

# Why Do You Hate Me?

*by debjunk*

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*Chapter 1 of 1*

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Hermione Granger made her way through the hallway to her classroom. As she walked, she noted a tall, dark man coming toward her. She frowned. Snape, or Severus, as she'd taken to calling him in her head, had been incredibly cold toward her lately. She didn't quite know what to expect from him as he passed her in the hall. She was greeted with a hateful sneer.

That's it! Her insides roiled as indignation filled her. Without thinking, she grabbed Severus' robes and dragged him into the nearest classroom. He sputtered as her grip tightened on his robes while she directed him into the room nearby.

Once the door was closed, Hermione turned to see the Potions professor ready to explode.

"What is the meaning of this, Professor Granger?" he snarled.

"Professor Snape, I am at a loss as to why every time you see me, you frown or growl. Have I done something to upset you?"

Severus looked taken aback. The shock quickly left his face, and it was once again filled with rage. "I assure you, Professor Granger, if you had done something to upset me, you would know it."

He made to exit the room, but Hermione held him back. "Then why do you hate me so?"

Snape eyed her crossly for a few moments. His sneer seemed to deepen as the disgust in his face increased tenfold. He took two steps closer to her until his nose was almost touching hers.

"You want to know why I hate you?" he hissed.

Hermione wanted to take a step back because he was so close, but his eyes held hers, and she was unable to move a muscle. Her own eyes widened, but that was the only thing that showed she'd heard him at all.

"I hate you," Severus continued, "because you remind me of myself at your age. I hate you because you are good and kind, where I am bitter and evil. I hate you because no matter how much I might desire you, I know that you could never feel anything for me. I hate you because every time I see you, I want to pull you into my arms and kiss you. Unfortunately, I know those kisses would be unwelcome. I hate you because I know you see me as a monster and always will."

Hermione stared in wonder. She couldn't believe what he was saying. He had feelings for her? He thought she couldn't reciprocate them? He was so very wrong. Her eyes narrowed at him.

"I see you as a monster because you act like one! You berate me at every possible opportunity. You're a monster because you've stolen my heart and run away with it. I know you could never feel anything for me; I'm just an annoyance in your day. I see you as a monster because I could never feel for anyone else the way I feel for you, but it's a hopeless cause."

Severus looked stunned. He stepped back as his eyes raked over her. Hermione could tell the wheels were turning furiously in his mind. Finally, he spoke.

"You... you... care for me?" he stuttered.

Hermione folded her arms in front of her defensively. "I do," she answered simply.

Confusion filled his eyes. "How could that be? We are so different. You are young and beautiful. I am old and careworn."

Hermione's gaze dropped to the floor. She was silent for a minute, composing her thoughts. Determination filled her, and she looked back up and stared Severus straight in the eye.

"You are not old. As for being careworn, we all are after all we've been through with the war. I don't care how old you are, I find you attractive. I have for a long time. I've wished, for what seems like forever, that you'd care for me as well."

Severus closed the distance between them once again. His eyes searched hers. A small smirk came to his mouth. When he spoke again, his voice was tender. "I have, though. I have cared for you longer than I'd wish to admit."

"So, we've been dancing around each other needlessly?" Hermione asked as she tilted her head.

Severus' hand came up, and he caressed her cheek. His eyes studied her face as she leaned into him. "That would appear to be the case," he murmured.

Pulling her into him, he kissed her. Hermione's stomach dropped out from under her as his lips touched hers. Severus Snape was such a firm, hard man, but this kiss was gentle and reverent. Her arms encircled him before she pulled him to her. He, too, pulled her close. Hermione got lost in his sensuous kiss as a deep longing finally became fulfilled within her.

Severus pulled away. She looked into his eyes and caught her breath. The usually unreadable eyes of Severus Snape were filled with desire and love for her. The walls he so carefully built about himself were now gone, and she could see into his soul. It was a soul that hungered for her. Elation filled her as she comprehended the depth of his affection for her.

A smirk graced his mouth. "You should have asked me why I hated you a long time ago."

She smiled. "You should have thrown caution to the wind and kissed me a long time ago."

"I won't make that mistake again," Severus replied before his lips met hers once again.

**The End**

*A/N: Just a little 'what-if' scenario that popped into my head last week. (Yes, I do have to publish every little thing that crosses my mind.)*