

Our Child

by carley9

The heat of battle can cause one to do weird things. Hermione must deal with the consequences from the night after the Final Battle against Voldemort.

Prologue - Giving Up Ariadne

Chapter 1 of 2

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Prologue – Giving up Ariadne

Hermione slowly rocked in the chair as she held her pregnant belly. She gently smoothed the robe over where her child lay. Any day now, she was due to have a child that was the product of a one-night stand. It had happened in the aftermath of all the partying, and revelry, after the defeat of Voldemort. She had come through virtually unscathed, as had a few others. The important thing was that Harry lived, despite the many lives lost. It still hurt to think about Dumbledore and McGonagall, but they had seen that all of the students had been well protected.

It had been four years since she had graduated, and Snape hadn't changed a bit. He still had snapped at all of them as if they were first years, and he didn't look as if he'd had a proper bath in weeks. She was so grateful to be alive that night; she hadn't wanted anyone to be alone. So, she had disappeared into the dungeons and accosted him. She didn't exactly know what had come over her as she had dragged him to the table in his lab. She murmured whispered words of desire and kissed him fully on the mouth. He had whispered back in kind and answered her kisses with his own. It had been a nearly silent affair, until she had screamed her release and he had answered her with a gasp. She left before morning, not wanting to experience or see his shame first-hand.

Hermione, for once, hadn't taken the proper precautions, and a few weeks later, as she stared at the Muggle pregnancy test, she knew exactly what the consequences would be: a child. She did the only thing a girl in her situation could do: she called her best friend. Between the two of them, they developed a plan.

"Mione, are you okay?"

"I'm fine, Gin. She's just not letting me sleep."

She and Ginny Potter, née Weasley, decided that she would pose as their surrogate mother. Ginny and Harry had been trying to have children ever since they had gotten married, and that made Hermione's pregnancy opportune. As long as this child didn't look like HIM, everything would go according to plan. She had plans to continue her studies in France, and then she was going to go to Japan to study under the oldest living Potions master. She was going to travel and live life, but now, she was going to give up her child.

Hermione stood up and reached for Ginny's hands. Giving them a gentle squeeze, she said, "I think it's time to wake Harry and go to St. Mungo's." She gingerly reached for the small of her back and rubbed small circles, trying to soothe the aching muscles there. Ginny's hands soon joined hers, and she gave a little whimper of pleasure.

"Don't worry, Hermione. I'm sure everything will be fine. One of the Midwives is a Muggle-born, so she knows all the complications that could happen," Ginny said as she took Hermione into her and Harry's room. She shook Harry and smiled at the way he sat up and blinked sleepily in the dim light coming in from the hallway. She gently tussled his hair and said, "Harry, it's time."

He threw the covers off and grabbed for his glasses. "Why didn't you wake me sooner? We should have taken her when the pains first started!" He grabbed for a robe and a suitcase that was sitting behind the door. He stopped and looked at the two women giggling at him from the hallway. "What is so funny?"

"Harry, you have enough time to change into some proper clothing," Hermione said with a giggle. "Oh!" She placed her hands on either side of her abdomen and winced as a contraction passed. Slowly breathing in and out, she added, "You may want to hurry though." The child was kicking hard against her ribcage; she began to slowly breathe in her nose and out her mouth.

Ginny grabbed Floo powder and said, "St. Mungo's!" She put Hermione into the fireplace and waited until she left. She grabbed a bit for herself and told Harry, "I expect to see you there soon. We will be in the maternity ward."

When she was set up in a room, Hermione asked, "How could I let myself be so stupid? Why didn't I do the right thing and just leave that man alone?"

"Because you're an angel of mercy," Ginny said. Then she snickered. "That and you were hot for him and his body." She ducked when Hermione threw a pillow at her. "Come on, 'Mione. Both you and I know better."

"I don't want to admit it." Hermione sucked in a breath and slowly panted it out. She fell back and said, "I don't want to do this ever again."

Ariadne Medora Potter was born at 12:35 in the afternoon on August 1st, exactly nine months after the fall of Voldemort. Her birth mother left a note for Ginny and left shortly after she saw her daughter for the first time. She was leaving Britain to continue her studies. Nobody knew precisely when she would be back, but they knew that when it happened, it was going to be something spectacular.

