

# The Cradle Robber and the Cougar

*by Drivelicious*

James Potter is determined to win the heart of Hermione Granger, despite all of the obstacles.

## One-Shot

*Chapter 1 of 1*

James Potter is determined to win the heart of Hermione Granger, despite all of the obstacles.

"Excuse me? Ma'am?" The young man ran his hand through his hair in frustration as he looked at the witch ignoring him from behind the counter.

"Please, I am trying to find my wife and son. Can you please tell me if they were brought here?"

"Just a moment," the witch said as she closed her magazine. "Okay, who were you looking for?"

"I'm looking for Lily Potter. Is she here?"

Hermione was heading for the lifts but stopped as she heard the name of her brand new baby goddaughter. What in the world did that man want with Lily? She turned to look at him. From the back he reminded her of Harry, but she didn't recognize his voice, and she had just left Harry moments ago before Flooing to St. Mungo's to check on Lavender, Ron, and newborn Hugo.

"Please, I desperately need to find Lily. Lily Potter. Is she here?" he asked again.

Narrowing her eyes, Hermione fixed a glare and stalked toward the man. Whoever he was, he didn't need to know a thing about baby Lily until she knew who he was.

"No Lily Potters here, sir. The name sounds familiar though." The bored receptionist turned back to her magazine. "Oh! I know that name. Are you looking for the . . ." She was cut off by Hermione slapping her hand on the counter.

"Who are you, and why are you looking for Lily?" she asked, looking at the man carefully. She was struck for a moment on how closely he did resemble Harry. The eyes and the voice was different, but the features were extremely similar.

"You know Lily? Where is she?"

Hermione was fiercely protective of the entire Potter family. Everyone was. The children were never left unsupervised. If Harry and Ginny weren't with them, she or a member of the Weasley family was. Nobody wanted those children to be threatened because of their parents' fame. She was wary of small groups of Death Eaters that were in hiding and was very tempted to check this man for the Dark Mark. He just looked so much like Harry.

"Tell me who you are first," Hermione insisted.

"Can you please have this conversation somewhere else?" the receptionist asked lazily.

Hermione grabbed the stranger by the arm and took him to a corner of the entrance hall. "Who are you?"

"Who are you?"

"You don't get to ask questions. What do you want with Lily?"

"She's my wife!" the man yelled. "I'm looking for my wife. She'd be with my son, my baby boy, Harry. I woke up in the woods near Hogwarts. I don't know how I got there, but my wife and child were not with me. I went home, but my house is gone. Please tell me where they are. Does he have them? Did You-Know-Who take them?"

Hermione looked in horror as tears started to roll down the stranger's face. "Oh, my God," she whispered as realization dawned. She was looking at Harry's father. She was looking and talking to the long-dead James Potter.

"Are you James? James Potter?"

"Yes, who are you?" he asked again.

"You need to come with me. I know where Harry is, but we can't talk about this here," Hermione said, becoming increasingly flustered.

"Wait," James said, stepping back. "Who are you? How do you know where my son is?"

"Not here, just trust me. Come with me." Hermione grabbed his arm and tried to drag him toward the row of fireplaces that served as the Floo network.

"I'm not leaving with you! I don't know who you are. You could be working for You-Know-Who."

"I'm not. Look!" She quickly pushed up the sleeves of her jumper showing her unmarked arms. "Please, come with me, and I'll explain." She once again grabbed his arm, and this time he followed her into the Floo.

In moments they arrived at Hermione's flat. "Come in, and make yourself comfortable," she mumbled. She had no idea how to break the news that his wife was dead. "Do you want something to drink? Eat?"

"I'd like to know what's going on," James said as he glanced around her living room. He was drawn to a photo of a small group of people. In the center was the strange woman and a man who looked just like him. "Who's that?"

"That's . . . Damn it! I don't know how to do this. It's your son. That's Harry."

"That's not Harry. He's just a baby, a little over a year old."

"Something strange is going on. I don't know why or how, but you've been thrown forward in time. Your son is now twenty-eight years old. He's a man now and one of the finest you'd ever meet."

