

Faith and Persuasion

by anogete

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Chapter 1 of 1

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The map took months of hard work and frustration to create, but it was flawless when it came to getting the job done. That job was finding Severus Snape. She knew it worked because she was watching him from a safe distance in a very dark, very slimy bar in Muggle London. No one would have ever thought to look for him here, which was probably why he was nursing a drink at the bar, his long, delicate fingers playing over the smooth glass of the tumbler.

Hermione had a sneaking suspicion Severus Snape did not intend to kill Headmaster Dumbledore, and if he did, then it was out of necessity. She was confident that he did not betray the Order, but he couldn't come back because everyone believed him to be a murderer. A few weeks after the incident, Hermione snuck into Snape's private quarters, which had been sealed off pending an investigation by the Ministry, and took one of his shirts. It was nothing special just a plain white dress shirt that he routinely wore beneath his layers of formal black clothing. The shirt was the key to her plan. The map would never work without a personal item of his, and even then it took months of trial and error to create a fully functioning version, which would give her his location as long as he was in the United Kingdom.

When she completed the map that evening, she snatched up a discrete, black cloak and took off for Muggle London and the address that Severus Snape's dot was hovering over. She went alone because Harry and Ron believed Snape to be the worst villain in the world, rivalling even Voldemort. They wouldn't have understood why she had such faith in him. Hermione wasn't quite sure why she believed in Snape so fully either. She just knew that deep down he was a good man, a good wizard.

The bar was on a narrow street in a shifty area of town. The deep red paint across the front was cracking and peeling, revealing the raw wood beneath. The sign that proclaimed the name of the tavern was unreadable and falling off the storefront. A thick smell of smoke and sweat assaulted her as soon as she entered the place. Hermione made certain to keep the hood of her cloak up to cover her hair and most of her facial features. Snape's sallow complexion and his crooked nose were easily picked out from the crowd when she ran her eyes over the room for the first time. He was slumped at the bar with a drink in his hand, staring into the light refractions off the assortment of liquor bottles lining the wall behind the bartender.

Her initial impulse was to go to him, tell him that she believed in him, and get this mess straightened out right away. They couldn't fight Voldemort without their inside man, especially now that Dumbledore was no longer there to provide guidance and strength. She restrained herself, took a seat at the far end of the bar, and ordered a club soda that she didn't touch. Hermione was much too busy watching Snape's slow movements. He would raise the tumbler to his lips, take a sip, place it back on the bar, and idly shift it around with his tapered, meticulous fingers. He repeated the process, but only downed a third of the drink in twenty minutes.

The music jangled in the background, drowned out by the patrons' voices. A woman was crying in a dark corner of the room. Two men were arguing by the door. Four jovial men in leather vests were laughing and smacking the table where they were seated. A man two stools down was telling a woman in a very short skirt exactly what he'd like to do to her if she came home with him. She felt claustrophobic and disgusted with the atmosphere. These people repulsed her, but she also felt a deep pity for

them. She wondered if this was the sort of company Snape kept simply because these were the only people who would accept him now.

Hermione swallowed a nervous lump in her throat when she saw Snape slide off his barstool and toss some Muggle money beside his half-full glass of liquor. He didn't appear to be drunk, but he walked with his shoulders hunched over as he exited the bar. The two men that had been arguing at the entrance gave him a wide berth as he passed by them.

She quickly followed behind and scanned the street in both directions for his retreating back. There was nothing and no one in sight. She assumed he had Disapparated to some other location and kicked herself for not approaching him right away. If he knew that she was on his side, then she was certain he would return with her and give everyone the evidence they needed to clear his name. Pulling the map out of her purse, she walked a few feet down the narrow street to the closest streetlamp. The dot that denoted Snape was still right where it had been when she went looking for him. She stuffed the parchment back in her purse in frustration.

