

The Benefits of Revenge

by *BellatrixLives*

What happens when two conniving Slytherins and one vicious Gryffindor team up for revenge, and how does it concern the feared Potions Master and War Heroine Hermione Granger?

Prologue

Chapter 1 of 2

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Prologue

~ Parkinson ~

Pansy Parkinson taps her foot impatiently and lets out an annoyed sigh. She peers around the corner of the alcove she is hiding in, trying to find him.

Late as usual, she thinks.

Just as she is ready to give up and head to class, she spots a distinctively handsome face heading towards her. As he passes, she reaches out of the alcove and grabs his arm, pulling him out of the sight of others passing down the hall.

"About time, Blaise! I thought you weren't coming."

"Sorry," he apologizes, "I got held up by Flitwick. He was remanding me for not studying hard enough. As if I care! I only came back because my mother threatened to disinherit me if I didn't pass my N.E.W.T.s."

Pansy rolls her eyes.

"Yes, yes, I know. Which is exactly why I figured you would want in on this."

"In on what?"

"My revenge plan," Pansy says, smiling evilly.

"Revenge on who?"

"On our bastard Head of House, Snape! It's his fault we're here!"

"I thought I just said it was my mother's fault?" Blaise asks.

"Ugh, I swear sometimes you can be as thick as Draco. If Snape hadn't turned out to be a traitorous *Muggle lover*, then you would never have had to return to school. Do you really think that someone with *your* blood status would actually need his N.E.W.T.s under the Dark Lord's reign?"

"Well, no. I suppose not," he says, shrugging.

"Exactly! That is why Snape has to pay."

"How did the Dark Lord's fall impact you so greatly that you are this desperate for revenge?"

Pansy crosses her arms and puts on the nastiest sneer she can manage.

"Well, as of the end of the war, the Malfoy name is in tatters. As you know, I was supposed to be marrying into ~~that~~ *great family*, but now they are practically destitute since the Ministry confiscated most of the contents of their Gringotts vault to help the rebuilding fund after the war." She pauses dramatically to flip her dark hair. "So, now I have had to return here to get my N.E.W.T.s to make myself a better catch, in order to snag someone better than Draco, or, Merlin forbid, get a job that pays enough money to keep me happy."

"I see. I must say, you have my interest, but you'll have to tell me more about your plan before I agree to help."

"Well, naturally. I wouldn't expect anything less from a fellow Slytherin."

Pansy starts describing her plan in great detail, pausing only when Blaise cannot contain his laughter. When she finishes, he has a look of absolute glee on his face.

"Oh, yes. You can most definitely count me in!" Blaise exclaims.

"You can count me in too," says a light female voice, from behind Pansy.

She flips around quickly, drawing her wand, and is surprised to see Lavender Brown smirking at her. The girl must have been listening just outside the alcove and heard Pansy's whole plan.

"This doesn't concern you!" Pansy growls, raising her wand until it is level with Lavender's chest.

"No, I think it does. I know you are doing this to get back at Professor Snape, but didn't you say you would need a student as well? I know the perfect one. Using her will make things all the worse for Snape," Lavender says.

"Who?" Blaise asks.

"Hermione Granger."

Blaise lets out an appreciative chuckle, and Pansy finds herself secretly agreeing that Lavender has a point.

"Why would you do this to your fellow house mate?" Pansy asks.

"Because I hate her," Lavender spits out. "That bitch is the reason my boyfriend dumped me. She won't even date him, but he still holds out hope and refuses to talk to me! I might have gotten over it if I were given the chance, but, almost everyday, I hear someone talking about the goddess-like war heroine, Hermione Granger!"

Pansy slowly lowers her wand. She can tell that Lavender is telling the truth behind her motive. If there is one thing Pansy can recognize, it's hatred.

"You'll need to collect some of her hair," Pansy tells her, stowing her wand back in her robes. "And you'll also need to be able to lace something you know she will eat."

Lavender gives a loud snort, and shoots Pansy a sarcastic look.

"The hair will be easy; that mangy bush leaves loose strands *everywhere*. The food will be pretty simple as well. She keeps a tin of cookies from her mum in her nightstand. She has one every evening while studying in bed."

Pansy nods her approval.

"That will be perfect. The timing is right on as well. Snape has a cup of tea every night while grading papers," Pansy says, looking back and forth between Lavender and Blaise.

"How on earth are you going to manage getting that into Professor Snape's tea?" Lavender asks.

"He uses the same cup every night," Blaise says. "I have seen it separated from the rest of the school dishes a few times when I've snuck into the kitchens."

