

The Mentor

by ApollinaV

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Chapter 1 of 1

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Disclaimer: I neither own the HP-universe, nor do I profit from it.

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As evidenced by his own appalling classroom terrorist tactics, there was not a standard by which professors were evaluated. The wizarding world lacked a basic teaching school, such as the kind that trained Muggle schoolmarm's not to belittle or berate their spotty-faced charges, how to deal with temper tantrums, and handling the onset of puberty and raging teenage hormones. Given that Hogwarts was a boarding school, such training would have been handy.

Professor Grubbly-Plank, the old crone, had a gentle way with four legged creatures, and no use for men. The rumors that she had chopped up and served more than one of the neighbor children persisted some forty years after. Professor Flitwick had once been asked to leave the school after violating policy Number 1220 with Ravenclaw Prefect Miss Pleasant-Rider – the same rule that had Professor Huber gelded in 1709. And Professor Trelawney – well, hardly a week went by without an apology letter sent to a parent.

The best Hogwarts had was a mentorship program. It was high-minded and idealistic. A well-seasoned professor was paired with a novice to ensure they didn't hex students or, more commonly, get hexed by students. And until Minerva called him onto the carpet demanding he become a mentor, Severus had done quite well in avoiding the responsibility.

Fuck.

At least he'd been offered his choice. Professor Granger or Professor Longbottom. The Swot or the Toad. It wasn't much of a choice.

He didn't want her around at all. And it had absolutely nothing to do with the wank-fodder she provided him when he walked in on her naked in the Grimmauld Place lavatory.

If she had raised her hand once or twice as a student, Granger harassed him non-stop now that he was supposed to be 'accessible' to her.

She followed him constantly, yapping at his heels, and stepped on the hem of his robes - twice. Insolent chit. She failed to respect the robes. The billow was another protective layer. It created a circumference around him – a barrier between him and the unwashed, nose-picking masses. She was nattering on about new textbooks, or some such nonsense when he wheeled on her.

"Write me a note."

The Granger girl blinked stupidly, caught off guard by the non-sequitur. "I'm sorry, what?"

"A note," he growled impatiently. The Falmouth Falcons were playing on the Wizarding Wireless, and he had twenty good ones on the game. "It's comprised of words and sentences, with the primary purpose of conveying a message."

"Oh." Her mouth gaped unattractively, showing off a pink mouth and perfectly white teeth. Idly he wondered if they'd feel slippery against his tongue.

That was how Severus Snape became Hermione Granger's fucking pen pal. Oh, she sent him a note alright. The first one was nearly four feet of cramped handwriting regarding the proper procedures of handling rivalry in mixed Slytherin/Gryffindor classes.

Severus' answer:

Let them fight it out. Preferably away from your classroom. They'll only learn if they beat the stuffing out of each other. There's no point in delaying the inevitable.

She'd responded indignantly with a further six feet of parchment.

Two weeks before her first Christmas hols as a professor, Granger, the peace-maker, discovered first-hand that a tacitly sanctioned wand fight on the Quidditch pitch was much better than one in her classroom.

Severus was rather smug, until the next morning at breakfast. She arrived utterly dejected, looking to the whole world as if her heart had been broken and sporting a faint bruise on her cheek – then he felt *obligated* as a mentor to soothe her fragile feelings. Which he did, but only because Severus couldn't stand to eat with a moping witch – it put him off his corned beef.

His mentee insisted on sitting next to him at every meal. Yes, he'd considered jinxing the chair, but there wasn't any use; Professor Granger had insinuated herself in his life. It was as if she'd walked into his structured, well-organized life and made herself perfectly comfortable, thoroughly mucking about and uprooting absolutely everything. On the weekends she came over for 'mentorship time.' Although if she used the words 'children' or 'teaching' in his quarters, his hallowed domicile where he was bloody well off the clock, she had to leave.

Of course he hated her, and she was completely intolerable.

But he hadn't yet found a reason to kick her out, not even when she shed wispy curls on his cushions, and on his robes when they curled up to read together. Granger stuck to their bargain and Monday mornings began with a new 'note.'

He never finished reading her 'notes' on OWL and NEWT revising. By the second foot his eyes hurt.

Instead he wrote her:

Not your responsibility. They will succeed and fail on their own merits. Call it preparation for real life.

In March, he was supposed to evaluate her classroom conduct. He did. Standing in the back corner, Disillusioned, and hoping that nobody would notice the shimmering movement at groin height. Damned Granger.

Not that he'd approach her sexually. He wasn't some kind of pervert - much.

Fortunately, the illusion that the school year would never end and he'd be forced in perpetuity to pound knowledge into the inbred little darlings of his peers faded with the onset of summer. With it, his obligation to mentor Professor Granger ended.

Severus didn't quite know how to handle that.

Did it merit celebration? A handshake? Dinner? Sex? Calling her Hermione, as she demanded?

While setting the classroom to rights, he mused on the proper procedure for being rid of an obviously troublesome female when someone knocked on his door.

It was Granger. His grandmother, the wizened hag, used to say, 'If you speak aloud the demon's name, it appears.' Severus' nose twitched, and alarm bells went off in his head. Granger was trouble – the path to wreck and ruin. But as she leaned against his doorway, a bottle of liquor dangling from her fingertips, Severus didn't right care.

"Hermione," he greeted.

A/N:

Heartfelt thank yous to silverdoe who prompted this with: 'Severus and Hermione are secret penpals, how does it start?'

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