

Missed Me

by Danu

Severus catches Hermione doing the dishes late one night... and the song she?s singing has an effect on him

A Meeting in the Kitchen

Chapter 1 of 8

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A/N: This was my attempt at any sort of Songfic, and so far it's my favorite story that I've written. It had started as being a one-shot sort of thing, but after getting so many reviews to continue it, I did just that. Hopefully everyone here will enjoy it as well :o)

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The song "Missed Me" is property of The Dresden Dolls

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Hermione smiled to herself as she padded through the kitchen, her bare feet making barely any sound. Since the fall of Voldemort, Harry, Ron and her had been living together as roommates in number twelve, Grimmauld Place while they attended University. After graduating Hogwarts, the trio hadn't wanted to go their separate ways quite yet and thought rooming together in Harry's house was the best plan. And Hermione found that living with her two best friends to be quite nice; most boys at Uni. didn't waste her valuable time because they figured she was dating/shagging at least one of her roommates. Harry and Ron loved living with Hermione because not only did it give them a cover for their relationship, they still had her there to help with their assignments. Though sometimes she grew tired of endlessly hearing about Quidditch or constantly having to remind her two roommates to put the bloody toilet seat down. *It's so nice to have this old place to myself for a change* she thought. *Well, almost to myself, practically really*, she amended thinking of her house guest. She let out a small sigh as her thoughts drifted towards the man upstairs as she pattered around the kitchen tidying up from when Harry and Ron left for their trip yesterday.

Who would have thought that after seven years of having him as a professor, that she'd be sharing a house with Severus Snape? *Who indeed?* she mused. She had to admit to herself, the reasons he was there were bizarre at best. Hogwarts was currently under siege from the chicken pox. Several of the Muggle-born children brought it back with them from Christmas holiday, and now it was running rampant through the school. Most of the faculty was either sick with it or were teaching double their loads. Dumbledore had the few who weren't infected leave to avoid coming in contact with the highly contagious disease. And this was how Severus Snape had come to be staying at number twelve, Grimmauld Place, though truth be told, Hermione barely ever saw him. She wasn't sure where he spent his days, but she normally only heard footsteps in his room during the evenings. Hermione yawned a little as she gathered more of the dishes into piles on the counter while hot soapy water filled the sink. *Just what I need to help me to sleep, a little work and I'll be ready to go to bed in no time*. Smiling as she turned to the CD player she had in the kitchen, she put the familiar CD in and pushed play. As music filled the room, she lifted her voice and got lost in the music as she did the dishes.

Severus slipped into the house quietly, thinking the mistress of the house was sleeping and not wanting to wake her and have to answer her endless questions about his whereabouts. *Sweet Merlin, what is that coming from the kitchen?* Walking towards the kitchen, his wand ready for any possible trouble, what he saw stopped him in his tracks. There stood Hermione in what Severus could only assume were her nightclothes, singing along to some sort of music. He felt his blood turn hot as he took in how little clothing she was wearing, a man's sleeveless white undershirt and a pair of short red boxers covered her. Her normally bushy hair was somehow tamed into a knot at

the back of her neck. Severus smiled as he noted the multitude of pins that were poking from her hair, keeping it all together. His attention going back to the music that seemed to be coming from the curious black box that was perched on one of the other counters. It seemed like some strange mix between piano and drums. *Most curious*, he thought. As the song that was playing when he entered ended, the next track began. It started with a lilting melody played by the piano, soon followed by a slight trembling from the drums and cymbals.

Hermione lost in her own thoughts, smiled as the song began singing softly in a teasing voice, "Missed me, missed me, now you've got to kiss me..."

Watching her, Severus felt something in him tighten as she spoke about kissing. He stood there transfixed as she sang about telling various people about the man who kissed her and how he might be punished if he were found out.

*Missed me, missed me, now you've got to kiss me*

*If you kiss me, mister, you must think I'm pretty*

*If you think so, mister, you must want to fuck me*

*If you fuck me, mister, it must mean you love me*

*If you love me, mister, you would never leave me*

*It's as simple as can be!*

Severus bit back a groan as Hermione spit out the word "fuck," the image of her on her back and he above her flashing through his mind *Oh, gods*, he thought. He had never really thought about her in this way before. Well, maybe a little during her seventh year, but she was a student, a child. *Not anymore*, a small voice whispered in the back of his head. Seeing her in the scant amount of clothes she was wearing, singing as if there were no one else in the world, he realized how much he had kept those forbidden thoughts locked away.

As the verse tapered off, the piano and drums combined into some kind of macabre sounding waltz. It seemed somehow a tad slower, almost as if the dancers in it were moving in a slightly jerky and awkward fashion. He could almost picture a young woman and an older man swirling around on a dance floor, the woman almost a little reluctant to lead by her partner but going along anyways. Slowly the image faded into one of him and Hermione.

*Missed me, missed me, now you've got to kiss me*

*If you miss me, mister, why do you keep leaving*

*If you trick me, mister, I will make you suffer*

*And they'll get you, mister, put you in the slammer*

*And forget you, mister, then you'll miss me, won't you...*

*Won't you miss me...won't you miss me*

*Won't...you...miss...me*

Hermione almost wailed the last line, mimicking the singer. Her voice full of sorrow, longing and desire for the man that kept leaving *Her voice really isn't that bad*, he thought. It had a pure kind of quality that, while it might never reach certain high notes, what she lacked in raw talent, she made up for in the way she poured her emotions into the song. Severus smiled slightly as she implied that she would harm the man that toyed with her affections. Really, he expected nothing less from the Gryffindor know-it-all.

*Missed me, missed me, now you've got to kiss me*

*If you kiss me, mister, take responsibility*

*I'm fragile, mister, just like any girl would be*

*And so misunderstood...so treat me delicately*

Severus felt his hands almost twitch from the want the desire to take her into his arms. To do just what her song suggested, to snog her senseless before taking her back to his room to ravage her. *Get a hold of yourself*, he admonished himself while pushing an uneasy hand through his raven hair. He was surprised he had remained undetected for so long. The last time he had caught her like this, he had just come in from the Three Broomsticks. She had heard him come in and twirled around a slight blush of embarrassment on her cheeks, he asked her what she was doing up so late at night. She said answered back cheekily that she couldn't have been up too late if he himself was just coming in. At his raised eyebrow, she answered that she couldn't sleep and figured she would use her time and clean up a bit. That she could normally sleep after she tired herself out a little. Without thinking, he had murmured that next time she couldn't sleep to come see him, that he could think of something beyond scrubbing dishes to take up any excess energy she had. Severus had hoped she hadn't heard him, though by the blush and shocked look on her face, she must have. He had wished her goodnight and escaped to his room before any more damage could be done.

Watching her hips brazenly sway as she sang, her voice cruel and taunting:

*Hope you're happy, in the county penitentiary*

*It serves you right, for kissing little girls*

A voice in his head taunted him, *She's too young for you, you great greasy bat.*

*But I'll visit, if you miss me*

Hermione's voice softened, almost pleading now

*Will you kiss me through the window*

*Do you miss me, miss me...*

*Will they ever let you go*

*I miss my mister so*

Hermione turned around to gaze at Severus as she sang the last line. She knew he had been there for awhile, but wanted to see what he was going to do. After the last time he had caught her singing, she had stayed up for nights afterwards hoping he would catch her and make another offer. Licking her lips as the song faded, she watched Snape through a lust filled haze.

Snape shook his head slightly to dislodge the lascivious thoughts, upon seeing her eyes and that she had stopped singing. He strode over to her, his eyes darkening further as he watched her pink tongue swipe across her lips, he took her into his arms and kissed her hard and proper.

Hermione let out a soft gasp as she felt Severus's body pressed up against her own, her back against the sink and counter. Her hands slid up his arms and into his hair, as she hesitantly licked his lips with her tongue. Severus groaned and happily deepened the kiss further. He had meant to just kiss her once and walk away, but Hermione was too much of a temptation to simply kiss and let go. As they parted for air, Severus saw a desire that matched his own in her innocent eyes. The innocence that was there was his undoing. *She deserves more than a greasy, old Death Eater like me* he thought sullenly. Swallowing the lump in his throat, he kissed her softly and whispered goodnight against her lips before suddenly leaving her alone in the kitchen with swollen lips and an unfulfilled need.

## Coin-Operated Boy vs. The Real Thing

Chapter 2 of 8

Written in the same kind of theme as the first chapter, the day after Snape snogs Hermione senseless and leaves, she tries to confront him.

