

When You Wish Upon a Star

by blue artemis

Hermione makes a wish upon a wishing star not knowing that the wishes they grant usually have a twist. This story is best described as dark humor. The rating is not for smut.

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Chapter 1 of 1

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A/N: This was written for the Granger Enchanted Twisted Wish challenge.

Hermione was sitting out by the Black Lake, letting her mind wander from topic to topic until she looked up and saw a very bright star. *That's not in the right position to be one of the planets. My Nana called those wishing stars.* Hermione smiled to herself, content with the bit of nostalgia about her favorite grandparent. In a fit of uncharacteristic whimsy, she decided to honor her grandmother by making a wish.

"Star light, star bright, first star I see tonight, I wish I may, I wish I might be granted the wish I wish tonight. I wish that the red-head of my dreams realizes I'm perfect for him. Oh, and I wish that Crookshanks learns to love Ron as much as I do."

She nodded decisively then headed back to the castle, humming under her breath. As she was walking, she encountered Luna who was heading back from the Forbidden Forest.

"What are you humming, Hermione?" Luna cocked her head at her friend quizzically.

Hermione blushed. She hadn't realized she'd been heard. "It's called *When You Wish Upon a Star*, Luna. It's from one of my favorite movies as a child."

"You know that's true, right?" Luna wanted to make sure Hermione understood what she was doing.

"What's true, Luna?"

"If you wish upon a star, your wish will come true. But you have to be careful. Wish-stars have a strange sense of humor."

"All... Right then, Luna. I'll be sure to be careful." Hermione furrowed her brow in thought. *I don't think my wish was too outlandish. Nothing should go wrong.*

As the girls got closer to the castle, they were almost deafened by the uproar that was coming from the Great Hall.

There appeared to be a melee going on at the Slytherin table. Hermione and Luna approached Ginny and Draco, who were standing nearest the door. "What is going on?" Hermione asked.

"Rabastan Lestrangle walked in here, knelt at Neville's feet and offered his life on behalf of the house of Lestrangle because of the horrors done to the house of Longbottom by Rodolphus and Bellatrix," Draco replied, his face pale with the stress of the situation.

"OK, why did that cause a melee?" Hermione asked. "Isn't that what a proper pureblood apology is, or did I misread that in the etiquette section of the *Manners for Mudbloods* book I found in the Restricted Section?"

Her matter-of-fact response made Draco laugh reluctantly, and Ginny burst into giggles. Hermione was gratified when Ginny gave her a hug. "Don't ever change, Hermione. That wasn't what caused the melee. My idiot brother caused the melee. You can see that Rabastan is up at the High Table with Snape and Kingsley. Neville accepted his apology and pardoned him for the things he did to the Longbottoms under Bellatrix's *Imperius*." Ginny's last statement seemed weighted.

Hermione thought for a bit. "Right, so since Neville pardoned him, the Ministry must follow."

"Exactly, Granger. Well done!" Draco gave Hermione a genuine smile.

"Hermione, isn't that your Cakneazle up there?" Luna asked, gesturing to the High Table with her chin.

"Caknea..." Draco left off when Ginny elbowed him in the stomach.

"Cakneazle? Oh, you mean Crookshanks. I guess you could call him a Cakneazle. He seems to really like Rabastan Lestrangle, doesn't he... oh, dear, I better go get him." Hermione hurried toward the High Table, failing to find out what the melee was all about.

Luna, Ginny and Draco all started laughing when they saw Hermione rather apologetically try to remove her familiar, who had decided grooming Rabastan's hair was a good idea.

"I'm so sorry, Mr. Lestrangle, he's never done that before." Hermione's good manners prevailed, even in the face of the ex-Death Eater who held her down while his brother and sister-in-law tortured her.

"It's more than fine, Miss Granger. It is said kneazle familiars are good judges of character. Your fine beast makes what I need to say easier." Rabastan spoke with a voice that while not as deep as Severus Snape's had very similar honeyed tones.

Hermione looked up at the man speaking to her with startled eyes. She could not think of anything to say, so she just nodded.

"I give you my deepest apologies, Miss Granger; had I control of my own mind, I would have never harmed you. I must also offer you my most gracious admiration; you are a witch of great power and depth of character. If you do not mind, I would like to improve my acquaintance with you." Rabastan essentially declared himself interested in Hermione as a potential mate.

