

The Plight of the Prince

by broomclosetravenclaw

A potions experiment goes awry with unexpected results. Hermione vies to be Snape's assistant.

A gift for lady_rhian in the ss/hg exchange.

One-Shot

Chapter 1 of 1

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Disclaimer: The characters are not mine. I just like to take them out to play from time to time.

A/N: A gift for lady_rhian who requested, "a one or two-chaptered PWP, HG/SS, post-Hogwarts smutfest... whether it comes about because of mutual research, or working together for the Order."

Thank you to the lovely Southern_Witch_69 for betaing.

The cauldron bubbled beside her, a faint green mist swirling just over the top. Hermione strained to keep her eyes open, watching the clock, only three more minutes. She thought back idly over the past month. How Snape had suddenly appeared at number twelve, Grimmauld Place.

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Ron and Harry had been off searching for Horcruxes, Ginny had gone to the Burrow for a few days, and Lupin and Tonks had gone undercover for the Order. She had been reading in the drawing room, sitting amongst stacks of books on the Dark Arts, researching. Engrossed in her tomes, she barely registered the sound of the front door opening; she paused and then heard the light, metallic click of the latch closing. She closed the book and steadied herself for Mrs. Black's screeching; the house was silent. She crept down the old wooden stairs to find Snape leaning on the troll-leg umbrella stand, barely holding himself up.

Since then, Snape had been staying at Grimmauld Place and helping the Order. Harry and Ron had not been happy about their new houseguest, but Hermione had managed to keep the peace, insisting that they needed Snape's help and reminding them that it is best to keep your enemies close. Harry and Ron begrudgingly agreed to ignore the fact that Snape had taken over the basement. Hermione moved most of the Dark Arts books down there also: first, to not have to watch Ron's face grimace as he read the titles and second, to be able to ask Snape any questions she might have. His acerbic manner did not discourage her; in fact, she had seen him worse. She figured deep down that he knew she kept Harry and Ron out of his way.

Snape spent his days making potions that would be helpful during the war: Invigoration Draughts and Strengthening Solutions for the weary, Blood-Replenishing Potions

and Healing Draughts for the injured, antidotes for various poisons, and a few other noxious potions that Hermione was sure used Dark Magic. The once dark, damp, and seldom used basement was now filled with the dim, orange light of fires burning under several cauldrons. The dusty shelves now held numerous jars and vials of various substances, and a cupboard had been placed in the corner to hold finished potions. Hermione had a sneaking suspicion that some potions had been Floo'd to Madam Pomfrey for storage.

One day while she was quietly reading on her stool in the corner, Snape startled her by speaking. "I think we have a good supply of the necessary potions. I would like to start a few experiments that may prove helpful in battle, and I will need an assistant."

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She realized now that what Snape meant by assistant was someone who could sit and stare at the clock for long periods of time.

Time's up, she thought to herself as she waved her wand and extinguished the fire beneath the cauldron.

She trod up the stairs from the basement, cursing Snape for not letting her slice, chop, or even bloody stir. By the time she made it up the second flight to her bedroom, she was malevolent. She decided that the next day she would continue to ask him questions, instead of just observing, until he gave her a task to do to shut her up.

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She was surprised to find Harry in the basement the next morning. Snape seemed to be casting spells on Harry and then taking notes.

"What is going on here?" Hermione demanded.

"Eh..." Harry stammered.

"I am casting the Imperius Curse on Harry and then performing Legilimens to see his thought process since he is able to fight it. I thought that we may be able to teach others to resist it or that I might be able to come up with a potion that could help the Order against this and the Cruciatus Curse. The batch you were watching last night was my first experiment."

"And just who have you been casting the Cruciatus Curse on?" Hermione challenged.

"No one... yet." Snape smirked as he turned back to his notes.

Hermione turned her ire onto Harry. "How long have you known about this?"

"Well, Pro...um...S...Snape and I have been discussing this in theory, but we just started experimenting this morning?"

"That doesn't answer how long you've known about it." Hermione crossed her arms.

"What does it matter? A few weeks, maybe."

Hermione was not sure why she was so upset. Maybe it was because Snape did not seem to entrust her with the tiniest detail.

Snape peered at the two over his shoulder. He thought Hermione would not approve of using the Unforgivable Curses, even for the sake of research.