**Disclaimer:** Thank you to those that have read and reviewed, I hope you enjoy the rest of the story.

Much thanks to my beta: Kat

All characters belong to J.K. Rowling

The line "Sometimes taking the easy way out, is the right way out" is from the movie The Matchmaker

"Coin-Operated Boy" belongs to The Dresden Dolls

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Hermione woke up somewhat early for a person who hadn't gone to bed 'til the wee hours of the morning. What had happened in the kitchen with Snape had her staring at the ceiling for quite awhile before she had been able to go to sleep, trying to figure out why he had left. Now that she was awake, she rolled over to look at the clock, which read 10 a.m. *Well, I have two options: Option 1, I can have a bit of a lie-in with that new book I got last week. Or, option 2, I can be responsible and get up and clean the house first. Then go and lie in the garden reading said new book. Hmmm, decisions, decisions.* Thinking that she didn't want to possibly have to deal with the awkwardness that running into Severus, once he finally got up, could entail; Hermione picked option 2. *I should be able to get the house cleaned, grab a shower and head out to the garden before he even thinks about skulking downstairs. Merlin knows I'm not sure I want to be around him after the way he kissed me last night, especially since he left. Why did he leave? Was it me? I know I'm not that experienced, but I thought from the way he kissed me...*, Hermione shook her head to let the insecure thought end there. She didn't need this kind of silly love-sick girl idiocy, she had a house to clean.

Once dressed in a faded pair of jeans and a old t-shirt, Hermione rounded up all the cleaning supplies and picked a room to start in. Having decided to start in the study and fan out from there, Hermione carried what supplies she would need and then went back to the kitchen for her CD player. Since the house was so big, she, Harry, and Ron had decided long ago to shut up a large portion of the rooms and only use what they themselves needed. It was easier to keep up this way, and required no use of house-elves. Checking to make sure her CD was still in there, she turned the player on and began dusting the shelves of books that lined one of the study's walls.

Severus woke with a start as he heard a crash of piano and drums. *Sweet Merlin! What is that bloody racket?!* Rubbing his eyes with the heel of his palm, he glanced over to the clock in his room and groaned when he read the time. He hadn't fallen asleep till after the sun had come up. Thoughts of Hermione had kept him up, not to mention he had had to deal with the pesky know-it-all as well. After he had snogged her and left before he had taken her on the kitchen table, the girl had followed him up to his rooms. It couldn't have been very long after he had kissed her, that he had heard a almost timid knock on his door followed by a very familiar voice. "Severus? Severus, I think we need to talk." *We need to talk, she had said. Right. Like having a normal conversation with her was the first thing on my mind* he thought. He had refused to say anything and warded the door to make sure she couldn't sneak in after he had fallen asleep. He wouldn't have put it past the sneaky Gryffindor to try that, simply so he would have had to speak to her when he got up.

Swinging his legs over the side of the bed to sit and stretch, he decided to go and see what the noise was. *Surely Hermione is either still in bed or is out at some class for her studies*, he assured himself as he padded to the door and down the stairs following the ruckus. Still, he had his wand drawn just in case. *Some habits are hard to break* he thought with a smile. As he drew closer to where the sounds seemed to be emanating from, he began to make out words to it.

Coin-operated boy

Sitting on the shelf, he is just a toy

But I turn him on, and he comes to life

Automatic joy

That is why I want, a coin-operated boy

A coin-operated boy? Bloody hell, it's her again. The same piano and drums duo from last night was now being played at a very loud volume, only this time it was a different song. *Should I just go back upstairs and sleep, or should I stick around and see what the message is behind this peculiar song?* His lips thinned into a line as he thought, Hermione's voice already launching into the next verse.

Coin-operated boy

All the other real one, that I destroy

Cannot hold a candle to my new boy,

And I'll never let him go, and I'll never be alone

And I'll never let him go, and I'll never be alone

Go, and I'll never be alone

Go, and I'll never be alone

Go, and I'll never be alone

Go, and I'll never be alone

Not with my coin operated boy.....

The music had an almost wind-up toy feel, especially when it began to almost skip like a machine would. The melody seemed to play down the impact of the words that went along to it. *Bloody hell*, Snape thought as he caught himself softly bobbing his head along to the piece. Deciding to be a bit braver, Snape leaned closer to the door so he was now able to see Hermione as she moved along the room, he could hear her voice take on a different lilt as the music shifted.

This bridge was written to make you feel smittener

With my sad picture, of girl getting bitterer

Can you extract me from my plastic fantasy?

I didn't think so, but I'm still convincible

Will you persist even after I bet you

A billion dollars that I'll never love you?

Will you persist even after I kiss you

Goodbye for the last time

Will you keep on trying?

To prove it I'm dying

To lose it...I'm losing..

My confidence..

I want it...I want it...I want it...

I want you...I want you...I want you

I want a...I want a...I want a...

I..want...a

Coin-operated boy.

Severus found himself almost sneering as he heard the word "smitten", feeling as if the girl was already asking for too much already. *You already occupy too much of my thoughts*. But as the song went on and she started to falter, mimicking the singer's pattern into almost fragmented thoughts and wants, he could feel himself soften as he thought about last night and how hurt her voice had sounded that he had used her and left her.

He slowly and softly pushed the door open further to watch as she did a half shuffle, between the different bookshelves and table dusting things as she went. He could already see that she had cleaned quite a bit from the shining windows to the freshly swept fire-place. He smiled as she turned her head and he caught sight of her nose with smeared with a bit of soot. *She really can be too adorable sometimes...wait...did I just use the word adorable?* Severus frowned at the thought as he ducked back into the hall when she turned around suddenly to toss a bit of trash into a bin.

Hermione smiled as she carelessly aimed the wadded up piece of paper. She had seen the movement from the hall and could only figure it was Severus again watching her. *Him being there has to be a good sign*, she thought. *Maybe I'll have a repeat performance of last night even*. Her eyebrows crinkled together as she thought she had caught a glimpse of him frowning, but she wasn't sure. *Or maybe not...*

And if I had a star to wish on

For my life I can't imagine

Any flesh and blood could be his match

I can even take him in the bath

Both Hermione and Snape smiled as they thought of the scene that particular line painted. Severus could see in his mind the water cascading down her body, his hands following where spray of a shower might go. Hermione bit back a bit of a groan, almost as if she had been reading Snape's wandering and lusty thoughts. Gathering up the last bits of trash, she began to round up the things she would need for the parlor as the last verse played.

Coin-operated boy

He may not be real experienced with girls

But I know he feel like a boy should feel

Isn't that the point, that is why I want a

Coin-operated boy

With his pretty coin operated voice

Saying that he loves me, that he's thinking of me

Straight and to the point

That is why I want...a...coin-operated boy.

All right, Gryffindor courage, don't fail me now. Hermione took a deep breath and opened the door as the last notes of the song faded. *Oh, I'm going to need a cold shower after this,* she thought as she took in the sight of Snape standing there. Being as his intent had been to find the source of the noise and then leave, he hadn't bothered getting dressed when he had left his room. The light from the study showed the paleness of his body, the faint appearance of muscles and the smattering of dark chest hair that ringed his navel before disappearing into his green boxers.

Severus himself was still surprised that she had once again caught him, his boxers showing the state that the last thoughts he had been having had left him in. As Snape cleared his throat, Hermione's eyes wandered back up his face and disheveled hair. "Coin-operated boy?" Snape questioned, raising an eyebrow. Trying to act as if he were dressed in his usual billowing robes, and not standing in his boxers in front of the objection of his affection.

"Yes. A coin-operated boy. Someone that is just like a real boy, without all the complications," Hermione answered, lifting her chin slightly in defiance.

"I'm surprised you would want to take the easy way out, Miss Granger."

"Sometimes taking the easy way out is the right way out. Besides, after dealing with the real thing, a coin-operated boy would be a blessing."

"Is that so? Perhaps you've just been wasting your efforts on the wrong sorts of boys...or men for that matter." Snape eyebrow raised again, as he looked thoughtfully down at her.

"It's possible. Maybe if said boys or men, would stop snogging me and then running away, I wouldn't feel the need to have a coin-operated boy," she said with a tilt of her head.

"I did not run away," Snape said with a distinct frown. "And just how many boys have you been kissing anyways?"

"None except you as of right now. And you most certainly did run away."

"Miss Granger, I can assure you that I have not, nor have I ever ran away from anything." Hermione snorted in disbelief. Severus continued, choosing to ignore her. "I was merely acting as the responsible adult that I am, and removing myself from a position where I could have taken advantage of you."

"Severus, you're acting as if I'm still a student."

"-Technically you are," he interrupted.

"Not what I meant, and you know it. What happened last night was mutual, and I think we need to talk about it."

"Miss Granger-"

"-Hermione."

"Fine. *Hermione*," he said, stressing the use of her first name, "what happened last night will not happen again. I am several years older than you are and...well..." he began to fumble as he started walking back to the stairs, "...and you will just have to trust me that I only have your best interests at heart..." he finished as he turned and quickly vaulted up the stairs and closed his door.

Hermione pursed her lips together and considered going up there after him, quietly fuming at the same time *My best interests at heart?! What a load of dragon dung. And that whole line about being older, you'd think he could come up with something better than that.* Deciding that since he wouldn't open the door to her last night, he most likely wouldn't open to her today, Hermione went back to her cleaning. *All right, Severus, you might have gotten away this time, but next time...* Hermione's thoughts trailed off as she thought of the sight of him in his boxers. *Well, at least I'll have something to masturbate to,* she thought with a smile.

