

# The Perfect Fit

by GeminiScorp

It was what she had thought she wanted...

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Chapter 1 of 1

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This was originally written for Alienor77310 in the the Autumn SS/HG Exchange over on livejournal. Thank you Alienor for such a fun prompt. (Hermione is happy living alone. She'd need a very good reason to give that up. What would that be?) Bunches and bunches of love to deemichelle and christev! I don't know what I would do without you guys.

~~A Perfect Fit~~

The door clicked shut and Hermione blew out the breath she'd been holding. Yet another night of listening silently as Severus slid out of her bed at some unholy hour of the morning and Flooded himself home. What the hell? He didn't have a problem shagging her silly but...what?...he couldn't deal with seeing her the next morning? Was he that disturbed by her unruly hair that he couldn't stand waking next to her? When she really thought about it, she couldn't ever remember a time she'd woken up next to the wizard other than on their short holiday to Paris. What a glorious two days that had been.

A soft whoosh from the living room signaled his departure, exasperating her even more. She rose from her bed, flicked on the bedside lamp and slid her feet into her slippers. His side of the bed looked as if no one had been lying there moments before. The pillow was perfectly fluffed and the coverlet was smoothed.

With a huff she marched to the bathroom. It was already after four so she might as well get a head start on her day. She reached for her toothbrush, squeezed on a bit of the paste Severus had made special for her and scrubbed violently at her teeth. She couldn't believe how upset she was by the fact he left. She had never wanted to share her space with another man after Ron. For years after her split she had sworn off relationships. But Severus was different: he never imposed.

Opening the cabinet to put everything away, she realized that though his toothpaste was in her hand, Severus' toothbrush was not in the cabinet. She had watched him brush his teeth just last night after they'd eaten curry. Glancing around her bathroom, she couldn't find a trace of him anywhere. No shampoo, no hairbrush, not a robe, not one single toiletry.

Her heart felt heavy as she stepped out of the bathroom and started looking around her flat. They had been seeing each other for two years; surely there should be some hint that the man spent time in her home. A lot of time.

The main room was tidy as usual, the only clutter the books taking up every spare horizontal space...which she didn't think of as clutter at all. Clutter was abandoned socks and shoes, half-empty beer cans and dirty plates. Clutter was one of the many reasons she had left her ex-husband. At least Severus and she had the same idea about what was an acceptable mess. Using her wand, she set the books to their rightful locations on the book shelf. She frowned at the lack of the pile she was sure would be left. Surely he had left a book or journal here. With as many evenings they spent reading and researching together there had to be a *Potions Quarterly* lying around here somewhere. Running a finger over the spines on the shelf, she read the titles, quickly coming to the conclusion that she was the owner of every last one.

A quick perusal through the rest of her apartment did not turn up even one item of Severus Snape's. There were no male clothes in her bedroom, no severely tailored cloaks in her front closet, and his favorite tea could not be found in her kitchen cabinets. There was not one thing that belonged specifically to him.

"Not even a stray hair on the floor," she mumbled to herself.

Making her way back to the bedroom, she flopped down on her bed and before she knew it the tears started to fall.

~~ss/hg~~

Hermione had walked out on Ron years ago and left what she had thought was her only chance at a relationship. They'd been all wrong for each other, and had she listened to her heart she would never have married him in the first place. They were opposites, and as the years wore on, it became more and more evident.

"Ron!" she had shrieked on that fateful day, walking into the chaos that he'd made in their kitchen. "How can one man make this kind of a mess?" There was mud all over the floor, dishes overflowing the sink, and he had left the refrigerator open!

"Do you honestly expect me to clean up after you when I've worked all day? I've had it with this type of shit. I know you know housekeeping spells and I suggest you get your arse in here and do them now!" she yelled as she walked into the garden.

She'd had no idea she had an audience. Six burly Aurors sat around the table chugging Muggle beer...Ron's drink of choice...and snacking on what looked to be every ounce of the food she had purchased the day before.

Ron, royally pissed and more than a little embarrassed by her tirade, started screaming at her in his stupid, slurred, drunk voice, "Fuck you, Hermione. This is my home and I'm the King of my Castle! I'll do as I please. Shut your mouth, you little harpy, and do your job. A wife is supposed to take care of her man," he grunted derisively, "not that you've ever known what that entails."

She looked around at the faces, some laughing and smiling, some looking shocked at Ron's words, and something broke inside of her.

For too long she had been the adult in their relationship. She cooked, cleaned, shopped, took care of the bills, disciplined the children, and tried to have an adult relationship with a husband who insisted on acting more immature than the kids. She was done.

She had packed and stormed out of there faster than his tiny little brain could process it.

