

When Harry Kissed Severus

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Mistletoe and Folly at the Yule Ball.

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Chapter 1 of 1

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A collective gasp -- quickly muffled -- went through the Great Hall as a beribboned sprig of mistletoe, floating in mid-air, settled directly over top of Severus Snape's head. A flicker of light from one of the nearby sconces glinted from the thread of silver in the ribbon holding the fist-sized bundle together.

The Yule Ball had been revived in Harry Potter's seventh and final year, and although it was not given in his honor, many of the staff believed the headmaster was expressing his approval for the boy besting the Dark Lord at Halloween, nearly two months earlier.

The knot of friends that included Ron and Hermione, Ginny and Neville, and the same Harry Potter all watched the enchanted bundle as it hovered.

"That bit's settled in for the night," Ron said, thinking it was one less bundle that could happen to pick either himself or Hermione to hover over. He'd been hoping for an excuse to kiss her in public. Not that he didn't in private, but it seemed more, well, interesting to be about it where everyone could see.

"I told you it was a bad idea," Neville said, not to his date Ginny, but to Hermione, who'd been with him on the decorating committee.

"I think it's a lovely idea," Ginny said, but then she had, to Neville's embarrassment, been a victim of the supposedly randomly drifting sprigs twice already. Since the mistletoe had been charmed to hover overhead until the recipient got kissed, she had gotten two hasty pecks from Neville, who'd been blushing furiously both times.

"We can't let it hover there all night," Hermione said, frowning.

"Don't see why not," Ron replied, thinking even one less chance to kiss his girlfriend would be worth it to see Snape leaving hours later with the mischievous plant still overhead.

Harry, who had not brought a date, pressed his lips into a thin line. "Only one way to get rid of it." He had a strange look in his eye, but Ron thought he almost always did these days.

"You're right," Hermione said, "I'll do it."

"What?" asked Ron, Neville, Ginny and Harry at the exact same moment.

"I charmed them; I should do it," she replied. "I can't just let it *hover* there all night. It's monstrous."

"Of course you can," Ron said, looking vaguely queasy at the thought of his girlfriend even close to the Potions master, much less...

"Well, I won't," she said, stubbornly, turning as if to go over to the alcove where Snape stood, staring into the crowd, giving every appearance of not noticing the scrutiny he was undergoing.

"Lips that touch Snape's will never touch mine," Ron said, grabbing her arm.

"That'll put a quick end to your plans for the evening, won't it?" she asked, pulling her arm away. With a determined air she marched over toward Snape.

The teacher gave her a cursory glance then went back to observing the dancing. Hermione, her heart pounding a bit more than she'd expected, said, "Excuse me, sir."

The dark eyes flickered downward, lingering a bit this time as though comparing her to a particularly common potion ingredient and finding her wanting. "Yes, what is it, Miss Granger?" he asked finally.

Hermione pointed upward, watching his head drop back. His neck really was very pale, she thought suddenly.

"Send it away," Snape said, looking back at her. "I've no time for such useless traditions."

"It's charmed to stay there until you, er, succumb to the tradition," she said, suddenly quite unable to say the word 'kiss' in front of her teacher.

"Is that what this is about then?" he asked, eyes narrowing suspiciously. "To get me out of the way to break this ridiculous charm while you and your friends perpetrate some..."

"No!" Hermione interrupted, suddenly very aware that the others were probably watching them. "You can't break the charm." She flushed. "It's a really good one."

"And how exactly do you know this?"

The flush felt warmer. "I, er, might have helped charm them." Well, it wouldn't have been any fun if the recipient could just wave their wand and blast the mistletoe away.

She was being stared at. He probably knew how good she was at charms, while she didn't know what else, besides potions, he was good at. Potions, and saving Harry, that is.

She was being stared at, but she wasn't being spoken to, she realized and breathlessly got up the nerve to speak. "So, since I, sort of, might have helped, it only seemed fair that I offer to...help you out with the er, tradition." And still no way to say the word 'kiss'. She wondered, a bit hysterically she was sure, if she'd have to draw lips on a piece of parchment to get across her meaning.

"Ah, the noble self-sacrificing Gryffindor," Snape said, and Hermione abruptly reached the end of her patience.

