

Severus Snape and the Orbiting Mistletoe

by Pearle

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Chapter 1 of 1

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~~~~~ Severus Snape and the Orbiting Mistletoe ~~~~~

She's had a crush on him for the longest time, since her seventh year, really. How could he not know? Even when she was away at University, it was his face she saw in her mind when she closed her eyes while kissing those boys. They were boys. They could never compare to him.

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Hermione sighed. She had returned to Hogwarts five years after her graduation to fill the position of assistant mediwitch. She was hired to assist Madam Pomfrey in the hospital wing and keep her medical potions well stocked. She had maintained a double major in medicine and potions. While not reaching the status of a Potions Master, she was qualified to brew the potions needed for the hospital. In addition, Albus had promised her a private lab in the dungeons, adjacent to Snape's, with full access to the school's potion supplies for her own research. It was Snape's private storeroom she was itching to get her hands on.

Hermione enjoyed working with Poppy and the rest of the staff, pleased they had accepted her as an equal. Snape remained true to his nature, no longer calling her a know-it-all, but not giving her the respect she deserved.

"Madam Granger, Hermione." Remus's voice rang out in the empty corridor. He had returned to Hogwarts once again, filling in as the Defense Against the Dark Arts instructor, much to Snape's continued annoyance.

Hermione was generally fond of the werewolf. "Remus, heading for lunch in the Great Hall?"

"Coming from the lab? The great bat there?" Remus asked with a smirk as he fell in step beside her.

"Yes, stalking through my lab as usual. You would think after all this time, he could get it through his thick head. I am quite capable of working unsupervised. I do not plan on blowing up the castle. I should think I have proved I have the ability to brew even the most complex medical potions without inflicting bodily harm on anyone." Hermione was warming to her subject, the subject being, one Severus Snape, Potions Master and all around annoyance. "The man annoys me to no end."

Neither one noticed the shadow that detached itself from the wall as they passed a darkened corridor. Hermione jumped as his voice came to her from close to her left shoulder.

"Then we are even, Madam Granger. You have annoyed me for seven years, and yet you are still here. Shouldn't you be off somewhere raising a passel of brats as others in your year have strived to achieve? Surely you possess the intelligence to accomplish that task without sticking your nose in a book?"

Hermione allowed her anger at the man's words to come to the forefront. Her voice was sickeningly sweet as she stopped to address Snape. "How very kind of you, Professor Snape, to think I should pass my intelligence on to my children. I do hope you will still be teaching here, so that they can profit from your extensive knowledge of Potions. Dear me, what could I be thinking?" Hermione's voice started to rise in volume and pitch as she continued, "Of course you will be here. Where else would the bat of the dungeon be? I can't imagine you will ever leave, nor will you ever stand a chance in hell of meeting someone, or something, that can stand you long enough to have a child with you. Of course you will be here. Lucky me, lucky Hogwarts. At least we can always count on Severus Snape to be the bloody bastard we all know him to be!"

Snape hissed at her through clenched teeth. "Are you through, Granger?"

Hermione's face was flushed. Her eyes continued to snap in anger. "You're damn right I'm through. Through with you. Stay out of my lab and stay the hell away from me."

She left a seething Snape staring at her back as she did a fair impersonation of him striding down the corridor, her skirt attempting to billow out behind her.

"Well, that went well. You might want to work on your communication skills a little, Severus." Remus smiled as the Potions Master turned his full glare on him.

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The door slammed against the back wall with more force than necessary as Snape entered the Great Hall. Heads popped up at various tables, only to quickly look away when they witnessed the storm brewing on the Potions Master's face. Hermione was sitting in her usual seat, talking to Poppy. Unfortunately, he was normally seated on the other side of the little witch.

Severus reached for his chair, intending to forcibly drag it back. He was surprised to find it stuck to the floor, not budging an inch. He pulled again. The chair did not move.

"Granger," he growled.

Hermione ignored him.

His voice was a low hiss, "Enough childishness, release this chair immediately."

Hermione turned to face him. "Or you'll do what, remove house points, give me detention, have me expelled? Sorry, Snape, I'm not a student here any more. And the faster you get that through your head, the better off we will both be."

