

Safe In Your Arms

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Hermione gets frightened during a thunderstorm.

Chapter One

Chapter 1 of 1

Hermione gets frightened during a thunderstorm.

She hated thunderstorms. She hated them more than anything in the world. She pulled the blankets around herself more tightly, as if they would protect her from the storm.

Hermione chewed on her lip in concentration. *This is useless!* Sighing, she pulled her knees up to her chest and laid her head down on them. She was trying to focus on her reading for her Transfiguration Apprenticeship, but just couldn't. Not when it was storming outside like crazy and she was all alone.

Casting a Tempus Charm, she groaned when she saw it was almost two in the morning.

Where was Severus? Why wasn't he back yet?

Severus had gone to Malfoy Manor for his usual drinks with Lucius. She knew the two of them were best friends and they got together weekly to catch up. But he was usually back by now.

A roll of thunder sounded out. She closed her eyes, taking a deep breath. She needed to calm down!

Hermione usually slept in her own rooms, but she couldn't tonight, not when the storm was raging around her. So she had sought refuge in Severus' rooms. Whispering the password, she had crept inside, hoping to see him sitting by the fire. But the only thing that greeted her was silence.

That was three hours ago.

She still couldn't sleep so she was sitting on Severus' bed, a book in her lap and Crookshanks curled by her feet.

Vaguely, Hermione wondered what Minerva would do if she came in here and found Hermione. She didn't exactly condone their relationship, but she didn't stop it either. Her only rule was that Hermione slept in her own bed and that it didn't interfere with her studies.

Hermione had returned to complete her seventh year shortly after the war. The year had gone by quickly, and before she knew it, Minerva was offering her a Transfiguration apprenticeship. She gladly took it.

When she returned the next year, Hermione had realized with dread that she would be around the other professors more often.

Severus and her had started arguing almost instantly. He critiqued her study skills while she often pointed out he was a rude and snarky bastard. It had started out as fights, but slowly had turned into teasing.

They both were oblivious to their emotions, until Ginny acutely pointed it out one night. Hermione refused to believe that she fancied the older wizard, but after Ginny's comment, Hermione couldn't look at him the same.

Mustering up her courage, she asked him to Hogsmeade for drinks. It was awkward at first, but the two of them ended up having a good time. That was around Christmas time and it was now late April.

The two of them were happy in their relationship, and Hermione couldn't imagine finding a better wizard for herself. She needed someone mature and smart, and Severus fit the bill perfectly.

Ginny and Harry were ecstatic for the two of them. Harry had respected him greatly after the War and was pleased that he had found a bit of happiness.

Ron was not happy for them at first, but after a severe scolding from Lavender and Molly, he came around.

Of course when Skeeter found out, she wrote a nasty article about the two of them, stating that their affair had started when she was under age. Of course, everyone knew this was rubbish and Rita was quickly discredited.

Luckily, the school board did not have any objections as well. Severus technically wasn't her teacher, only Minerva was.

But they were happy, and that was all that mattered.

Sighing, Hermione picked her book back up. She tried to read, but failed miserably. Minerva would be disappointed tomorrow when she would quiz Hermione on the material. Groaning, Hermione flung the book across the room.

It thundered, the castle shaking. Hermione immediately tensed up.

Well, the castle didn't actually shake, but Hermione felt like it did. Walking towards the window, she was grateful that Severus' rooms were beneath the Black Lake. She couldn't see the flashes in the sky, but she knew they were there. And that was enough to keep her away.

Crookshanks meowed, calling Hermione's attention. Turning, she scratched him behind the ear. "Where is he Crooks? He's never out this late." The cat meowed once more. Leaning over, she scooped him up and pressed a kiss to his squashed face.

Hermione hated to think that she was acting desperate, but she just really wanted to see Severus. When she was frightened like this, it was usually his embrace that helped to calm her down. But she was alone, and she really wasn't sure what to do with herself.

Her fear of thunderstorms dated back to when she was a child. She remembered a particularly nasty storm one year when she was home alone with her Mum. The two of them were huddled up in the kitchen as the storm of the century raged around them. She was six. The thunder was loud and scary, frightening her.

Hermione would never forget it. A bolt of lightning had struck a tree in her backyard. She watched in horror as the tree caught on fire, quickly spreading. Their garden shed had caught aflame, along with the fence.

No one was hurt, but it was enough to frighten Hermione. She had never gotten over the fear, no matter how unrealistic it seemed. There was no way a stone castle could catch on fire, but she still feared it could happen.

She heard the thunder and immediately clutched Crookshanks tighter. He gave a protesting mewl and wriggled free from her arms, taking off into the darkness.

"Thanks Crooks," she muttered. "Coward."

"What exactly do you think you're doing in my chambers?" a smooth, baritone voice spoke out.

Hermione screamed, just as another roll of thunder struck. Turning, she saw Severus standing in the doorway. "Severus! You're back!" She jumped off the bed and ran towards him.

He caught her in his arms, pressing a kiss to the top of her head. "What are you doing here?" he repeated again, pulling back to look at her.

She blushed. "The storm was bothering me and I couldn't sleep. So I decided to come see you, but you weren't here."

"Hermione, I forgot about your fear of storms. I would have come back sooner," he hugged her tighter. "I'm sorry."

She pulled away from the hug slightly. "It's okay, Severus... I'm with you now and that's what matters."

"I can't believe you waited that long. Hermione, it's almost three in the morning," he said, tucking a curl behind her ear.

"I couldn't sleep," she protested. Her fingers grasped the front of his robes tightly, not wanting to let him go.

"You really should go back to your rooms," he stated, watching her.

Furiously, she shook her head. "I won't be able to sleep. I'm staying here with you tonight."

"Very well, but if Minerva finds out, it won't be me she's mad with, understood?"

"I accept full responsibility," Hermione said, a smile on her lips.

Severus leaned down and brushed his lips against hers. "Get into bed, I'll be right back," he murmured before going to the bathroom.

Hermione smiled. She already felt better. Crawling into bed, she waited for Severus to reappear.

Moments later, he returned. He had taken off his robes and was now just wearing his boxers. They hung off his hips just right, exposing the perfect amount of skin. Hermione grinned at him mischievously.

"None of that," he muttered, lifting the duvet so he could get into the bed.

Hermione ignored him, sliding up to his cold body. She wrapped her arms around his waist, burying her face into his side. "How's Lucius?"

"He is all right. I was there rather late because Lucius is out of sorts. The Greengrass family has finally accepted Draco's proposal for Astoria's hand. Lucius is finally coming to the realization that his only child is about to get married."

"Sounds like he's having his mid-life crisis," Hermione murmured.

Severus chuckled. "Yes, I suppose he is." He looked down at her and noticed she was still shaking. "Are you okay? I know storms bother you, Hermione."

She nodded, breathing in the familiar scent of sandalwood. "I feel better now that you're here, Severus."

He smiled at her. "Good. Now you need some sleep. I will not have Minerva telling me I kept her apprentice up all night and is now unable to perform in class."

"Okay," she whispered, feeling rather sleepy. She pressed a kiss to Severus' bare chest. "I love you."

"And I you," he replied, leaning down to kiss her brown curls. "Goodnight, Hermione," he whispered into the darkness.

"Goodnight," she whispered back. She held onto him tightly, knowing that if he were there, everything would be all right.