

To Touch You Again

by Alison

Where is Hermione's favourite place in the world? Wherever Severus is.

Complete short story

Chapter 1 of 1

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By Alison Venugoban

"It is with deep regret that we announce the passing of the former Chief Minister of Magic, Hermione Snape, after a sudden illness. Madam Snape was ninety-eight.

"She was of course best known for her instrumental role in the defeat of the Dark wizard, Voldemort, and later for her tireless work within the Ministry of Magic, fighting for many years for the rights of marginalised Magical Creatures before becoming Chief Minister, a post which she held until four years ago when increasingly fragile health forced her retirement.

"Madam Snape is succeeded by a son and two daughters, five grandchildren, twelve great-grandchildren and two great-great-grandchildren.

"She will be laid to rest in accordance with her wishes with the other members of the Order of the Phoenix who have passed over, in the Memorial Cemetery on the grounds of Hogwarts School for Witchcraft and Wizardry, in a plot beside her husband Severus Snape who passed over seventeen years ago at the age of one hundred and two.

"Other members of the Order buried in the cemetery are of course household names to most Wizarding families the world over: The Chosen One, Harry Potter; the Great Strategist, Albus Dumbledore; Spy Master Extrordinaire, Severus Snape..."

Leaving the radio droning the names of the Dearly Departed, I got up and stared out at the night. The clouds that had been threatening snow all day had cleared now, and the stars were shining brightly. The nearly full moon leant the snow outside a surreal appearance, gilding the blanketed landscape.

I'd been there when she'd died earlier that afternoon. She looked so little and vulnerable it had broken my heart. My brave, strong girl was old now, bedridden, her once riotous curls silver. I'd watched as our eldest daughter, Serena, held her hand until the last.

I glanced at the clock ticking on the mantelpiece. Almost time.

Turning from the window, I strode from the room and out into the corridor. It was long and dim, lined with many doors. Our deeds in the Order, and later Hermione's good work for the marginalized, meant that we had many places we were welcome to visit.

I kept my old rooms in Hogwarts out of habit, although I used to be just as happy with Hermione in the house where our children were born. But for this special occasion, I wanted the place where Hermione had spent many hours as a student and then later countless hours researching a plan to use for the Dark Lord's defeat with Harry Blasted Potter and Ronald Weasley's no doubt gormless aid.

Stopping at one door, I opened it quietly. There was the Hogwarts library, dim, deserted and quiet now in the moonlight.

Hermione was sitting slumped over a table that was covered with open books. Her head was pillowed on her arms, and her lashes made dark smudges against her cheeks as she breathed in and out slowly in sleep. Her hair, once again, was a riotous mass of chestnut locks, and her face had the soft roundness of a young woman once more.

I knelt beside her and held my hand in front of her face, just close enough to feel her warm breath tickle my palm.

"Wake up, Hermione," I said quietly.

She stirred, opening her eyes. As they met mine, she smiled and sat up slowly, stretching. "Oh, it's happened then? I passed over?"

I nodded, smiling back at her. "Yes. It was very peaceful. I've just come from home."

At this Hermione gave a little start and looked around. She turned back to me with a delighted look. "Severus! How did you arrange for me to come here?"

"I had a word with Albus, who leaned on the current Headmaster. But honestly, Hermione, don't you know we're welcome anywhere? There'll be no dusty attic for us."

"I don't care where we go, so long as we can be together," she said quietly.

I put my hand over hers, and her eyes widened in delight. "We can touch again!"

"Of course we can." And then, because I felt my heart must surely overflow with love if I didn't, I leant forward and kissed her, for the first time in seventeen long years.

The next day, a few students idly noticed that there was a new painting in the Hogwarts library. It was of a young woman wearing old-fashioned robes. Sitting beside her was a severe-looking man with black hair and dark piercing eyes. The students paid them little attention, busy as they were with homework or assignments. So they didn't see that the man and woman in the portrait were holding hands.

The End

Author's note: If you liked this story, please have a read of my original story "Love Inhuman" at this link:

<http://www.thepetulantpoetess.com/viewstory.php?sid=11932>

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