"Well, you could always see if Harry's willing to help you out since he's got this thing about *saving* people," she snapped, then stopped short, taken aback by the flare of...something in the dark eyes.

A hand cupped her chin, tilting it up. There was something in his expression that reminded her suddenly of Harry but she couldn't quite figure out what. "With your permission," he asked softly and she nodded, feeling like she had the first time Ron had kissed her, sort of fluttery, almost out of sorts.

Then, as if she were indeed about to kiss Ron, her arms slid around his neck as Snape bent down. Lips touched hers and might have moved away again if her arms, locking around his neck, hadn't pulled him closer. She felt the delicate brush of his hair along her forearms, thinking how deliciously sexy it was and maybe she could talk Ron into growing his hair long, when she realized Snape's lips were moving over hers. Not coaxing them open. Hermione knew Ron would never forgive her if she let her teacher inside, but the idea drew a little sigh out of her as she responded to the aching sweetness of it. And unlike that first kiss with Ron, Hermione felt her knees go weak.

Strong arms caught her, and from somewhere above her she heard a distinct swear word, one that Ron had certainly never used while kissing, nor at any other time in her hearing. The hands had gone around her waist. For some reason, she couldn't get her eyes focused. It was as if they'd decided, without even consulting her, to go cross. When they did decide to focus, she realized Snape was still looking at her but the hands holding her all but upright were moving away.

"Oh!" she said, eyes going very round. "Sorry! Must have gotten a bit, er, lightheaded." She pressed her lips together. For some reason they felt tingly.

"The punch, no doubt," Snape said dryly.

"What?" she asked, blinking. "Punch. Right." She cleared her throat and looked around as if just realizing where she was. "Could we, er. No, I suppose not."

From behind her another collective gasp went up from the students. Belatedly Hermione realized she hadn't checked to see if the mistletoe had scooted off to its next victim. A quick glance over Snape's head assured her it had. Even though she felt like straightening her dress, Hermione forced herself to simply nod and make her way back across the dance floor to her friends.

She'd rather thought that because of her daring, all eyes would be on her. Then she realized that her knot of friends was now the focus of attention and quickly saw why. Hovering over Harry's head was a neat bundle of mistletoe, its red and silver ribbon hanging a few inches from Harry's unruly hair.

Ron, not surprisingly, was looking murderous, all but tapping his toe in impatience. Ginny looked amused. Neville looked like he always did, a bit nervous, and Harry...Harry looked odd. He was ignoring the mistletoe exactly as Snape had and was looking at her, with nearly exactly the same glint.

"What was that all about?" Ron demanded as soon as she rejoined them.

"All what?" she asked, trying not to turn around and see what Snape was doing.

"All that swooning!"

"I did not swoon!" Hermione defended. "He's just, er, very focused."

"Focused?" Harry and Ron asked in chorus. Ron glared at Harry who ignored the glare.

"What's that supposed to mean?" Ron asked when Hermione didn't answer either of them.

"I think I'd like some punch," she said, smiling sweetly. "My mouth is a bit dry."

Just then Pavarti Patil came over to their group and blushing gestured toward the mistletoe hanging over Harry's head. "Don't be daft," he said impatiently. Her face went all over thunderclouds, much as it had at their first Yule Ball three years ago.

But then Luna Lovegood came over with several of her Ravenclaw housemates and soon Harry was in the middle of an ever-changing circle of girls. Colin had come over with Luna and gave Harry a look Hermione couldn't interpret. If it had been anyone else she'd have thought it meant 'I've got a secret,' but Colin was such a silly chatterbox he never had any secrets.

Harry shouldered his way out of the crowd, the mistletoe zipping along so fast to keep up the ribbon trailed along behind in a nearly horizontal line.

"Odd how it came off of Professor Snape's head to float over Harry's," Luna said in her usual dreamy voice.

Was that what the gasp Hermione had heard had been about? She turned to study Harry but he wasn't looking at anyone in their little cluster.

He was looking at Snape.

After a moment all of his friends had noticed that he was looking at Snape. A second after that, all the girls who'd tried their luck with the mistletoe noticed that Harry was looking at Snape. And in the way of large groups, when a portion of them are fixated in one direction, heads invariably turned in the same direction, so soon everyone in the Great Hall knew that Harry was looking at Snape.

