

# Creep

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A songfic to "Creep" by Radiohead. Severus reflects on a highly inappropriate attraction to one Hermione Granger. (Not HBP compliant.)

# Reflecting

*Chapter 1 of 1*

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*when you were here before*

*couldn't look you in the eye*

He remembered when he first recognized her beauty. Difficult not to, really; even her imbecile friends saw it. He carefully avoided watching her more than absolutely necessary. He knew the way he was looking at her was not appropriate. What if Albus had seen the dark thing behind his eyes? She was most definitely not worth losing his job over.

*you're just like an angel*

*your skin makes me cry*

But she was lovely, wasn't she? He settled his gaze determinedly Elsewhere, although he found it more and more difficult to maintain distraction. The part of his brain that fancied itself a connoisseur of all things fine was very insistent that he take another look. And another. And another. In fact, that part of his brain wanted him to commit every feature, every curve, every highlight and shadow to memory. It wanted him to burn her image into his mind, to keep for reflection and appraisal later. So he did. He allowed himself fifteen seconds, during which he pretended to glare at Potter and Weasley. But what he was really doing pleased him much more: memorizing her face, her perfectly-coiffed hair, her neck, her smooth shoulders, the curve of her breasts -- Merlin, when did she sprout those? -- her slender waist, her hips, her delectable legs, her dainty feet. He allowed another five seconds to the study of her neatly manicured hands, and another two or three to admiring her shapely bum. But her skin -- her skin was what really got him. Her smooth, flawless ivory skin nearly brought tears to his eyes. What he wouldn't give to feel that skin under his hands.

*you float like a feather*

*in a beautiful world*

She really was the belle of the ball, her fourth year. She glided around the floor on the arm of that bumbling dolt Krum, while the other boys drooled and attempted to hide their erections. And even he, the black-hearted bastard of Hogwarts, could barely tear his eyes away from her. He felt so foolish, and so ashamed. She was his student, and an insufferable know-it-all at that. He could barely abide her presence in his classroom. But in the Great Hall that year, he wanted nothing more than for her to be close to him.

*I wish I was special*

*you're so fucking special*

They weren't really all that different, inside. Thirsting for knowledge, trying to instill their love of academia in others. It was the outside that mattered, though, and they were worlds apart on that front. Yes, they both had been a bit awkward, as all teenagers are at some point. But she had bloomed magnificently, and he... Well, he had not. His nose was just too long, his hair refused to give up its grease, his skin would not hold a tan no matter how he tried, and years of terrorizing students into respecting him had turned what could have been a sauntering walk into a stalking harpy gait. And this, this iced the cake. She, a vision of perfection in a very mature, womanly evening gown, was surrounded by friends, laughing and enjoying a rather dull event. He, a grim presence in his trademark black robes, was alone in the shadows, sneering and glowering at any who dare to look at him, counting each painful moment until he could retire to his chambers without Albus giving him that disapproving Look. He almost wished that he could be among her friends, laughing about whatever it was they were laughing about. Then he reminded himself that with Potter and Weasley there, it might well be him that they found so incredibly amusing. That sobered him somewhat.

*but I'm a creep*

*I'm a weirdo*

*what the hell am I doing here?*

*I don't belong here*

Honestly, what was the point? He didn't dance, didn't socialize, and didn't mingle. He barely even moved from his place in the background, save to deduct house points from students attempting to spike the punch or snog in various nooks and crannies. He felt a distinct sense of being disconnected from the festivities, no matter how much Albus tried to get him involved. All he really wanted to do was go back to his quarters and read, perhaps have a glass of brandy, and go to sleep. Which was wishful thinking -- Severus Snape hadn't had a decent night's sleep since he joined the Death Eaters all those years ago -- but it would serve if anyone asked him why he kept checking the time.

*I don't care if it hurts*

*I wanna have control*

When he returned to his quarters that night, he set about finding spells that would improve his appearance. Specifically, the more vigorous and long-lasting, the better. He knew he could not afford to change his persona so drastically while the Dark Lord still lived, but he could have some spells on reserve for when he was free to experiment with making himself easier on the eyes. This was his act of hope. Yes, spying for the Order said something about his faith that good would triumph over evil, but really, it was more a matter of conscience. No matter which side won, he wanted to be able to die knowing that he had served the right master, in the end. However, planning how he would alter his appearance after the Dread Lord's demise revealed an optimism that Severus would never acknowledge aloud.

