

# Doubly Indebted

*by peppermint*

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*Chapter 1 of 1*

Hermione saves a house-elf from certain death.

Hermione was ensconced in a St Mungo's bed, waiting for massive doses of Blood-Replenishing and Skele-Gro potions to do their magic. A mediwitch had just delivered a tea tray, and even the smell of industrial-grade black pekoe and generic packet biccies was a panacea to her aches and pains. She reached for the pot, only to have her hand slapped away by a pregnant, indignant house-elf.

"Mistress will be still and let Peppy make the tea!" she demanded, moving the tray out of Hermione's reach.

"Peppy, I am not your mistress. All I did was—"

"—was be stepping in front of that horrible, purple bus and saving Peppy's life is what you was doing!"

Hermione sighed, pinching the bridge of her nose between her thumb and forefinger. "Peppy, any decent person would have done the same. Really, you don't need to wait on me."

Peppy's eyes began to water and she looked down at the floor. "Peppy owes Mistress a life debt twice, and Mistress won't even let Peppy make her a cup of tea! Yes, two life debts: one for Peppy and one for Peppy's baby! Why does Mistress hate poor Peppy? First Peppy's old master dies, yes he does, he is old and very sick, and then Peppy tries to go to the Ministry to find a new family, and Mistress Hermione saves her from the Knight bus, and poor Peppy just wants a family to serve again!" the little elf wailed, pressing the hem of her pillowcase against her face.

"Oh, Peppy, please don't cry. I'll take you to the Ministry myself in the morning, all right?"

The look Peppy shot her way was scathing. "Mistress doesn't have anything for Peppy to do?"

"I live by myself, Peppy. I eat takeout, so there's no dishes. I'm pretty neat, so there's no messes."

Scandalized, Peppy asked, "Takeout? Mistress is not cooking? Nobody is cooking for Mistress? Mistress needs Peppy. Peppy is a good cook. Please?" she begged, bringing Hermione a cup of tea.

Hermione sipped the tea and sat back against her pillows with a sigh. "That's perfect tea, Peppy."

Smiling, Peppy handed over a plate of biscuits, too. "Peppy did the best Peppy could with inferior ingredients, Mistress."

"I can't believe I'm saying this. Ron is going to laugh so hard when he finds out," Hermione muttered. "You can come home with me, and I'll give you a trial period until you have your baby; but I'm going to insist on giving you a day off and paying you something."

Peppy beamed, clapping her hands together in glee, "Mistress Hermione will not regret making Peppy the matriarch of the elves of the House of Granger!"

Hermione got quite used to having a hot meal waiting every night when she came home from work, and by the time Peppy had her baby (a girl, whom she insisted upon naming Miney), Hermione couldn't fathom letting her go anywhere else.

And so the Illustrious House of Granger was established.

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prompt from MuseAmuseant:

3. Hermione risks her life to rescue an abandoned, pregnant house-elf. Who is very grateful and very determined to get her benefactress to change her opinion of house-elf servitude.