"We are going to lace the cup with it," Pansy says, smiling.

"And getting Professor Snape's hair? That can't be easy," Lavender offers.

"I have a plan."

"Do you have the potion?"

"I've had it for a month," Pansy tells the other girl. "They say it is more potent the longer it sits."

"It's true...I've seen it," Lavender assures her.

"This is going to be *amazing!*" Blaise laughs.

Pansy gives her two conspirators another evil smirk.

"Meet me here tonight, after dinner, and bring some of Granger's hair," Pansy tells Lavender. "I'll have the potion for you then. In the morning, after Granger leaves the dorm, sprinkle it on *one* of the cookies and cast a charm that draws her eyes to that one. I want this to happen tomorrow night."

Lavender nods, and then hurries off out of the alcove.

"Are you sure you can trust her?" Blaise asks.

"Yes, I'm sure. She is out for revenge, and I can sense that she, like me, will not rest until she gets it."

* * *

As Pansy enters the potion lab, she glances around the room, her eyes glittering maliciously. She finds Granger easily enough; she is sitting next to Potter's ginger-haired girlfriend.

Ginny Weasley, she scoffs inwardly, filthy blood traitor.

Pansy takes her normal seat next to Blaise and notices Draco watching her from the back of the room. She shoots him a withering glare and turns her attention to the front of the class.

It doesn't take long for Snape to come busting into the classroom.

Oh, for Merlin's sake...cut the act already. Everyone knows you're a bleeding heart Muggle lover.

He gives the instructions for the day's lesson and Pansy immediately sets to work on her potion. She tries to manage her potion as best she can while being distracted with the plan, waiting for the opportune moment to make her move.

Here he comes.

Snape begins making his rounds, checking over everyone's potion.

"Your hue is off, Miss Parkinson," he tells her in his most bored tone. "Too many lacewing flies."

After he moves on, Pansy sneers and rolls her eyes.

Almost there... almost. Just one... more... cauldron... over. There!

Snape is standing right behind her, inspecting Neville Longbottom's potion. Pansy holds her wand under the table and flicks it, causing a stack of books in the far corner of the room to topple. Snape's head, along with the rest of the class, swivels toward the distraction, allowing Blaise to levitate a frog spleen into Longbottom's potion.

The reaction is instantaneous. Neville's potion explodes loudly, spraying the Potions master with the thick orange liquid and causing him to fall backward into Pansy.

Pansy places her hands on Snape's back, as if she is trying to help set him right, and carefully plucks one of his long black hairs. She quickly pockets the strand as Snape stands up.

He is giving Longbottom one of his legendary frightening glares, and the cowardly Gryffindor is shrinking beneath his gaze.

Pansy has to work hard to keep from laughing. As she gazes around the room, she notices Lavender Brown staring at her questioningly. She gives the girl a very slight nod, and a small, satisfied smile. Lavender lights up, then looks away, trying to remain inconspicuous.

Let the games begin.

~ Brown ~

Lavender wakes up in the best mood she has been in for as long as she can remember.

Today is the day, she thinks. I will knock that relationship wrecker off of her high horse. We'll see if Ron still wants her when he finds out she isn't the perfect little princess he has always imagined.

Lavender takes her time getting out of bed and heading to the bathroom. She wants to be sure she is the last to leave the seventh year girls dorm. She hums merrily as she styles her hair, taking extra care while curling her long golden locks.

"Are you coming, Lav?" Parvati calls from the door, to the bathroom.

"Go ahead without me," Lavender tells her. "My hair is being stubborn today. I'll meet you in the Great Hall."

Parvati nods and hurries away, leaving Lavender all alone.

Perfect.

She rushes back into the girl's dorm and wards the door. Lavender pulls out the small phial of potion Pansy gave her the night before and uncorks it to add a long dark strand of hair that had belonged to Professor Snape. She gently swirls the potion until the hair dissolves.

Mischievous smile on her face, Lavender makes her way to Hermione's bedside table and pulls out the tin of cookies. She opens the lid and very carefully drips some of the phial's contents onto a cookie in the center, and then adds a Notice Me charm.

As she re-corks the potion bottle, Lavender gets a subtle whiff of summer's breeze and leather.

I love the smell of Amortentia.

A/N: This story is already written, and completed in twelve chapters (including the prologue and epilogue).

A special thanks to HazelThorn1989 for the beta!

Flights of Fancy

Chapter 2 of 2

A plan set in motion...

