every time. "Don't ruin this for Hermione," Remus warned.

That comment had deflated his anger somewhat. But it also left behind a vague residue of sadness, of emptiness, and he knew with certainty that he had to get away from here, from everyone. So with a toss of his shoulder-length, ebony hair, he strode toward the fireplace with all the intimidating grace of the aristocrat he undoubtedly was. He snatched up a handful of floo powder from the flowerpot, tossed it into the grate, and exited the Burrow in a flash of green flames, leaving several people stunned and confused.

So, he had silently intruded on Ron's big moment. Maybe he couldn't ruin the ridiculous moment; he was resigned to that, but he could bear witness to it. He watched as Ron, less than eloquently babbled on before he knelt on uncoordinated, gangly limbs and rooted through his pockets. Sirius had rolled his eyes. How mundane, he'd thought. Ron, the dunce, was seriously lacking in the originality department. Hermione deserved a spectacular declaration of love, something thoroughly thought out and then well executed--not this travesty. The thought of Hermione married to that freckle-faced twat was nauseating.

Sirius had then been violently jolted out of his dismal thoughts when out of nowhere figures suddenly appeared in the darkness. He watched in horror as Ron was struck down, not by the killing curse, thank the gods, but it was still disconcerting to watch his face go slack before he keeled over onto his side.

With a ferocious growl, Sirius pulled his wand and ran out the back and was just in time to see Hermione whip out her own wand and attack what he knew were Death Eaters. How the hell did they get passed the wards? She was putting up an amazing fight, shooting off hexes and spells at an unprecedented speed, astonishing him and impressing him all in one fell swoop.

"*Defodio*," Sirius screamed, smirking when the spell hit its target, ripping out a large chunk of the face of the nearest Death Eater, who fell to the ground screeching in agony.

"*Mobilicorpus*," he heard Hermione yell and watched as a tree uprooted itself and smashed into a Death Eater who had been advancing on him from the side.

Sirius wanted to be able to stay by her side, protect her to the best of his ability, but he had to turn his attention to the three Death Eaters rushing him, wands raised.

"*Incarcerous*!"

Sirius barely had time to respond with, "*Protego*," to protect himself from the ropes flying at him, but the ropes bounced harmlessly off of his shield. With a fast flick of his wrist, he hurled out, "*Expelliarmus*!" He followed this quicker than lightning strike with, "*Duro*." The Death Eater who he'd just disarmed turned a slate grey colour, starting at his boots and moving swiftly upward until he was entirely encased in stone, no longer a man. A statue stood in his place.

Before he'd a chance to silently gloat at his success, he was being rained upon, and it took him only seconds to realize that the particles falling from the sky were definitely not raindrops. Moisture, yes. But raindrops? No. He was astonished. Hermione Granger, fighter for House-elves rights, tireless do-gooder, and self-proclaimed person in charge of banishing foul and inappropriate language, had just used a *Confringo* curse!

Spells were flying everywhere. Sirius was dodging them, using trees and rocks as cover. But they were hopelessly outnumbered, and he wondered why the hell no one had come to investigate. It wasn't as if they were exactly being quiet, he thought before once again rushing out into the melee only to discover that Hermione had somehow been disarmed and was grappling with the wizard who held her. When she saw him across the meadow, she screamed, "Sirius!" Freeing one arm, she reached out to him, desperation written all over her face.

Gods! He thought in agony, *I have to reach her. I have to save her!* Incensed beyond reason, Sirius mowed down anyone who got in his way.

Dimly, Sirius was aware that there were flashes of light coming from behind, and he realized with relief that, finally, help had arrived. Sirius heard Remus, Tonks, and a mass of other voices shouting spells and counter spells, and it had probably been they who had saved him from serious injury while in his rash, headlong flight toward Hermione. He would have to depend on them still, for he wasn't going to wait around with his thumb stuck up his arse now that reinforcements had arrived.

He snarled and snapped viciously when he was roughly grabbed by the back of his vest and hauled away from the witch who had been so close he could smell her fresh, clean scent. Sirius turned and barreled into the fucker, rugby-style. It had been an unexpected move on his part, and so the Death Eater scum went down with him in a pile of arms and legs.

Foregoing his wand in this instance, Sirius curled his fist tightly into the fabric of the wizard's robe, brought his other fist high in the air, and slammed him square in the face. The wizard screamed in agony as Sirius pummeled him repeatedly until there was nothing but a mass of blood, tissue, and bone where once his face had been.

Wiping his bloody and swiftly swelling hand on his once pristine, purple vest, he grasped his wand firmly and with a wild determination ran to where he had last seen Hermione. She was now completely wrapped in the folds of one of the dirty bastards' robes. She continued to struggle, but her struggles were in vain; her captor was just too strong for the young woman, and without her wand, she was helpless.

Sirius, breathing in deep gasps and with rivers of sweat dripping off of his face, was now only a few feet from Hermione. She looked frightened but unharmed. Though relieved, Sirius was also extremely confused. Why hadn't the Death Eater killed Hermione? Why was he just standing there, doing nothing? What the hell was happening here?