Left to their own thoughts

Chapter 3 of 8

Hermione and Snape are in the house at the same time again, but neither of them know it.

The pair's insecurities rear their ugly heads as they both get lost in their own thoughts.

Thank you again to everyone who has read and left a review. I really appreciate it. This next chapter doesn't contain as much of the lyrics as I have been putting in, but that's mainly because I felt some of it would have detracted from the actual text and flow of the story. And just for those who are wondering "The Jeep Song" is during Hermione's POV, and "Truce" is during Snape's.

Props once again to my beta and sounding board: Kat

Legal Schtuff:

All characters belong to J.K. Rowling

"Truce" and "The Jeep Song" belongs to The Dresden Dolls

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Hermione sat on the edge of the old claw foot porcelain tub as she turned on both the hot and cold water. Leaning down to put the stopper in, she adjusted the water once more, making sure that the water was more or less pure hot, with a dash of cold thrown in to prevent scalding herself. As the water slowly filled the large tub, Hermione began to undress, her thoughts wandering once more to her obstinate house guest. It had been a week since the incident in the kitchen and their confrontation in the study afterward. True to his word, there hadn't been any more shared kisses or embraces. *Hell, I haven't even seen him this last week* she thought sullenly. *Am I really that easy to ignore? That easy to walk away from?* Hermione had been glad, in a way, that she had been able to lose herself in the work that her classes provided her, but a certain Potions Master was always on the edge of her thoughts.

She softly began to hum as she finished undressing and tamed her wild hair into a knot at the back of her neck. Turning off the taps, she muttered a stasis charm to keep the bath hot before swinging a leg over the tub, hissing softly as she slowly began to sink into the steaming water. "Mmmm," Hermione purred. Leaning against the back of the tub, she rested her head on the edge and closed her eyes. *Why bother trying to figure out the real Snape, when I could just daydream* she mused as her thoughts began to wander back to last week, and what could have happened.

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Severus Snape had run from very few things in his life. This was the first time he could remember that he was fleeing from a girl who could almost pass as his daughter. *I'm not running from her*, he insisted. *I'm merely doing what is best for her. Not to mention removing myself from the temptation that she presents.* He was still waking up in the morning from dreams where he had never stopped kissing her in the kitchen, but instead ended up taking her on the kitchen table. Another favorite dream of his, was when he would dream how she had gone down on her knees that day in the study and used that clever mouth on a certain part of his anatomy. Many was the morning that he had needed to perform a simple cleaning spell on the himself and the sheets.

It had been slightly difficult to avoid her this past week. She kept hours that were similar to his own, though that didn't entirely surprise him. It made sense that she would be up until all hours studying; she had done just about the same thing during her time at Hogwarts. Sighing slightly, he quietly walked up the stairs and into the study. He wasn't quite sure where she was, or if she was in the house at all, but he knew he didn't want to run into her. After starting a fire, he sat down in a worn chair and ran a hand through his hair. He wasn't sure how long he could keep this up. Not seeing her and living in the same house was almost as bad as when he had first begun to notice her, and then found her everywhere. It had been exhausting keeping up his facade of disinterest and dislike for her.

Gods, I need a drink, he thought. Looking around the room, he noticed two things. One was that there was a decanter of firewhisky discreetly sitting on a small table across the room. And two, that curious music-playing black box of Hermione's was sitting next to the firewhisky. He had been wanting to get a look at the clever device, after the second time he had caught Hermione singing along to the sounds it produced. Getting up from his seat, he walked across the room and ran his hands over the object. It felt sort of smooth and cool beneath his palms. The few dials and buttons looked up at him temptingly. Pursing his lips, before deciding to try fiddle with the item he warded the door. He began flicking the one switch that he found and was immediately rewarded with a slight whirring noise and a flicker of light on a panel. *Hmm, so what does the number twelve mean*, he wondered.

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Meanwhile...

Hermione stifled a small yawn. Droplets of water rained down upon her head as she stretched in the bathtub. *Must have fallen asleep there for a moment* she thought. Looking at her fingers and deciding that she couldn't have been out for very long, based on their slightly prune-like look, she rolled her shoulders, working out the last few kinks from the troubling week. She reached over for the sponge and body wash, softly beginning to hum again. Squirting a generous amount of her homemade soap, she began to work the sponge into a lather, sliding it up and down her arm. Soon she found she was singing as she washed herself.

*I've been driving around town*

*With my head spinning around*

*Everywhere I look, I see*

*Your '96 Jeep Cherokee*

The words of the song almost had her rolling her eyes at herself, as she began thinking about Severus. True, he didn't drive a Jeep, but whenever she had left the house this last week, she had caught herself looking whenever she thought she had seen his usual billowing robes. *Why can't I stop thinking about him for just a minute?*

*You're a bully and a clown*

*You make me cry and put me down*

*After all that I've been through,*

*You'd think I'd hate the sight of you*

She knew she was attracted to him, though Merlin knows he wasn't what one would define as classically handsome. Still, that hair that had a habit of falling in his eyes, so that your fingers just itched to move them, and those fathomless dark eyes of his, had been haunting her dreams this past week. Not to mention his voice, dark and silky. And in his way he could be a bully, with his sarcastic remarks and disinterested, even sometimes cold tone. But then she'd remember how he had been during the final battle. How he had for years been working against Voldemort as a spy, and the danger that had put him in. Besides, it was his intelligence and dry sarcastic sense of humour that drew her to him.

She wasn't sure when she had first noticed Snape in that particular way, but she had a feeling it had started with the last year of Potions class and how she would find herself fixating on his hands, the long nimble fingers, and wondering what it would be like to link her own fingers with them. What those hands might feel like sliding along her skin, running through her hair... *Whoa there*, she thought. *If I don't stop this, I'm going to have to take a cold shower instead of a hot bath.*

*I try to see it in reverse*

*It makes the situation hundreds of times worse*

*When I wonder if it makes you want to cry*

*Every time you see a light blue Volvo driving by*

Pushing aside the more lurid of her thoughts, she resumed washing herself, thinking all the while on what she could do about her current problem. *I know he wants me. I know it. So why does he keep running?* Gently biting on her bottom lip, she put the sponge down and leaned against the back of the tub again. *Maybe he doesn't want me...maybe he regrets everything.* Hermione let out a long sigh. She wasn't exactly sure what the reason was behind Severus keeping her at an arms distance. *Really the question is, is he worth it to keep pursuing, or should I just give him up*, she thought.

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Presently, Snape was well on his way to getting drunk, after figuring out Hermione's CD player. After playing with the buttons for awhile, and turning the dials this way and that, he hit upon getting the thing to play at a decent level. The music wasn't too bad, not quite something he would have listened to on his own, but he didn't feel like fiddling with the damnable thing anymore. Sitting back in the same worn chair as earlier, he took another swig of the firewhisky. The room now had a decidedly melancholy feel to it, with the music playing filled with a sad piano and even more despondent voice calling out to him.

You call it over, and I call you psycho

"significant other"

Just say we were lovers, and we'll call it even

We'll call it even...

Severus half snorted to himself. *As if anyone would admit to sharing a bed with me.* While it was true that he had indulged in the random taking of a Muggle prostitute in the past, he hadn't really been intimate with anyone in a long, long time. Who really wanted to admit to having sex and enjoying it, with the hooked-nosed, greasy great bat of Hogwarts? *Who indeed*, he thought glumly. *Hermione*, a voice whispered in the back of his head; *Hermione seemed interested*, it insisted.

She's a child, Snape answered.

She isn't, and you know it. Wizards twice your age have arranged marriages with witches younger than her the voice argued. *Or are you afraid of losing her?* it taunted. *Afraid of scaring her away like you did Lily?*

Snape set down the empty glass, refilling it once more. *Lily. I haven't thought about her in ages* he thought. He remembered his long-ago crush on the intelligent red-headed Gryffindor. Lily had always been kind toward him when Black and Potter had taunted and insulted him. Sometimes she would even help him gather his books and scrolls together after the pair had caused Severus to drop them. It was after these few instances that he had taken to noticing her more. How intelligent she was in the few classes that they had shared together.

Didn't last long though did it, the voice sneered. *Nope, you just had to go and verbally strike out at her.*

She was getting too close, Snape answered defensively.

Too close to what? She only wanted to be your friend.

She would have left eventually. Would have eventually hurt me.

Still upset that Daddy didn't love you? The voice taunted darkly.

It doesn't matter anymore, Snape thought. *He's been dead for at least ten years now.*

True, very true, the voice agreed. *Still*, it mused, *where does that leave the know-it-all?*

Wherever she currently is. I refuse to let her entangle herself to an old Death Eater like me.

Ex-Death Eater, the voice corrected him.

Doesn't really matter now, does it?

No, I suppose not, though it seems a waste. Throwing away the chance of something first with Lily and now with Hermione, seems a terrible waste.

No one really asked for your opinion.

Didn't they? the voice mused.

Severus decided to stop debating with himself and just go up to bed. He was drunk and he was tired. He was also horny, but that was beside the point. Standing up, he took care of the fire and walked out of the study, into the darkened hall.

