Anger Will Get You Everywhere

by ader_snape

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Chapter 1

Chapter 1 of 1

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"It was a grave transgression on your part, Severus." Lucius Malfoy fixed him with an icy gaze. Severus knew it was for show. The Board of Governors was still watching him closely for signs of favouritism, even eight years after the War.

"The boy almost exploded his cauldron for the second time in one class period. And it was due to pure negligence. If he had succeeded, he would have seriously injured himself and most of his fellow students," Severus explained in a tone as icy as his counterpart's stare.

"Nevertheless, we cannot allow your reaction to go unnoticed." Wallen Mayther, a newer member of the board, piped into the conversation. "Professor Snape, we could very easily ask for your resignation. The boy's parents are most adamant that we do. But we feel that would be overly severe for your actions, considering you have no other outbursts of this level on your record."

Severus stared at the plump man. "Never before have I had a student as careless and stupid as Jeremy Nethers." He said the name as if the words themselves tasted bitter.

Mayther pursed his lips. "The Board has decided that in lieu of your resignation, you must attend an anger management seminar."

Severus sat straight up in his chair in surprise and rage. "You cannot be serious! Anger management seminars are for people who yell over petty things such as spilt ink and being accidently bumped into on a busy street!" Severus's face was turning red as he continued. He was only vaguely aware of Minerva's elbow cutting into his ribs, but chose to ignore it. "I keep my anger inside!"

"Yes. We believe that to be part of your problem," Mayther said impatiently. "You do not handle your anger properly. Your choice is simple. Go to the seminar or tender your immediate resignation." His tone left no room for argument.

Severus made an impolite noise. He had no desire to attend such a seminar. No doubt he'd be forced to talk about his feelings with whatever strangers were taking the class with him. But he also wanted to keep his job. He was currently Minerva's Deputy and was looking at a promotion to Headmaster in a couple of years when she retired

"I will go to the seminar," Severus said. I can always decide later to resign if the seminar proves too much, he thought to himself.

"I had hoped you would see it our way, Severus," Lucius said with a sly smile.

Severus sneered at him. "Are we finished here? I have a class in fifteen minutes."

Mayther pulled a piece of parchment out of his bag. "You'll need to have your instructor fill this form out and seal it with his wand. You will be on probation until you have

finished the workshop. Any indiscretion during this time will be grounds for termination without pay. If you understand these terms, please slide your wand along this line," he said, indicating the bottom of a second piece of parchment, "and you will be free to go."

Severus stood up, hastily swiped his wand along the indicated line, and stalked out of the room without a second glance.

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The room looked more like an office than a courtroom. The walls were painted an off-white. There was an oversized desk at the front of the room with five name plates that were, at the moment, blank. Opposite the desk were two smaller tables with rather uncomfortable-looking chairs. Hermione sighed and took a seat at the table to the left.

She hadn't really prepared anything for her defence. She had done everything she was being accused of. She had verbally attacked her former boss and then exploded his desk using a charm of her own making. It made it impossible to put the desk back together magically. She, of course, would agree to pay for all damages. It was just a civil suit, after all. What more could they ask from her?

Just then, a sound from behind her pulled her out of her ponderings. She turned to see Dirk Shalts walk through the door. He had a deceptively charming air that put most people at ease as soon as he walked into a room, and an attractive smile that made most women weak at the knees. But not Hermione. She saw past all of the fake flatteries and pompous charisma. Dirk was nothing more than an arrogant bureaucrat who used his influence and position in the Ministry for his own gain and comfort. And Hermione had had enough of working under such a jackass. The particular day in question, he had chosen to approve a new regulation allowing privately owned businesses to deny service to werewolves and other "half-breeds." He had only done so to gain election funding from one of the old families who had been cited for refusing to allow a customer into their shop because he was a known werewolf. It had sent Hermione over the edge when she had heard. And her actions had landed her here.

As she settled back into her seat, the front door opened, and the five members of the Wizengamot overseeing the suit walked into the room. As they took their seats, the name plates shimmered as the names appeared. Hermione groaned as the last name settled into place: Agnes Umbridge.

You have got to be kidding me, she thought. She had had no idea Dolores had had any family. She was doomed. Perhaps the other four members would outweigh anything Umbridge would say. But a chill wiped out any thought as a high-pitched "ahem" rang through the room.

"I see both parties are present," Umbridge said in a sickly sweet voice that was proof she was related to the vile woman Hermione had hated so much. "Shall we begin?" She pointed her wand at a quill and parchment and they both levitated into the air, poised for the session to begin.