"You must realize I don't believe you at all. I don't know why you'd lie to me like this. I've got to contact my friends. They'll help me find my wife and son."

"Friends like Remus? Sirius? I'm sorry, that's not possible."

"What's happened to them? You're working for him! Let me get to Hogwarts. I need to talk to Dumbledore." James moved toward the fireplace.

"He's dead. They are all dead." Hermione waited for a reaction and saw his fist clench in anger. She only hoped that he wouldn't lash out at her. "James, I'm very sorry to have to be the one to tell you this, but it's been twenty-seven years since Voldemort attacked your home. He killed you that night. Or so we all thought. James, Lily is dead. She was killed protecting Harry. Voldemort killed her."

James stepped away from the photograph and stalked to the other side of the room. "I don't even know you, and you are telling me that my wife is dead? That I'm dead? You are the worst kind of liar, and I want to know who you are and where my son is. Right now," he hissed.

Hermione took a step back. The look of hatred on the man's face scared her. She knew she had to get someone he trusted to talk to him. "James? Mr. Potter? My name is Hermione Granger. I'm Harry's best friend. Did you know Professor McGonagall?"

"Of course I know her; everyone who went to Hogwarts knows the professor. What does that have to do with you telling me horrific lies?"

"Do you trust her?"

"Yes. Of course I trust her."

"Just a moment then." Hermione turned to her fireplace, keeping one eye trained in his direction. She quickly stuck her head into the fire and called out for the professor. After a brief conversation, she stepped away to let her through.

"What's this all about, Hermione? I was preparing for a staff meeting."

"I know and I'm sorry, Minerva, but can you turn and look behind you?" Hermione pleaded.

Minerva turned and smiled. "Harry! How is the new baby? Is everything all right?" She paused and studied the man in front of her. "Wait a moment, you aren't Harry. Oh great Merlin! James?"

"Professor? Is that really you? It's only been a few months since I saw you last. You look so different." James stepped forward to embrace his old Head of House.

"A few months? Oh, James, it's been years. Twenty-seven years! What are you doing here? How are you here?"

"I've been kidnapped by that wicked woman over there. She's telling me horrible things about Lily, Sirius, and Remus. Even Dumbledore."

"That woman is Hermione Granger, and she is not one to tell stories. James, everything she's told you would be true. You've been dead for twenty-seven years."

Hermione stepped back and let her favorite professor explain the situation to a still angry and upset James Potter. She knew Harry should be there, but she also knew that James needed to face his new reality before meeting his son.

\*\*\*\*\*

Hermione placed the new photo on her mantle. She smiled as she ran her fingers over the people she loved so much. It was a group photo from Lily and Hugo's joint first birthday party. The babies were born only days apart which made party-throwing quite convenient. The entire Weasley and Potter families were squeezed into the photo. Right in the center, where she would have normally been if she hadn't been behind the camera, was James. He was smiling as he held little Al, having him wave at the camera. He had finally found peace and happiness again after grieving for all he had lost. It was hard to believe it had only been a year since he had woken in the forest with the formerly broken Resurrection Stone gripped in his hand.

It had been a hard few months immediately after his return. He and Harry had spent a great deal of time together, and the Weasleys had taken him in as they had extra room. Hermione had helped him find a flat of his own after a time, and he started working with George at Weasley's Wizarding Wheezes. It was a perfect fit for his Marauder mind. He and Harry had formed an odd bond, not quite father and son, but they were very close, more like brothers.

"Hermione?" a voice interrupted her thoughts as it called her through the Floo. "Can I come by?"

"Of course, James. Anytime, you know that." Hermione straightened her shirt and patted down her hair as she waited for her visitor to emerge.

"Sorry to bother you on a Sunday afternoon," James said as he stepped into the living room, spelling the dust from his clothes.

"You never bother me. I just finished framing the picture from the birthday party yesterday. I made several copies of the photo. You can take yours with you."

"Thanks. Let's see how it turned out." James walked to stand beside Hermione and looked at the picture. "Not bad, not bad. You are a pretty decent photographer."

Hermione snorted. "Pretty decent? Thanks. I could have done better if some of my subjects had been sitting still."