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Hermione paused in the bathroom. *What was that?* She tilted her head, trying to listen, when it finally dawned on her what she was hearing *It's music. Severus must have figured out how to make my CD player work.* She couldn't recognize the song, but she thought it sounded like one of the slower, sadder pieces *I guess I wasn't the only one who was lost in their own unhappy thoughts tonight*, she thought. Keeping an ear out for the music playing in the study, she finished towel-drying her hair. Slipping a faded green nightshirt over her head, she hung the towels up to dry and silently opened the door. The house was dark; looking out into the hall from the bathroom it looked like one great yawning mouth. With everything Hermione had faced in her young life, walking through a dark house still gave her the willies sometimes. Taking a deep breath, she turned the bathroom light off and started to quietly walk up the stairs. She paused quickly when she heard the creak of the study door as it opened and a slurred curse that must have been Severus bumping into something. *He's drunk*, she thought. *Which means he won't put up as much of a fight* a dark voice in her head whispered. Hermione suddenly got a very sly smile as she began climbing the stairs again, while forming a plan.

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"Bollocks!" Severus cursed, as he shambled from the study towards the stairway. He wasn't sure how he had knocked into the wall, but he knew there would most likely be a bruise somewhere on his person in the morning. He only hoped that if Hermione was home, his stumbling around didn't wake her up and bring her downstairs to investigate. With the amount of firewhisky that he had drunk, he wasn't sure he could refuse her tonight. Passing by the bathroom, Severus decided to stop and use the toilet before going back to trying to shuffle up the stairs. As he was finished and fastened his trousers, he noticed the damp towels hanging up. Fingering the bits of cloth, he could tell they hadn't been wet for very long. *Hermione must have been in here while I was drinking in the study* he thought. The idea that only a hallway, a door, and a tub full of water had been separating him from a naked and willing Hermione, made the confines of his trousers a mite tight. *It wasn't just the hallway and door that kept her from you*, a voice reminded him. *Don't forget your own insecurities.* Snape mentally waved the voice away, deciding not to pay as much attention to it as he would have had he been sober. Then again, if he had been sober, he would have also noticed the small slit of light that was coming from underneath the door to his room.

The First Taste

Chapter 4 of 8

Snape's drunk, Hermione's pretending she's asleep in his bed, who knows what's going to happen next.

Thanks again to those who have read and left reviews, and thanks to those who have just read. I've never been big on leaving reviews for a lot of stories that I've read (for some reason I always feel like what comments I leave sound incredibly asinine and stupid), so whether you read and review or just read, I appreciate it all just the same.

Anywho, I somewhat went off the Dresden Dolls kick I had going with this next chapter. Mainly because I couldn't find a song that really captured what I was going for (or at least in my opinion I couldn't). So I went to the next best thing: Fiona Apple.

Props to my beta and sounding board: Kat

Legal Schtuff:

All characters belong to J.K. Rowling

"The First Taste" belongs to Fiona Apple

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Leaning against the wall by his door, Snape contemplated trying to find Hermione's room to explain why they couldn't make any attempt at a relationship. Well, in truth, one part of his mind was drunkenly trying to come up with a good argument, while the other half was stating that he should find her and shag her before she changed her mind. *I should just go to bed. I'll talk to her in the morning.* Turning the doorknob, Snape stumbled into his room. *Something doesn't seem right.* Eyebrows wrinkling in confusion, he looked around. He noticed that his room had the soft glow of candlelight, and there was some unintelligible soft music being played. *Did I stumble into Hermione's room?* Whirling around the room, he put out a hand to steady himself, as he took in his surroundings. *No, it's my room,* he thought, noting his cloak laying on a chair by a pile of old tomes. As his eyes fell on the bed, he finally noticed that he wasn't quite alone. *She must have come up here and fell asleep waiting for me.* Snape softly smiled as he took in Hermione's sleeping form. The blankets were carelessly pushed so that they lay around Hermione's waist, the green of her nightshirt standing out amid the white linens on the bed. Her usually bushy brown hair seemed to be damp and curled into soft little ringlets. *She looks so very much at peace, it'd be almost a shame to wake her.*

Working over the possible solutions of what to do with the sleeping Gryffindor in his bed, Severus began to remove his robes. *Should just wake her and send her off to her own bed,* he reasoned. *But, on the other hand, the bed is surely big enough for the two of us, and she does really look so peaceful. Not to mention she's easier to deal with if she's asleep,* he thought, the edges of his lips lifting into something resembling a smile. Hitting upon the idea to let Hermione sleep, and simply wake up ahead of her, Severus began to undo the buttons on his white linen shirt. Quietly shuffling around the room as he changed, he finally was ready to get into the four poster bed wearing a pair of black boxers and a white vest. Sighing as he snuggled down into the covers, he was surprised when he heard an answering sigh from Hermione who seemed to be drawn to his body heat. *It wouldn't hurt to hold her, would it?* a voice in the back of his mind asked.

*No, I suppose not,* he thought, though some part of his mind was insisting there was a very good reason but he couldn't be bothered to think of it right now. Thinking too hard would ruin the perfectly good buzz he had going anyway. A vague sort of smile danced on his lips as he subtly turned a sleeping Hermione and tucked her into the curve of his body. Lightly, putting an arm around her waist, he promptly went to sleep.

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Hermione had had a hard time to keep from smiling as she saw through slitted eyes that her plan was working. After hearing Severus curse in the hallway, she had quickly and quietly hurried up the stairs to his room. Finding the door unlocked, she quickly made her way inside and went about setting up what she hoped would be a romantic atmosphere. *And now I have Severus right where I want him* she thought, snuggling closer, her backside brushing up against his groin. Her smile widened even further for two reasons: as she felt Severus's reaction to her, and when she recognized the song that had flitted on.