I would like to thank my beta, Chexie, for looking this over for me.

This is a story I have started over on FF.net, but—with the help of my beta—I will be adding to and fixing it.

This story is born from a plot bunny I adopted from emmakitty on WIKTT.

Chapter One - First Impressions

Chapter 2 of 2

The heat of battle can cause one to do weird things. Hermione must deal with the consequences from the night after the Final Battle against Voldemort.

Disclaimer: Harry Potter and Co. belong to JKR and not me.

I'd like to thank Hechicera for helping me fix this chapter up. All mistakes are mine.

Chapter One First Impressions

"Ariadne Potter!"

Ariadne grimaced and pulled herself up short at the booming voice of the current Headmaster. He wasn't a friendly man, but he could be fair. Well... most of the time. She turned around to begin giving her excuse for being out so late and saw a brown-haired woman with the Headmaster. He didn't look too pleased with the woman, but he never looked pleased with anyone. She quickly bowed her head meekly, and asked, "Yes, Headmaster?"

She heard his sigh of disbelief, and his exasperation, as he said, "This is Professor Granger. Since it is late, and I have more pressing matters, I need you to escort her to her rooms. She is staying in the old Potions master's rooms in the dungeons."

Ariadne lifted her eyes and saw something briefly reach the headmaster's eyes. Was it recognition? Or was it something else? As the headmaster drifted away, Ariadne tilted her head and watched him questioningly, getting a soft bark of laughter from the woman.

"Hello, Professor Hermione Granger at your service," the woman said, as she extended her hand. "It seems Headmaster Snape neglected to tell me about the students that live here after the session is out."

Ariadne shook the hand in front of her and said, "It's just me and my cousin Thomas living here. Thomas's father is the professor of Care of Magical Creatures." She placed her hands behind her back and started toward the dungeons. As she walked, she said, "My father is the Defense Against the Dark Arts professor. He was instrumental in the fall of Voldemort, but you probably already know that."

Hermione smiled and ruffled the girl's hair. "Of course I know who he is; I stood next to Harry, along with Ginny and Ron, when the final battle occurred. I'm your godmother, Ariadne." She reached for the girl's hand and smiled. "If memory serves me correctly, I should be heading toward the dungeon stairs, where all of my trunks are that the nice house-elves are unpacking for me, as we speak. Why don't we find your parents, and have a nice cup of tea." She looked down at Ariadne and saw in the girl's face similar features to her own; and the absence of another that would have marked her parentage for her, whether she wanted it or not. "What does your mother do, Ariadne?"

Ariadne smiled and said, "Lately Mum has been helping Uncle Ron care for a litter of kneazles. I guess they were orphaned when their mother wandered too close to Bones, Uncle Ron's dog. It didn't help that Aunt Reyna had a huge memorial service for the mother and made Ron bury her!"

By the time they reached her parents' set of rooms, there was the start of friendship forming. Ariadne knocked and entered the sitting room. Harry and Ginny were already drinking tea. "Mum, look who's come to tea."

Ginny looked up, and her face broke into an instant smile. She set her teacup down and hugged Hermione fiercely. "I didn't know you were actually coming back," she said as she held Hermione out to look at her. The last eleven years hadn't changed her physical appearance a whole lot. She still had the curly bushy hair, and the soft cinnamon colored eyes. "In your last letter you said, 'Snape be damned!' if I remember correctly."

Hermione sat down, and answered, "That I did say." She grabbed a spare teacup, and poured herself some tea. She stirred some sugar into it, and added, "The funny thing is, the next day I met the git on my way to my lab; he was very convincing. He went as far as to say that he would ruin my reputation with my current employer. But, that is that, and I am here." She took a sip of her tea, and asked, "Have you given the letter yet?"

Ginny picked up her teacup, and said over the top of it, "We were waiting for the sorting, but I have a good idea what house she is going to be in." She gave a sideways glance to Ariadne, and continued, "She found it a few weeks ago, about the same time your letter arrived. She may not look like him, but she certainly picked up a few less desirable of his traits."

"Does she know about...?"

Ginny nodded her head. "We sat her down and had a very long conversation about what had happened and why her father was never told. We discussed why it was important for you to tell Snape about her, even though she wanted him to know right away."

