

Between Two Lungs

by theslacker

The contents of a diary entry left lying open upon a desk are unlikely to remain confidential.

A Defunct Thing

Chapter 1 of 1

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Dear Professor Snape,

Within a human ribcage lie two lungs. Between these lungs, slightly to the person's left, is his heart. It is made of thick, strong muscle, and pumps blood throughout the body. This is basic human anatomy.

You, Professor, defy basic human anatomy. Whether there is anything at all between your lungs is debatable, but if there's something there, I can assure you that it is black and withered and has, perhaps, *never* properly functioned.

But please don't think that having no heart excuses you for being a bastard.

Sincerely,

Miss Hermione Granger

My dear apprentice,

It is an irksome need of many people of a dependent persuasion to confide. Most turn to other people, but those who have nobody have often been known to turn to quill and parchment. The resulting logs of tiresome rubbish are generally stowed away somewhere out of sight, to protect unsuspecting Masters from being privy to their apprentices' inane dribblings of uncontrolled, adolescent emotion.

Do not leave your precious diary open on your desk, Miss Granger. It really is a sickening mess of sentimentality that I would rather avoid coming across when looking for my notes. I am currently trying to convince myself that the moistness my hand brushed across was tears, and not some mucus drip from your nose.

You shall recommence brewing at five-thirty tomorrow morning. In your tantrum yesterday you rendered what you had useless, so you shall begin again. Do not be late.

Professor S. Snape

Sir,

I am taking a short holiday. I decided that, even if you revoke my apprenticeship, leaving was a better idea than being imprisoned for your murder. I shall return Thursday evening.

HG

Miss Granger,

You know full well that the contract detailing the terms of your apprenticeship, which the headmistress drew up and watched me sign, does not allow me to terminate your position under me. You may be assured that, were that not the case, you would have been short one apprenticeship months ago. Of course, you could leave of your own volition, but what Master would take on an apprentice who had failed to go through with an apprenticeship?

I shall enjoy my days of relative peace without you.

Professor Snape

Professor Snape,

What Master would take me on, you ask? Why, Master Jigger. When I draw up a contract with him Thursday morning, you may consider ours ended.

Hermione Granger

Granger, you will not apprentice to Jigger. He may have impressed you with his competency with potions, but he's a disgusting old lech. You will relax and enjoy the rest of your stay with the Potters, and then you will return here.

I am preparing your base for you. You have made it competently before, and I see no reason to delay.

S. Snape

I'm sorry, Professor, but I fail to see how working for an old man who admires my arse is so much worse than working with one who does nothing but belittle and insult me and my work. I am sorry, but I shall most certainly not return.

H. Granger

I'm a better Potions Master, Granger, and you know it. Get your sorry, little, much-admired arse back to the castle.

I don't care, Professor. The superior education I would receive under you is not worth bearing the brunt of your heartlessness on a daily basis.

I doubt we shall have much cause to see or hear from each other from this point forward. Goodbye, Professor, and thank you for what you did teach me.

H. Granger

Stop being such a silly little twit, Granger. Don't make me come and drag you back.

Miss Granger,

You left the castle on the brink of great academic discovery. Surely you will at least come to complete your work? It is unlike you to leave loose ends.

Severus Snape

Miss Granger,

I am sorry that I'm such a heartless bastard, but it is entirely your fault. I'm not fool enough to believe I lost the thing; I know you took it. You could, at the very least, come back to return it to me.

S.

Dear Professor Snape,

That was one of the most ungracious apologies I've ever received. Still, I must thank you for clearing up a most perturbing matter for me. My heart has been behaving most oddly and improperly lately. I ought to have known that the defunct thing was yours. As you've been missing it, I am perfectly willing to give it back, so long as you give me mine.

Hermione

Hermione,

I would not call your suggestion a fair trade. I think I shall keep your heart. Don't be angry. With a bit of care, I'm sure mine will improve for you.

I shall take good care of yours, just in case you should ever want it back.

Yours,

Severus

Dearest Severus,

If you're happy, I'm happy. But why have you been so terrible to me this year?