"The potion from last night has sufficiently cooled; you can decant it into those vials on the second shelf," Snape said without turning around.

Only if you think I can handle the task, sir, Hermione thought as she bit her tongue.

Harry saw the irritated look on her face, one that he knew all too well. "Well, if we are finished with today's experiments, I will just be off," Harry said as more of a hopeful declaration than a question.

Hermione remembered her mission to ask questions. "So, what is this potion for?" She really was curious since she had sat watching it the previous night, making sure it just simmered and did not boil.

Snape thought he could use her help. "That was the potion I mentioned regarding the Cruciatus Curse."

Hermione resisted the urge to bite her lower lip. "And just who do you plan to test it on?"

"Myself."

Hermione was taken aback. Was he so downtrodden that he would let a *Crucio* be cast at him? She knew that one could not cast it on themselves, but did he expect Harry to do it or her? She had a sickening thought of Harry and Snape making a deal of the sort that Harry and Snape had both made with Dumbledore.

He saw her staring at him. "Do you hate me enough to cast the curse, or would you prefer to note the results?"

Hermione shook her head in disbelief. She had spent the better part of the last year reading volume upon volume about the Dark Arts, but it was another thing to start practicing them.

She realized that Snape was studying her. "What?"

"The potion needs to set for twenty-four hours, I will begin testing tomorrow. Do you want to assist or not?"

The former know-it-all was struck with the irony of the situation. Just the night before she had been complaining about just being a lackey and wanting more responsibilities, and here they were, just not in the form she expected.

"Okay," she said.

"Bring Harry with you. That is all for today," he said as he dismissed her.

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Hermione combed through what few books she had on potions. She even asked Harry if he still had the copy of Snape's *Advanced Potion Making*, which evidently Snape had taken back his first week at Grimmauld Place.

Finally, when the moon was on its descent westward, she gave up and went to bed. She hated the unexpected, but she had learned lately that that was what you got with Snape.

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After a few restless hours of sleep, Hermione went down to the kitchen for some tea, she was too anxious to eat. She chastised herself for her nervousness; after all, she

was not drinking some experimental potion and having an Unforgivable cast upon her.

Snape entered the kitchen, brushed past her, poured himself a cup of tea, and headed down to the basement without any acknowledgement of her presence.

Maybe I can cast the Cruciatus, she thought wryly.

After Harry made his appearance in the kitchen and ate a hearty breakfast, the two of them made their way to the basement.

"You are enjoying this too much," said Hermione, eyeing the sly grin on Harry's face, for which she received an exuberant smile back for her effort.

Snape had everything neatly laid out on the make-do table, a vial of the potion, a beaker, and a notebook and quill with the stool that Hermione usually used in the corner pulled up to one end.

Hermione took her seat as Snape explained to Harry how the experiment would work. The potion was supposed to act on the central nervous system, allowing the user to feel minimum effects of the Cruciatus Curse. They would need to test how long it would take the potion to begin working and then for how long the effects would last.

With quill in hand, Hermione watched as Snape measured and drank the potion. She noted the time. Five minutes later, Harry cast the hex. Snape fell to the ground, keeling over into the fetal position. Hermione noticed that Harry was no longer grinning. Five minutes later, the same effect. Fifteen minutes into the experiment saw some improvement, Snape remained standing, but he had a strained look on his face. Snape seemed uncomfortable even after Harry lifted the curse, but he insisted on continuing. Five minutes later, the curse had Snape pacing the room, and he looked agitated when Harry lowered his wand.

"This experiment is over!" Snape spat out.

Harry wasted no time in retreating up the stairs. Hermione thought she would just tidy her notes and keep an eye on Snape.

"Out!" he bellowed.

Hermione took the notebook with her, determined to help with the next batch. As she had presumed, Snape's notes on the brewing process were just a few pages ahead of her notes on the testing.

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Snape stared up the dark staircase, willing his breathing to return to normal. He paced around the table looking for his notebook, he needed to try to write down what he felt before in overtook him. The potion had been palatable, inducing a nice warming, calm feeling. The first two hexes had taken that feeling away, but it had been replaced by a tingling down his spine. With the third hex, he had not felt any gut-wrenching pain, but his blood had seemed to pool in his lower region, and the effect did not lessen when the curse was lifted; it was uncomfortable, but bearable. The fourth time Harry cast the curse, he was so hard it was agonizing, again there was no relief when the spell ended. He had yelled at them to get out.