I wonder how long he's been planning that? I'm so glad I read that book, horrid title or not. I have no idea what to do, so I guess I will just jump in feet first. "I'm unsure how to respond to you, Mister Lestrangle. Your interest in me seems rather sudden." She held her hand up when it looked like the headmaster was about to interrupt. "However, your request is made honorably, and I do not wish to cause you harm or distress. Therefore, I agree to a few limited meetings accompanied by a friend. Is that acceptable?" Hermione was amused to see the relief clearly etched on Severus Snape's face out of the corner of her eye.

Rabastan was clearly pleased by her response, which was reserved enough for a woman who was uncertain about a man, but courageous and secure enough to give him a chance. Hermione watched as he rose to his feet, took her hand and bowed over it, touching his lips to the back. "Thank you, my lady. I hope to prove myself worthy of you."

Draco, Ginny and Luna had inched their way up past the brawling students to see what was going on. "So, how did we all end up together?" asked Ginny.

"We were escaping the Wrackspurts, and the Nargles bound us together?" Luna's completely off the wall response gave the other two pause.

"It's a good enough reason, I guess, Lovegood. Now what are we going to do about that situation up there?" Draco had seen what was going on and was very curious.

"We provide chaperones who are completely willing to turn a blind eye. I'm guessing we can get the headmaster in on that. We should probably talk to Neville as well." Luna was currently looking at a star on the Great Hall's ceiling that appeared to be winking at her. "Oh, dear. I did tell Hermione those wishing-stars had strange senses of humor."

The students were all made to return to their common rooms by the headmaster after the distraction in the forms of Rabastan Lestrangle, Hermione Granger and Crookshanks had gone.

When Hermione reached her room, Lavender Brown accosted her. "What're your intentions toward Ronald, Hermione?"

"What do you mean, Lavender?"

"Don't play dumb. Are you planning to marry him?"

"I don't want to marry anyone right now. I'm too young. But I'd like to see where our relationsh..."

"Don't finish that statement. Pining looks and one kiss don't make a relationship." Parvati interjected angrily. "You don't have a relationship. At least not one where he thinks you are an equal." The girl held her hand up when it looked like Hermione was going to interrupt. "I'm going to tell you something, and I swear on my magic it's the truth." Her wand flashed with a white glowing light, so Hermione knew that whatever Parvati said next would be the absolute truth.

"Ronald Weasley may have told you that he was willing to have a relationship with you. What he means is that he is going to string you along until he is ready to marry you. You'll then bear his children and be his little house-wife whether you want to or not. He's been heard saying that he knows you don't think he would exercise his rights as a pureblood, but he will. That means you'll have to stay home and do as he wishes because you are of a lower rank than he is socially. He's been playing on the sympathies of both Lavender and Pansy Parkinson, and both of them are pregnant because the fool cannot cast a contraceptive charm properly."

Hermione took a deep breath and did a rapid mental assessment of the situation. *Anger, check! Deep hurt that my boyfriend cheated on me... No, still angry. Surprise? No, not really. Ron let fame and fortune go to his head. Disappointment that he is a worse pureblood supremacist than Draco? No... still angry. Interesting little voice saying I have an even better looking red-headed pureblood after me... hmmmmmmmm.*

Remembering something from the etiquette book, Hermione bowed her head. "My thanks to you, Parvati. I owe you a kindness." She then turned to Lavender and very unexpectedly said, "I'm so sorry, Lavender. Either you have to deal with Ron and don't want to, or you do want to and it's marred by Pansy. I'm so out of the picture, you would need omniscience to find me. But if you want any help getting back at him, let me know."

Lavender smiled through her tears. "Just... have... him... out... somewhere public tomorrow when you talk to him."

Hermione nodded, and all the girls went to bed.

Ginny had not gone up with Hermione to her room. Instead she sat in the common room thinking about the entire day, and how masterful Neville was and how well she got

along with Draco and the odd friendship she had struck up with him and Luna. *Oh, no! I need to write to my parents.* She scribbled out a hasty note, basically informing her parents of Ron's misdeeds and the unexpected courtship begun by Rabastan Lestrangle. Her last line was telling.

I am so sorry to have been the bearer of bad news. I think, Mum, that you need to give up having Hermione as an official Weasley. Ron really burned his bridges, and I'm afraid his temper is going to make that permanent tomorrow.

Love,

Gin

She ran out the common room door and almost ran Neville over.

"Sorry, Nev. I need to get this up to the owlery."