She purchased a flat in Hogsmeade two days later, as far away from Ron as she could get, and made a home for herself. The kids spent most of the year at Hogwarts and summers were spent equally between her and Ron. Rose and Hugo had been devastated by the news of the divorce, but soon adjusted to the differences. She knew it was hard on them, though. She took solace in the fact that she was so near to them as they finished school. Many Hogsmeade weekends were spent laughing with her children when most parents didn't have such an opportunity.

She moved her apothecary business from Diagon Alley, and it had positively bloomed in the Scottish wizarding town. She didn't have the same competition, and after settling in she'd bought a parcel of land in the countryside. Access to such fresh ingredients gave her potions a definitive edge. She'd even taken away business from her strongest competitors in London.

That was how Severus had become part of her life. Still teaching at Hogwarts, he would stomp into her store once a week, sneer at her derisively, comment on her wares, and then stalk out. She had taken it all in good stride and started giving him the same when he would visit. A sarcastic comment or a scathing look, followed by an intelligent question and a small smile from her would fluster her former teacher. An hour or two of conversation usually followed. It was over a year before she realized how much she valued his friendship.

Severus had been the perfect confidant for her. He had listened, and really heard her, as she spoke of growing up in such a dark time with Harry as her best friend, had understood what had drawn her to Ron and ultimately what had driven them apart. Understood her stance to never ever have another relationship like the one she had with her ex-husband. It took another year for her to realize she wanted more than his friendship, even if she didn't want another live-in mate.

Post-war Severus was different. Calmer, more patient...even with the dunderheads he taught...and sweeter. He'd probably hex anyone who called him that, but to her it was that sweetness that had been her final undoing.

A particularly nasty bug had every witch and wizard in Scotland in dire need of Pepper-up Potion, and brewing sixteen hours a day for a week had brought her to the brink of exhaustion. Severus had his hands full making sure Hogwarts was fully stocked, but he had found time to come to her rescue.

With a sweep of his hand a cot had appeared in the corner of her workroom.

"You're asleep on your feet, you silly chit. You're more likely to poison these poor, sick sods than cure them. Now go lie down and let me finish this up." When she just stood there staring at him, he took her by the arm, laid her on the cot, and covered her with a thick conjured blanket.

When she awoke, her orders were filled and she had enough extras to restock her shelves. He'd insisted on taking her to dinner and walking her home. It was the first time he had set foot in her flat. Though she had tried, he wouldn't allow her to thank him, so when he said his goodbye that night she had thanked him with a kiss. A kiss that he had deepened after the initial shock had worn off.

It had only taken her almost another year to get him into her bed. And now she didn't want him to leave.

It was hard at first to share space with someone other than the kids, but he was always so accommodating to her idiosyncrasies and her moods. Never over staying his welcome, never just popping by uninvited or unannounced, and never, ever making a mess.

"And never staying the night," she whimpered into her pillow.

Damn him! He was doing exactly what she had wanted and needed him to do before, but not anymore.

Things change.

~~ss/hg~~

Hermione glanced at her watch and groaned. Only two minutes had passed since she had looked at it last. It felt more like an hour.

After her epiphany that morning she had Owled Severus a special dinner invitation and set about making some changes to her flat. Her room now had his-and-hers closets, an extra shelf had been added to the bathroom cabinet, and after a major shopping spree her kitchen was stocked with all of his favorites. She had bought him a robe and slippers, replaced the worn towels he complained about with thick, fluffy ones and removed the flowered wallpaper he despised from her bedroom. She'd even bought a couch she thought he would find more appealing. Everything still looked the same; the additions were hidden under Glamours she had placed. She didn't want to alert him to the changes before she had a chance to talk to him. She still wasn't sure he would want to cohabitate with her.

She heard the Floo roar to life and tried to settle the butterflies in her stomach. She felt like a schoolgirl.

"Hermione," he greeted her with a smile. After using his wand to remove the ash from his clothes he kissed her lightly and made his way to the coat closet. "Something smells delicious."

"Lamb chops, Brussels sprouts, and savory herb pudding," she answered. Her attention was more on the way he placed his robes perfectly on a hanger. Before he fastened the buttons, she caught a glimpse of a small leather satchel also on the hanger. How was it that she had never noticed that bag before? Was that where he kept all of his personal essentials?

"Mmmm, all my favorites. Did I do something to deserve such special attention?" he asked while wrapping his arms around her lightly.

She looked up at him and smiled nervously. "How do you know you're not forgetting a special date? Perhaps it's an anniversary?"

"I think not," he stated. "It was a beautiful June day the first time I stepped foot in your shop. Our first kiss was November 18th, our first date November 20th and the first time we made love to each other was on August 17th. As this is February, I think I am safe." He kissed the top of her head and made his way to the kitchen.

