

Camp Wildewizard

by Clairvoyant

Severus helps Hermione deal with a challenging situation: sending her son away to camp.

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Chapter 1 of 1

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Disclaimer: The brilliant JKR owns it all. None of her original characters were harmed in the writing of this story. I make no money from this, so I cannot quit my day job.

A/N: About a week ago I made a comment to lulabelle72. I was lamenting about sending my nine-year-old son away to camp for the very first time. She responded by hurling a plot bunny directly at my head. Just kidding. Thank you, Mistress Lula, for inspiring me to break out of my woe-is-me, sulky mood. Mega thanks to Nala, for her super-speedy beta read.

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As he strode out from the brilliant green flames and dusted the silvery Floo powder from his impeccably neat, dauntingly black teaching robes, Severus Snape sensed something amiss in his Hogsmeade home. It was half past eleven when he arrived home, having completed his scheduled patrol of Hogwarts, searching hallways and dark alcoves for rule breakers, teenaged lovers and miscreants alike. As much as he enjoyed docking House points and assigning detentions – forevermore administered by Filch – to unwitting dunderheads, he would much rather spend a quiet evening at home with his bride, the former Hermione Granger-Weasley.

Normally when he returned home on these late nights, he would be greeted by his brave, little lioness, leaning seductively against the mantle in the lounge, wearing a flimsy negligee and holding a dry martini with pearl onion garnish in one hand, a bottle of massage oil in the other; soft Jazz music would be heard in the background, playing faintly on the wizarding wireless radio. Severus could imagine no better way to unwind after a tension-filled patrol around the castle. Well, to tell the truth, he could imagine something better, and that usually followed the drink-and-massage routine.

Tonight the lounge was bathed in total silent darkness, and Hermione was missing. Severus unsheathed his wand with wicked quickness and began to patrol the house, searching for his absent wife. He first searched the kitchen, dimly lit by the flame of a single candle, which stood sentry over an unopened bottle of Grey Goose vodka. He continued the literal witch hunt, not giving a thought to the missing bottle of dry vermouth. Hermione was not in the dining room either.

Next, he carefully peered into the guest bedroom, illuminated by the full moon shining through the sheer drapes, which covered the paned-glass windows. A quick scan indicated nothing out of sorts. Inside the room he could see two figures, slumbering quietly in their twin beds; not Hermione, but her two children, sired by her ex-husband, the red-haired menace, Ronald Weasley. He was considered by everyone, including Severus, to be a pleasant, fun-loving chap with a reckless streak. He was a hex-first-ask-questions-later type of fellow at work and at home. The last thing Hermione needed was another petulant child to nurture. She had desired a mate, an intellectual equal with similar interests, and Severus was the wizard for the job.

The hint of a smile ghosted his lips as he closed the door to the children's bedroom. As much as he disliked children, he didn't mind these two because they were Hermione's own. He continued the search for his missing wife. Their own bedroom was empty, void of witch. It was much the same for the bathrooms and his study.

As he approached the last room on the ground floor, he heard a muffled sobbing and saw light escaping through the gap between the closed door and the threshold. Severus stealthily turned the knob and slowly, quietly, pushed open the door to the utility room, lest he startle the occupants and alert them to his presence. Years of spying had taught him to tread lightly, allowing him the element of surprise, if needed.

This time he was the one to be surprised. It was there he found Hermione, crumpled on the cold tile floor, clutching a small, sodden, athletic sock and weeping uncontrollably. Strewn around her were tear-soaked character briefs, decorated with the images of professional Quidditch players and heroes of the Second Voldemort War, including Hermione and Severus as well as the boy-who-lived-twice, Harry Potter.

"Hermione," he whispered as he sat down next to her and gathered his bride in his strong arms. "What has happened? Why are you crying?" Severus rocked the weepy witch back and forth to gently soothe her. She took a few deep, shuddering breaths to calm herself, then blew her nose with a pair of tiny, Victor Krum y-fronts.

"It's Hugo," she cried in despair. The waterworks had sprung a leak again, as the blubbing continued.

"I just looked in on him. He seems perfectly fine," Severus explained, his voice the epitome of calm amidst the storm. "What's wrong with him?" He was truly concerned; his face contorted with pain, sympathy and fear of the unknown. Who knew the taciturn man had such a range of emotion?

Hermione looked up, viewing Severus beneath a fringe of clumpy, wet eyelashes. She sniffled and said, "Nothing's wrong with Hugo. It's me. I'm a mess."

She paused to blow her nose again, and her husband remarked, "I can see that. Tell me why you are crying." He was trying to be patient, but he was in the dark about what set her off on this crying jag.

"Well, tonight while you were on Hogwarts patrol, I wanted to prepare Hugo's gear for sleep-away camp before I welcomed you home with my usual patrol-night routine. I didn't... I just... I didn't realize that labeling Hugo's name on little socks and underpants would set me off like this." She rested her head on his chest.

Severus ran his hand over her unruly locks. "I still don't understand why undergarments would upset you so," he said quietly in his deep, rich baritone. "You're aces when it comes to laundry charms, my love. Hugo will have the brightest, cleanest underpants in all of Camp Wildewizard."

"You've just hit upon my issue, Severus," Hermione spoke sadly. "He will be gone for ten days. However will he manage? I know he's nine years old, but he's never been away from me for more than a weekend, and even then he's with family." She was referring to her custody arrangement with her ex-husband. The children would visit Ron every other weekend at the Burrow, where they were often surrounded by an overabundance of cousins.

"Hermione, look at me," he said as he lifted her chin up with his long, elegant fingers. "You have raised a fine young man in Hugo. Not only is he book-smart, but he has common sense and is personable, too. He plays well with others; he will be fine at camp. Besides, the staff is certainly well-equipped to manage homesick children." Moments passed and no words were spoken as she considered his reasoning.

She sighed. "I know you're right, but I'm having a hard time letting go of my little boy. He's growing up and doesn't need me as much as before," she argued.

"He's still a boy, Hermione," Severus reminded his young wife. "He will need your help and guidance for years to come. Rose still needs you as well. I need you, Hermione. I'm lost without you." His black eyes bore into her with a passionate intensity she could barely withstand. Severus then rewarded his witch a rare smile and bestowed a kiss upon the top of her head.

Hermione could finally relax. She toyed with the many buttons of her husband's frock coat and mused, "You know, if this works out for Hugo, maybe next summer we could arrange for Rose to visit the Burrow while he is at camp. Then we can enjoy a second honeymoon. What do you think of Las Vegas?"

With his trademark smirk and arched eyebrow, he replied, "It's as if you are reading my mind. Since when did you master Legilimency?"

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