"You know how hard it is to make a three-year-old still? You are lucky I got him to wave at the camera instead of picking his nose."

"Sure, 'Grampa James.' Whatever you say." She laughed.

"That's 'Uncle James' to you. It's a little odd being a grandfather at the age of twenty-two. Especially considering my son is twenty-nine."

"Yes, but if you really count the years, you are actually forty-nine, which makes you downright old." Hermione gave him a grin as she teased. She had grown to love being around James. She loved it a bit too much. She couldn't deny that she was completely attracted to him. After spending a year with him, she didn't think he looked all that much like Harry at all. He was taller by a few inches, and his features were sharper. He had light brown eyes that hinted at playfulness and humor. Something she'd only recently seen in him. All of her brotherly feelings toward Harry were not transferred to his father. There was nothing brotherly about the way she felt. She just knew it was all wrong. She was thirty years old, and he was physically eight years younger. Plus he was a grandfather! She just couldn't wrap her head around all the things that were wrong with the feelings she had.

James watched as Hermione processed whatever she was thinking about. He wondered if she knew he could tell when she was thinking hard. Her face would change with her thoughts, and while he didn't know what was going through her mind, she was fascinating to watch. He loved to watch her. He loved to listen to her when she lectured Harry and Ron. From what he understood, she had been doing that for nearly nineteen years. He had heard the stories of her bravery and her dedication to her friends. He might not have a traditional father-son relationship with Harry, but he would be forever grateful for everything Hermione did to protect his son and stand by him over the years.

He wanted her. That was the thought that ran through his head nearly every waking minute. He'd made his peace with losing Lily, and although he would miss her for the rest of his life, he knew he didn't want to be alone. He had loved being married, even as a young husband. He had loved that year of fatherhood he had spent with his son. He wanted all that again, and he wanted it with Hermione Granger. He had come over to make his move, and he wasn't going to leave without giving it a chance. He had gone over everything that Sirius had taught him about wooing Lily and thrown that right out the window. Hermione was a different creature all together, and a fistful of flowers and a lopsided grin wasn't going to do it.

"Hermione?" he called out, just wanting to break her thought processes for a moment. He knew she wasn't the type of girl he could pounce on. She'd hex his balls right off. She had fast reflexes.

"Oh, I'm sorry, James. I was thinking."

"Stop thinking for a moment; you think too much." He gave her his lopsided grin. It couldn't hurt. "I . . . Um . . . You see . . . I was wondering if you'd go out with me?" Damn, he thought. That sounded so stupid. It was as bad as the first time he had asked Lily out. Did his voice even change pitch?

"You want me to go out with you?" Hermione asked. "On a date?"

"Well, yes. A date would be a good start. I was also thinking that eventually we'd get engaged, have a nice simple wedding, and then make a few babies so that Harry wouldn't be an only child. Somewhere between the date and the engagement, I'd like to have sex with you, so the babies might come before the wedding." James sighed and smiled. He'd done it; he'd let her know his intentions. He probably should have been a bit more subtle about the whole thing, but he didn't want her to think his only goal was to get in her pants.

"Oh. Wow. James, that's nice of you to ask and lay out your plans. I'm flattered, really. I just don't think it will work." Hermione wanted to slap herself after the words poured from her mouth. She really wanted to tell him to just skip to the sex part and they could work out the rest later. "It's just wrong. Our age differences I mean. You are only twenty-two years old -- as you just pointed out. I'm thirty! The Muggles have a word for older women going for younger men. I do not want to be labeled a cougar."

"A cougar? Doesn't sound too bad to me. Want to learn how to be an Animagus? I could hang with a cougar." He laughed at himself as he pictured his stag and her cougar walking through central London.

"James, be serious! You just asked me on a date and then went on to lay out the rest of my life! I'm trying to explain why I'm saying no."

"Do you want to say yes?" James couldn't help his smirk. She was thinking again. He could see the change in emotions as she planned things out.

"That's . . . Well, it's irrelevant. It doesn't matter what I want. It's just wrong. I grew up with your son!"

"So now you are saying I'm too old?"