Just as Hermione glanced over her shoulder, a cold hand clamped over her mouth, and a strong arm wrapped around her waist. "If you scream, I'll kill you." The voice was cold and icy. This wasn't the Professor Snape she thought she knew, but it was his voice. Before Hermione could even begin to struggle, she was pulled back into an even darker alley beside the bar. He shoved her against the rough, brick wall, and Hermione had to throw her hands up to prevent her nose from being broken. The sharp edges of the bricks cut into her palms, making her cry out against his hand.

"Where's your precious *Potter*, Miss Granger?" Snape hissed, his breath hot on her neck, and his body pressed firmly against her back. He was surprisingly strong, and there was no way she could get free. His arm was still wrapped around Hermione's waist, holding her wand tightly against her side. "I am going to remove my hand from your mouth. If you try to run, it will be the last thing you ever do. Is that understood?"

Hermione nodded vigorously, and his hand slid away from her mouth. She gulped in the acrid air of the alley. "Professor, I..."

"Shut up!" His whisper was filled with barely controlled rage. "Who sent you? Who had you follow me?"

Hermione blinked back the tears gathering in her eyes. "No one sent me, Professor. I... I came on my own."

"Why?"

"Because I know there must be a reason why you killed Dumbledore."

Hermione felt her world spin as he turned her around and slammed her back against the wall. His hands clasped her wrists and pinned them over her head. "Yes, Miss Granger, there was a reason."

"Why, sir?" she whispered, trying to block out the dull throbbing in her head.

His face was pale and twisted in a horrible smirk. "Because I could, because the Dark Lord is going to win this war, Miss Granger. I am not going to be on the losing side."

Hermione's heart dropped into her stomach. "But no, Professor.... You're, I mean, you're a member of the Order. You're spying on "

"I'm spying on no one. With Dumbledore dead, the Order will fall apart at the seams. Potter will fail when he faces the Dark Lord, and you'll all be enslaved by the Death Eaters."

Hermione struggled to free her hands, but his grip was firm and unyielding. She threw her body in any direction it would go, hoping to break his hold for just an instant. Snape took a step closer, sliding one of his knees between her legs. "Let me go!" Hermione screamed.

"There's no need to scream, Miss Granger. I've placed a silencing spell around us. No one can hear you." He pressed his body closer. "Now stop struggling before you anger me."

"You're going to kill me either way, you *murderer*." Hermione felt the tears gathering in her eyes again. "I trusted you! I trusted you!"

"The only person who has ever trusted me is the Dark Lord."

Hermione turned her face to the side so she couldn't feel his breath on her lips. "He doesn't trust you. He probes your mind. He tests your loyalty. He demands your compliance; you don't willingly give it."

"He's accepted me," Snape replied in a firm, hateful voice.

Hermione turned her head to face him again. "With all due respect, sir, he's *used* you."

His eyes burned as she stared into their dark depths. "Shut up, you little brat. You know nothing about me."

A hot tear rolled down Hermione's cheek. "Yes, sir. I *thought* I knew you. I thought you were a good, decent man who was making amends for past transgressions. I thought you knew right from wrong. I thought you would protect us with your life. Congratulations, Professor Snape, you fooled me."

"Who sent you?"

"No one!" Hermione bit back a sob. "I came looking for you on my own because I wanted to help you."

Snape's mouth twisted back into that horrible smirk again. "Help me with what exactly, Miss Granger?"

"Help you clear your name. The Order needs you, Professor. We can win this war, but not without your help."

Snape's smile faltered, and his eyes snapped up to meet hers. "After what I've done and how I've treated you for all these years, you wanted to help me?"

"I've always had the highest respect for you, Professor. I *believed* in you even after you killed Dumbledore and fled. I believed in you when they all wanted your head on a platter." She tried to free her hands again. They were tingling from blood loss. His grip was unforgiving and still as firm as ever. "Please, Professor, please let me go."

He tilted his head back slightly and looked down his crooked nose at her. "Why should I?"

Hermione's eyes were brimming with unshed tears. "Because I know there's a good man in there somewhere. I know you don't want to kill me." She paused. "Please let me be right about something."

