

Music From Another Night

by kiss_of_cuteness

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Chapter 1 of 1

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The lithe body of a blonde woman glided gracefully onto the terrace. Her form exuded all the characteristics of which women desire possession: beauty, confidence, wit and amiability, but the most coveted quality she possessed was the elusive charm that made her an object of fascination.

Another woman followed her out the door. Although the two appeared to be approximately the same age, the second had no ethereal qualities to attract the eye. She was petite; her wild hair overshadowed her sweet face. Her large brown eyes were framed with long lashes and her rosy mouth quirked upwards at the corners.

Sitting down on a wooden bench, the first woman began to talk. "Hermione, I shouldn't have come. Your mother-in-law always cooks enormous amounts of food. I'm quite bloated; I don't think I've eaten so much in years."

Hermione protested against the unflattering image the blonde painted of herself. "Nonsense. You look splendid."

Looking up, the fair-haired woman answered dismissively, "It's the dress."

"It's you, Luna."

"Everyone has lovely dresses in France," the slender woman began to prattle. "It is the Mecca of fashion, of course. They say, a long time ago, that there were wizarding schools of fashion. I can finally hoist my bottle-cap necklaces on the general populace and tell them it's fashionable, and they truly believe it. Can you imagine?"

Hermione didn't answer. She pushed some hair behind her ears and listened to the young woman thoughtfully.

"Ron is growing more handsome every day," Luna said firmly. Hermione agreed with a nod of her head. Luna was not satisfied and continued, "You must love him very much."

Hermione paused for a moment before answering. "I do."

Luna stood up and walked towards the garden fence. She placed her slender hands on it and looked out into the pasture beyond. "I'd make a terrible wife," she said dreamily, not really focusing on the situation and merely saying the first thing that entered her mind.

"You would." The answer from Hermione came out solidly, as if there could be no other answer. Luna's infectious laughter reverberated throughout the bushes, causing several garden gnomes to surface from under the soil.

"You haven't changed a jot, Luna," Hermione sighed, seemingly amazed at the possibility.

"I don't see how you thought I could be so terribly changed," Luna countered lightly. "Silly Hermione... for once, there is something in her life she doesn't know beforehand."

"You laugh and call me silly. It seems as I was still in my final days of Hogwarts." Hermione's voice came near to yearning.

"But you aren't." Luna's tone allowed for no discussion of the subject.

Stillness fell over the garden. The two women stood in silence for many moments, contemplating what to do, what to say. They stared at the moon, as if it could give them guidance by lighting a path.

Hermione finally broke the silence. "Ron wants to have a child."

A genuine smile lit up Luna's face. "You should. You'd make a splendid mother."

Hermione's eyes became hopeful. "Do you really think so?"

"Of course," Luna replied. "I remember how you mothered Ron and Harry. You already have the experience."

Hermione spoke with hesitation. "It'll be a lot of responsibility."

"Since when have you shunned responsibility? I think you were the only thirteen-year-old ever entrusted with a Time-Turner."

Hermione blushed a deep red at the compliment. Her cheeks were flushed to match the colour of her lips.

Luna continued, "If it's a daughter, she'll be just like you at school – incredibly smart, but wide-eyed and innocent."

"Was I really that innocent?" Hermione asked in a voice littered liberally with naivety.

Luna smiled warmly. "Yes, Hermione, you were."

"Well," Hermione replied in the authoritative tone that Luna knew so well, "you were no practiced seductress yourself."

"I distinctly," Luna emphasized the word, "remember asking you to dance at your graduation."

Hermione smiled at the memory. "I was so shocked. After all, it was something that just wasn't done."

Seeming pleased with the topic, Luna continued, "And I remember thinking how beautiful you were." She smiled wryly. "And what an attempt at a dance..."

Hermione blushed again, abruptly changing the subject. "Are you still living with Donna?"

"Yes."

"Do you love her?" It was a bold question, and Hermione waited on tenterhooks for the reply.

Luna sucked in her breath, tilted her head, opened her mouth to say yes, but thought better of it and instead answered, "No." She turned her face towards the moon and began to ramble nervously. "I shouldn't have come back; I don't know what to say now. I really wasn't expecting this." Luna had lost all of her poise. "You have a life here, a life with Ron."

"There are other lives," Hermione insinuated.

Luna straightening her back, steeling her resolve. "Not for you. You didn't come to France." As determined as she was, her tone had become wistful, as if she longed for the memories that had never been created. "And I'm too rebellious for this life."

Hermione fidgeted for a moment then, as a slow tune was heard from the inside of the building, she inquired, "Would you like to dance?"

Luna shook her head. "Not here. Not now."

"Why not?" Hermione challenged her stubbornly.

Sighing, Luna answered, "Why not?"

The two turned to face each other. Hermione's arms reached up to Luna's shoulders. Luna's arms encircled Hermione's waist. Hermione absently played with Luna's long hair, breathing in her scent, the scent of dewdrops.

Luna smiled as she felt Hermione's heart quicken. "Being out here, in the moonlight, it almost seems as if the years have never passed. Your lovely eyes are still so wide."

"Nothing has changed!" Hermione's plea was passionate.

"Yes, Hermione, things have changed."

"They can't if we don't let them!" Her voice was full of desperation.

Luna's heart was wrung. She brought a hand up to the smooth skin of Hermione's cheek and wiped a fallen tear away. She was still the same Hermione, not only wide eyed, but also innocent. "No Hermione, for tomorrow the sun will rise, and tonight will be just another lovely, lingering memory."

They danced in the night until the music drifting from the open door stopped, and even then they held one another for a moment, neither wanting the moment to end. Luna placed her fingers under Hermione's quivering chin and gently brushed the waiting lips with her own. A chaste kiss was all that she could trust herself to accomplish before pulling away from Hermione, once again leaving them alone.

A/N This is a present for AniDragon as a part of the gift exchange on fiction-net.org. Thank you to slytherinheiress (Kristin) for her amazing job betaing. It has also been nominated at Multifaceted for best Femmeslash fic; please take the time to go vote.