~ Granger ~

Hermione sits in the Great Hall eating breakfast while listening to Ginny talk on and on about an upcoming Quidditch match, wondering how on earth she can miss the boys so much, when it sounds as if they never left. She gives a small sigh as Ginny begins talking season statistics and picks up a piece of bacon to munch on.

I miss my boys, she thinks sadly.

Harry and Ron are some of the few who decided not to return to take their N.E.W.T.s.

Due to the stress of the war and the final battle, most of last year's seventh year students didn't take their finals. In an effort to get things back to normal, Hogwarts had invited all those who were interested to return for a semester. They are to attend normal, seventh year classes, and then, at Christmas break, they will take their N.E.W.T.s.

Hermione, of course, did not even hesitate to send off her acceptance of the offer, and she was only mildly surprised when the boys laughed in her face and told her they would not be joining her. Harry had already been accepted into the Auror training program, despite not finishing school. Though Hermione was disappointed, she had expected no less.

Who would turn away the boy that saved the Wizarding world?

Ron was also offered a place, but he turned it down, saying he'd had enough fighting for a lifetime. Instead, he chose to take up working with George at the joke shop. Hermione remembers him telling her that, after seeing so many people dying, or crying, he just wanted to see people laugh.

She understands their decision not to return to Hogwarts, but it had still hurt to find out that she would be returning alone. When she had said as much to Ginny, the fiery redhead had boxed her on the ear.

"Aye! Thanks for that. Glad to hear how you really feel," Ginny joked.

"Oh, you know what I mean! I've never really been without the boys before... and after a year on the run, sleeping in the same tent, it is going to be strange without them."

Ginny had nodded sadly and wrapped an arm around Hermione's shoulder.

"Don't worry, I'll keep you so busy, you'll be asking, 'Harry who?'"

Hermione is pulled out of her thoughts by Ginny nudging her arm.

"If my Quidditch talk was boring you, all you had to do was speak up," she smiles. "Now we need to head out, or we'll be late for Transfiguration."

"No, sorry. I'm just feeling a little sad this morning," Hermione says, standing up.

"Missing our boys?"

"Just a bit."

"I know. Me too."

On their way out of the Great Hall, Hermione notices Lavender staring at her, a mysterious smile on her face.

That can't be good.

"The harpy's staring at me," Hermione mutters to Ginny.

"She really holds a grudge, doesn't she?" Ginny laughs.

"It's not funny! I'm not used to being so openly disliked."

"Oh, really? So I suppose all those years of Malfoy taunting you were just foreplay?"

"By people in my own house, I mean," Hermione explains, trying not to blush at the thought of foreplay with Draco Malfoy.

"Well, I think you should stop worrying about it. What is she going to do?" Ginny asks as they round the corner of the Transfiguration hallway. "If anything, I say you should piss her off more."

"Why and how would I do that?"

"Because it would be funny, and by dating my brother, of course."

"Ginny," Hermione groans, "how many times must I tell you I am not interested in Ron that way? In fact, how many times must I tell him? He is my friend, and that is all. I don't want to mess that up."

"Blah, blah, blah. I know."

As they walk through the door of their classroom, Aberforth Dumbledore, the new Transfiguration instructor, greets them. He has taken over for McGonagall since there is no way for her to manage both teaching duties and her headmistress duties.

"Why, if it isn't one third of the Golden Trio!" he booms loudly at Hermione. "Good morning, my dear."

"Good morning," she says, having to fight to keep from frowning.

She hates all of the attention the teachers bestow upon her. No one treats her like plain old Hermione Granger, the know-it-all, anymore. Instead, they fawn and fuss over Hermione Granger, the war heroine who helped defeat Lord Voldemort.

That's a lie, she corrects herself, not everyone treats me like that.

Severus Snape doesn't treat her any differently than he has in the past while he was so deeply undercover. Whereas some students complain, saying he doesn't need to play his part anymore, Hermione finds his behavior comforting. His complete indifference keeps her down to earth and makes her strive even harder to garner any type of positive reaction out of him.

Just like the old days.

She has always had a high level of respect for Professor Snape...well, except for that year when she thought he murdered Professor Dumbledore in cold blood. Her respect for him has only grown since his true loyalties were revealed. She sees him as the true war hero, much more so than she sees herself. She views him right up there at the top, with Harry, and truly believes they would have lost if not for his sacrifices and hard work.

During her first day back to Hogwarts, Hermione had tried to approach him to apologize for leaving him in the Shrieking Shack.

"We thought you were dead," she whispered.