Hermione stared dumbfounded after him. "How do you remember all of that? The only date I knew for certain was the last." Her faced reddened at the admission.

"I remember everything," he said, as he walked back into the room, a bottle of merlot and two glasses in his hand. A wandless command and the wine was decanted. He poured two glasses, handing one to her, and led her back into the living room. "I need this. The students were particularly dense today; they exploded another four caldrons, making it twenty-seven for the year. A new record, I believe," he grumbled as he pulled her down to sit next to him on the couch.

She forgot until it was too late that Glamoured objects do not feel the same as they look. Severus stiffened next to her as her typically unyielding couch gave way to cushy comfort. His fingers twitched for his wand.

"Hermione?"

"Umm..." she stammered. Hell! She had meant to serve him dinner first...there was something to the phrase *the way to a man's heart is through his stomach* wasn't there? After he was well fed she was going to show him the changes she made and hope she wouldn't have to spell it out for him. How was a witch supposed to ask a man to move in with her anyway?

"Finite," he ground out slowly.

She must have taken too long to answer.

The long black couch and bookcase shimmered into view, and the man to her left stood up.

His neck swiveled back and forth taking in the changes. Raising an infamous eyebrow at her, he took off to assess the rest of the house.

Hermione sat there with her head in her hands. After all this time, and all of her emphatic declarations that she would never share space with another wizard ever again, she felt foolish in her actions of the day. Severus seemed to like the way things were. Certainly he would have confronted her had he wanted more.

"Ahem," he cleared his throat.

When she didn't lift her head, he sat next to her and wiggled a slipper-clad toe, just within her line of sight.

"I like them. They fit perfectly, my dear." He wrapped his arm around her shoulders. "I like the other changes too. Especially the removal of that god-awful wallpaper," he finished with a laugh.

She finally looked up at his smiling face and whispered a thoughtful, "You do?" She noticed he had donned the fluffy black robe along with the slippers. It gave her courage.

"Do you want to explain? Or should I guess?"

"I... I got tired of you leaving. Every morning you left, and until recently it hadn't bothered me, but I started looking around and nothing here said Severus Snape. It was all Hermione Granger-Weasley and I didn't like it."

She stood up and motioned to her book case. "Not one of these books is yours, although we read together every night. I could smell your shampoo in my shower, but there wasn't a bottle sitting there for me to use," she paused, silently cursing how weak she sounded, before going on. "Do you know I could not find one thing that you owned in my entire flat? It made me sad."

"I thought that was the way you wanted things, Hermione. I remember many conversations on how you felt living with a man wasn't all that it was cracked up to be. The sex wasn't enough of a trade off for becoming their mother, nursemaid and house-elf all in one. Something you adamantly refused to do again."

"I did feel that way, but now... well, you're not like that! You never ask me to do anything for you. You never want more than I give you. The minute I feel the least claustrophobic you leave. It's like you read my mind!"

"I just listen very closely and am excellent at following directions. You made it clear you did not want more than a companion who went on his merry way at the end of the night. Or morning as it has been lately."

"But what do you want? You've made concessions for me. Never asked for anything in return. And I've been too selfish to notice."

"Hermione, I took what you were able to give me. It suited me. I did not want another Master either."

"I would never..."

"I didn't mean it like that," he interrupted quickly. "I thought the restrictions you placed on our relationship were what I wanted and needed, too."

"And now, Severus? Is it enough? Because it doesn't feel like enough to me anymore." Her voice was deep with emotion.

Severus stood and made his way to the closet. He pulled out his leather satchel and opened it. "I took a page from your book and spelled my bag to carry everything I need. I believe it has my entire library, most of my potions stores and numerous items of clothing. I've been living from this bag for over a year, careful to never step over the line you set, but always ready for any opportunity to be with you.

"Am I to understand the alterations you've made to the flat are an invitation?"

"They are," she squeaked.

With a flick of his wand, the bag expanded and out shot clothes, books, a silver tea set, a ratty old green recliner, a file cabinet, and numerous other items that seemed to dance through the house, placing themselves neatly in the appropriate places. Within a minute the bag was empty and Severus turned his attention to a wide-eyed Hermione.

"Are you all right, my dear? You did invite this," he said, wrapping his arms around her. "I can always pack up if it's too much.

Hermione peeked over his shoulder at the additions to her living space. For a moment she panicked before she realized that everything blended and fit perfectly with her belongings. Just like the man who held her so tenderly in his arms.

"No, Severus. It's a perfect fit." She kissed him, whispering softly, "Just like you," before leading him to her...no...their bedroom.