"You were a fool to follow me. These are dangerous times."

"I didn't think you were dangerous to me," she replied.

"How did you find me?"

Hermione's eyes glanced at her purse on the ground. "I followed you."

"Liar."

"It's the truth."

Snape locked his gaze with hers and Hermione found herself unable to look away. She knew what was coming. He was going to invade her mind with Legilimency and find the truth.

"Stop! Please!" she screamed. "It's the map in my purse. It gives me your location at all times."

"How?"

Hermione closed her eyes and looked away. "A series of charms and a personal item of yours."

"You created it?"

"Yes." Her voice was rough from the screaming and crying.

He pressed her hands harder into the brick wall. "You stupid girl, now I can't let you go. You'll just make another of those for Potter and allow the Order track me down."

"Let me go and I promise I won't."

"Promises mean nothing to me," he spat out.

Hermione dropped her chin against her chest and sobbed. "So, what are you going to do now? Are you going to cast the Killing Curse on me?" She was trying so hard not to cry, her teeth cutting into her bottom lip. "I don't believe I trusted you. You were my favorite professor."

"Come now, Miss Granger. We both know that I was never your favorite professor."

"Yes, you were, you prat!" she yelled, thrashing against him. "You were always my favorite professor. I've learned more from you than anyone."

"Have I taught you about betrayal then, Miss Granger?"

She smiled bitterly. "Indeed, sir, you have."

"What do you suggest I do with you?"

"Let me go."

He chuckled under his breath. "I'm afraid not."

"Then just kill me and get it over with," Hermione said, squeezing her eyes shut.

Seconds slowly ticked by and nothing happened. She wanted to open her eyes and look at him, but was afraid if she did, he would cast an Avada Kedavra right then and there. Finally, his smooth voice whispered in her ear. "What *am* I going to do with you, Miss Granger?"

"Well, it looks like you only have two choices: kill me or let me go," she said without opening her eyes. She tried to pull her wrists free one more time, but all she succeeded in doing was pushing her body more firmly into his. There was a very distinct hardness pressed against her stomach. It made her freeze and then shrink back against the wall.

"It's got a mind of its own," Snape whispered in her ear. He knew that she had felt his erection.

"Please don't do this, Professor." Hermione's voice was shaking with fear and uncertainty.

"Don't worry, my dear, that's not my style. I prefer my women to be less... Gryffindor." He shifted his weight away from her until she couldn't feel him concealed beneath his trousers. "I want you to step away from the wall and hook your foot through your purse."

"What?"

"Just do as I say."

Hermione stepped forward and into his body. She could feel the erection behind his zipper again when she slipped her toe through the strap of the purse.

"Close your eyes, and don't fight this, or you'll be splinched."

Hermione opened her mouth to protest. She did not want Snape Apparating her anywhere at all. The protest died on her lips when she felt the disorienting swirl of dual Disapparation. A moment later, she was firmly in Snape's arms and inside a dank motel room with only a bed and two chairs. The mirror on the wall had a tarnished silver frame with a jagged crack across the center of it.

"Where are we?" she asked.

"A motel room."

"Let go of me."

"Not until I find your wand." He was holding both her wrists in one hand while searching her body with the other. He finally found it tucked in the waist of her pants. Snape snatched it away from her and threw her back. Hermione nearly toppled onto the bed.

"Why?" she asked.

Snape shrugged as he examined her wand. "I haven't decided what to do with you yet. We'll stay here until I do."

"Harry will be looking for me."

He scowled at her. "I'd prefer not to hear any more about your savior, Mr. Potter."

"Why didn't you just kill me back there? You can't do it, can you?"

Snape slid her wand up his sleeve. "Of course I can."

"I don't believe that," she said, rubbing the bruises forming around her delicate wrists.

"Are you still laboring under the impression that I'm a good man, Miss Granger? Do you think I'm someone to be saved, that a simple declaration of trust from you will make me see the light?"

