

# Unity Of The Senses

*by shuldham*

Who knows where the dance of the senses will lead Severus and Hermione?

## One Shot

*Chapter 1 of 1*

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AN: This is a romance that is set post DH. For the purpose of my story Severus has a window in his room. My many thanks go to agnes\_grey and Serpentine.

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### Unity Of The Senses

He sat on the ledge, breathed deeply and leant into the stone parapet. Slowly, the granite gave up its daylong, sun-baked warmth to his body. Severus relaxed as the sultry heat suffused across his back. He closed his eyes and inhaled the scents of the late summer's evening. The trace of sun-kissed heather, earth and freshly-cut grass all melded together into a single, encompassing scent that defined summer for him and ghosted across his senses. The faint, woody tang from an early bonfire curled its lazy trail of smoke into his lungs. He opened his eyes and drank in the sight. The last, lingering rays of sunshine washed across the hills and trees, caressing them with an opulent, golden light. Even the dust motes in the air caught the slanting beams. The world lay open to his scrutiny and danced for him, as it shimmered at the sun's touch. A rare smile of contentment flickered across his face.

Later, with the sweat prickling out on his skin, in the unseasonable warmth of the summer night, he lay in a half sleep. Held between dreaming and waking, between desire and reality, he dozed. Restless, he turned towards the slight, cooling breeze that drifted through the open window. Carried on that same breeze, a soft contralto voice humming an old folk song drifted across his ears and melted into his sleep-softened mind. Lulled, he fell into a deep and peaceful sleep. The voice, a beacon, illuminated his dreams, making them bright and shining in the darkness.

~\*~

Later still, at the turning of the seasons, and with the window shuttered against the herald of winter carried on the autumn night, he found that he missed the beautiful voice of his dreams.

~\*~

She found the very sound of him to be hypnotic and wonderfully intoxicating, like a full, rich port-wine. The cadence of his speech would thrill through her. It had ever since she had, unknown to him, stood transfixed, listening to him as he read aloud. His mellifluous tone had glided in a heartbreakingly poignant glissando across the words, imbuing them with a longing that was almost tangible. He had thought himself alone, as he indulged in the rare pleasure of reading a sonnet aloud. Curiously, since the beautiful voice had visited his dreams, he had found 'When Most I Wink' to be one of his particular favourites. Entranced by the aching beauty in his tone as he read her

favourite sonnet, Hermione had moved towards him slightly.

The minuscule sound disturbed him and he had whirled around. Her apology had stilled on her lips, stopped by the uncharacteristic lack of a sneer on his face. The moment had been fleeting, and his sneer had soon bled unpleasantly across his expression. The abrupt incompleteness of the poem made her ache with the desire that he would complete it, but he had only glared at her and walked away.

~\*~

Since that time Hermione had been hungry for his voice. She found delight in his description of every-day events. She had sought him out and talked to him and at him, and he, reluctantly, began to talk to her. When she did not appear to harass him one day he found her absence to be oddly distracting, rather than the relief he had assumed it would be. Listening to the gossip in the staff-room (an old habit, and one which had served him well), he had discovered she was away on a course. He was shocked to realise that he missed her conversation, her company, her presence. On her return she had found him different, less vituperative. He had even approached her and enquired as to whether her course had been instructive or an asinine waste of her time and talent. She had studied him for a long moment, but could find no hidden barb in his query and gradually their conversations had deepened and lengthened.

During a heated debate on the properties and safe uses of *Orobranchia Hederae*, she had found herself torn between attention to the detail of his arguments and fascination at the way his voice caressed the plants properties in potion stabilisation. Distracted, she found herself blushing when she idly began to wonder just how his voice would thrill when roused to a lover's passion.

~\*~

Severus puzzled as to just how the sight of an escaped wisp of hair curling, deliciously, around the nape of her neck as she talked, could distract and fascinate him so. He caught himself wondering if the wisp would curl around his fingers in the same, delightful, fashion. He frowned when he found his fingers twitched with the desire to tuck that same, errant, strand back behind her ear. He smiled when she blew yet another stray lock away from her eyes; when she did not have a hand to spare for the task. He offered to carry some of the books that filled her arms and wondered when her company had become so satisfying to him.

~\*~

He hid in the shadows and watched with burning intensity, as her dress swirled and flared around the gentle swell of her hips as she danced on her birthday. Her smile, when it came, was a flash of radiant brilliance that lit her entire face and made him ache to have it turned towards him, and for him, alone. Severus wondered how the simple sound of her laughter should so fill him with a long forgotten, child-like joy.

