

# A Time to Dance

*by Melenka*

A meeting by the lake observed.

## in moonlight

*Chapter 1 of 1*

A meeting by the lake observed.

Alone in the moonlight, arms raised high, Hermione twirled, silver threads flashing as her skirt flared to reveal bare feet, delicate ankles, and a well-turned calf. She shook her head, and the careful confines of an elaborate twist dissolved into a cascade of curls. She laughed, dancing sideways on the edge of the lake, lifting her skirt – a bit high, really – so she could splash like the child she no longer was.

From her perch on the wall, Minerva watched, relieved that Hermione had remembered joy. The why of it was not her business. Not entirely.

From the shadow of the trees, black on charcoal grey, only the reflection of the moon in his eyes gave Severus away. He too, watched the young professor dance. Swaying ever so slightly, nodding as she waltzed along, it seemed he heard the music that moved her instead of the night sounds of the castle grounds. Once, twice, he made as if to join her, then fell back.

Her light steps brought her closer to him, and she slowed, just a bit, as she passed. He lifted his hand, let it fall, turned away.

“Don’t go,” she sang. “There’s ever so much moonlight, but only so much time. Dance with me. I promise I’ll not tell a soul.”

“I cannot dance.” A whisper, but it carried.

“Bollocks,” she said. “Anyone can dance.”

“Such language,” he chided, stepping out of the darkness.

“I’m not a child anymore, Severus.” She danced around him. “Haven’t you noticed?”

He had. Everyone knew he had. He might have been a great spy, but he was utterly incompetent when it came to hiding his attraction to the young woman. Minerva licked her paw. She really ought not to trespass on their moment. She did not move.

“I choose not to dance,” he amended.

“Then it’s another night of dancing alone for me. Pity, wouldn’t you say?” Hermione’s hips swayed as she floated away from him, her feet barely skimming the grass.

“Perhaps you will find another partner.”

She lifted her arms again, this time in mock surrender. “You really are a great idiot, aren’t you?”

He flinched and said nothing. She ran, dress and hair streaming behind her, and leapt upward – straight at him, leaving him little choice but to catch her or be knocked over.

Either would have suited her purpose. He chose to catch her.

She looked down at him and smiled. "I don't want another partner."

He released his hold, just slightly. She slid down his body until her feet touched the ground. He kept his arms around her. "Then I suppose I shall have to learn to dance."

"At the very least," she quipped.

Satisfied that her paw was as clean as it could get, Minerva leapt from the wall and padded back toward the castle. She had lived long enough to know when a first kiss was in the offing and had no desire to intrude now that things were going according to plan.

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A/N: Written for flitterkat at HPcon\_envy. Prompt was: Minerva, in cat form, observes Severus and Hermione dancing in the moonlight