"No!" Hermione stomped away in frustration. Her body was screaming at her to just accept his offer, her heart was screaming at her to accept the offer, but her mind just couldn't wrap her head around everything. "You aren't old. I mean, you are older but yet you are too young, and . . . I give up." She sat down in a chair, completely defeated.

James knelt at her feet and took her hands in his. "I'm a forty-nine-year-old man in a twenty-two-year-old body, having the physical reactions of a fifteen-year-old whenever you are near me. I don't think any of this is wrong. I came back from the dead for no explainable reason, so I'm choosing to believe I'm here for a second chance. With you. You stood by me this past year, even after I accused you of being a Death Eater. I think we could make something really wonderful work."

"Your words are so sweet. It's not that I'm not interested; I just think it's wrong. Awkward. Bizarre." Hermione looked into the handsome face in front of her and wanted nothing more than to run her hands through that messy hair and pull his lips toward her. Her body was humming with desire.

"Because of the age difference? What about Ron? You were older than Ron," James argued as he stood to pace.

"Barely! Ron's only a few months younger than I am."

"What about when you dated Charlie? He's older than you by several years right?"

"About seven, but it's different. It's more acceptable that the man be older."

"Fine. I'm forty-nine years old. Old enough? Please, Hermione, one date. Let me show you that I'm not an immature fool. I've experienced a lot in my life -- and death. Let's just go to dinner tonight. Please. Say you want to."

Hermione decided right then and there that he was right. He was everything she'd been looking for in a man, age be damned. "Fine. One date, dinner tonight. We'll see how it goes."

"So is that also a yes for the hot sex?" James asked, a smile returning to his face.

"Don't push it, Gramps. Now you need to leave so I can get ready for our date. What time are you picking me up?" Hermione stood to walk over to him.

"I was thinking we could go now?"

"Sorry, I'm a girl. I need to plan my outfit, pick out my shoes, do my hair and all those other things we girls do to get ready. Plus I need to run a quick errand. I need at least two hours."

"Fine two hours. I'll see you then." James was pushed toward the Floo and, laughing the whole way, returned to his flat.

Hermione followed him into the Floo, calling out Harry and Ginny's home. "Harry! I need to talk to you!" she called out, not bothering to ask permission to enter.

"Hermione! Are you all right?" Harry asked, rushing into the room.

"Yes. No. Kind of. I need to talk to you. Can we go for a walk? "

"Not at the moment. Ginny went to the store, and I've got Al and Lily napping. We can talk here though. James is out back with Teddy, so they'll be busy for a while."

"Fine. I need your honest reaction because I will say no if you aren't happy about it. You are too important to me, so I don't want to do anything to jeopardize our friendship. It's really a bad idea all together. I'll just be going now." Hermione moved to head back to the fireplace when Harry grabbed her arm.

"For Merlin's sake, Hermione! I barely understood a thing that you just said, but I'm guessing you want my approval for something?"

Hermione threw her arms around Harry and squeezed tight. Talking into his chest, she mumbled, "Your dad asked me out on a date."

"Huh?" Harry pushed Hermione back a few inches.

"Your dad asked me out. On a date."

"Oh. Okay. Well, that's something," Harry said as he ran his hand through his hair and stepped back a few feet. "He mentioned that he was feeling ready to move on with his life. He said he wanted to date again and even asked me how I felt about becoming a brother. I just didn't have a clue that it was you he was thinking about."

"Forget I said anything; I'll cancel, and we'll all just forget it ever happened." Hermione once again moved to leave when Harry's arm stopped her.

"Do you want to cancel? Tell me the truth."

"No, Harry. I don't. I like James. More than I should, despite the age differences. But like I said, you are more important to me, and I don't want to hurt our friendship. I'll cancel."

"Don't. If Dad likes you and you like him, why not give it a go? I think age differences with a man who was dead for twenty-seven years should be tossed right out the window. You'll never be able to figure out who's older. I'm all right with it, Hermione. I love you, and I love my dad. If you can be happy together, then do it. Be happy."