"Where is that damn notebook!"

He had no way of noting the time now. He had no idea of how long it had been since he had evicted his assistants. He sat down on the floor with his back against the table leg, facing the clock, attempting to find a comfortable position, mentally noting the ingredients he had used and trying to calculate how long the potion should last.

It was no use; the painful throbbing interrupted his concentration. He began to wonder if relieving himself would counteract the potion, or if he would be stuck in this situation until the potion wore off. He slid his hand down his black-clad thigh, pausing to rub the unmistakable bulge. His body twitched at the sensation, demanding more. He quickly unbuttoned his trousers, removing the barrier between skin touching heated skin. He began stroking himself, driven on by the pounding in his ears.

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Hermione sat at the kitchen table trying to decipher the black scrawling notes in front of her. She found she was correct in her assumption that some old, possibly dark, magic had been used to mix the potion, but of course, they were dealing with the Unforgivables.

As the minutes ticked by, her concern for Snape's well-being overtook her better instincts. She went to the top of the basement stairs to listen for any sounds of distress. She didn't hear anything. She stealthily descended the stairs and saw Snape sitting on the floor, his back angled towards the stairs, hunched over. His body faintly rocking and his breathing ragged. Hermione slowly stepped towards him, not wanting to startle him. As she came around the table, Snape threw his head back against the table, and Hermione had a bird's-eye view of her ex-Potions professor engaged in pleasuring himself. He was oblivious to her presence as he gripped his cock, his hand no longer moving, but his hips pumping wildly through the tight grip. With a loud exhalation, he came, still thrusting. Hermione was not sure if she should back away or just stand still.

She heard Snape say, "Damn it!"

She thought he had seen her, but he was staring at his lap. She followed his gaze and saw that his cock was still hard. The realization hit her: Snape's uncomfortable expression during their experiment, his pacing, his yelling at them to get out. The potion had indeed acted on the central nervous system, but not in the way he had expected. She also had a suspicion that the effects would last until the potion wore off, especially after watching Snape's exhibition.

She had a sudden urge to go get the notebook and ask Snape how long he thought the potion would last, but was afraid of his reaction.

"You may as well ask, Granger." His voice startled her.

"What?"

"Go get my notebook, and then we can discuss this experiment."

As she climbed the stairs, she looked back over her shoulder and glimpsed Snape standing up and trying to button his trousers around his straining erection.

When she returned, he took his notebook and read over his notes. He handed it back to her and dictated his responses to the potion, glossing over his own solo experiment. It was difficult for Hermione to concentrate, for when he got to the part about relieving himself, he began to subconsciously rub himself, and she could not get the image of him stroking his own cock out of her mind.

"Are you writing this down?" he asked tersely.

She blushed, realizing that she was staring at his crotch and had no idea what he had just said.

He turned and began pacing again.

Hermione bit her lower lip, trying to quell the sensation in her lower abdomen. "Maybe I could help."

"With what?"

"Passing the time while we wait for the potion to wear off."

He turned abruptly and swooped down on her, placing an arm on the table to each side of her, essentially trapping her. "Do not tease me, Miss Granger. For I am in no

position to be trifled with."

As Hermione twisted on her stool, trying to ease his grip, her knee grazed his crotch. His eyes closed as he relished the contact. Hermione replaced her knee with her hand. Snape quickly undid his trousers, losing minimal contact with Hermione. He lifted her off the stool and placed her on the table, bunching her skirt around her waist. He was in a frenzied state again, needing release, unable to wait. He pulled her underwear off with one hand while stroking her with the other. He replaced his hand with the head of his cock, rubbing at her opening, teasing her and torturing himself. Her breath became a soft moan, and he thrust into her, pumping just as wildly as he had earlier. Hermione closed her eyes; the vision of him before with his cock in his own hand and the sensation of him moving within her was too much. She entwined her legs around his thighs and pulled him deeper into her, arching to meet his thrusts. Her muscles tightened around him as she said his name, pushing him over the edge.