I lie in an early bed, thinking late thoughts

Waiting for the black to replace my blue

I do not struggle in your web, because it was my aim to get caught

But daddy longlegs, I feel that I'm finally growing weary

Of waiting to be consumed by you

Hermione turned so that she was face-to-face with Severus. *Truer words could not be spoken,* she thought. Looking up at Snape's sleeping face, she gently brushed a lock of hair off his forehead. He looks so peaceful. Knowing she had all the time in the world, she slowly took in the face that had haunted so many of her dreams lately. Finally her eyes came to rest on his lips. *Well, it's now or never,* so with a determined look in her eye, Hermione softly laid her lips on the man in front of her.

~~~~~

Snape was becoming increasingly more aware of a kind of pressure on his lips. Thinking it was just a dream, he pulled the soft body closer to him and returned the gentle kiss with one of his own.

*Give me the first taste*

*Let it begin, heaven cannot wait forever*

*Darling just start the chase*

*I'll let you win, but you must make the endeavor*

Slowly, Snape began to take control of the kiss, his tongue sweeping across Hermione's lips, almost as if asking for entrance. Whimpering slightly, Hermione parted her lips and felt Severus' tongue silkily slide across her own. She slid her hands up Severus' arms and into his hair, her tongue tangling with his.

"Oh sweet Merlin..." Severus murmured. Opening his eyes as he drew back from the kiss, his eyes focused on the face in front of him. "Hermione? I didn't mean...I thought

\_"

Hermione put a finger over his lips to silence him. "Severus, just shut up and kiss me." Looking into his eyes, Hermione saw some kind of battle going on and was thankful when she heard Snape mumble, "oh sod all the reasons" and he kissed her passionately.

The candlelight flickered on the walls, as the pair rolled and twisted on the sheets. Severus' hands began to wander from cradling Hermione's head, down to her neck to skim the curves of her breasts. Hermione's breath hitched in her throat and her hands stilled their journey up and down his back for a second before they began their travels anew. Breaking from their heated embrace, Severus began trailing kisses down her neck to her throat, nibbling gently. Hermione's fingers wrung into the raven hair and held him there, her hips squirming and brushing up against his arousal. Severus' breath was now trapped in his throat for a moment while he fought the urge to strip her, immediately followed by joining their bodies. His hands began to roam underneath her nightshirt, cupping and teasing her breasts, his thumbs fluttering her nipples back and forth.

Hermione groaned, pulling Severus' head from the crook of her neck and capturing his lips, kissing him ravenously. Leaving his hair for a minute, her hands slipped down his back to the edge of his vest and began to pull the garment up and finally over his head, breaking their kiss. Severus looked down at her, a eyebrow raising as she tossed his shirt aside.

"Divesting me of my garments, Miss Granger?"

Hermione giggled, "It seemed to be in the way."

"Perhaps I should do the same to you."

Looking deeply into his eyes, she murmured, "I wouldn't object if you did."

A small sigh of relief that she wasn't going to end their night before it really began, he smiled. "Off with the nightshirt then," he said in his best Professor Snape voice. Helping him to remove her nightshirt, Hermione laid back on the sheets, feeling a mite shy in her nakedness.

*Oh, your love give me a heart contusion*

*Adagio breezes fill my skin with sudden red*

*Your hungry flirt borders intrusion*

*And I'm building memories on things we have not said*

Returning to her lips, Severus kissed her, trying to convey a sense of comfort to her. "You're beautiful," he murmured against her lips, "more than I rightly deserve." Deepening the kiss before she could say anything in his defense, they soon were once more in the throes of passion.

Hermione's hands wandered down Severus' back and rested on his hips as she raised her own hips to brush against him again and again. Burying his head in her hair, he moaned. Taking the opportunity, she leaned and began to leave a trail of kisses along his neck, mimicking his earlier movements. Nibbling along the way she moved upwards to finally gently suck on his earlobe which produced a very audible groan from Severus. Taking a deep breath for courage, Hermione gave a slight tug on his boxers.

Feeling the clothing slide downward, he looked into her eyes. Hermione stared back as more of the fabric inched its way down before Severus removed them completely.

*Full is not heavy as empty, not nearly my love*

*Not nearly my love, not nearly*

Settling between her now-spread thighs, he leaned down and kissed her lips sweetly and gently as he entered her. Hermione and Severus were lost in the pleasure of one another; the only sounds in the room were breathless whispers and soft rhythmic squeaking of the bedsprings.

*The first taste*

*Let it begin, heaven cannot wait forever*

*Start the chase, I'll let you win*

*But you must make the endeavor*

Hermione soon let out a great mewling noise as she shuddered, her back lifted off the bed. Severus immediately followed suit, burying his head into her hair as he lost himself in her body.

## Sex Changes

*Chapter 5 of 8*

They always said that sex would change you...

Not a whole lot to say this particular chapter. I've gotten back on the Dresden Dolls kick that I've been on. Hope you all enjoy, and remember it'll get worse before it gets better.

Props to my beta and sounding board: Kat

Props to all the folks that keep coming back and reviewing.

Legal Schtuff:

All characters belong to J.K Rowling

"Sex Changes" belong to The Dresden Dolls

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Severus stretched slightly as he woke up the next morning before noticing that his head felt like he had taken one too many hits from a Bludger*That's what happens when you overindulge*, a whiny little voice in the back of his head lectured.*Overindulge*, Severus sneered to himself;*let's call a spade, a spade. I was drunk last night, nothing more. Ah, well, a headache potion and a cup of tea should make me feel a mite better.* As he began to notice a sort of pressure on his chest, he opened his eyes to see a familiar bushy mane, which belonged to the head that was currently lying snuggled on his chest. Severus froze in dread. *Oh, sweet Merlin, what did I do last night?* Laying in the bed, he noticed the room had the faint scent of melted candle wax and that there was some kind of music still faintly playing. Music, he thought. I remember music had been playing when I came in. But it seemed more mellow than what was faintly being played now.

Dear Mr and/or Mrs sender-

We're pleased to inform you that your applications been accepted

Starting from the time you get this letter

Your life will be a never-ending circus of confusion

You'll get your choice of an anesthetic

We'll need to chop your clock off (tick tock tick tock tick tock tick tock)

It might not be what you expected

But there's no money back once you've been ripped off...

As he frantically thought about the events of last night, the memories slowly began to come back to him*I remember drinking in the study, and then I bumped into that wall.* He looked at both his arms, noticing that one was wrapped around her waist and was sporting a lovely bruise. *Right, so I bumped into the wall, went to the loo, and then came upstairs. Hermione was asleep in my bed...*

Drawing his eyebrows together it hit him. The images of the night before, the taste of her lips, the feel of her body as they both lost themselves in one another*Oh, dear Gods.*

*What's wrong, Severus, old boy? Thought you wanted her in your bed and beneath you*the voice from last night taunted.

Yes... but not like this. There should have been..., his thoughts trailed off as he tried to think of what he had wanted between them. He knew he had wanted to make love to Hermione, but it was more than just that. He wanted more than just a quick roll between the sheets. *I want to court her*, he realized in aghast.

Oh, that's rich. Next thing you know, you'll be spouting out love poetry to her.

Sod off, Severus told the voice angrily.

My, aren't we touchy.

No, just hung over, he quipped.

Boys will be boys

Will be boys

Will be boys

Will be boys

Will be boys

Will beat boys with no warning

Girls will be girls

Will beat guys

Will beat boys

That don't cry over toys

That they use to beat girls

They despise by the morning

They always said that sex would change you...

As if hearing his mental argument, Hermione began to stir. Yawning, she sleepily smiled up at Severus.

"Morning."

"Hermione, I'm sorry."

"Huh?" She looked up at him with a puzzled look. "Sorry about what?"

"About last night."

"What do you mean you're sorry about last night?"

Severus sighed. "It shouldn't have happened. I was drunk and took advantage of you, and I'm sorry."

Pursing her lips together, Hermione tried to hold her temper. "Severus, you did not take advantage of me. Hell, I was in your bed when you came in. It's not like you clubbed me over the head and dragged me in here." Leaning up onto her elbows, she tucked an errant piece of hair behind her ear. "Look, I know I kind of manipulated things with the candles and being here, but that doesn't mean it was anything we should be sorry about. It was beautiful, and one of the most amazing nights of my life," she ardently stated.

Severus eyebrows drew together as he frowned slightly, looking down into her face. "What do you mean, 'kind of manipulated things'?"

Hermione blushed slightly. "Well, I heard you curse in the hallway, so I quickly kind of made your room more... romantic," she answered haltingly.

"And then you laid in my bed and pretended to be asleep? What were you planning on doing? Mounting me in my sleep?" Severus said accusingly.

"I just thought that maybe if you didn't have anywhere you could run to, maybe we could get a little bit beyond snogging is all. You could have told me to leave at any time," she shot back.

"Right. I would have told you to just skip back to your room while my head is muddled with bloody firewhisky, and you're practically naked in my bed."

Wrapping the sheet around herself, Hermione got up from the bed before facing Severus again. "Do you truly wish we hadn't spent the night together? Didn't it mean anything to you?"

Pushing himself up to a sitting position, he sighed wearily. "Hermione--"

"No, don't bother. Forget last night even happened," she said angrily, stalking over to the door. Looking back at him, her voice came out in a broken sob. "Forget I ever thought I could love you." And with that, she slammed the door.

But while you happen to be here

Why don't you whisper all those sweet forevers in my ear

Stiff upper lip in all this sorrow

Hurry up and stick it in

You never when it will end, tomorrow, tomorrow, tomorrow...

They always said that sex will change you...

"Well, that went well, didn't it?" Severus sullenly asked the empty room. A sudden tapping at the window drew his attention *Bloody hell, what now?* Finding his discarded boxers, he put them on as he crossed the room to let the rather large owl in. After taking the letter from the owl, it flew back out the open window, leaving Severus scratching his head looking at the seal for a clue to whom the letter was from. Seeing the Headmaster's seal, he opened it briskly. *I hope this isn't news that one of those dunderheads finally managed to blow up my classroom in my absence.*

Dear Severus,

I am happy to inform you that the Chicken Pox has finally been contained, and it is now safe for you to return. Please enjoy the rest of this weekend off. Hope you enjoyed this unexpected time off, and I will see you at the high table for breakfast on Monday.

Best Regards,

Albus Dumbledore

Headmaster, Hogwarts School of Witchcraft and Wizardry

"Albus, you have the most miserable timing," Severus muttered. *Or maybe he doesn't*, he thought. *It's obvious that Hermione is going to need some time to calm down. Maybe having me back at Hogwarts would help a little, make her see how happy she could be without me sulking around.* Nodding in agreement with his thoughts, he began to pace around the room thinking of what he would need to take back, along with a lesson plan for Monday. All the while that he was making his plans, part of his mind was storing away the memories of the night before. *Last night is not something I want to forget for a very long time.*

The Perfect Fit

Chapter 6 of 8

A little angst, a little alcohol and a little music. Makes for a great combination when someone has fucked you and left you "for your own good."

Hope everyone has a lovely weekend, and enjoy the chapter :o)

Props to my beta and sounding board: Kat

Props to all the folks that keep coming back and reviewing

Legal Schtuff:

All characters belong to J.K. Rowling

"The Perfect Fit" belongs to The Dresden Dolls

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*He wishes it never happened. What's so wrong with me that he regrets something that was so beautiful?* Hermione sighed and stretched on the couch. After running out that morning, she had taken great pains to avoid running into Severus for the rest of the day. *Not like he's going to be here much longer anyways* she thought sullenly. Later that morning she had gotten an owl from Dumbledore letting her know that the Chicken Pox had been contained and that her house guest would be leaving by the end of the weekend. Part of Hermione just wanted to shrug her shoulders and say that at least she had some good memories, but the greater part of her was unhappy and more than little hurt. Since Harry and Ron still weren't back from their holiday, she decided to just give in and wallow in her sadness.

Deciding that the study would be a better place to wallow, since there was always the chance Severus would come to say goodbye, she transfigured one of the sturdy leather chairs into a couch, put on a collection of rather sad songs and began to make a considerable dent in the decanter of firewhisky. *I just don't understand it. We both wanted it; hell, I initiated it. Why is our being together so wrong? I don't care about his age or what he had to do during the war. Underneath all that black, I know he's a good man.*

*I could make a dress*

*A robe fit for a prince*

*I could clothe a continent*

*But I can't sew a stitch*

Hermione sighed as she recognized the song. *It figures I would make sure that one was included.* The piece had a soft sad piano playing, which was only accentuated by the soft sad voice singing and the occasional tinkling of cymbals or chimes. Holding her glass of firewhisky, she lifted her voice, the words slightly slurring, never noticing that a door had softly opened.