"We need you, Professor. Voldemort doesn't need you; he's using you until he uses you up," Hermione said, her voice soft, but firm. "He doesn't care about you the way

we do."

"No one cares about me, Miss Granger."

She stomped her foot against the squeaky floorboards. "I care about you! Why would I come looking for you if I didn't care?"

His voice was sharp and meant to wound when he replied. "Past tense. You *cared* about me until I assaulted you outside that tavern. Now you hate me just as much as everyone else."

"I feel sorry for you, Professor."

He cast her a glance that would have frightened the bravest of wizards. "I don't want your pity, Miss Granger."

"Well, too bad! You've got it!" she replied, her voice raised.

"I don't know why I even bothered," Snape mumbled to himself. "You're an insufferable child that "

"I am not a child, Professor."

"You're acting like one," he said vehemently.

"So are you," Hermione countered. When he didn't reply, Hermione sat down on the edge of the bed and sucked in a deep, shaky breath.

Snape paced the small room for a moment before turning abruptly to her. "What do you propose I do with you?"

"Come back with me, explain yourself to the Order, atone for Professor Dumbledore's death, and help us defeat Voldemort."

He snorted. "Just like that, Miss Granger?"

"Yes," she said, nodding.

"You're mistaken if you believe the members of the Order will be as quick to forgive as you are."

Hermione clasped her hands together in her lap. "I'll vouch for you. I know you want to do good, sir. I just *know* it. I can feel it when I look at you, but no one wants to give you a chance."

"People who give me a chance usually find their way to an early grave, Miss Granger. Take Headmaster Dumbledore as an example."

Hermione averted her eyes. "I know he used you just as much as anyone else."

The room fell silent except for Snape's boots thumping across the floor. A moment later, he cautiously took a seat beside her on the bed. Neither of them spoke for several minutes. Hermione was so nervous that she could barely draw breath. Her fingers were laced tightly together in her lap, and she traced the bruises along her wrists with her eyes as she waited for him to say something.

"When exactly did you grow up, Miss Granger?" he asked in a soft voice.

"Excuse me, sir?"

"I remember a young girl waving her hand around in my class, trying to prove herself by answering a simple question. I don't remember *you*."

Hermione gave him a small smile. "Over six years and a war will do that to a girl."

"What have I ever done to earn this trust that you mistakenly placed in me?" His voice was no longer harsh, but weary.

"Many things, Professor. You put your own life in jeopardy so many times to help us. I never forgot."

He sighed and rubbed his eyes with his forefinger and thumb. "It was all an act."

"No, it wasn't. Despite everything, I still believe in you, Professor Snape."

He waved his hand in the air dismissively. "Stop calling me Professor."

"What should I call you, sir?"

"Whatever you'd like," he replied. A few silent moments passed before he spoke again. "I very well can't hurt you now."

Hermione smiled softly. "Let me help you. Please?"

"How do you propose to do that?"

"Help us defeat Voldemort so you can actually live your life for yourself instead of for him or Dumbledore or anyone else who wants a piece of you."

"You want me to spy."

Hermione shook her head. "No, I want you to do whatever you can do, whatever you feel comfortable doing."

"I'll be sent to Azkaban for Dumbledore's murder."

Hermione was silent for a very long minute. "I won't tell anyone that I've found you."

"You are going to cover for me, Miss Granger?"

"I'm just not going to say anything. I don't want to see you go to Azkaban, sir."

"Why me? Why are you so concerned for me that you would lie to your friends?"

She turned her head away from him and looked at the water-stained wall. "I just think you deserve some happiness."

"I certainly don't," Snape whispered. "Why are you going to so much trouble for me? I attacked you outside the tavern." He paused and gently lifted Hermione's hands to examine her bruised wrists. "I hurt you."

She slid her fingers down to twine with his. "I don't want you to live like this, sir. I have faith that you're not completely bad."

"Even after I assaulted you?"

Hermione wanted to touch his face, to cradle his cheek in her hand. "You were afraid I was going to turn you in."