"I would expect no less of someone with *your* magical capabilities," he had sneered. "If only you would have had a book with you to give you the answer."

"Sir, I am so deeply sorry."

"I do not require your apology, Miss Granger. I had adequately prepared for that outcome. My body was pumped full of anti-venom and Blood-Replenisher. I did not need any further assistance. Now, go. Leave me in the peace I have surely earned," Professor Snape demanded.

Hermione and Ginny sit near the fire in the Gryffindor common room, with their books out after a long day of classes, trying to study, that is, Hermione is trying to study while Ginny complains about the Potions master.

"I mean, really! Three feet of parchment on how to properly brew yesterday's potion because Neville messed up? It's really not fair. My potion was fine," Ginny pouts.

"Your potion was twice as thick as it should have been," Hermione reminds her.

"Shut it. Whose side are you on?" Ginny jokes.

"I'm on the side of your education. If you want to do well on your N.E.W.T.s, you'll have to work harder."

"I have a whole extra semester after you take yours...I'll be fine. I think," the redhead mumbles, paging through her potion book.

"I'm going to go upstairs and read for a bit," Hermione tells her, gathering her things.

"What the bloody hell were you just doing?"

"I'm going to read for fun, that is."

Ginny shakes her head, not understanding Hermione's thirst for the written word.

Not many people do understand, Hermione thinks sadly as she climbs the stairs to her dorm.

Hermione piles all of her school things into the trunk at the foot of her bed and readies herself for the night. She changes out of her school uniform into a plain, short, red nightgown, and then pulls her hair up into a loose clip.

Ever since her time on the run, Hermione has found herself indulging in silky, completely impractical nightwear. After a year in flannel and long johns, she needs to feel just a bit more feminine.

When she is done in the bathroom, Hermione climbs into her bed and pulls out the latest book she is invested in. It is an old tome, containing the largest compiled source of information on house elves. She hopes for S.P.E.W. to make a comeback one day and wants to be fully prepared.

As she flips through the dusty old pages, Hermione feels her sweet tooth kick in and remembers the delicious chocolate chip cookies her mum had sent her, waiting in the nightstand. She eagerly pulls the drawer open and grabs the tin.

When she peels the lid off, she is struck by the smell of her mother's cooking. She grabs a particularly good-looking cookie and quickly devours it.

After placing the tin safely back in her drawer, Hermione turns her attention back to the book she was reading.

House-elves have, for many centuries, served the most noble houses in the...

Hermione's eyes become unfocused and the book slides from her lap, hitting the floor with a loud thud. Black eyes, dark hair, and perfect lips haunt her mind. Her body begins coursing with the need to see *him*... the only man in the whole world who matters to her.

Severus. My Severus. I need to see you.

"I need to see him," she whispers, "right now."

Hermione launches out of bed and just barely has the frame of mind to throw her school robes on over her short nightgown. She hurries for the stairs and bumps into Lavender on her way down.

"Where are you going?" the girl asks her.

"I have to see my Severus," Hermione urges, pushing past her.

She doesn't notice the wicked smile on Lavender's face, or the patronus the girl summons.

Hermione stumbles across the common room, past a confused and ignored Ginny, and out the portrait hole.

I must get to the dungeons. I miss him so much!

Somehow, Hermione manages to make it all the way to the dungeons without encountering anyone, and she is glad because she doesn't have time to chat. She must get to Severus; he is probably wondering where she is.

Hermione decides to try his office because she has no idea how to get to his private chambers. Her heart is racing, pounding heavily in her chest, as she approaches the door.

She raises a quivering hand and knocks.

He'll be happy to see me, right?

She hears soft footsteps coming from inside the office and holds her breath.

The door before her swings open and Hermione's heart almost bursts in relief at seeing him in person.

"Severus," she breathes out happily.

Severus's face is an angry mask looking down at her.

"Miss Granger," he snaps, and suddenly his whole body relaxes. He looks down at her with wonder. "What took you so long?"

Before she can prepare, Severus sweeps her up into his arms, holding her in a tight embrace, and kisses her.

Fire shoots through her body, and she pushes herself harder against him, wanting more contact.

Without breaking their kiss, Severus steps backwards and leads her inside his office, slamming the door behind them.

Both are so caught up in their passion that neither sees the camera flash from the hall.

A/N: *The next chapter is rated NC-17. It opens up from Pansy's perspective though, so if you wish to skip the racier aspects, read through her section and head to the next chapter.*

Also, special thanks to HazelThorn1989 for the beta!