Hermione set her cup down, and turned to Ariadne. "Do you have any questions for me?"

Ariadne nodded her head and sat quietly for a moment. She was smart, and she knew what everything in the letter meant, but she didn't want it to be necessarily true. She studied Hermione, and bit her lip as Hermione would do when something was troubling her. She didn't tell anyone that she had taken it, but her Mum knew right away. When she had the talk with her Mum, there was only one thing her Mum wouldn't answer her. She lowered her head and asked, "Why did you give me away?"

Hermione sat in silence for a moment. She had been expecting to answer this question some day, hoping that Ariadne would have been older when she finally asked. "I was very young and had never planned to have a baby. Since I had never planned for it, I wasn't financially stable enough. I was just starting as an apprentice and had no income. I knew that you would be much better off with Harry and Ginny than you would have been with me...or your father for that matter."

Ariadne began to protest, but Harry interrupted her. "Ariadne, it was what all of us thought was best at the time." He reached for her, but was disappointed when she pulled away. It was hard to remember that she was eleven now. He sighed and looked to Ginny for help.

Ginny smiled gently at Ariadne and said, "We wanted to wait until you were in Hogwarts before we told you your true parentage. We did it so you didn't think you were never wanted. You were the answer to our prayers because we were having problems having a baby of our own." She held out her hand, and Ariadne grudgingly took it. Ginny pulled her daughter into a hug and said, "Not for one minute have you not been as our own child."

Ariadne withdrew from the hug and looked at Hermione. Now that she knew what to look for, she could tell she had inherited most of her features from her mother while the shape of her fingers and her hair was from her father. She quizzically cocked her head to the side, and tried to puzzle out why her father had never been told. After a few moments, she asked, "Why did you never tell Headmaster Snape?"

Hermione drained her teacup, and patted a place beside her. Once Ariadne had come and sat beside her, she said, "I want you to promise me that you will not tell him until I do so. After all, it is only fair that I be the one to take the punishment of his actions." Ariadne gave a slight nod in indication of her promise. Hermione sat back and looked her daughter in the eyes. "Severus Snape was not a very nice man. He has mellowed in the last few years, but when you were conceived, he was still unpleasant. I understand that you are friends now and can't see what it was we saw, but I just couldn't give an infant to a man I thought could possibly hurt it."

Ariadne just sat there and stared at Hermione in a wide-eyed gaze. "Headmaster Snape would never hurt a baby!" she exclaimed as she tried to reconcile the man she knew with the man Hermione was telling her about. She stared at the ceiling as she scanned her memory for anything that would prove him to be the bad man Hermione thought he was. Finding none, she was still in shock.

Hermione looked at Ginny and asked, "Is he really that different now?"

Ginny nodded and said, "He gets along really well with all the children, especially Ariadne."

Ariadne looked to the other adults to see if what Hermione was saying was true. She turned to Harry and asked, "He's not as awful as the older students say he is, is he?"

Harry looked at his daughter and sighed. "He was very unpleasant to me when I was a student, but now that the war is over, he isn't as bad as he used to be." Harry shrank back a little when his daughter glared at him for saying something bad about one of her friends.

Hermione watched as the smiles lightly tugged at Harry and Ginny's mouths, and she shook her head at the girl's antics. In order to lighten the mood a little, she said, "Are you certain that she is going to be a Slytherin? Right now she's acting like any hot-headed Gryffindor."

Ariadne glared at Hermione and said, "Professor Snape said so, and he was head of the Slytherins for a really long time."

Hermione softly laughed and said, "I know. After all, he was my professor, as well as your parents', long before you were born. He prided himself in getting the pick of the crop, when it came to students' being in Slytherin." Hermione grabbed a small sugar biscuit and took a bite out of it. As the sweetness melted on her tongue, she could see Ariadne impatiently tapping her toes. "He had a habit of overlooking some of the brighter students, me included."

"Why would he do that? The last time he was talking about you, he was saying you were a brilliant witch."

Hermione laughed out loud at the statement. It would be like Severus to berate, and bait, her while she was a student, and sing her praises when she was on another continent. She hugged Ariadne to her and said, "He will never admit to it in my hearing."