He jerked away from her. "Don't make excuses for me, Miss Granger. I did it because I wanted to scare you."

"Lucky for you I don't scare easily." She untangled one of her hands from his and gently tucked a strand of hair behind his ear. Hermione couldn't help herself. Her once commanding, intimidating professor was breaking down before her eyes.

Snape watched her closely, his dark eyes tracing the contours of her face while his brows furrowed slightly in confusion at her touch. "Please stop," he said softly. Hermione hadn't even realized she was slowly running her fingers through his hair.

"Don't you use shampoo," she said with a smile.

"I make my own."

"That's your problem."

He shrugged. "It doesn't matter anyway. No one touches my hair."

"I did," Hermione said.

"Yes, and you're mad."

She laughed. "When I was in fourth-year, I had somewhat of a crush on you."

"You *are* mad."

Hermione blushed and looked at the floor. "They say that women want what they can't have. I suspect it was something along those lines. You were unattainable."

She dared a quick glance at his face and saw his Adam's apple bob up and down when her eyes passed over his throat. "I'm not sure what to say, Miss Granger. Should I be flattered or insulted?"

"Flattered," she said. "I wasn't trying to insult you by saying that you were unattainable. I never thought you'd pay one bit of attention to me. The only time you even looked at me was when I helped Neville in Potions, and even then it was just to yell at me and deduct points."

"I obviously had no appreciation for the woman you would become."

"Are you saying you regret treating me that way?"

Snape shrugged again. "Somewhat, but you must admit you did deserve the treatment on occasion." He batted her hand away from his hair. Hermione hadn't realized she was stroking the greasy, black strands again. "That's very distracting," he said. Hermione jumped when he lifted a hand to touch her hair. "See?" he said, trailing his fingers through it. "Very distracting." Snape's voice was far away, and his eyes were unfocused.

She found it hard to breathe with him so close. Hermione placed one of her hands on top of his, knocking him out of his trance. "Sir?"

He shook his head and pulled his hand away. "I apologize."

"For what?"

He turned his eyes away from her. "For my thoughts."

"What thoughts?" Hermione asked.

"You came to help me, and all I can think of is..." He trailed off and never completed the sentence, but Hermione had a fair idea of what he wanted to say. She was feeling it as well. It wasn't so much sexual tension as it was pure need. She found that it was difficult to think of him in the same way after feeling his body pressed against hers in the alley, his erection insistently rubbing against her stomach.

She swallowed. "I thought you didn't like Gryffindors," Hermione said, trying to keep her voice from shaking too much.

"I've said and done a great many things which I've regretted, Miss Granger."

"Can't you call me Hermione?"

"Do you know how old I am?"

"Does that even matter?" she asked.

He shook his head. "You're a child."

"You said I had grown up."

"Indeed, I did."

Hermione placed a hand on his forearm, moving her fingers up the sleeve. She was mesmerized by the contrast of her pale hand against the inky blackness of his clothing. "I said I don't want your pity," he whispered.

She inhaled a deep, steady breath. "This isn't all about you. Just because I'm female, it doesn't mean I don't yearn for certain things or get frustrated."

"You're eighteen. You don't know what true frustration is. Aren't you dating that Weasley boy?"

"No."

"I'm a murderer, Hermione."

Her hand was at his shoulder. She curled her fingers over it in a tight squeeze before sliding her hand behind his neck. "You made a mistake."

"A rather large one, don't you think?" It was evident that Snape found her touch to be distracting. He licked his lips and looked away.

"Yes, you made a very large mistake, but you can make up for it. You can help us save the wizarding world from Voldemort." She grinned at him and changed the subject. "When I had a crush on you, I used to fantasize about washing your hair."

He snorted and looked at her. "Excuse me?"

"You know, washing your hair while taking a bath with you."

Snape's eyes darkened. "Oh." He looked away for a moment and then turned back. "You fantasized about that?"

"Sometimes. Mostly when I finished my potion early in class and had time to watch you."