She watched, and then smiled, as Minerva led the glowering man from his hiding place. Hermione's pulse quickened, as with reluctant elegance and a fluid grace he partnered Minerva in the dance. Hermione felt almost drunk with the sight of him. Later, the line of fine buttons on his coat-cuff drew her eye. He looked towards her and raised his glass with the others, to toast her. His long fingers twined around the glass stem, and she envied the glass, for it knew his touch. His fleeting smile was so fast she had thought it an illusion, but her heart had skittered wildly, and she wondered that the others did not hear its beating, so loud was the pulse in her ear. The sound of his voice, clear and distinct, wishing her a 'Happy Birthday,' she thought the best gift of the day.

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The slightest accidental touch of her hand on his, when they reached for the same book in the library, lanced through him as surely as if he had been stabbed. His hand on hers, as she reached for the same book, sent a thrill of heat through her that felt utterly right and left her wanting so much more.

~\*~

The brief feel of her body against his as she slipped on the winter ice and he caught her left him craving for more of her to touch, and for all of her to touch. The brief sensation of being pulled against him, of his warmth and strength, of the wool under her fingers, of his hand on her back, made her flush.

'Thank you, Severus,' she had said, using his given name for the first time, and his heart had leapt at the sound.

He held her eye and replied, 'You are most welcome ... Hermione.'

He had lingered over her name, loving it with his tone, and a pulse of desire in her groin answered her name's caress. She shivered, and he thinking her cold had removed his scarf, leant close and wrapped it around her neck. She smelt of the cold, crisp, winter's air and vanilla and utterly intoxicating.

His scarf wrapped around her felt as if he surrounded her, and it was a heady, wonderful feeling. She closed her eyes briefly and inhaled his scent of cinnamon and sandalwood. His eyes were on hers when she opened them again.

She reached up and held his hands where they still lightly lay, holding his scarf around her. His pulse beat a rapid tattoo under her fingers. He gently pulled one hand free, reached up tentatively and slowly and with concentrated, infinite care he tucked the curl of hair at her temple behind her ear. It was as if he wished to engrave the memory of the sensation upon his senses for eternity. His thumb and forefinger teased her neck, and she inhaled sharply at the blissful sensation.

'My apologies,' he said in a flat, hopeless tone, thinking his touch unwelcome.

She had felt his hands still and begin to move away. In that heartbeat, between intent and flight, between possibility and rejection, the knowledge that to let him go was utterly intolerable gave her hesitation courage. She had tightened her grip on his hand, raised it to her lips and whispered a kiss across his knuckles. The fine black hair had teased against her mouth and she had felt him shiver.

'No, Severus, I want more,' she replied, laying the truth open between them, and then she had smiled for him alone.

His world had spun.

Slowly, he slid his hand along her cheek; it was cold from the winter's air, but warmed by his touch. She had pressed eagerly into his palm. His smile for her was all that she had seen promised in that fleeting moment at her birthday months, and another lifetime, ago.

Hesitating slightly, he bent his face to hers, only to stop when she could feel the heat of his lips hovering, uncertainly, against hers. She took away his uncertainty, closing the distance between them. Their lips, cold at first, brushed gently together. Then, as their kiss intensified they had pulled each other hungrily closer, and they tasted each of the other, of vanilla and cinnamon, of the winter's air warming in their mouths and of each other's love.

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At the turning of the year, with the first, green shoots of new life emerging from their winter sleep, the air inside was warm and redolent with the scent of wine and candle wax. As the firelight's shadows danced around the room they stood facing each other, drunk not with the *Amarone*, but with the sight of each other, naked.

Both gasped, at the first touch of skin against skin, and at the prickle of electricity of knowing their first touch of lovers meeting. Lips, met and moved, tasted and touched. Hands, slid and stroked, teased and caressed, fingers entwined. Their touch became more demanding, more fevered, each urging the other to the fulfilment they craved. He smiled as her eyes opened wider as, at last, with agonising slowness he pushed inside her. He held himself still within her, revelling in the sensation, and then growled as she moved impatiently beneath him, her movement urging him to thrust. Slowly at first then faster he responded. Her fingernails raked his back, and desperately he tried to control his rising excitement. The scent of him on her and of her on him, the sound of his voice whispering nonsense words of passion and of hers whispering his name, drove them almost mindless with desire. She answered each thrust of his, calling his name, pulling him to her. Each thrust of his, took her closer to the shattering of her senses. From the white heat of her orgasm she thought she heard him call her name, as he joined her where their senses combined, in a perfect, blissful unity of

passion.

As the candle flames guttered and failed, the two lovers drifted towards sleep, held in the circle of each others embrace. On the cusp of sleep she heard him softly speaking the lines of the sonnet he had left incomplete the year before, but it was completed now, as were they. Both smiled in their dreaming, content in each other's arms.

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