As he pulled out of her, she could feel that he was still erect; the sensation of having him pull all the way out had her wanting him to thrust back in. He stood there, looking down at her, face flushed and clothes rumpled, her legs still spread, inviting. It took all his self-control to take a step back and sit down on the stool, his hardened cock pointing at the ceiling.

Hermione broke the silence. "Do you think this potion has the same effect on women?"

"I think we should wait until we have solved some of the glitches before we involve more test subjects."

"I meant me," Hermione said.

"Absolutely not. We do not need two of us in this situation."

Hermione just grinned as she got up from the table and walked over to the storage cupboard. She removed a vial and a beaker. As she walked back past Snape, she trailed her hand across his cock, making him shudder.

"Hermione, don't. We don't know any lingering effects."

"When you say we, does that mean I can help you prepare the next batch?" she asked coyly.

He shook his head as he said, "Yes."

"More than just watching a cauldron so it doesn't boil?"

"Hmmm..."

She positioned herself between his legs and began stroking him.

"Will I be allowed to slice and stir?"

She bent her head down and placed a feather-light kiss on the head of his cock.

"Will you let me be a true assistant?"

He wanted to shove her head back down, to feel her warm lips against his flesh, to be enclosed in the wetness of her mouth, but she had moved in an attempt to straddle him. If she wanted to tease him, he could play that game. He pushed her back onto the table, this time laying her back. He began kissing her stomach, unbuttoning her shirt as he kissed his way up between her breasts. When he reached her neck, his cock was nestled between her legs; she strained and pressed against him, trying to get him inside her.

"Not yet," he said with a sly smirk on his face.

His kisses moved from her neck, following the line of her bra, his tongue slipping under the lace edge, her nipples hardening in anticipation. He undid the clasp, sliding his hands underneath the fabric, cupping her breasts, his thumbs grazing her nipples. She arched up into him, trying for more intimate contact. As he slid down her body, he removed her skirt, positioning his head between her legs. Hermione tried to sit back up, but was instantly stilled as Snape's tongue slid along her inner thigh and swept across her center, where he placed a few chaste kisses, which she was sure was payback, before lightly sucking her clit between his lips. Once in his mouth, he tortured her relentlessly with his tongue, alternating between flicking and circling her most sensitive spot. Hermione closed her eyes, giving over to the sensation, when he suddenly stopped. She stared at him, desire glazing her eyes.

"Severus, please," she begged as he stood over her.

"That is what it feels like to have taken the potion, a constant need," he said as he entered her. He felt a strange tingling in his lower back, but dismissed it as Hermione wrapped her legs around him. He began thrusting with long deep stokes, slowing down his rhythm, taking his time. He leaned down over her, bracing himself on his elbows, feeling her under him. Her body gave in to the familiar sensations as he came deep inside her. His upper body collapsed on top of her, his legs barely holding him up. He realized that his whole body was completely lax. The potion had finally worn off in just under three hours.

Hermione noticed the difference and caught herself looking at the clock also.

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The next morning, bright and early, Hermione followed her customary routine of tea and toast for breakfast as she awaited the rest of the house to awaken. She waited for Snape to pass through, as usual, but found herself with a slight blush, which Harry and Ron were too busy eating to notice. After a bit of small talk over the papers, Hermione made the descent into the basement, ready to help.

Hermione planted herself on the familiar stool. After a few minutes of Snape ignoring her, she asked, "What are we working on today?"

"I am going over my notes and will try the potion again, but without the puffer-fish eyes. I assume you will be sitting there reading, as usual."

"But, what about me assisting you?" Hermione tried not to sound pouty.

"I am sure I will need someone to watch the potion while I attend to other things."

"But, yesterday..."

"I said you could help with the next batch, and watching it is helping." He arched an eyebrow.

"But you said I could prepare ingredients and stir..."

"No, you said those things. I never agreed to them, despite your attempts at sexual blackmail," he said, hiding a smirk.

It was, in fact, the truth, but he also liked seeing her flustered.

"Okay," he said after a few moments, "you may assist me on this next batch, and then after the testing, we shall see if I have a need for your *assistance* again."

She was sure she saw a slight grin on his face, but just for an instant.

"Now, get over here and stir before I change my mind."

Hermione stood up and took the spoon from his hand, giving him a look to match his own.