Except, of course, in the classical finest farcical tradition, Snape himself.

The object of all this attention was leaning against the stone wall closest to where the Slytherin table usually sat, exactly where Hermione had left him only moments ago. Arms folded across his chest Snape was the very picture of unconcerned indifference.

Very slowly he looked up, not at the heads craned in his direction but at the one figure who'd started all this craning in the first place. Harry Potter, with mistletoe floating lazily over his head.

The music was still playing but no one was dancing except the slowly swaying couple of the Headmaster partnering Professor McGonagall. Then Harry was moving, crossing the dance floor where the crowd parted easily enough for him. Curious whispers followed behind him, though the mistletoe kept up easily. It really was a good spell, Hermione thought proudly.

Harry stood in front of his professor and watched Snape's eyes travel up, over his head where the bewitched bundle hung. A lazy smile touched the corners of Snape's mouth.

"Took you long enough," Snape drawled, pushing away from the wall.

"You were expecting me?" Harry asked, frowning.

Snape uncrossed his arms, his robes pooling softly around his feet. "As smugly confident as Miss Granger is in her charms, I'm perfectly capable of deflecting any bit of magic she can come up with. Deflecting, or altering it," he added.

Harry smiled, then sidled his eyes in either direction. "This is pretty public," he asked, voice low but shivery with erotic possibility.

"All that I will allow now while you are still a student and under my...care."

Harry let that melt over him like warm chocolate. 'All now' implied 'more later'. "So, this is my Christmas present?" Harry asked, taking a step closer.

"I rather think of it as the other way around," Snape said, grabbing a fistful of Harry's sleek black robe as though he couldn't wait another second.

Harry let himself be drawn closer, close enough to feel his professor's body heat. He knew from those frustratingly few times he'd been able to brush up against Snape that the Potions professor didn't smell remotely like potions. He smelled like an aftershave he'd seen the headmaster give Snape during one of those holidays Harry'd stayed at Hogwarts.

"So, I'd better make it a good one, then, if it's got to last," he said, lifting his face up, sliding his arms around Snape's neck.

"My thought exactly."

Unlike the kiss with Hermione, which Harry had watched very closely, there were tongues involved. Snape's mouth sealed over his, lips moving softly. Not to coax, for Harry needed no coaxing, but to increase the intimacy. His whole body was pressed against Snape's and even though he could feel his arousal checking in with its vote about how to end the evening, he knew that was not on offer. He pressed in harder anyway. He had a pretty fair idea of what both of them would be doing later this evening. Unfortunately, not together.

Snape's sense of propriety could be damn inconvenient even though Harry appreciated the relaxing of it for this particular holiday tradition.

The hands around his waist slid inside his dress robes, creating the most acute sense of intimacy Harry had ever experienced. Especially in a room full of people. A really *large* room full of people. The hands under his robes slid, undetected by anyone save Harry, around his arse, cupping him intimately. Harry heard, deep within the chest pressed close to his own, a groan. He grew, if possible, even harder.

He had an image of Snape bending him over backwards, ravishing his mouth, of hands moving around to the front, stroking him where he really needed, hands on his prick...

Over his head, the sprig of mistletoe, which had been hanging leaf and berry end down, suddenly up-ended, wobbled around Harry's head a bit crazily, then spiraled down to the floor. As soon as it hit, it burst into flames.

A commotion rose up at the smoky fire. Harry, smelling something burning, lifted his head only to have Snape brush his lips quickly one last time. Snape released one of Harry's arms and reached for his wand. Luckily Snape's left arm still held him partially upright or he might have swooned like Hermione. 'Focused' just so didn't begin to describe it.

With a simple spell Snape put out the mostly smoldering fire, then, still holding Harry's arm, leaned down and picked up the tattered little bundle. The red ribbon had singed and some of the dryer leaves had crumpled away. Snape broke off a bit and wrapped what was left of the ribbon around it, handing the rest to Harry.

Harry smiled as Snape tucked the ribboned bit into his own robe pocket, and, eyes smoldering like the ill-fated mistletoe, strode away. Harry put the remaining sprig of mistletoe in his own pocket. When he got back up to his room he was going to do a preserving spell on it. He was pretty sure it would last until the end of term.