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Hermione sat at the table, waiting for the council of five to come back with its decision. Testimonies hadn't lasted long. Shalts had recounted the day's events and then had summarised the damage done. When asked if she had anything to add, Hermione had declined to comment except to express her sincere regret for her actions. The council had thanked them for their input and excused themselves to deliberate.

Twenty minutes after they had left, they filed back into the room. With a flourish, Agnes Umbridge stood and straightened her periwinkle robes. "The council has carefully reviewed and discussed the case for which we are here." She looked at Hermione with smile and an evil glint in her eyes. "We have decided that the defendant, Hermione J. Granger, shall pay a fee of 55 Galleons to the Ministry of Magic, Department of Labour, for the replacement of damaged and destroyed property."

That's reasonable, Hermione thought. But her relief was short-lived as Umbridge continued.

"In addition to repayment, we are also requiring you, Miss Granger, to attend an anger management workshop. This display was an obvious sign of an underlying problem. This needs to be addressed."

Hermione leapt out of her chair in outrage. "Underlying problem?! This is outrageous! Anger management workshop?! You can't be serious!"

"I assure you that I am serious. It seems that even in a court of law, you are unable to control yourself." Umbridge's smile grew larger. "If you do not complete the seminar, you could be subject an additional fee and criminal charges."

Hermione slumped back into her chair. Merlin, she hated Umbridges.

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Severus walked into the room with a sneer on his face. Minerva had practically begged him to attend. The room was wide open with a circle of chairs, and there were a few people mingling by a table set up with a scant amount of breakfast food. He decided to hover against the wall near the door; he did not want to socialise with these people if he did not have to.

A few minutes had passed when a familiar curly-headed woman walked through the door. *Granger?* he thought. She had had her fiery moments, but who wouldn't, dealing with those two dunderheads her entire life?

Her hair was still as bushy as ever, only now the strands were more defined as curls than just a mass of frizz. She currently had the curls confined to a tight bun at the nape of her neck with a few stray tendrils hanging here and there. Her jaw was set, but her expression gave away little emotion. She glanced around the room, noticed Severus, who did not acknowledge her presence, and then gave a resigned sigh and walked over to where he was standing.

This day will be long enough without the jabbering of the Golden Know-it-all, but she will insist on it, it seems Severus thought wearily as Hermione made her way toward him, stopping next to him with her face forward.

"Nothing better than being cooped up with a bunch of nutters with anger management issues, is there?" she said in bored, monotone voice.

Severus couldn't help but smirk. Perhaps Miss Granger would be better company than he had originally thought.

"Indeed, Miss Granger."

"So, I'm here by court mandate. Blew my boss's desk to smithereens. What are you in for?" Hermione said casually. The woman made it sound as if they were in Azkaban. Then again, they were in a room with concrete walls, against their wills. All that was missing were the Dementors.

"I, apparently, mentally scarred one of my students. His parents complained loudly enough that the Board of Governors gave me the choice of resignation or this." He paused. "I'm still considering resignation."

Hermione gave a small laugh. "Hufflepuff?" she asked with a hint of arrogance.

"This coming from the girl who defended Longbottom throughout his first few years at Hogwarts. My, my, Miss Granger. Your compassion level has certainly dropped since your time at Hogwarts."

She finally turned her head to face him. "Is that such a bad thing, Professor Snape? And it hasn't dropped. It's just become..." ...she paused thoughtfully... "selective."

Before he could formulate a response, there was a loud clatter from the front of the room. The frumpy man in front straightened his glasses as he quickly gathered the stack of books and folders that had fallen from his arms.

"Clumsy me!" he exclaimed in frazzled but cheery voice. "Ah, yes. Right. Well, if everyone will please take a seat, we will begin for today."

Severus held his arm out to Hermione. "Let the torture begin." She grinned as she took his arm, and they walked to the ring of metal chairs.

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Hermione wished she had thought of a cushioning charm before they had sat down. Her rear end was numb from these stupid Muggle chairs. The hard metal was ridiculous. How could anyone be expected to sit in them for three hours? She looked at her watch for what felt to be the fiftieth time that morning, only to discover two minutes had passed since the last time she had glanced at it. She shifted in her chair again.

Her mind started to wander as she thought about her former professor sitting next her. They had had an amiable conversation. And a slightly witty one at that. It wasn't exactly the dark, nasty man she had grown up knowing. The war had changed him. He was finally free of Voldemort. Surely that would change anyone. Or perhaps it was simply because she wasn't a student anymore.

She snapped back to reality when the frazzled seminar leader, Mr. Dodson, said the word "break."

