

So Cold the Night

by karelia

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Chapter 1 of 1

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Must be my lucky day, Snape thought while fidgeting with the wards to enter his new flat off Camden High Street. The door opposite revealed the youngest Weasley male exiting with several trunks. *Ever heard of Reducio, dunderhead?* he thought, amused that some things apparently never changed.

Not lucky, then, as he found out in the evening. Sitting by his window watching the Muggle life on the road, a movement in the window across the street caught his eye. *Stop the histrionics, girl!* The girl in question was barely dressed and sobbing her heart out. *Time for bed*, he decided.

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Her tears lessened, her eyes gradually moving to stare out of the window. She made him shiver. *So cold...* He peeled himself away from the window to pay a visit to the off-licence. Some Scotch would not go amiss. Maybe sleep would come more easily.

"Professor Snape! I thought... I thought you were..." Her voice trailed off. She blushed.

"Miss Granger. Evidently, I am not dead." He inclined his head and continued his way. *It's her. I do not lust after students!* His reminder to himself was forgotten when he sat down by the window to gaze at her.

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A shiver ran down his spine as he watched her undress. *Does she have no shame?* Hot jealousy crept over his skin as her fingers caressed her skin, slowly running down the straps of her camisole. *Such fair skin...* He noticed his bottle was finished. *Damn. When did that happen?*

He started when they crossed paths again on his way to the off-licence.

"Professor." She nodded politely.

He stopped and wondered how she managed to dress again so fast. "Miss Granger." He, too, nodded politely and continued his walk, trying his best to banish her out of his mind.

I should move away... What a futile thought. He was far too obsessed with watching her in the window each night. His dreams were filled with her. And himself. His hands caressing her fair skin. His lips touching hers. His fingers making her cry out in bliss. *I can dream...*

His nights were filled with dreams. As were his days. All of her. Soon, he would join her in her window, stand behind her, take off her camisole, he dreamed.

For now, the nights were cold. So cold.

He wondered if any gods would hear him if he prayed.*Fruitless...*

He was startled when she greeted him with a smile, as if she were pleased to see him. "Good evening, Professor Snape!"

"G... good evening, Miss Granger." He failed at returning the smile, but must have looked pleased enough, for her smile widened. She offered a friendly nod before she passed him. He wondered if she would return in time for him to watch her in the window.

His evenings had turned into the most pleasant and most agonising voluntary routine he'd ever engaged in. Watching her every single move was exquisite. Being separated by an entire world was agony.

Not being her hands...or skin...was painful. His right hand...his, not hers, dammit...wandered downwards until it reached its aching destination. At first, it moved slowly, as if in unison with her slow movements. Then it sped up until striving frantically for its peak.

He jumped when the bell rang. *Who could this be...?*

His eyes widened when he saw her standing in front of his door.*Oh, Merlin, she knows...* He groaned inwardly, but managed to raise an eyebrow. "Miss Granger?"

"How much longer are you going to just stare?" she asked, one hand on her hip.

He gestured for her to enter, afraid for a terrifying moment she wouldn't accept.

Gryffindors! Even in thought, his sneer was less than half hearted.

She turned to face him at the bottom of the stairs. Slowly, she pulled her sweater off to reveal a peach-coloured camisole. It was light, yet in stark contrast to her fair skin.

Our children will rival the whiteness of the Malfoy peacocks, he thought and then shuddered. *No!* He was at her side in an instant. "Allow me." His voice wasn't his own.

With shaking hands, he caressed her fingers. "Beautiful," he whispered.

"Beautiful," she repeated, her voice trembling. "And yet, you wouldn't have made a move, would you?" Her hand slipped out of his and moved to his chin, turning his head so he faced her. Their eyes met.

He shook his head. "I'm unworthy. Too old for you. Too much of a past. You were a dream."

Her eyes widened. "You don't want..."

"Sh. Of course I do. Come upstairs. It's cold here in the hall." When she didn't move, he picked her up and carried her up the stairs into his flat and sat her down carefully on the sofa.

"Tell me you don't want..."

"No! I'll never tell you that! How much courage do you think it took me to come here?"

Her rage was magnificent.

"How much courage do you think it took me to time your outings and make our random meetings on the street seem just... random?"

What a goddess.

"You... you mean our encounters on the High Street weren't coincidence?" Her admission astounded him. So did his naïve stuttering.

"Of course not." She avoided his eyes.

"Hermione, look at me." He was pleased to see his teacher's voice was still holding an ever-powerful command.

She swallowed hard before meeting his eyes again.

"Do you mean...?" He was uncertain.

"Hell, yes, *Severus!*" She glanced at his window, its bench beneath it. "Comfortable spot you have there." The shadow of a grin.

"I don't have your stamina." He hoped to keep a neutral voice.

"Of course not." She nodded. "I guess Nagini's bite was nasty, its effects lasting..."

He smirked. "Perhaps I was just lacking someone to keep me young..."

"You have that now." It was barely a whisper.

"I do?"

"All winter long I've wanted nothing more than be..."

He silenced her with his lips.

Her moan was barely audible, only enough to send his courage soaring. "More?"

A pleading whimper answered him. He picked her up and carried her to the bedroom.*My treasure.*

She looked magnificent there, on his bed, her unruly hair spread out like a halo, her camisole as stark a contrast to her fair skin as ever.

Finally, he took it off to reveal all. Nearly all. He took off the rest of her clothes and gasped*Such splendour.*

"All this admiration is commendable, but I need more," she murmured. Her breasts had been tailored to fit his hands perfectly.

Finally...finally!...his hands touched her in all the places they'd been wanting to touch for months. Fingers worshipped skin from neck to breasts to stomach, caressed the soft hair before delving into hidden places.

"Yes! Don't stop!" Her need for him..*him*...was wondrous. Never before had a woman appreciated him the way she did.

His fingers continued caressing her until she cried out in bliss.

To his surprise, she led him from thereon, at first showing her appreciation with touches here and there until... "Come. Come inside me."

It took no further invitation, and soon both reached heaven.

She returned once to her window, for nostalgia's sake. The next time she entered her flat, it was to pack her belongings, which she then floated through the open windows to his flat opposite.

When he caught her wistful expression, he asked, frowning, "Are you all right?"

His witch smiled. "Never better!" she said and took his hand. Her small hand, too, fit perfectly into his larger one. "Tell me how you used to spend your evenings."

"Dreaming of you. Until the dream came true." Then he kissed her and carried her to his bed. The cold nights were forgotten.

A/N: Title and inspiration from the song "So Cold the Night" by Communards.

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