

Wedding Announcement

by debjunk

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Chapter 1 of 1

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Hermione slammed the paper down and looked to the place where her 'intended' should be sitting. His seat was empty. Her eyebrows drew together. Maybe he'd gotten his paper early... or...

Hermione stood, noticing that every eye was on her, and most everyone's eyebrows were raised. Even the student body had quieted down and was staring at her. She frowned and turned, storming out of the Great Hall.

It didn't take her long to get to Snape's door. She rapped on it loudly. No one came to answer. She knocked again. Still no answer.

"Snape, I know you're in there! Open up!" Her fist hammered loudly on the door. "Snape!"

The door opened, a black clad arm reached out, and Hermione felt herself being pulled into his room.

"Quiet, you daft woman! I don't want anyone to know I'm here!"

Hermione flashed the folded paper at him. "Have you seen this?"

Severus grabbed the paper from her hands and opened it up. He read the full page article quickly, his frown growing deeper and deeper. "She said she was going to do this, but I hoped she wouldn't."

"Who? Who would do..." Hermione jabbed the article. "Who would do... this?"

"Who would leak out the false news that you and I are engaged? Dolores Umbridge, of course."

"Umbridge? I haven't heard that name in years. What rock did she crawl out from?"

"She showed up here two nights ago and said that if I didn't marry her immediately, she would start spreading rumors about my love life. She didn't go into detail, but I can only believe that this is what she meant."

"Marry you? Why on Earth would she want to marry you?"

Severus' eyebrows knit together as he gave her a grumpy look. "I suppose it's because she can't find anyone else to attach themselves to her. I understand that the thought of being romantically involved with me is enough to turn any witch's stomach."

Hermione's eyes softened. "That's not what I meant," she said apologetically. "You... you're not that bad." Hermione averted her eyes from him and studied the floor.

"Evidently, Umbridge feels the same."

Hermione looked back at him. "Severus, what are we going to do? What are *you* going to do? You can't marry Umbridge! She's a cow!"

"I was thinking more like a pink hippo from a drunken hallucination."

Hermione chuckled but became serious quickly. "We have to stop her, Severus."

Severus shrugged and tossed the paper onto a nearby table. "It would seem it's too late. We are already engaged in the eyes of the world."

"Better us than Umbridge and you. Why didn't she just announce her engagement to you instead of pulling me into all this?"

Severus looked away. "I don't know. Perhaps she wanted to embarrass me because of your age."

Hermione looked over at the paper again. Taking the paper, she unfolded it and read the article. She noticed something that she hadn't before. Something that only one person knew about her. Turning back to Severus, she narrowed her eyes at him. He was looking away and missed her skeptical glare. She moved to him and took his arm.

"We'll just have to go through with it, then. We'll have to marry."

Severus snapped his head to her in amazement. "You would do that? We can tell the world the truth about Umbridge. She will not prevail."

"No, Severus, we'll have to do it this way. I'll marry you, then we can split up after a few months. No one will be the wiser."

Pulling him toward her, she kissed him fully on the lips. To her surprise, Severus pulled her close and kissed her furtively in return, almost in desperation. She surprised herself by her reaction. She knew she'd been attracted to him previously, but his touch and kiss were lighting her with a fire she never knew she possessed. She fell into him and his intoxicating kiss. Finally coming to her senses, she pulled away from him, biting him on the lip before retreating from his kiss.

"What was that for?" Severus asked, a cross look on his face.

"You put that article in the paper! What are you up to, Severus Snape?"

"Woman, you wound me."

"And I'll wound you more if you don't tell me the truth."

Severus glared at her.

"Don't you give me that glare. You are the only one who knows the significance of April 22nd. That article specifically says we picked that date because it's the day I found out I was a witch. No one knows that but you. Not even Harry knows that date, and certainly Dolores Umbridge doesn't!"

Severus shrugged. "Damn, you caught me."

Hermione's mouth dropped open in amazement. In her indignation, she didn't seem to realize that Severus had not taken his arms from her. It felt so normal, that she didn't seem to even think about him pulling her to him. She didn't take notice until his lips were on hers once again. With that electric connection, she pushed him back.

"No! Stop it! You're not going to just kiss this away. Why did you put that article in there?"

"You're here, aren't you?"

"Yes, but..."

His lips came down on hers again.

"Stop it!" she cried as she pushed him away. "I have no intention of marrying you on April 22nd or any other day for that matter."

"So, I have three months to convince you."

Hermione pursed her lips at him. "How long have you wanted to ask me out?"

Severus arched his eyebrow at her. "Four months, two weeks, and six days."

"So..." she scowled at him. "Why didn't you just ask? Why can't you be like a normal human being and just ask me to dinner? Why did there have to be a wedding announcement for you to... *kiss me*?"

"I like to see you riled up. It... excites me."

"It excites you? It *excites* you? Well, that's just lovely. You like to rile me up, so you announce our engagement. What's the next thing you're going to do for a thrill? Vanish my clothes while we're eating dinner in the Great Hall?"

Severus gave her a wild look. "Don't give me any ideas."

She pounded his chest then. "Let go of me, you ridiculous brute! I will not do this with you."

"From that kiss, I can tell you want to, though."

"I will not let you win! This... This was too much. If you'd asked me out I would have gladly said yes, but this?"

He released her and turned away. "So, you want boring then? You want everyday, normal romance? Fine. Go marry Weasley, then."

Hermione's face became hard. "That was low, Severus, even for you." She turned and stormed to the door. Severus heaved a great sigh.

"I just thought that something different might pique your interest. I am not the best at romance, and I've never had a long lasting relationship. Perhaps my choice of approach was not the right one, but I didn't mean to offend you."

Hermione stopped, her hand resting on the door. She mulled over what Severus said. Taking in his motives, the article that seemed so menacing before simply became a unique form of beginning a relationship. A very Severus Snape form of beginning a relationship in any case. She should have taken his very private persona into account before blowing up at him. She turned and sighed herself.

"You really want this?" she asked softly.

"I do," he answered. Still he didn't turn toward her.

She walked over to him and faced him. "I'm not much for secrecy in a relationship. While your means of beginning this was romantic in its own way, I would have rather you just told me you'd placed the article rather than make up a story about Umbridge."

Severus nodded quickly. "I suppose I went a bit far with that."

"You really would want this to progress to... marriage?"

Severus shrugged. "Why else would we court?"

Hermione chuckled. "Court... that's so old fashioned a word."

"Perhaps I'm an old fashioned man."

She tilted her head slightly as she regarded him thoughtfully. "Perhaps I'm an old fashioned girl at heart, too."

She closed the distance between them.

"Hermione, I am not one for secrecy in a relationship either. I just... didn't know how to approach you. I wasn't sure if you even thought of me in any romantic way whatsoever."

"I understand," she said. "I'm shy about letting such feelings be known, too. I was sure if you knew I was attracted to you, you'd laugh and ridicule me for months."

"Silly witch."

"Silly wizard."

They were so close now, they could feel each others breath. Severus closed the small gap between them and kissed Hermione softly.

"Oh, Merlin," she gasped. "I don't think I'll ever tire of that kiss," Hermione murmured as Severus pulled back to look at her.

"Good, because I'll never tire of kissing you."

Prompt by HermioneDiggory from 6/19/10: Hermione is completely stunned when she comes across an article announcing her engagement (to the character of your choice) in the Daily Prophet. It's news to her! Who is behind this and what are they up to?