\*\*\*\*\*

"Thanks for dinner, James," Hermione said as she stood at the doorway to her flat. "It was wonderful, and you were wonderful, and I just had a wonderful time."

"Wonderful," James whispered as he stepped closer.

"So, would you like to come in for a drink or something? I have water," she said while backing herself toward the door.

He reached out a hand and brushed her hair gently from her face. Moving his hand to lightly caress her cheek, he moved his thumb gently over her lips. "Can I kiss you?"

Hermione's voice was gone. All she could hear was the pounding of the blood as it quickly moved through her veins. She nodded, and when she saw the look of triumph and desire in his eyes, her body reacted in a way it hadn't in years. As his lips touched her, she nearly came on the spot. She clutched at his back as he moved his mouth over hers. "Inside," she mumbled in between kisses. "Water."

With a flick of her wand, the door opened, and Hermione pulled James inside, still attached to her lips. She pulled back and moved toward the kitchen. "Did you say you were thirsty?"

"Sure. Water would be good." He followed her into the kitchen and watched as she fumbled at the sink. She would have dropped the glass if he hadn't been quick with a well-aimed Wingardium Leviosa. She was nervous. He could see it in her movements. Hermione was normally very smooth and in control, but now she was shaky. He took the glass that she handed him and took a sip.

"Thanks again for a wonderful dinner out. I thought the chicken was very good," she said. She knew she was babbling, but if she didn't babble, she'd probably throw herself at him, and she had never been dominant in any of her relationships. All two of them. She looked down at her toes and noticed a chip in her nail polish that she'd have to take care of. She kicked off her shoes out of habit, and they landed in the corner next to her cat's water dish. "Did I tell you I enjoyed tonight?" she finally asked, knowing full well she had said that twice. "It was . . ."

"Wonderful," he said, cutting her off. "I know. You said that. So is this it? The end of our date? If it is, that's fine. I'll go home and plan our next date. If this isn't the end of our date, could you let me know that as well? I'm not sure if I should take off my jacket and make myself comfortable or if I should leave."

"Our next date? You want to go out with me again?" Hermione stared up at James as once again he moved closer.

"Did you not just have the best kiss of your life a few minutes ago? Of course I want to go out with you again. You are a very silly woman, Hermione. I'm going to kiss you again. Right now."

Hermione braced herself against the counter as James stalked toward her. Once again she felt her blood rush through her veins, and her whole body warmed up. As James finally reached her, he slowly tipped her face toward his and gently pressed his lips to hers. She responded immediately and with abandon as she threw her arms around his neck and held on. James picked her up and set her on the counter where he could get a better angle.

"We should probably wait until the second date, right?" James asked as he kissed down her neck.

"Actually, I think we've had dinner together before, so this might be our third or fourth date," Hermione moaned, throwing her head back in pleasure as James' hand wandered to her breasts. "Bedroom though. I'm too old to be shagged next to my coffee maker."

"Right." James stopped his ministrations of her breasts and stepped back. "Damn you are beautiful."

Hermione grabbed his face in her hands and gave him a gentle kiss. "Thank you," she whispered. She hopped off the counter, grabbed him by the hand and pulled him with her toward her bedroom.

He was more than happy to follow along as his pants were getting tighter by the second. He watched as Hermione lay herself down across her bed, her hair framing her face. He knelt on the bed and bent over her, kissing her mouth, cheeks, and laying one sweet little peck above her breasts. He started unbuttoning her blouse and was thrilled to see pretty white satin adorning her breasts. He loved the simplicity of it all. It made everything right. He kissed the swell of her left breast and buried his face in her neck.

Hermione ran her hands through his soft, messy hair and felt a wave of emotion that was more powerful than the initial lust that had taken over. She loved this man. She had never allowed herself to admit it, but she was in love with James Potter. She pushed him away slightly so she could sit up and remove her blouse. She took pity on his fumbling hands and unhooked her bra.

"Thanks," he said with a chuckle. Embarrassed to be looking at her naked breasts, he looked down at her delicate hands as they unbuttoned his shirt, and he helped it along, throwing it into the corner. "You aren't going to get upset about my clothes lying around are you?"