*I want a perfect body*

*I want a perfect soul*

And now, six years later, here she was again. A professor herself this time, along with Potter. Severus had spent most of the afternoon performing the spells he had set aside six years ago. He scoured his entire body, sloughing off dead skin, hoping to give himself a healthy glow. He tried every charm known to wizard-kind to rid his hair of all the built-up oil, but to no avail. Finally, very sheepishly, he resorted to a Muggle shampoo and conditioner, resolving to brew his own versions as soon as time permitted. He straightened and whitened his teeth, painful though it was, but decided to leave his nose alone. Not really much to be done about that. Nothing permanent, anyway. Besides, his hooked nose was quintessentially Snape, and he didn't want to change himself to the point that she wouldn't recognize him. He shook his head as the image of himself with a Lockhart-esque button nose drifted into his mind. No, better to leave it as it was. He knew there was no point in practicing smiles and laughter. Some things are lost with disuse, and he accepted that. Perhaps the physical changes would be enough, and maybe if he tried not to sneer so much...

*I want you to notice*

*when I'm not around*

He did not make the spectacular entrance he had planned. Severus Snape had a lot of nerve, to be sure, but when it came down to it, his instincts told him to get a feel for his prey before he moved in for the kill. She was beautiful again, but this time it was different. It was a more mature beauty, regal, with wisdom in her eyes that wasn't there those years ago. She was also wearing professorial robes, although they were a bit more formal and more flatteringly cut than the ones she wore in the classroom. Still joking around with Potter. When he moved off to mingle among the staff and students, she would occasionally sweep the room with her eyes, looking for The-Boy-Who-Still-Lived. Once she found him, she would go back to whatever she was doing. Severus found himself wishing he were so dear to her heart that she searched for him that way. Of course, Hermione Granger's relationship with Potter was nothing like what Severus wanted with her.

*you're so fucking special*

*I wish I was special*

The longer he looked at her, the more intimidating she became. He had played the spy for years, in the camp of one of the most deranged madmen to ever plague wizard-kind. He had shielded his mind from one of the best Legilimens the world had ever seen; he had acted genuinely proud of a whole House of scheming, egocentric, aristocratic little upstarts; he had steadfastly demeaned and belittled the brightest student Hogwarts had seen in years. He was Severus bloody Snape, and here he was, afraid to approach a woman half his age. She was just too much. Too delicate, too warm, too absolutely exquisite to behold.

*but I'm a creep*

*I'm a weirdo*

*what the hell am I doing here?*

*I don't belong here*

He knew he shouldn't follow through with his plan. What right had he, vile thing that he had become, to touch perfection? Why would she even look twice at him, other than to remember some horrid thing he had said to her when she was his student? Perhaps she would recall a derisive glare he had cast as she sat in class, knowing the answer, while he refused to call upon her? She may not hate him -- innocent hearts are not capable of hate -- but she certainly didn't see him as anything other than a greasy, foul-tempered git. Or worse, she might still view him as a teacher, a mentor. He was hesitant to speak to her alone, for fear she would call him "Professor," reminding him that this intelligent, witty, deliciously gorgeous woman was once a mousy little know-it-all student sitting in his classroom. Stirring up memories of the unspeakable things he had thought, before she even graduated Hogwarts. The thoughts that, had he been a man with less control, could have turned to actions that would have sent him to Azkaban. He had warred with himself through many lonely nights. His reptilian brain kept conjuring images that were the worst kinds of wicked, of the things he'd do to her... And the best his conscience could do was to add the clause "if she were not my student" to the beginning or end of every twisted fantasy he imagined. No pupil had ever affected him so. It sickened him. But here he was again, pressed and polished and hoping to catch her eye. Hoping to impress her.

*She's running out again*

Breaking the monotony of his self-deprecation, out of the corner of his eye he saw her walking briskly out the door. Not storming out like she did the last time he saw her at

a dance, but escaping nonetheless. He made his way to the doors silently and discreetly, and managed to remain unnoticed as he sought her out. He found her outside, sitting on a bench and staring at nothing. Her legs crossed demurely at the ankle, hands folded in her lap. But her face spoke volumes. Not everyone would have picked up the subtleties, but Severus had spent a great deal of his life reading people who were trying not to be read -- sometimes his very life depended on his accuracy.

*whatever makes you happy*

*whatever you want*

Gently, ever so gently, he reached out to her with a bit of wandless, nonverbal Legilimency. Seeking out her surface thoughts. It wasn't difficult, as she had the issue right out in front, worrying and picking at it. Like a sore on the roof of your mouth that would heal if you could just stop tonguing it. Ronald Weasley. He had been the cause of her distress the last time as well, had he not? Severus seemed to recall his Slytherins laughing about how "that little Mudblood, Granger" had been "all weepy" over some comment the young Weasley had made at the Yule Ball. Something about Krum. In any case, Ronald had been cruel and she had taken it to heart. Now she was troubled again, about something to do with the youngest Weasley boy. Severus reached a little further, past the surface thought of Ronald, to find the cause of her distress. She had it right there for his perusal; in fact she was replaying it over and over in her mind. Potter. Potter had asked her something. Severus had to struggle to see beyond her anger, to what it was Potter had said. There, there it was.

