

The Final Ingredient

by OpalJade

A spelling mistake brings Professors Granger and Snape together.

One Shot

Chapter 1 of 1

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A/N: This was written for the Spelling Mistake challenge on GS100 (and for Droxy who made me laugh when she told me how she ended up with her username!).

At the edge of the forest, collection tray nearly filled, Hermione watched as the last ingredient appeared on her evaluation parchment.

4 droxy wings

Hermione frowned at the apparent error. She was positive there was no such thing as droxy wings. The spelling mistake glared at her mockingly in perfect impersonation of her preceptor.

Bastard!

He had done it on purpose. He wanted her to fail the collecting part of her apprenticeship. How typical of him to make her second guess herself on the very last item.

But was it sabotage? Perhaps it could be just a simple spelling mistake?

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*Remember what happened the last time you questioned his spelling?*

She'd been attempting to brew her first level five potion, and the instructions had called for dryad chromosomes from an oak tree. Knowing what a touchy bastard Snape could be, she had decided not to mention that chromosomes *always* came in dyads, so the word was, in fact, redundant. She had not, however, been able to ignore the glaring spelling mistake. A covert flick of her wand, and the "r" disappeared in dryad.

To her horror and embarrassment, the mistake had been hers, and she had disastrously altered the potion.

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She could still hear the venom in Snape's voice as he explained that her careless version could've caused toxic fumes and blindness.

He was so upset that he had even grabbed her by the upper arms, shouting and shaking her until she had furiously hit him with a Jelly-Legs Jinx.

Next thing she knew, they were on the dungeon floor, half kissing and half tearing each other's clothes off.

Yes, she had become her supervisor's lover. But that had only made things more difficult for her. At every turn, Snape had to make sure that she understood that he was not going to lower his standards just because they were involved. In fact, he had raised them. He was unfair and petty, and Hermione couldn't wait to be done so they could relax and try to have a normal relationship.

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But that was fourteen months ago. She had managed to successfully clear all levels of her apprenticeship. Could it be that Severus was trying to teach her a final lesson? Did he even remember that argument?

All she knew was that she had four hours to procure twenty-four ingredients to pass this, the last part of her evaluation.

And she couldn't get doxy wings if, indeed, he had meant droxy wings. He would not hesitate to fail her, even if the error turned out to be completely his this time.

*Bloody idiot!*

Well, he had no idea how stubborn she really was.

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She could research this bit of information efficiently, and quietly. She'd need a library. A plan unfolded in her mind rapidly. Visit Kingsley, get permission to use the Ministry's Library of Natural Resources, confirm that droxy wings did not exist and come to the forest to procure actual doxy wings.

Perfect plan, except that the book she was looking for, *Wing Taxonomy; An Identification Guide* was not available. Newt Scamander had borrowed it last week.

Well, she'd just have to Apparate to Luna's, apologise for not attending her blue moon party last month, and ask to take a peek at the book.

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She had twenty-two minutes left.

"I'm sorry, Hermione, but Newt left that particular book at the cabin. It's just down the path to the pond. The cabin will be on your right, hidden behind the blue spruce."

Hermione was out the door before she finished, racing along the path. She hoped that, if indeed droxy wings existed, Newt Scamander would have some stored in his cabin. She'd never have time to find them if they were elsewhere.

She barged through the door and almost catapulted to the shelf, locating the manuscript in question and leafing quickly to the "D" section.

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Hermione scanned the page, eyes welling up.

She'd been right all along; there were no such thing as droxy wings, but that wasn't the reason she was crying. On a small bit of parchment, two words were scrawled in Severus's familiar handwriting.

Merry me?

She snorted at the deliberate spelling mistake. So few people knew what a witty man Severus Snape was. What a clever proposal, all centered around what had brought them together in the first place!

"Well?" came a velvety voice from behind the huge clock, accompanied by a rather large nose, and dark eyes peering out.

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Startled, she still managed to nod her head yes as she walked towards him. He met her halfway, where he cradled her face in his hands, and kissed her like it was their first time again. Then he reached for her left hand and placed a small box in her palm. She stared at it in dismay.

Was Snape turning soft on her? Hermione felt uneasy. Who was this man staging a proposal and bearing diamonds?

"I hope you will not be disappointed."

Inside the box, on the dark green velvet lining, lay four grotesque, hairy, black doxy wings.

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Ah. That's more like it.

Hermione could not have been happier; she was almost out of time and, here were the last ingredients she needed to pass and finish her goddamned apprenticeship.

She took the wings out, placed them carefully on her examination tray and handed the entire thing to Snape.

"There you go, *sir*. Complete."

Snape stopped the chronometer and bent, examining each ingredient carefully.

Prick!

"Congratulations, *Miss Granger*," he said, smiling softly. "It will be a most profound relief, having you out of my classroom. I had begun to despair that you would remain under my tutelage forever."

~~~\*La Fin\*~~~

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