"Not tonight I won't, but don't let it be a habit," she teased. She reached for the buttons on his pants and looked up in shock when he stopped her with a hand. "Are you sure you want this, James?"

James pulled her towards him and kissed her sweetly on the lips. "More than anything, Hermione. More than anything. I'm just a little nervous."

"Why?"

"I've only been with one woman, and that was Lily. You've had other lovers."

"Two. I've had two lovers. I'm not promiscuous, James. I don't sleep around."

"No! I know that. I didn't mean to imply that I thought you were easy with men. I just don't have the experience, and I don't know what you like."

"I don't know what you like either, James. We'll learn together. That's the beauty of this. You said you wanted a relationship with me. Do you still?"

"Yes, of course I do."

"Then we will have plenty of time to figure everything out. Please just make love to me, James."

He slowly pushed her down and lay down next to her. Kissing her sweetly once again, he moved his kisses down her neck, arriving at the swell of her breasts. "Amazing," he whispered in awe as he took one peaked nipple into his mouth, suckling gently on one before moving on to the next.

Without knowing exactly how, he found himself completely without clothes and looked to see that Hermione's skirt was missing too. He looked up at his witch and saw the smirk on her face as she stuck her wand under the pillow. "I just wanted to get on with it!" she said with a laugh.

James joined her in her laughter as he continued to enjoy her breasts. His hand moved down her body to cup her soft curls. Her gasp encouraged him, and his fingers quested for her clit. Moving a finger slowly over that most sensitive spot, he felt her shudder below him. "You're wet already," he murmured, glancing up at her.

"I have been all day. Ever since you put the thought of sex in my mind," she said between gasps as his skilled fingers continued to work. "Please, James. I need you." She arched her back as his fingers pushed inside of her. "Oh, god, oh, James." She felt the build up of tension as he continued his ministrations. She wanted to beg him to stop so that he could be inside her when she came, but her need was too great, and she felt as if her body had burst open as she shuddered and shook. As her heart rate slowed down, she looked to see James resting his head on her belly, a satisfied smile on his face.

"I guess I know you like that," he teased.

"Mmmph," she replied, still not able to think. "Kiss me."

James moved his body up and over hers to find her lips once more. As their tongues tangled and their heart rates quickened again, James let out a gasp when he felt a hand tighten around his cock.

"Inside me. Please," Hermione begged, wanting him to find the pleasure he had given her.

James lifted his hips and moved himself between her legs. Looking deep into her eyes, he positioned his cock and pushed in. They didn't close their eyes or even blink as their bodies finally connected as one. The burst of emotion Hermione had felt earlier was back and stronger than before. She felt that she was finally whole. James fit inside her as if he was made for her, and she thought that maybe he was. Maybe he was brought back for just this reason.

James was feeling the same emotions, and he reached out to grasp her hands. As his fingers intertwined with hers, he pushed in again and again. He moved slowly, wanting to feel everything. He wondered if this was it, if this was the moment that his new found life would be taken once again. Now that he'd found joy again, maybe it would be over. He prayed to whatever gods were listening that he be allowed to have this life. To live this time, to really live in peace and happiness with her.

Their bodies eventually took over, and both began to move faster, in sync with one another. James reached down to rub her clit, hoping to send her over the edge with him. When she flew, her body clamped down on his as his name was screamed from her lips. Her arms gripped his shoulders while her legs wrapped themselves around him. She held tight as she exploded once again and felt him stiffen as he released himself within her. They clung and rocked together as the shudders subsided and their bodies relaxed.

When they had finally rolled together onto their sides and loosened their grips on each other, Hermione was able to focus once again. She saw the satisfied smirk on his face and started to giggle. "Gods, that was perfect!" she yelled, breaking the silence.

"It was. It was perfect. That's the only way to describe it." James joined her in her laughter. "And to think, you are so much older than me, I'm surprised you were able to keep up."

"No, Gramps, you are the old one. You're a cradle robber; I'm just a baby compared to you."

"What was that the Muggles call girls like you? Cougar?"

"Cradle robber."

"Cougar."

"Hermione?"

"James?"

"I love you."

"Love you too."