Hermione

Dear Hermione,

It is a frightening thing to open your eyes one morning to the fact that your heart has gone missing, particularly if the one time you gave it away, it came back shredded and shrunken. What would I have done if you discovered it someday, hidden close to your own, nestled snugly in your chest where it did not belong? I am well aware that it is a bit black, and, yes, somewhat withered. How could I believe that you would welcome it? That you would not tear it out with disgust, trampling it into the cold, stone floor? It seemed so much wiser to pretend it was gone completely, rather than admit that you had complete power over it. It was the only way I thought I could get any sleep at night.

I still did not get much sleep.

I have been a perfect fool. Come back to the castle and finish your apprenticeship post-haste. It would make me happy.

Yours always,

Severus

Dearest Severus,

I am throwing my things together now. The best follow-up to these days of sniffing in Harry and Ginny's guestroom that I can think of is kissing you.

Love,

Hermione

Dear Hermione,

Being kissed by you sounds like the ideal way to end months of torture, but I refuse to kiss and be kissed under dubious ethical circumstances. Finish your apprenticeship.

Yours,

Severus

Dear Severus,

I love you terribly, but you're infuriating.

Hermione

I'm sure, as a Muggle-born, you know what they say about people in glass houses, Hermione. You're maddening, to a nearly literal extent.

S.

Dear Harry,

I wouldn't worry about Hermione. She's been in wonderful spirits this past month, and only yesterday she was telling me that she expects to have finished her apprenticeship project within the next two weeks. Whatever happened between them, she and Snape have obviously sorted out their differences. I was impressed that they managed working together before, but now they sit next to each other at mealtimes, talking in surprisingly chummy fashion. This morning, Hermione was definitely giggling over whatever they were discussing, so unless potions has grown a lot funnier since we took it, I'd say that she's actually enjoying his company.

How are you and Ginny? Several of the professors have united in pestering me for news of you, along with the rest of the old gang. I'm afraid I seldom have much to tell them. I've only kept in close contact with Luna. Will I see you at her Spring Party?

Neville

Dear Hermione,

I'm hosting a Spring Party two Tuesdays from today. I do hope you'll come. Neville tells me you expect to have finished your apprenticeship with Professor Snape by then; we could celebrate. If you would like to bring Professor Snape, please do. I'm sure he'll want to celebrate, too.

Your friend,

Luna

Miss Lovegood,

Miss Granger is engrossed in the final stages of her project, and has asked me to respond to any urgent post. Thank you for your invitation. Expect two from the Hogwarts dungeons.

Sincerely,

Professor S. Snape

Hermione,

I've accepted an invitation for us to attend Miss Lovegood's Spring Party in a week and a half. I suggest we use the opportunity to make our announcement to your friends.

Yours,

S.

Dear Severus,

I don't know why you'd think it a good idea to send me distracting little notes while I muddle my way through the difficult final stages of my project. I thought you understood that I didn't want you supervising because it's next to impossible to concentrate on slivering and dicing and stirring and timing when I could be concentrating on you. Thank you for realising I'd like to go, and for volunteering to come, even though it'll be a crowd of old students and other people who have pestered you in the past. What is this announcement you speak of, though? What sort of things are you deciding without consulting me?

Love,

Hermione

Dear Hermione,

It seems simple, but I suppose you have a lot on your mind. You are impossible; I am impossible. We have acknowledged that we wish to be impossible together. If you are happy, then I am happy, and you have claimed that the reverse is also true. Our hearts have swapped places, and neither of us is willing to return them to their original homes. There seems only one logical conclusion. I will not insult your intelligence by naming it after providing you with the facts.

Yours,

S.

Dearest Severus,

You insult my intelligence nearly every day. Luckily I know that you don't mean it. Of course I know what you're on about, but don't think you have me fooled. I knew you were head of Slytherin before I ever fell in love with you.

Don't be nervous, Severus. Of course I'll marry you.

But please, let *me* tell them.

Love,
Hermione