"That's not very proper, Miss Granger."

"Hermione," she corrected. "I'm a little tired of being so proper all the time."

Snape gently removed her hand from his neck. "You're making this very difficult for me, Hermione."

"What?" she asked.

"Are you propositioning me? Is that how I'm to take this?"

Hermione shrugged. "I'm not sure what I'm doing, actually."

"You'll regret it."

"No, I won't."

Snape grabbed her head and placed a hard, demanding kiss on her lips. It was awkward and painful, and Hermione pushed him away.

"You regret it already."

"I regret that you attacked me," she said, reaching out a hand and pulling his face closer to her. He resisted for a moment before allowing Hermione to bring his lips close enough to kiss. At first, she lightly brushed her mouth against his, entreating him to loosen the muscles holding his jaw tightly shut. Finally Snape relaxed and let Hermione press her lips on his. As the kiss deepened, she found herself unsure of how to continue. His lips were slightly parted, giving her access, but she wasn't sure of what his reaction would be if she slid her tongue inside.

Her quandary was solved when she felt the tip of his tongue venture into her mouth. Hermione immediately met it with her own, moaning as he fought with her tongue for the right to her mouth. Every passing moment instilled more aggressiveness into the kiss until one of his hands was on her neck and the other firmly pressed against her back. He tasted like mint with just a hint of the alcohol he had been drinking at the bar.

Hermione felt like she was doing something forbidden or taboo by kissing her former professor. She got a thrill over his more dangerous qualities, despite how disgusting she found her attraction to his dark side. His allegiance was still to Voldemort, even if she believed that she might still be able to persuade him back to her.

She didn't realize the change in position until she felt the mattress beneath her back. Snape's body was on top of her, and he was straddling one of her thighs. His lips travelled down her chin until he reached the pulse point in her throat. Hermione had never felt this feral before. She couldn't control the shudders and writhing of her own body as he sucked at her neck and twisted his fingers into the material of her cloak. She heard the clasp break just under her chin, and Snape pulled the material away from her chest.

"If I were honorable, I would ask if you would prefer to put a halt to our activities," he whispered in her ear. "Fortunately for me, I'm not honorable."

Snape's tongue traced the contours of her ear, eliciting sharp gasps from her throat. "Professor."

"Severus," he corrected.

"Severus," Hermione repeated in a breathy voice.

Snape smiled against her ear. "Yes..." he said, drawing out the syllables until he was hissing that single word.

His hands fumbled with the hem of her t-shirt until he was able to draw it over her head. Hermione was so focused on his tongue tracing the edges of her sensible, white bra that she barely noticed his nimble fingers releasing the button and zipper of her jeans. The cold air of the motel room hitting her moist panties came as a shock to her. Snape pushed himself up to kneel above her while he used his wand to release the buttons of his shirt. She could see a pale chest beneath, but the darkness in the room was preventing her from getting much of a proper look. When he tossed his shirt on the bed, Hermione's wand fell out and rolled across the mattress to rest against her fingertips. He froze and moved his eyes from the wand to her face. "Your move, Miss Granger."

She knew as well as he did that she could cast a spell to disarm or hurt him before he could reach his wand lying next to his knee. "I told you to call me Hermione," she said, reaching a hand up to the fly of his trousers. Snape captured her hand and guided it to his erection, allowing her to feel him beneath the material. Before long, he was panting and thrusting his hips into her palm.

"Do you regret this yet?" he asked, looking down his nose at her prone body.

Hermione returned his gaze defiantly. "No."

"Good. Divest yourself of your under things."

By the time Hermione had lifted her body enough to remove her bra, Snape had hooked his fingers in the hips of her panties. He easily slid them down her legs with Hermione's help. Once she was naked, she turned her attention to his attire. Snape worked on his trousers, and when he finally removed them, Hermione realized he wore nothing beneath them. It surprised her, and her heart thumped wildly in her chest, as if she had run up the steps from Hagrid's hut in one go. She couldn't seem to stop her writhing body, aching for him to fill her. "Prof "

Snape placed an index finger against her lips to stop the formal title from spilling out.