Albus entered through the back door, taking in the scene before him. His eyes twinkled as he asked, "Problems, Severus?"

They had started to attract the attention of the students. Severus was fit to be tied. If looks could kill, Hermione would be dead right now. "That is Professor Snape, Granger. Release this chair now!"

Hermione casually turned to face him. "And that is Madam Granger to you. There are empty seats on the other side, go sit there. In my infinite wisdom, I seem to have forgotten the unlocking spell." Hermione turned back to speak with Poppy, who was trying to hide her amusement behind a fake cough.

"This is not the end of it." Severus turned and left the Great Hall in a flurry of cloth, not willing to argue further, or concede defeat and move to the other side of the table.

Poppy could not hold back her laugh. "Do you think that was wise, Hermione? I know Severus can be difficult at times, but to deliberately evoke his anger like that."

"Yes, well, he really got under my skin, sort of the last straw and all that. Maybe I can talk to him when he cools off." She had a hard time being neutral where Snape was concerned. She had lusted after him for the last five years. She supposed her anger was just a way of coping with the frustration of not being able to tell him how she felt, or the remote possibility that he could ever return her feelings. Right, the odds of that were a billion to one, Granger.

"I know Severus, it takes him decades to cool off. Come to think of it, has he ever accepted anyone's apology, Albus?" Poppy turned to the Headmaster.

"Not as far as I remember, but I could be wrong. Don't worry, my dear. I'm sure everything will work out fine."

Albus smiled kindly, his eye twinkling.

Hermione had known the Headmaster too long to trust that smile.

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The staff readily agreed the castle was more interesting since Hermione started. She and Snape had been the topic of discussion in the staff room since the beginning. Their arguments could be heard all over the castle and grounds. Those present were always quick to change topics when one or the other entered the staff room.

Hooch's theory was repressed sexual energy. Flitwick was convinced Hermione would kill Snape one day, inferring she would not be able to control her emotions if she was PMS'ing. Minerva had threatened to hex his bollocks off for that comment. She was also quick to point out she had not suffered from PMS in ten years. She would be neutering him with her hormones in complete balance.

He made a hasty retreat, bits still intact. The next time the topic of Snape and Hermione came up, he quietly agreed with the general consensus and did not offer his opinion. Poppy privately pointed out to Minerva later, Flitwick had remained sitting, with his legs crossed and his hands in his lap, as if that would have helped if Minerva ever decided to follow through on her threat.

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Hermione shook the snow from her cape as she leaned back against the front door and eyed the activity in the foyer. She had snuck into Hogsmeade for some last minute shopping. The snow had started in earnest as she made her way back to the castle.

Everywhere she looked she was confronted with symbols of the holiday. Red and green bows, silver tinsel, and shiny ornaments covered any item that did not move and a few that did as well. There was even a sprig of mistletoe over the doorway to the Great Hall. The decorations were in preparation for the Christmas dance that night, in keeping with the spirit of the season.

A third year Hufflepuff burst through the doorway from the dungeons and took off for the stairs at breakneck speed.

"Mister Williams, unless you intend to break your neck, I suggest you slow down this instant," Hermione called to the student as he took the stairs two at a time.

The boy turned abruptly. "Madam Granger, there has been an accident. Professor Snape..."

It was all she needed to hear. "Go tell Madam Pomfrey," she called over her shoulder as she disappeared through the doorway and down the stairs.

Hermione reached the Potions classroom in record time. She steeled herself for what she would find when she opened the door. She was definitely not expecting the sight that met her eyes.

Severus Snape stood amid the ruins of a cauldron explosion. His robes were covered in a fine ash. Several sprigs of mistletoe appeared to be circling his body, forming a loose wreath, and a Santa cap was perched on his head at a jaunty angle. Other than the odd decorations, he appeared relatively unharmed.

"Professor Snape? Are you all right?" Hermione thought he looked rather festive, she also thought he looked as if he was going to kill someone.

"Do. I. Look. All right to you, Madam Granger?" His glare was now directed at her.

"No. Actually you look rather, festive, sir." The comment drew snickers from several of the students.

Snape swept the room with his glare, gaining immediate silence.

Hermione cleared her throat. "Would you like to tell me what happened? Maybe I can help?"