"So have you answered him yet?"

"Who, Ron?"

"Yes, Ron. Who else?"

"No, not yet. I'm still considering."

"Still? 'Mione, you've been 'considering' for two months! How difficult is it?"

"I'll have you know it's very difficult!"

"He's one of your best mates! How is that difficult?"

"Harry, I'm not just going to up and marry someone just because he's one of my best mates! There's more to it than that! You wouldn't marry Ron, would you? *Now there's an interesting image*, Severus thought.

"Of course not! But... that's different, we're... we're both blokes."

"Same concept, Harry. He's your best mate, but that doesn't mean you'd agree to live with him and bear his *children* forever and ever amen!" Severus could feel Hermione's revulsion at the thought of having children with Weasley. He couldn't suppress a smirk.

"But you like Ron, right? You've been dating for years now. What are you so afraid of? 'Mione, he said that you haven't even let him... you know... in your knickers."

"Harry James Potter! I don't see how that is any of your concern! I bet Ron asked you to talk to me, talk me into it since he isn't here to worry me himself! Well, I will have you know that I will not be browbeaten into something that I don't want, and I do not want to marry Ron! The only reason I've stayed with him this long is in the hopes that he will mature into someone tolerable, but apparently I was mistaken. So you can tell him that it's off, all of it. You two can be all chummy and scheming about something other than me!"

"'Mione, don't be like that. Ron's a good person, you two go well together--"

"No, actually, we don't. I can't read or study in his presence, because he's always on about Quidditch or whinging because I won't hop into bed with him. I want someone that can hold their own in a conversation about something other than sports, someone who reads for pleasure, someone whose idea of seduction is a bit more subtle than 'Say, those are nice legs, what time do they open?' I'm so tired of it I could scream, Harry. So tell Ron he's a nice bloke, but I just can't deal with him anymore. I want someone who compliments me as perfectly as a mortal can, and I refuse to settle for anything less."

Severus had to take a moment to let all of that soak in. So Weasley had asked her to marry him, had he? And Potter was trying to talk her into accepting? And she had railed against their meddling, calling off the whole relationship. *Bravo, Miss Granger*, Severus thought. *Your passion is... enticing*. She hadn't slept with Ronald either. That was curious, but not really surprising. Severus could understand a woman of her sensibilities wanting to save that experience for someone who could ensure her pleasure. He knew she understood the value of maiden's blood; she was probably saving that as well. *Clever girl. Woman*, he corrected himself. *She is a woman now. A woman that knows what she wants, apparently*. Severus reflected on her list of what she wanted in a man, a smile slowly playing across his face as he realized that he met all of her requirements. If he could just jump that first hurdle of getting her to see him as a man and not a professor, he was pretty sure he could make her realize that he was what she wanted. This was perfect.

*you're so fucking special*

*I wish I was special*

*but I'm a creep*

*I'm a weirdo*

*what the hell am I doing here?*

*I don't belong here*

*I don't belong here...*

Severus retreated silently into the Great Hall, backing away instead of turning on his heel. Partially to be sure Hermione did not turn and see him, and partially because he wanted to look at her for as long as possible. He was admiring the nape of her neck -- that sweeping updo certainly displayed the delectable flesh wonderfully -- when he bumped into someone. He turned swiftly, wand in hand, ready to deduct fifty points from the dunderhead who dared to run into him... and found himself face to face with Albus Dumbledore.

"Severus," Albus greeted the Potions Master.

"Albus," Severus acknowledged with a slight nod.

"Are you retiring so early?" The Headmaster enquired softly.

"I'm afraid so. I have... plans to make, for the coming semester," Severus not-quite-lied, unsure what Dumbledore suspected, if anything. Albus craned his head slightly to see past Severus. Then his eyes began to twinkle and he smiled at the younger man.

"I daresay you do. Best of luck, then. Just remember that cautious speech and double-talk served you well as a spy, but you haven't much use for it now. Carefully chosen

words sometimes suggest a lack of... ah, passion. This may not always be the impression you wish to give. But I'm sure you knew all that, hmm? Good night then, Severus."

"Good night, Albus." And with that, the self-proclaimed black-hearted bastard of Hogwarts retreated to his quarters to plot the seduction of Hermione Granger.