~~~~~

I shouldn't be here. She's sad, she's drunk, and... and... and I just wish I could make it all better.

Fine words from the person that caused her to cry and run out of your room.

Oh, sod off, you've done enough damage.

The voice made a little "humph" noise but nothing more. Turning his attention back to Hermione, he watched her take another drink before standing, swaying slightly and singing along.

I can't change my name

But I could be your type

I can dance and win at games

Like Backgammon and Life

I already know you're my type, Severus thought with a vague sneer as he pressed himself against the door, trying to stay in the shadows and out of sight. Not wanting to upset Hermione further but not wanting to go without saying something, he felt oddly compelled to just stand there and listen to her.

I used to be the bright one

Top in my class

Funny what they give you when you

Just learn how to ask

~~~~~

Turning from the fire she faced the doorway. She knew Severus was there. She wasn't sure how, but she did. Putting her glass down on the table, she stood there and sang what she felt in her heart. Hermione had always known she was smart and not what one would ever call beautiful. Being in Harry's and Ron's shadow for so long, she sometimes felt that there would never be someone who would really understand her. Yes, she loved to read and learn and was happier talking about subjects like Potions, Arithmancy, and Transfiguration. But that didn't mean she was just a "brain," or that she wasn't interested in the male species. It just meant that a good portion of them weren't interested in her, and in a way, it stung that she was good enough to be friends with them, but was never good enough for something more.

*I used to be the tight one*

*The perfect fit*

*Funny how those compliments can*

*Make you feel so full of it*

And with Severus, it had felt right. And when they would banter back and forth, the kisses, she thought he was interested too. *Guess that just goes to show me not to assume,* she thought sadly. Walking closer to where Severus stood, she wiped a glittering tear from her eye.

*I can shuffle cut and deal*

*But I can't draw a hand*

*I can't draw a lot of things*

*I hope you understand*

*I'm not exceptionally shy*

*But I've never had a man*

*That I could look straight in the eye*

And tell my secret plans

~~~

She knows I'm here, and yet she just keeps singing Severus was impressed by the amount of bravery that it took to stand in front of someone and sing what was in your heart. And he also felt extremely guilty that he had been the cause of this drunken emotional episode. He watched transfixed as she finished the song, marking the end of each verse by walking a little bit closer.

Can't you just fix it for me, it's gone berserk...

Fuck I'll give you anything if

You can make the damn thing work

Gryffindor bravery, come on, Hermione, she coached herself. There was something in Severus' obsidian eyes that seemed to beckon her closer. She knew she was only opening herself up for more heartache, but she needed to say what was in her heart. She couldn't keep things bottled up anymore.

Can't you just fix it for me, I'll pay you well,

Fuck I'll pay you anything

If you can end this

Hello, I love you will you tell me your name?

Hello, I'm good for nothing - will you love me just the same?

Hearing her sing the last line, the question that lay behind it, Severus could only grace her lips with a kiss before quickly leaving the study, shutting the door as Hermione dissolved into tears.

Half Jack

Chapter 7 of 8

Severus is missing a text that he needs, and goes back to 12 Grimmauld Place for it. What else might have he forgotten and gone back for?

Just for everyone's information, because of so much inner dialog in this chapter, all song lyrics are in bold. Anywho, hope everyone enjoys the chapter!

Props to my beta and sounding board: Kat

Props to all the folks that keep coming back and reviewing

Legal Schtuff:

All characters belong to J.K. Rowling

"Half Jack" belongs to The Dresden Dolls

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"Curse the chicken pox and the students who dared to bring it here," Severus muttered under his breath while grading papers on a quiet Friday night. Though he had to admit he had enjoyed the break from the dunderheads that he was forced to teach, Flitwick didn't have the class quite where he felt they should be by this point. Pinching the bridge of his nose, he gave yet another paper a dismal grade. *That's it. I'm done grading sub-par work.* Severus put the pile of scrolls yet to be graded into a neat pile, and pulled out the collection of scrolls that served as a planner for his lesson plans. Muttering the incantation that brought up the lesson plans from several weeks ago, he began to skim the scroll till the week that he had been forced to leave. Remembering from what little notes Flitwick had taken of the classes' work and what they had been up to, he could see this was exactly where his classes had veered right off the plan. *Some changes are going to have to be made* he thought grimacing at the dunderheads' performance during the week. Pulling out another seemingly blank scroll, he waved his wand with a swish and a flick, and the plans for next week appeared. Putting all the scrolls together side by side, he began to make a plan to get his classes back on track.

The sound of his quill quickly scratching across a new scroll filled the room before his eyebrows came together as he made one last note. Pursing his lips, he tried to remember where he had left the textbook on herbs that could be used for healing. He didn't use it very often, but he could see that since Flitwick hadn't talked about the properties found in Comfrey, Anise, or Bay Laurel, he would need the book for next week. He scanned the small bookcase that he kept in his office before going into his personal chambers to search for it. As he searched the bookcase, he had a small moment of fear. *Oh, no, don't tell me I left it there.* Scanning the shelves again, he realized he had indeed left it behind. *Maybe I misplaced it on another shelf* he thought before quickly pushing the thought aside. His bookshelves were organized with the utmost precision. There was no way the book was somewhere else.

"Best to get this over with," he muttered as he put on a cloak, exited his office, and as soon as he finished putting his wards up, he walked out of Hogwarts so he could Apparate back to 12 Grimmauld Place.

Smoothing his robes down, Snape lifted his hand to knock on the door hoping that it wouldn't be Hermione who answered. He had dreams that had been filled by the bushy-haired know-it-all this past week, and while he felt that their parting had been in her best interests, he was still regretting leaving her. Looking into her despondent eyes as he kissed her goodbye had almost done him in. *Hello, I'm good for nothing - will you love me just the same* the last line of the song had called out to him on some level that he hadn't even known existed. It seemed like something he himself would utter, not Hermione. She was brilliant, compassionate, attractive, brave, and, guessing from their banter, her sense of humour was somewhere near his own. She was everything he would want in a partner, if he was looking for one at least. It was he that was lacking, not her. *Might as well stop dilly-dallying thinking about what could have been, and get this over with.*

Almost in answer to his thoughts, the door opened and Snape was greeted by a dark-haired, bespectacled face. "Professor Snape?" It was obvious that Potter was surprised to see him, but there was none of the usual rancor between them these days. True, the pair were not, nor would they ever be fast friends, but it seemed with Voldemort's demise, a sort of truce arose between them.

"Good evening, Potter. I'm sorry to be calling on you this late in the evening, but could I come in for a moment?"

"Um, sure," Harry agreed, stepping back awkwardly to let Severus in. "Actually it's not that late, Professor; we just weren't expecting any company. Is something wrong at Hogwarts?"

"No, nothing's wrong. I found that I am missing a textbook that I need for next week's lessons. Would you mind if I look in the room that I occupied the last few weeks?"

"No, not at all. You might also want to look in the study; there's a ton of books that Hermione has in there." Running his hand through his still messy hair, he added quietly, "Though, you might want to send Ron or me in there, she's been acting a little funny lately."

"Funny?" Severus asked, somewhat concerned.

"Yeah. I mean, she has always been keen on studying, but it's like she's trying to run away from whatever is bothering her through schoolwork. Ron and I have tried talking to her, but she won't say anything except to threaten to hex our bits off if we don't go away and leave her alone."

"Maybe she just has a pressing project," Severus offered, feeling a bit of guilt creeping upon him.

"It's possible, I guess. Still, just so you leave unscathed, why don't you check the guest room, and I'll deal with the study."

"Very well then." The pair walked up the stairs with Snape continuing on as Harry turned into the study, which seemed to be playing some sort of music. Stepping into what had been his rooms, Snape noticed that things seemed unchanged. The candles that had been there that night were still there, the wicks blackened from burning but now unlit. He looked towards the bed where he smiled fondly as he recalled that night with Hermione, though his smile dissolved as he remembered her tearfully running from the room the next morning. "What's done is done," he stately firmly to himself. Looking around the room, he could quickly see that the book was not there. Walking down the stairs he turned into the study to find Harry, "It seems Hermione is either in the loo or walked out for a moment. I'm not sure where your book could be in all of this," he said, motioning to the table piled high with books except for a small space that was covered with scrolls, along with a quill and a bottle of ink. Hermione's black music box stood on the table that had held the decanter of firewhisky; it was once again playing the piano and drums duo, though at a much more lower volume.

"Do you know where she got that infernal box, not to mention whatever that music is? And I'm using the term 'music' loosely."

"Oh, that's a Muggle CD player," Harry explained with a chuckle. "Some of their music comes on these little round discs, and once you load one into that thing, it'll play it for you."