Severus pinched the bridge of his nose, a headache threatening to overwhelm his senses. The movement of his arm caused the mistletoe to break apart and reform as he moved. His voice was tight as he relayed the events of the past ten minutes. "They were working on an adhesive potion. Thompson here is about as talented as Longbottom was. I saw the cauldron start to froth just before I cast a containment charm. I can only assume a berry fell into the cauldron to cause this type of explosion."

"And the mistletoe and Santa hat? Where did they come from?" Hermione was doing her best not to laugh. Severus Snape decorated with mistletoe and wearing a Santa cap was beyond anything anyone could have imagined.

"I take it you have not looked in the classrooms. The Headmaster decided to decorate the entire castle in the bloody spirit of the season. I have been trying to take them down all morning. What hat are you talking about?"

Hermione moved to his side. "You're wearing a Santa hat, Professor." She reached for a sprig of mistletoe. It refused to be dislodged from its arch around his body.

Severus shook his head, the sprigs of mistletoe breaking apart and reforming again.

"I think the containment charm and the adhesive potion interacted to form a shield around your body. The mistletoe appears to be stuck in the shield." Hermione had managed to hide her smile.

Poppy arrived just as Hermione reached up and gently tugged on the Santa hat. It too, refused to move. "Dear God, Severus, what happened here?"

Snape dismissed the class before repeating, for Poppy's benefit, the events leading up to him resembling a human Christmas tree.

"Well, I may have a potion that can help. Usually it requires an object to soak in the solution several hours before it will entirely dissolve the glue. I think I can alter it enough for you to drink it. You will just have to wait until it takes effect before the rest will dislodge themselves." Poppy had used the solution several times when the students had stuck their hands and various other bodily parts together. It took several hours to dissolve the glue.

"Drink it? Have you gone barmy?" He had no intention of drinking anything she came up with.

"I think you should leave him this way until after the dance." Hermione smiled as he turned to glare at her.

"What happens when you sit down?" Poppy was moving him towards one of the classroom chairs.

The mistletoe rearranged itself again. Shifting away from the back of the chair, Severus held out his arm and glared at the sprigs. The mass of pieces seemed to reform itself in line with his gaze.

Hermione tried to venture an opinion. "I think it has retained an element of the shielding charm. Look down at your foot."

Poppy looked surprised. "My God, it moved to circle his foot."

The mistletoe formed a loose wreath around his ankle, not allowing him to step on the annoying plant. "Very good, Miss Granger. The containment charm lets you cast the shield where you concentrate the spell; in the same way I can concentrate the movement of this ruddy plant. How the hell is that supposed to help me?"

"Well, it doesn't. But you must admit, it is interesting. Really, Severus, you will be fine. It's Christmas. Just think of it as getting into the spirit of things. I need to alter the solution. Hermione, please escort Severus to the hospital wing." Poppy left muttering to herself about men and boys.

"I do not need help. At least I will not be able to attend the dance tonight." He could take some pleasure in his predicament, no matter how small it was.

"Nonsense, Severus. You will fit in well with the theme of the dance." Albus entered the classroom in time to hear Severus's comment.

"This is all your fault, Albus. If you had not insisted on decorating the classrooms, I would not look like a bloody Christmas tree. Do not look so pleased, Madam Granger. You and I still have a few issues to discuss." Snape turned and stormed out of the classroom.

Albus smiled at the young woman. "He is a handful."

Hermione laughed. She had never heard the Potions Master described as a handful before. "I better go see if Poppy needs my help."

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"Merlin's beard, Are you trying to poison me, woman?" Severus scowled at the bitter taste of the dissolving solution. He was perched on one of the cots, the mistletoe still swirling around his upper torso.

Poppy stood with her hands on her hips. Men could be such babies. "Just drink it. Be glad you don't have to drink one of your own potions."

Hermione watched as Madam Pomfrey ran her wand over and around him. She stepped back and viewed him with a critical eye. "Well, you don't seem to have suffered any ill effects."

"What do you call looking like a bloody human tree?" He snarled, his scowl deepening.

"Sit back and be quiet. You are not hurt in anyway. Give it a few hours and let's see what happens." Poppy shrieked as she watched him rise and walk to the door. "Where do you think you're going?"