It was difficult to maintain a strong grip on his wand due to the swelling and throbbing of his hand. At this point, he thoroughly regretted having used it to bash in one of Voldemort's brainless buffoons. Nothing to be done for it now, so he'd have to make do as best he could.

Sirius took a step closer but could go no further. His brow creased in frustration and then cleared. The yellow-bellied, arse licking, maggot had used a Cave Inimicum spell. Sirius was tempted to give it a go anyway, but it would have been a wasted effort, and they both knew it. With great reluctance, Sirius lowered his wand.

Sirius could only growl in frustration as the Death Eater took Hermione's face in his gloved hand, squeezing her cheeks together causing her to let out a whimper of pain. When he bent his head over Hermione's shoulder, the hood of his robe, whether by chance or design, fell back revealing the face beneath. Recognition hit Sirius swiftly in the gut. *Dolohov*. Seemingly pleased by Sirius' thunderstruck expression, he added insult to injury by using his tongue to begin a slow, steady lick from Hermione's jaw to her temple, smacking his lips together when he was done as if savoring the taste.

The revulsion on Sirius' face matched the similar display on Hermione's face; the witch began her struggles anew. Dolohov laughed at her attempts, and with slow and precise movements, he shifted his hand, gliding it up the front of her robes until he rested it on her breast. Hermione instantly stilled, her eyes grew wide in abject horror when his fingers began a rhythmic rubbing of the tender flesh hidden beneath her robes. An agonized whimper slid passed her parted lips when he gave her nipple a

vicious twist.

Sirius was a fearsome sight, grey eyes bitter and hard, mouth twisted into a ferocious snarl; he was more than ready to bring this bastard down, and he was going to make him suffer the torments of hell for what he was doing to Hermione.

"Dolohov, I am going to take great pleasure in ripping your arm out of its socket and beating you to death with it for touching her. I swear by all that's holy, I will."

"I don't think so, Black." Dolohov laughed and pulled Hermione closer while grinding his hips into her. "I bet she's quite the animal in bed. She bit me when I first latched onto her; I'm going to assume by that, that she likes it rough." His fleshy lips brushed against her ear as he murmured with an evil glint in his eyes, "Not to worry, my little Mudblood, so do I."

The malicious grin he shot at Sirius transformed his face from ugly to hideous, and Sirius knew, he just knew, that Dolohov was getting ready to Apparate and take Hermione with him. It was then that Sirius lost all sense of reason.

He began to shake uncontrollably--not from fear or loathing, although he felt both of those things clearly and distinctly. No, it was unadulterated rage, and that rage was the impetus for Sirius' storehouse of unbridled and heretofore unknown masses of magic to erupt. Sirius had never felt more strong or more alive; his entire being vibrated and hummed. Power rose up and flowed from every pore in his body, coursed through every artery, every vein; it was intoxicating!

But when he went to use this stronghold of powerful magic against Dolohov, he couldn't, which further enraged him. He let out a frustrated bellow and tried forcing the magic out from this shell he called a body but to no avail. The magic was pulsating. It was there! It was real! Why couldn't he use it? Why? Why?

In the dark recesses of his mind, he heard the echo of maniacal laughter. It went on and on, endlessly torturing him. He groaned and used both hands to try to hold his head together. He felt as if it was going to explode. The pain was excruciating. He could hear a voice calling to him, entreating, begging. "Hermione," he hissed before the darkness claimed him.

When Severus Snape arrived at the Burrow, he wasn't in the least surprised to find mass pandemonium. In fact, he'd been expecting it. They were all spread out into small groups, each having an emotional melt down of some sort.

Tonks, the clumsy, walking disaster, was conversing with Charlie Weasley, both of them hovering over Ron Weasley, who it was clear had been crying, his face giving testament to that fact as it was far more red and blotchy than normal. Molly had her arm wrapped around him, rocking him to and fro, stroking him consolingly on the back of his head, and mumbling crooning sounds suitable for a young child; which Severus was sure Ron Weasley understood completely as he had always, in his opinion, exhibited nothing but childish tendencies.

Potter was off in a corner looking shell-shocked, Ginny Weasley sitting close while patting him on the back, no doubt whispering banal words of solace; once again striving to garner the Boy Wonders' attentions. Severus surmised that she wasn't as distressed by this turn of events as she was pretending to be; she'd always, for some God-awful reason, been jealous of Miss Granger and her friendship with Potter. He quietly snorted. The silly chit had no taste whatsoever. The twin Weasley's, instead of standing by the side of their grieving brother, were also dancing attendance to Potter, perhaps they imagined themselves in love with him as well. Severus nearly gagged at the thought.

Severus recognized several students from Hogwarts. Colin and Dennis Creevey, the Patil sisters, Seamus Finnigan, Luna Lovegood, Neville Longbottom, Dean Thomas, who seemed more concerned by the considerable coddling in which Miss Weasley was administering to our Hopeless Hero than on the whereabouts of Miss Granger.