"Humph. I'm surprised it can play in this place with so much magic."

"You know 'Mione, once she sets her mind on something, there's no stopping her from getting what she wants."

"Too true, Potter, too true."

"Getting back to the other part of your question, I think the band playing is called... is called, hold on, she told me once what their name was." Harry thought for a second. "Oh, yes, the Dresden Dolls. I guess it's some Muggle band that another Muggleborn she's friends with from one of her Uni classes suggested to her," he finished with a shrug of his shoulders. "Anyway, she should be back soon; do you want me to stay or--"

"--I am perfectly able to talk to Miss Granger on my own, Potter. But thank you for the offer."

"All right. If I don't see you on your way out, have a nice night, Professor."

"You too, Potter."

~~~~~

Harry walked out of the study and back down to his and Ron's rooms. "Who was at the door?" inquired a sleepy Ron.

"Oh, just Snape. Something about accidentally leaving a book here and needing it," Harry answered as he finished getting ready for bed.

"You think he'll be okay on his own with 'Mione?"

"Yeah, I'm sure he'll be fine. He might even find the book in one of the piles on the table before she gets back," Harry said as he snuggled into the blankets and Ron's side. "Goodnight," Harry whispered as the candles flickered out before he kissed Ron goodnight.

"Goodnight."

~~~~~

Meanwhile, Severus was pacing the study trying to figure out whether or not he should begin looking or wait for Hermione. *There must be some sort of logic to the way those books are stacked, and I'd hate to mess up her system*, he thought, thinking back to the few times someone else had done the same thing to him and how upset it had made him. A heavy hitting of a low piano key broke his thoughts. *Figures she'd still be listening to them*, he thought, sitting down into one of the leather chairs. *I guess I'll just wait till she gets back*. The low notes seemed to mingle with a ringing cymbal before tapering off slightly to be met with that now familiar voice.

**Half underwater**

**I'm half my mother's daughter**

**A fraction's left up to dispute**

**The whole collection**

**Half off the price they're asking**

**In the halfway house of ill repute**

The song seemed almost urgent in a way, as if the singer was trying to exorcize old demons. *Just what I need to match my mood*. The slight mention of family had Severus thinking back to his own. Some nights, he missed his mother; she had always been a kind soul. The light that seemed to banish the bad dreams he had as a child.

**Half accidental**

**Half painful instrumental**

**I have a lot to think about**

**You think they're joking?**

**You have to go provoke him...**

**I guess it's high time you found out**

*Provoke him? Just being in the same room was enough for him.* Severus thought with a touch of anger. His mother had always assured him that at some point, his father had been a warm and giving man, but Severus never saw that particular face. No, the father he remembered was cruel and taunting, full of remarks about Severus' failings. Harsh hands that gave gifts, only to take them back at some imaginary infraction. He would admit that the memories he had of his father were where he was also drunk, but it still didn't seem to excuse all of his actions either.

**It's half biology and half corrective surgery gone wrong**

**You'll notice something funny if you hang around here for too**

**Long ago in some black hole before they had these pills to take it back**

**I'm half Jill**

**And half Jack**

*I am not my father,* he thought angrily

*Aren't you? What about what you did to Hermione? That was an action that your father really could have been proud of* a dark voice in his head whispered.

*It was for her own good.*

*Right. Sending her out of the room crying really did wonders for her,* the voice sneered.

*It was. I'm too old, too bitter, too damaged.*

*Don't forget too afraid to take the chance that she might see who you really are and run away.*

*Aren't you just the helpful one,* Severus thought wryly.

*I try.*

**And when I let him in, I feel the stitches getting sicker**

**I try to wash him out but like they say: the blood is thicker**

**I see my mother in my face**

**But only when I travel**

**I run as fast as I can run**

**But Jack comes tumbling after...**

Standing, moving towards the window to look out into the dark night, he saw the reflection of his face in the window. As he studied himself, he could see his mother's eyes looking back at him, as he also noticed that his father's nose and chin occupied his face as well. He ran a hand through the hair that both he and his mother shared. *What would Mum have thought of Hermione? She would have liked her,* he answered himself. He smiled faintly as he thought about the handful of characteristics that they shared.

**And when I'm brave enough and find a clever way to kick him out**

**And I'm so high not even you and all your love could bring me down**

**On 83rd he never found the magic words to change this fact:**

**I'm half Jill**

**And half Jack**

*She wouldn't have liked the way you treated her,* the voice whispered.

*No, she wouldn't have,* he agreed.

*And you were right; you're not your father.*

*Thank you.*

*Though you were wrong about Hermione. You know she doesn't give a Galleon's worth about your age or your temperament. Do you honestly think she would have spent that night with you if she did?*

*She could have done that out of pity.*

*You were there,* the voice admonished. *That was certainly not done out of pity. If it was pity, she could have just blown you and left, and you know it.*

**I'm halfway home now**

**Half hoping**

**For a showdown**

**Cause I'm not big enough to house this crowd**

**It might destroy me**

**But I'd sacrifice my body**

**If it meant I'd get the Jack part OUT**

**See... Jack... Run... Jack... See... Jack... Run... Jack... Run...**

The voice continued its lecture as the notes began to a crashing end. *You should have given her a chance. It wasn't fair treating her like some immature child.*

*I know. It's just, I was...*, Severus trailed off, not wanting to use the word.

*Scared, I know. But you stood up to your father, didn't you?*

Yes.

*And Voldemort? Being a spy for the Order was extremely dangerous.*

*It was the least I could do for the years I was a Death Eater before coming to Dumbledore.*

*Still, you're not your father, and Hermione isn't either. She's not going to run away from you, nor is she going to laugh in your face when you admit your feelings to her. Give the girl a bit of credit for Merlin's sake.*

Severus had to chuckle slightly as the voice's scolding seemed to remind him of his mother. *She might not want to have anything to do with me anymore, after what I did.*

*Yes, but she also might still want to try and have a relationship with you. Don't you think she's worth the risk?*

Severus nodded. Yes, *she is*.

Hearing the door open, Severus turned around and found a rather unkempt-looking Hermione staring back at him.

"What are you doing here?" she asked him rather crossly.

Taking in the circles under her eyes, how pale she looked, and the way her hair stuck out in bizarre angles as it tried to escape from the pins she had pushed into it to tame it, he said only two words as he crossed the room to her.

"I'm sorry."

"What?" Hermione looked at him as if she wasn't quite sure she had heard him right.

"I said I'm sorry, about everything." He paused, dragging a hand through his hair. "I should have told you that morning how I felt about you, instead of letting you run out thinking the worst. I shouldn't have left with so many things left unsaid," he finished in a rush.

Hermione looked up at Severus and noticed the almost desperate look in his eyes, and felt a glimmer of hope light up in her, coupled with the urge to make him feel the same desperate helpless feeling she had felt that night he had left. Crossing her arms over her chest, she leveled a look at him. "So, do you expect me to just jump and down out of happiness? That I'm going to say that everything is now magically all better and we can live happily ever after?"

Severus swallowed the biting comment that had almost sprung out in his defense. She was, after all, right. *What do I expect?* The voice answered him: *a chance*.

"I don't expect everything to be forgiven, I know you can't forgive me overnight for how I hurt you. But I expect a chance. A chance to make up for what I did wrong, to admit to the feelings that I have."

"And just what are you dying to admit to, Severus?" Hermione asked, her voice laced with sarcasm.

Taking a deep breath as he moved closer, he hesitantly moved an unruly lock of hair off her eyes. Growing braver, he cupped her face in his hands, looked in her eyes and answered, "That I love you." And with that admission, he kissed her, deepening the kiss as he felt her arms snake around his waist.

As they parted for air, Hermione mumbled, "It's about bloody time you told me that, you prat," before Severus silenced her again with another deep kiss.

## When I'm 64

*Chapter 8 of 8*

Six years have gone by, what has become of Hermione, Snape and the rest of the gang.

This is an epilogue (which I'm sure you guys were able to figure out from the summary). Hope everyone enjoys it, and thank you to all the wonderful people who have read and left reviews. You cannot imagine how those made my day over the time that I was writing this.

Props to my beta and sounding board: Kat

Props to all the folks that keep coming back and reviewing

Legal Schtuff:

All characters belong to J.K. Rowling

"When I'm 64" belongs to The Beatles

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Severus put the paperback novel down in the covers with a huff. *If I got up, she would probably just send me back to bed* he thought, pursing his lips together. After that first outbreak of the chicken pox, the disease seemed to come back around every few years. This year, it finally claimed Severus Snape. Severus was thanking his lucky stars that it had happened during Christmas break when having the time off didn't mean sacrificing time away from his classes. *At least those dunderheads won't fall behind this time.*

With the outbreak and it being so near to Christmas, Severus and his small family went to 12 Grimmauld Place for the holidays. Hermione insisted that it made no sense to hang around Hogwarts when he was on bed rest orders from Poppy. Both Harry and Ron had opened up more of the rooms to make room for them, and the twins loved playing with their uncles. *Most likely because their uncles share the same mentality they do* Severus mused.

