

A Mote of You

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What happens when insufficient care is taken to keep George away from a potion?
The "one not like the others" challenge on GS100.

One

Chapter 1 of 1

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A Mote of You

"What are you doing, Miss Granger?" His disgruntlement precedes him like an invisible footman.

"Making the punch."

She dips a teaspoon, tastes, and wrinkles her nose.

"It's *still* not right. Here, Prof- er, Mr Snape – can you make out what it says here? Molly's handwriting is appalling!"

He squints at the parchment then bends to sniff the cauldron.

"Blackberry cordial. Ugh. Tell me what I am doing at Potter's wedding, Miss Granger."

She laughs and wards her work.

"I'm on no account to let George anywhere near it," she explains. "Come along now, and pretend to be sociable."

*

Let us take a brief moment to revisit the scene that has just played. Snape crosses the room looking hunted, and Granger greets him with a lovely smile, which makes him blink. He covers his confusion by turning his attention to the parchment, but it is not hiding place enough, so he bends over the cauldron and – there! Do you see?

An eyelash, one sooty eyelash, falls unnoticed into the brew.

We watch as it tumbles through the liquid, end over end, coming to rest at last in the depths.

An insignificant event. But George Weasley is a clever man.

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"So let us raise our glasses and, in honour of the occasion, each pronounce the name of our One True Love," declares George, lifting his goblet.

Harry looks into Ginny's shining eyes as she drinks deeply of the punch. She turns, smiling radiantly.

"Severus Snape!" she cries joyfully.

"Severus Snape!" whispers Luna to her bridesmaid's posy.

"Severus Snape!" Lavender's husky tones somehow carry across the entire garden.

"Severus Snape," breathes Molly, misty-eyed.

"S-S-Severus Snape," stammers Ron.

The chorus of passion intensifies. He cannot cope with the unexpected popularity and flees for the house.

Hermione has said nothing.

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Once again, we must rewind and alter our focus. Why is it that Hermione is apparently untouched by adoration?

George proposes the toast, and Hermione raises her glass to her waiting lips. She does not intend to drink deeply, as her heart belongs to one who doesn't really want it. She sips, holds the liquid a moment on her tongue, frowns, and spits suddenly onto the grass. She doesn't even spare George a glare as she hunts for water with which to rinse her mouth.

She made the punch. She knows how it should taste. This is not blackberry cordial.

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Poor Severus.

He is a powerful wizard. One mote of him, steeped for hours in alcohol, leeches the ghost of his being into the doctored cauldron, the glasses, the mouths and the hearts of the entire party. He inspires such love. Albus would be proud.

But Severus, who has stood firm in the face of horror and death, backs away, terrified and sweating. He cannot escape. Molly has sealed the house against him. Wards against unwelcome guests – for Arthur is careful to the point of paranoia – prevent Apparition.

He can only climb.

He sees Hermione is unaffected.

"Help!" he mouths.

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Hermione grabs George's arm. She shouts furiously at him. But he has eyes for only one person, his true love. He hauls himself to the roof of the porch in pursuit. The matter is urgent. Lavender and Ginny, skirts torn and fingernails broken, are ahead of him. His mother is close behind.

Severus, who has reached a windowsill on the third floor, is thankful nobody has yet thought of the broom shed. Fingers skim his ankle and he reaches for his wand, ready to hex, but his other hand slips and his weapon falls.

He scrambles for the chimney pots.

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It is later. Dusk, to be precise. The party has been immobilised, levitated to the ground, and left to sleep it off.

Hermione and Severus have spent the intervening hours analysing George's potion. As one might expect, it is a clever brew, though the application was somewhat lacking in forethought.

Now they sit in his living room with cups of tea.

"You didn't drink it either, did you?" he asks. He snorts. "You're not at all like the others, are you?"

"Let's drink a toast," she says hesitantly.

They clink cups.

"Severus Snape," she whispers, smiling.

"Hermione Granger," he replies.

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