"That's all right, Ginny. How are you doing?" Neville's casual inquiry made her insides squirm.

She made a snap decision and smiled sensually up at him, while putting her hand on his arm. "I'm well, Neville. I love the way you handled both Rabastan Lestrangle and Ron today. And there are a lot of other things we need to talk about."

"Decided not to wait for Harry, did you?" Neville's almost mocking statement made her take pause.

"You kept me sane, Neville, you kept all of us sane. I don't know that I ever wanted Harry Potter as much as I wanted my own hero. When it counted, you were willing to have me fight at your side, and you made me a better person. You are my hero. It kind of worries me that Ron and Harry haven't grown up yet, but I think there is hope." Ginny's voice dropped out of seductive into pensive.

Neville's smile at her pronouncement really made her feel butterflies. "Good. I can take that. I just didn't want to be the one you settled for. Choosing me makes all the difference. I've loved you for so very long, Ginny." He leaned in to kiss her, when she yelped.

"Hold that thought! I really need to get this letter out!"

The two teens laughed, then grabbed each other's hands and ran up the tower to the owlery, stopping to steal kisses along the way.

Molly was awakened by the owl tapping the bedroom window. She threw back the covers, stood up and walked swiftly to the window, trying to make certain that the noise did not bother Arthur. She read Ginny's letter, with the obviously hasty post-script saying she had accepted Neville's marriage proposal and cried out in surprise.

At his wife's cry, Arthur popped quickly out of bed and joined her by the window.

"This may be for the best, love. Harry will never have to worry if Ginny wanted him or his title, and you know Hermione and Ron were never suited, as much as we would have liked them to be. I'm just afraid that either the Parkinsons or the Browns will come demanding restitution."

"But, Arthur, then we'll never see them again. I love them both like they're mine!" Molly's distress was evident in her voice.

"Not at all, Molly-wobbles. We will go to Hogwarts tomorrow and tell them how much they mean to us and that they'll always be family. You'll see, our family will just get bigger, we won't lose a one."

Molly nodded tearfully into Arthur's shoulder as he eased them both back into the bed.

The next day, Hermione was out by the lake bright and early, enjoying the breakfast Rabastan had provided for them out by the lake. Luna, their chaperone, was busy communing with Nargles, in the couple's line of sight, as required, but not paying much attention.

"I'm surprised none of you took the early NEWTs offered by the Ministry, Miss Granger."

Hermione turned to her partner and smiled at his interest. "Call me Hermione. In any case, I needed a bit of normalcy, as much as this madhouse can be called normal."

Rabastan's rich laughter made her insides flutter.

He took her hand up and kissed the back of it lightly. "You have my permission, nay, it's my wish that you use my given name, my lady. You're a delight."

Neither one had seen that Harry, Ginny and Neville were holding Ron back near the castle, to keep him from ruining the courtship.

"Stop it now, Ron," commanded Neville. "You know very well that he could call you out for interrupting a publicly acknowledged courtship."

"That back-stabbing whore! How dare she accept a courtship while I haven't decided whether to marry her or n..."

Ron had to leave off, as Harry punched him hard, re-breaking the nose Neville had broken the day before. "Never, ever, speak of my sister like that again, Ron. Next time I will use my wand and not my hand." Harry's icy voice and cold stare frightened Ron.

"Fine. I will break up with her as soon as that travesty of a courtship date is over. She's going to wish she never left me, though. You'll see."

At that moment, they saw Rabastan help Hermione to her feet, then bow to her and to Luna and depart.

As soon as Harry, Ginny and Neville let him go, Ron stormed over to where Hermione was standing.

Hermione looked up just as Ron stomped up to her. She was about to greet him when she registered what he was saying.

"You stupid, conceited, Mudblood bitch! Who are you to think you can do better than me, Ronald Weasley, hero of the final battle and part of the Golden Trio?"

Hermione just stared at him her eyes wide in surprise, then as Ron started to speak again, they narrowed and she pulled her wand.

She waved it at him and silenced him wordlessly.

Luna, Lavender, Pansy and the headmaster by this point had joined the small group at the castle, and they had crept up slowly on the arguing couple.