Glancing at the book still laying in the covers, Severus picked the novel back up, a small smile on his lips. He had never been one for modern Muggle literature, but Hermione had insisted that the book was good, and in a way she was right. Severus hadn't been sure he would enjoy a book named after a girl, but *Carrie* was proving to be a pretty good read. He sympathized a lot with her, had been horrified at the shower scene, and even more so when Hermione had confirmed that sometimes girls were indeed that cruel to one another.

Placing his marker in the book before putting it on the nightstand, he stood up and put on a dressing gown. *I'm tired of lying in this bed; the worst she can do is send me back*, he thought as he opened the bedroom door sticking his head out to see if the coast was clear. If Ivy or Sebastian spied him, the plan to get out would be over before it even had started.

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Hermione smiled as she came into the kitchen. The twins were napping in their room, Severus was most likely resting and grumbling over being stuck in bed, and Ron and Harry were in the study playing Wizard's chess. *Those two never change*, she thought with a smile of nostalgia as she was almost certain she had heard one of the pair cheering as a rook was overtaken. When they had finally come clean about the nature of their relationship to everyone, it had been met with very little fanfare--though that was mostly due to the fact that by the time they eventually said something, everyone already knew. *Anyone with a pair of eyes and a bit of common sense can tell Ron and Harry are absolutely mad about one another*, thought Hermione. The only one who had really made any fuss had been Percy, but no one really paid him too much attention. Hermione was sure that the Dursleys probably would have been upset as well, if Harry had been in contact with them. But Harry hadn't had any communication with them for so long, it was almost as if they had never really existed.

*The dishes aren't going to clean themselves*, Hermione thought as looked at the sink full of dishes. *Best to stop daydreaming and hop to.* After filling the sink full of soapy hot water and wiping down the kitchen counters, she loaded a CD into her player. Smiling as the player filled the kitchen with the jaunty tune backed by a clarinet, piano, bass and drums, she began to wash the dishes.

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Severus smiled as he took in the sight of his wife scrubbing the dishes. Her hair was tamed back into a tidy plait down her back as she happily sang the familiar tune. He had surprised her by buying her CDs for the device, even more so when she found he had gotten her all Muggle bands. She had teased him by asking if he even knew any of the bands he had purchased. In turn he had surprised her when he told her that he did indeed know and enjoyed music by people such as David Bowie, Rufus Wainwright, and the Beatles. As he recognized the tune, Hermione cheerfully sang along.

When I get older, losing my hair, many years from now,

Will you still be sending me a Valentine, birthday greetings, bottle of wine?

If I'd been out 'till quarter to three, would you lock the door?

Will you still need me, will you still feed me,

When I'm sixty-four?

As he watched her sing as she worked, he went back to six years ago. Who would have thought that that one little encounter in the middle of the night would have resulted in not only a happy marriage but also two three-year-old children? *Who indeed*, he thought with a smirk. Severus had never given much thought before about having children; he had figured that some time during the war he would die and didn't see much point in planning something that would never happen. But Hermione had changed all that, and when he had found out about the twins, he had been a mix of elated and terrified. Now, he couldn't imagine his life any other way. Hermione and the twins brought such laughter and happiness into his life. Sebastian looked very much like his mother, with his riot of brown hair and matching brown eyes, though he had his father's distinctive nose, and a grimace that almost matched Severus'. Ivy, on the other hand, had a mixture of her father's raven hair coupled with her mother's curls. Her eyes seemed to come directly from her grandmother in the form of a startling shade of green. Molly swore that the pair of them were almost as rambunctious as Fred and George had been. Shaking himself out of his reverie, Severus took in the picture of his wife lost in her music, her hands immersed in soapy water before he silently crept up on her.

I could be handy, mending a fuse, when your lights have gone.

You can knit a sweater by the fireside,

Sunday mornings, go for a ride.

Doing the garden, digging the weeds, who could ask for more?

Will you still need me, will you still feed me,

When I'm sixty four?

Hermione let a startled gasp as she felt a pair of arms snake around her waist and a kiss dropped on her nape.

"Severus! You should be in bed," she admonished as he quietly chuckled.

Severus leaned down to place another lingering kiss on her neck before silkily asking, "Would you prefer me upstairs and sleeping instead of down here doing this?"

"I'm not answering that," she said, laughing softly, as she tilted her head allowing him more access.

"And I'm taking that as a no," he said with mirth in his voice, as his lips trailed along her neck before nibbling on her earlobe.

"We should probably stop," she said with a soft moan.

"Why? The twins are napping, and I don't see Potter or Weasley in here," he drawled as his hands came up to cup and tease her breasts.

"Yes, but they could. Besides, you should be resting."

"If I have to spend all day in that room, I'd rather have you to keep me company in that big bed," he said before softly biting that one spot on her neck that drove her crazy.

"Severus," Hermione said with that half-warning, half-pleading tone in her voice as she squirmed in his arms. Chuckling, Severus stopped what was doing, content to just hold her in his arms.

"All right," he said with a dramatic sigh. "I suppose we can always pick this back up later."

"You bet we will," she teased.

"Minx."

"Yes, but you love me."

"Indeed," he teased.

Every summer we can rent a cottage in the Isle of Wight

If it's not too dear.

We shall scrimp and save.

Grandchildren on your knee, Vera, Chuck, and Dave.

"Do you think we'll someday be grandparents?" she asked him.

"If we are, I'm forbidding either of them from naming the child 'Chuck.'"

Hermione softly giggled at his tone.

"Besides, we have a lot of time before either of the twins will even be interested in such things."

"Oh, I wouldn't know about that, Severus. Ivy has already said that she's going to marry Fred... or George, I'm not quite sure which one she was talking about."

"Over my dead body. They would be much too older than her by the time she's even going to be allowed to date."

"Says the man whose wife is how many years younger than him?"

Send me a postcard, drop me a line stating point of view.

Indicate precisely what you mean to say, yours sincerely wasting away.

Give me your answer, fill in a form, mine forever more.

Will you still need me, will you still feed me,

When I'm sixty four?

"I love you, you know-it-all."

"I love you too, you greasy git."

As Severus leaned down to capture Hermione's lips, the sound of the twins' voices rising even louder before exploding into tears sounded out on cue. "I knew marrying you and having those two was a bad idea," he deadpanned. Hermione gave him a look.

"Well, you know where the door and the Floo are," she offered sweetly.

"And have to deal with Potter and Weasley? I think not." Chuckling, Hermione left the cosiness of his arms.

"I'm going to see what's bothering the twins. After that, do you want something for lunch?"

"Yes. You," he answered. Hermione rolled her eyes and then gave a laugh as he gathered her up into his arms once more, giving her a blistering kiss.

"Oi. Can't you two separate for a minute? Your kids are crying for you, y'know," Ron said in mock disgust at finding the pair snogging again. Severus leveled a look at Ron as Harry came up behind him.

"I'll remember that next time I find a pot boiling over because you and Potter were too *ahem*, occupied." Ron was at a loss for words, as Harry blushed slightly and Hermione let out a giggle.

"I was just on my way up to check on them, Ron, but thanks for letting me know. And you," she said looking up at Severus' face, "I want you back in bed. Poppy would have my head if she finds out that you're traipsing through the house in your dressing gown."

"But Hermione"

"No buts. Once the twins are settled again, I'll come up with some lunch."

"All right," he grumbled as he left the kitchen. Smothering a smile, Hermione turned back to Ron and Harry.

"When I go back up with Severus' lunch, would you guys mind keeping an eye on for the twins for me?"

"Sure thing, 'Mione," Harry said with a smile. "We could even bundle them up and take out for a bit if you like," he offered.

"Really?"

"Sure. The weather isn't bad, and I know both Ron and I wouldn't mind getting out of the house."

"Thanks Harry, that's really sweet of you. Well, I better get up there before they bring the whole house down. I swear the pair of them could give Mrs. Black a run for her money."

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Harry and Ron both chuckled as she left. Turning to wrap his arms around Ron's waist, Harry looked into Ron's eyes. "You didn't mind me offering for us to take the kids out, did you?"

"Naw. With the bit of snow that's on the ground, they'll have a ball," Ron said before dropping a quick kiss on Harry's lips.

"Better head up and start getting them ready to go out. You know how fussy Hermione is about making sure they're properly dressed," Harry said with a laugh.

"I just can't wait till Ivy is old enough really argue with her. The pair of them are too alike," Ron said laughing.

"No kidding. Still it's been really nice having everyone here for Christmas. Your family is still coming over Christmas day, right?"

"You think Mum would miss the chance to pass out her jumpers and see the twins? She said her, Dad, Fred, George, and Ginny would be here early. I guess Bill has to go to his in-laws' this year, and Charlie had to stay at the Dragon Reserve. And well, you know how things are between Percy and the rest of the family."

"Yeah. Who would have thought all those years ago that everything would be like it was? Hermione and Snape not only married but parents. And you and me... together."

Ron chuckled before Harry's lips captured his own. *Who indeed.*