"We'll have an hour lunch break now. There are several eateries in the area, or you may stay here for sandwiches. Please be back here precisely at one o'clock. We'll be starting the exercise part of the seminar." He smiled. "You are dismissed!" he said a little too cheerily.

Hermione turned to ask Snape what he planned on doing, but before she could get words out of her mouth, he had pulled her up from her chair and was guiding her out of the room. Slightly annoyed at being dragged out of the room, she jerked her arm out of his gasp.

"What are you doing?" she demanded, giving him a scandalised look. He looked slightly confused, but only looked around the corridor.

"Getting us out of there before any of the others tagged along. Forgive my hastiness. I did not mean to offend you," he said genuinely.

She sighed. "Just warn me beforehand next time you decide to manhandle me?" He nodded and gave her a smirk. "Now, Professor Snape...," she started.

"Severus." Hermione blinked. It was his turn to sigh. "You are no longer my student. I would prefer if you called me Severus. Is that a problem?"

Hermione smiled. "No. No, it's not." She cleared her throat. "So, Severus, where should we go for lunch?"

He held out his arm for her to take. She took it. "I believe I saw a small café across the street." They walked out of the run-down recreational centre, chatting as if they had been friends for years.

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The lunch hour proved too short for Severus's liking. Not just because he did not even want to ponder what that lump of a man, Mr. Dodson, had in mind for the "exercise part of the seminar." It was more for the fact that he was enjoying Miss Granger's company. Her brilliant mind had not dulled in the least. If anything, her mind was sharper than ever. He'd had very few occasions that did not necessitate his dumbing down of a subject in order for his partner to keep up. But with Miss Granger, he felt parts of his brain getting a workout that it had not experienced in quite some time.

As they walked back to the small recreational centre, Severus found that he hoped the exercises called for partners. It would surely make the time go by more quickly. And then he found that he did not want the time to go by quickly if he was with Hermione.

As they walked into the room, he felt an odd confliction. But he soon forgot it as Hermione whipped out her wand and quickly waved it over both of their chairs. As she sat down, she sighed in relief as he eyed her suspiciously.

"What?" she asked incredulously.

"What did you do to my chair, Miss Granger?" he said in low voice.

She looked at him in amusement. "I put a Burning Hex on it." His eyebrow shot up into his hairline. She laughed. "I put cushioning charms on our chairs. Just sit down, you silly man." She reached up and grabbed his arm to pull him down. He sat and was instantly glad she had blown up her boss's desk.

"Thank you, Hermione. This may even make the rest of the seminar bearable."

She smiled and turned to the man in the middle of the circle.

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Four o'clock finally came. Everyone's papers were signed, and they were dismissed. Hermione was almost disappointed that it was the end because she knew she would be saying goodbye to Severus. She doubted they would just run into each other outside of anger management seminars.

They were both very quiet as they walked out of the building and onto the street. Severus was the first to break the silence.

"Well, I did enjoy today much more than I had expected." He shifted almost awkwardly. It would have made Hermione giggle if she hadn't been so busy awkwardly shifting around herself.

"Oh, yes. Me, too," she replied. She so badly wanted to ask to see him again, but found herself worried that he would scoff at her eagerness to see him.

"I guess this is goodbye, Hermione," he said, tipping his head slightly in her direction.

"It was good seeing you, Severus." She stopped. And then, before she could stop herself, blurted, "Perhaps I'll pop by Hogwarts sometime. To see you." She could have melted into the sidewalk. What was wrong with her? Severus didn't answer immediately. He just looked at her, and then took a step back.

"Yes, perhaps." And he Disapparated. Hermione stood frozen in that spot staring at the place he had just stood. She was confused. She threw her hands up in exasperation.

"What the hell does that mean?!" she said forcefully. As if in response, there was a loud crack, and Severus stood in front of her once more. He strode up to her, took her in his arms and kissed her.

It was heated and passionate, but soft and nice all at once. He pulled back and looked into her eyes.

"Forgive me," he whispered. She looked at him in confusion.

"For what?" she asked. Certainly not the kiss. That had been amazing. She cocked her head to the side as he smirked.

"For not forewarning you about the manhandling." His eyes twinkled like she had never seen before.

Thank Merlin for asshole bosses and dunderheaded students, she thought as he tightened his grip on her waist and Disapparated them both off the street.

THE END

A/N: This was the piece I wrote for the Winter 2012 SSHG Exchange. It was so much fun to write, and I hope you enjoy reading it. Many thanks to my lovely beta, AmyLouise, and my great Brit-picker, of_anoesis.	