"How dare you, Ronald Weasley. You're the one who spent a cozy Christmas with your brother while Harry and I were out trying to find pieces of a madman's soul. You're the one who broke all tenets of proper behavior by impregnating two different witches at the same time. What did you tell them, that you were tired of me, and I meant nothing to you?" Hermione got some satisfaction when his eyes widened in fear. "But you expected me to wait around to become your little slave-wife under the old pureblood tenets. I have a surprise for you, Ronald Weasley." She turned around and saw that Draco Malfoy and Neville Longbottom were present along with Pansy, Luna and Harry.

"I, Hermione Granger, hereby declare the house of Granger to be a noble one, based on my status as a war-witch, who has fought and killed in my own defense. I claim all rights and titles that go with such status." Her wand glowed, then a bright aura encompassed her.

Draco saw his parents out of the corner of his eye, as well as the Weasleys and quite a few other people, and took a chance. "I, Draco, heir to the house of Malfoy, witness and accept your statement. Long live the house of Granger!"

Neville smiled. "I, Neville, lord of the house of Longbottom, witness and accept your statement. Long live the house of Granger!"

Luna straightened her bottle-cap necklace, then declared, "I, Luna, heir to the house of Lovegood, witness and accept your statement. Long live the house of Granger!"

With three separate houses acknowledging her status, Hermione had just gained the same rights as any pureblood.

The applause started somewhere in the crowd, and it swelled until it was a true cacophony. Ron looked around and realized he had no allies in the group. "Fine. It's over. You weren't worth waiting for anyway; I mean, who wants to live in a pile of books!"

He turned around to stalk off, when unnoticed by pretty much everyone except Rabastan, both Pansy and Lavender hit him with a hex. Unfortunately, the two hexes mixed badly, and Ron fell into the Black Lake in the form of a large trout.

As Rabastan tried to get to the edge of the lake, he was rebuffed by a strange wall of magic which confused him until he saw the Giant Squid break the surface of the lake, appear to nod to itself then sink back down. Knowing when to give up, he turned back to the drama behind him.

"Arthur Weasley, where did that coward of a son of yours go? I demand retribution!" came the voice of Pansy's father.

"I don't know, Parkinson. But I agree, your daughter should have retribution. My son received an annuity from the Ministry along with his Order of Merlin, and I'll have the goblins create a vault for the child and his or her mother where that'll go. He has no other income as of this moment, and I'm not certain that he ever will. Is that acceptable?" Arthur responded.

Mr. Parkinson turned to his daughter, who shrugged her shoulders and nodded. It was better than she expected, she didn't figure she would manage anything better than someone's second wife now, and this way she and the child would have enough. "Fine, then, Weasley. I agree."

The men shook hands. Unexpectedly, Molly stepped forward and hugged the startled girl fiercely. "You carry my grandchild, young lady. I want you to know that you'll always be welcome in my home."

Pansy cried into Molly's shoulder, not expecting the kindness.

Harry turned to Neville, Ginny, Hermione, Draco and Luna and asked, "Where did Ron go, anyway?"

"I just hexed him into silence, Harry. I don't know," answered Hermione.

"I didn't notice," said Ginny, with nods of agreement from Draco and Neville.

"I'm sure the wishing-star knows," Luna said, humming under her breath. "Or maybe Crookshanks. He's very good at finding people."

The others smiled, amused by Luna's observation.

Unbeknownst to everyone, Crookshanks had seen the large fish land in the lake. He went to the edge and meowed, garnering Rabastan's attention once again. He watched agog as his lady's familiar waited for something, making a noise that sounded like a chuckle.

"Heya, Seymour! Did you happen to see that worthless piece of familiar-poisoning trash that fell in here looking like a trout?" Crookshanks meowed.

"I most certainly did, my friend. He's currently being chased by hungry mer-people. You might see him again soon. You weren't the only one he tried to poison, you know."

"I didn't know. Well, that does explain your magical shield here. I'm just going to sit and wait. You don't mind if I do some cleaning while I wait, do you, Seymour?"

"Not at all, Crooksie! Be my guest. From the looks of things you have a couple of minutes."

Crooks sat down and proceeded to lick himself clean.

Rabastan figured the animal was speaking to the Great Squid, if the bubbles coming up from the lake were any indication.

Approximately three minutes later, a very large trout flopped onto the beach. Rabastan tried once again to reach the dying fish. *I must try, at the very least. I doubt my lady would like it if I just sat here and laughed.* He was again rebuffed by a powerful but strange shield.

Rabastan winced as he saw Crookshanks casually bend down and break the fish's spine. A piercing and triumphant yowl followed, which seemed to call all the cats out of the castle. They ate quite well that afternoon.

