

Severus Promises, Hermione Dreams

by incarnated soul

Drabbles written for the 'Wedding Night' challenge at GS100.

Promises

Chapter 1 of 1

Drabbles written for the 'Wedding Night' challenge at GS100.

Hermione stands on a balcony, looking down at the crowd, the altar, the picturesque bride and groom, figurines on a cake, beautiful and happy: everything she's not.

'Do you, Ginevra Weasley, take this man, Harry Potter, to be your lawfully wedded husband...?'

There is a collective sigh.

But what Hermione hears is: 'Do you, Hermione Granger, take this man, Severus Snape...?'

And what Hermione sees is the emptiness beside her. What she feels is a numbing cold, seeping into her bones and an unbearable ache deep within her chest.

What she whispers, eyes blank and lips stiff, is: 'I do.'

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When Harry speaks, it is Severus' silky voice Hermione hears, Severus' voice which caresses the insides of her mind, echoing from another world, beyond death: 'I do.'

He's here with me, Hermione thinks, *he's here. He never left me.*

'Marry me, Hermione,' he had said, in that quiet, intense way that was his. Their last ever meeting: secret as ever, under the shadow of night, just as forbidden lovers, condemned, meet.

They had promised to make love on their wedding night: slowly, deliciously, savouring each touch. He had promised to worship her body.

He had promised they would be free.

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Hermione has no tears left to blink back. Instead, her lifeless voice whispers the vows. When Ginny throws the bouquet, inexplicably, it reaches her: the next bride-to-be.

Another incomplete promise, Hermione thinks blankly, staring at the scatter of petals.

'I will litter the ground with roses,' he had said with a smirk.

Looking at the white petals strewn haphazardly on the floor, Hermione finds there are tears left after all.

Like a prayer, she steps religiously on each petal as she leaves, believing he laid them out before her, one by one, with his own hands, just as he promised.

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It is her wedding night. But she is alone. No Severus to carry her over the threshold, to lift her veil, to slip her dress off her, to touch her, kiss her, hold her, caress her... No Severus to love her.

She lies on her hard bed and stares unseeingly at the ceiling until sleep takes over.

Phantom hands skim her skin slowly; Hermione shivers in her sleep. Fleeting phantom touches on her arms, her stomach, her neck. Phantom lips kiss her eyelids, her nose, her lips.

Is this a dream?

Hermione doesn't know. She just doesn't want it to end.

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Her phantom lover touches her slowly, savouring each moment. And when he loves her, it's with the delicious languor of those who have their entire lives ahead of them: the promise of tomorrow within their grasps.

Hermione sighs contentedly. But soon, her back is arching up and she clutches the bed sheets tightly, sweat glistening on her body, crying out...

'I'll make you scream my name,' he had said, smirking, a wicked glint in his eyes.

And she does. Just as he promised.

As she drifts off to sleep again, he lies beside her, holding her and caressing her.

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When Hermione wakes, she's still clothed. Her sheets aren't rumpled, pins still adorn her hair.

She stares in confusion.

Had her hands really twisted and clenched these sheets as she was driven to ecstasy? Had phantom fingers really laced into her hair, freeing it from its confines, tousling her curls? Had her lips really been kissed swollen?

Hermione looks at the evidence and despairs.

Her wedding, wedding night had all been a farce: a dream, a mere figment of her imagination.

Severus, she pleads silently, desperately, hot tears slipping down her face, *please, give me a sign*.

But nothing happens.

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