"Severus," Hermione whispered, maintaining eye contact with him the entire time. She parted her lips and allowed his finger to slip between them, rolling her tongue over the tip before sucking on it.

He leaned down and pressed his lips to her right ear. "You're a very naughty girl, Hermione."

She could feel the fingers of his other hand exploring between her thighs as he gathered the moisture collecting there. Without any indication or warning, he positioned himself at her entrance and pressed into Hermione's heat. Her breath was sucked out of her lungs, and all coherent thought left her brain when he pulled out and roughly pushed back inside, bottoming out in her depths.

All Hermione was aware of was a gathering tension in her body with each of his thrusts. She felt frantic and awkward, desperate to continue, and even more desperate to pull him closer. Her legs were wrapped around him, but she had lost consciousness of them, her energy focused on the growls emanating from his throat and the way he filled her so completely. He ceased to be her former professor, a Death Eater, or a spy for the Order. Instead, he was simply Severus Snape, and that was enough for her.

Hermione gasped when he tilted his hips slightly and ground his pelvis into her own. The motion seemed to hit every sensitive spot, and it was obvious that Snape knew he had found something she enjoyed. He repeated the thrust again and again until Hermione thought that she was going to die of the mounting tension in her abdomen and below.

His mouth was hovering near her ear when he whispered to her. "I never would have thought that my little know-it-all Gryffindor would want me to *fuck* her." The words sent Hermione past the point of no return. Her muscles contracted and went into a series of spasms that wrenched cries of ecstasy from her lips. Snape followed quickly behind her, tirelessly pounding into her body until a jerk and low groan announced his climax.

Exhaustion was chasing Hermione down, making her limbs feel heavy and her head quite foggy. Snape had to ask twice for her to pass his wand to him. She extracted it from the rumpled bedding and handed it to him without thinking. Snape placed the tip of his wand on her abdomen and murmured a charm that she had never heard. She wiggled beneath him as his wand trailed down to her sex. Snape smiled at Hermione and pulled away to lie on his back beside her.

"What did you do?"

"A charm to prevent pregnancy."

Hermione gasped when she realized she had completely forgotten about protection. "I didn't even think..."

He chuckled. "You didn't think? That's a first, Miss Hermione. Don't worry; I've taken care of it."

"Thanks," Hermione said softly, turning her head to look at him. "Are you... okay?"

Snape laughed lightly again. "I'm actually wonderful. It's been too long since I've done anything like that. The last several women were whores. They weren't to my taste, though they were the only ones who would accept my advances."

"I did." Hermione's voice was so soft it could barely be heard.

"Yes," Snape said. "I've decided what I shall do with you."

Hermione closed her eyes, just barely resisting the urge to cross her fingers. "What's that, sir."

"Severus," he corrected before continuing. "I'm going to keep you here and have you every day."

She immediately sat up in bed. "You're going to detain me and use me for sex?" Hysteria was close to taking over when she heard him laughing under his breath. "You bastard! Don't joke about something like that," she said, hitting him playfully with the back of her hand.

Snape caught her hand and pressed it to his chest. "I'm going to let you go in hopes that you'll return for me."

"I'll come back," she said, assuring him. "And Voldemort, the Order?"

"Will you keep my whereabouts a secret?"

"Yes."

"I'll spy for you," he said. "Only for you, Hermione. The rest of the Order must not know where you receive your information. Is that clear?"

"Yes, sir I mean, Severus."

"Good." He turned onto his side, and his hand trailed lazily down her waist and over her hip. "You're quite fetching when you agree with me, you know?"

FINIS

Author's Note: This was my entry into the fiction exchange on LJ's sshg_exchange. Azrael Geffen asked for one of three possible scenarios to be played out, and I chose this one: "A 'Snape really did kill Dumbledore because he's just a bad guy' type fic where Hermione manages to redeem him."