Rabastan headed over to Severus to tell him what happened.

"I can't say that little bastard didn't deserve it. Did you know he tried to poison me?" Severus asked. "Me! I'm the bloody Potions master, and he tried to poison me. I never did like that particular Weasley. Well, we'd better call his family up to the castle."

Harry, Hermione, Ginny, Arthur and Molly were perturbed at being called up to the headmaster's office, but they went nonetheless, not one suspecting what they were going to be told.

As they arrived at the office, they were met by Severus and Rabastan.

"My apologies. I did not want to give you the news I have to impart down in the crowd," Severus intoned.

His words seemed ominous, making his five guests clutch each other's hands.

"Please, Severus, just tell us," implored Arthur.

"Very well. Rabastan witnessed your son's rather gruesome demise. It appears that after the altercation with Miss Granger, he was hit by two different hexes coming from Miss Brown and Miss Parkinson. He was turned into a trout and fell in the lake. Afterwards, he seemingly was chased to ground by the mer-people, then eaten by Miss Granger's familiar and the rest of the castle cats."

"Meow!" Crookshanks wanted the people to praise him accordingly.

Hermione was uncertain as to yell at the cat or pet him. She also knew better than to ask whether or not transfigured human would cause indigestion. *Dad always said I had gallows humor. Wait, doesn't it say that the familiars at Hogwarts are spelled to prevent them from harming the students? Why would those spells fail?*

"Headmaster, could we please get Professor McGonagall in to see if she could find out why the animals behaved as they did; maybe she could explain how the student protection spells failed as well?" Hermione thought that was safe enough to request.

Severus nodded, then went over to his Floo and called for Minerva to join them.

Molly turned to Rabastan with tears in her eyes. "Why? Why didn't you help him?"

"Have you ever crossed the Great Squid? He has magic of his own which is quite difficult to overcome. Young Mr. Weasley must have offended him somehow. I did try, madam. I will submit to Veritaserum if you wish. I can put my memory in a pensieve. I could do no more than be witness." Rabastan knelt by Molly. "I am deeply sorry for your loss."

Just then, Minerva entered. When she heard what had happened, she shifted into her tabby form and meowed at Crookshanks.

He meowed back, and whatever he said made the hackles rise on the back of Minerva's neck. She shifted back quickly.

"That horrid boy! I'm sorry Molly, there must have been something wrong with him. He tried to poison Crookshanks and the Giant Squid. That is why the student protection charms failed. It is also why the killing of a familiar or sentient magical creature is a crime. If the perpetrators are not caught by wizards, the familiars feel no remorse at imparting their own judgement." Minerva was very upset. Killing a familiar or a magical animal like the squid was a horrible crime. She was even more upset that a young man she loved had lost his way.

Molly sobbed. Ron would have ended up in Azkaban had he succeeded in killing either Crookshanks or the squid; it was hard to realize her boy was lost to her; in any case, the wizarding prison may have improved, but it was basically still a death sentence.

Hermione was shocked. She wasn't happy with Ron, but she hadn't wanted him dead. Once the initial inappropriate reaction wore off, she began to sob quietly. Rabastan inched over to her.

"You have my deepest sympathies, my lady. But I do want you to know something. Those brains that attacked him in the Ministry made him vulnerable to mental attacks. Those months he spent near the Dark Lord's Horcrux, not to mention the time wearing it, broke down his normal function and left him largely susceptible to his darker impulses. The trout that died was truly no longer your friend." Rabastan was surprised when Hermione threw her arms around him tightly and sobbed into his chest. He really liked the feel of her, but remembered that he was there to provide comfort. He stroked her hair and rubbed her back, then led her to a sofa along the east wall of the office. As soon as he had sat them both down, Crookshanks leapt into his lap, curled up and fell asleep.

"I think he likes you." Hermione hiccupped through her tears.

"I'm glad he does," replied Rabastan with a smile. "I like him as well."

Hermione leaned into his strong embrace. This was not what she had envisioned when she made her wish, but her heart approved.

Harry turned to Severus and said, "Ron always did say that cat would eat him if it was given half a chance."

Many thanks to kyria of delphi, bunnyhops, and roseofthewest for the beta! I combined this Twisted Wish challenge with the following prompt from La Muse Amusant:

1. Whatever happened to Ronald Weasley? Only Crooksie and the Giant Squid know... and they aren't telling.