The majority of the inhabitants were, in his opinion, a bunch of nattering, imbecilic, fools. There were, of course, a few exceptions, but they were indisputably in the minority and notably absent. Shackbolt must have returned to the Ministry, no doubt to inform them of the events of today. Quickly scanning the rest of the room, he also noticed that Moody, Minerva, and several other key members of The Order were unaccounted for as well.

The matriarch of the Weasley clan accosted him the moment she realized he was in the room. *Typical*, he sneered to himself.

"Severus, where is she? What have they done? Have they hurt her? Is she... Molly faltered, not being able to finish the sentence, though fearing the worst.

The woman was amazingly predictable, he thought with an internal roll of his eyes. He'd positively keel over in shock if she were to ever actually say something other than the usual mundane drivel which some how managed to pass for words.

"Give me a moment, if you please," he stated calmly while straightening the folds of his robe. It was annoying having the woman jabber on without giving him the chance to answer one question before bombarding him with another.

Arthur placed his hand on his wife's shoulder, silently signally her to settle herself and then in a even voice he said, "Give the man a chance to catch his breath, Molly dear."

How nauseating, Severus thought, grateful that he would never be called upon to offer comfort or sympathy. His reasoning was clear. None was shown to him by this group of misfits, nor anyone else for that matter, therefore that is exactly what they got from him. None.

Taking a deep breath, Severus spoke loud enough for the entire room to hear; he was not going to repeat himself just because some stupid stooge hadn't been paying attention. "Miss Granger is alive." A great sigh of relief was expelled from the mouths of all the room's occupants.

"And Sirius? What about my godfather?" Potter asked quietly from his corner of the room.

Severus would have liked to have ignored the snotty brat but settled for delivering the news. "Regrettably...", he paused dramatically, reveling in the crushingly devastated expression that had settled on Potters face ... that mangy mutt lives as well."

The Weasley twins grabbed Potter by each arm to prevent him from attacking the cruel man sporting a sadistic smile, knowing full well that Potter would have given anything to able to throttle him silly but couldn't. Potter knew well enough that he was their only hope of possibly engineering the return of two of the people that he loved the most. It galled the boy to have to count on him of all people. Oh, what jubilant joy to have Potter in his debt.

With evident relish, he continued, "I do not, however, know how long that state of affairs shall last. It is the way of the Dark Lord to play with his toys until he grows weary of them at which point he takes great delight in breaking them into little, unrecognizable pieces."

"Good Lord, man," admonished an angry Arthur, "there's no need to be so graphic!"

"What would you have me do, Arthur," jeered Severus, his lip curled disdainfully. "Plant false hopes into your feeble brains?"

"Yes, you unfeeling, monster, yes!" shouted Molly Weasley, her ample bosom heaving dramatically. "While they're alive, hope lives as well and don't you dare say anything to the contrary, Severus Snape!"

"Pu-leeze," he sneered in reply. "If anyone should know the ways of the Dark Lord, it is I. I have seen it a dozen times before. If Miss Granger and that flea-ridden excuse for a wizard last the week, it will be a miracle." Ignoring the outraged mutterings all around him, he continued. "Dare I remind you of the fate of the Longbottom's?"

A choked cry filled the air and he assumed that it had come from Neville Longbottom.

Severus' head rocked to the side from the force of Molly's slap. "That is *enough*," she hissed between clenched teeth.

Ignoring the stinging of his cheek, Severus glared at Molly, stating in a quiet, menacing voice, "Woman, do not touch me again."

It was at this point, the oldest Weasley entered the room with Lupin close behind. Each had their wands out and at the ready.

"Severus, what news is there?" a harried looking Lupin asked.

"I have already given a partial history and I refuse to repeat myself." Waving his hand toward the people, now grouped together behind Arthur and Molly, all had the same look of disgust written on their faces. "You will have to make due with the ramblings of your friends as I am in no doubt ramblings they will be."

"Fine." And then what Lupin said next had all of them looking at each other in trepidation. "The wards have definitely been tampered with. Bill and I checked them twice. Don't worry," he continued, "We've reset them, and Bill put an extra whammy on just to be sure."

"The disturbing thing is that they were tampered with from the inside." Bill added, a look of concern etched across his features.

Ahh, Severus thought. *Interesting*. He wondered how long it would take until someone else in the room would reach the same conclusion that he had without it being spoon fed to them.

"But... that would mean," sputtered Charlie Weasley, "that someone here damaged the wards."

Lupin nodded his head[;] Severus noted how exhausted he looked and then realized that the full moon had only been two nights ago. Lupin, obviously, barely had time to recover from his painful transformation before having to deal with this whole fiasco.

"Yes," Bill agreed, looking grim. "There's no doubt that someone here... in this room... is responsible for the disappearance of Hermione and Sirius."