"My office. You may check me in an hour. In the meantime, I have essays to grade. I do not intend to spend the Christmas holidays pouring over poorly written assignments."

"Fine. Get back in bed and Hermione will get you what you need. I do not want to see you move from this cot for the next three hours." Poppy shook her head, honestly. "Hermione, get him whatever he wants."

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Hermione looked at the list in her hand. He could not possibly use all the materials he had sent her for in the course of the next three hours. She was sure he was using this as a form of payback for her earlier words. She used the passwords he gave her to bring down the wards and enter his office.

The smell of sandalwood and pine assaulted her senses. She stopped to breathe in the scent she had come to associate with him over the years. She looked around the office, taking in his massive desk, the potion's ingredients, and the seemingly endless stacks of books. The office, and Snape, had intimidated her when she was a student. Now they were colleagues, equals. Right. She started to gather the items on her list.

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Sometime in the second hour, two very small pieces of mistletoe fell from their orbit. Severus took great pleasure in blasting the offending plants to bits. Roughly two-dozen pieces were left circling his body. At this rate, he would be foliage free around midnight.

Poppy rechecked his vital signs. "You should be fine by the morning, no worse for the wear, Severus." He humped noncommittally as she continued to scan him with her wand. By the time he left the hospital wing, five more pieces had fallen off. He blasted those to bits, too.

Hermione helped Poppy pick up the remaining bits of plant. "Will he be all right?"

"Severus? He's fine. I will check him a few more times tonight to be sure, but he should be free of the mistletoe by morning." Poppy laughed. "It's a good thing it's not charmed for kisses. Can you imagine everyone feeling a compulsion to kiss Severus's body?"

Hermione blushed as images of Poppy's words danced in her head. He might irritate her but she still harbored a secret crush on the man.

Poppy noticed the flush in Hermione's cheeks and smiled to herself. Maybe Hooch's theory of repressed sexual interest might not be too far off. The two were kept busy the rest of the afternoon as the students showed up with various bumps and other minor problems.

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Hermione had just enough time to change and freshen her hair and makeup, before dinner. Harry and Ginny would be arriving any minute. Hermione had lost her parents in a Death Eater raid just weeks before the final battle, her seventh year. Without any remaining relatives, she and Harry had adopted each other as family. Harry had been returning to Hogwarts for dances, and welcoming and leaving feasts. With Hermione and Remus in residence, it felt more like home than ever.

Hermione greeted her friends as she entered the Great Hall. Harry and Ginny had been dating for the last six months. Hermione was genuinely happy for the two, if not a bit envious, though she would never admit that to anyone. She was shocked when Severus showed up, not sure how the Headmaster was able to pry him out of the dungeons.

Over forty students in his class has been witness to the orbiting mistletoe and several more had stared as he walked to the hospital. Within the hour, pretty much everyone at Hogwarts knew what had happened and was trying for a discreet look at Snape.

On a good day the man hated these types of affairs, let alone while he still had multiple sprigs of mistletoe doing a conga line along his body. She blushed as she watched the pieces skim his body in an elliptical orbit, coming close to some very private parts she would not have minded being better acquainted with.

Hermione sighed. Who was she kidding? Things were never going to get better.

"I take it, things are not going according to plan?" Harry had noticed Hermione's increased interest in potions, and the Potions Master, their seventh year. He finally confronted her on his suspicions. They talked late into the night, Harry providing a shoulder to lean on as she cried her heart out to him. He might not have reacted as well as he did if he had not been faced with a weeping, maudlin Hermione. In the end, he decided if she and Snape ever came to be which he highly doubted, and she was happy, well, it was her life.

Harry had heard about the potions accident when he had arrived. He nodded in Snape's direction. "Well, at least he fits in with the decorations." Both Hermione and Ginny batted him on the arm.

Albus stood up and announced the meal complete. The dance was for the upper level students only, fifth through seventh year. The prefects lend the lower level students back to their common rooms. Several charms and incantations later, the large tables disappeared to be replaced with smaller intimate groupings. A dance floor appeared, as well as a stage. Albus had contracted the Weird Sisters to play for the dance. The lights dimmed and hundreds of candles floated in the air above their heads.

The dance had been going on for several hours. Most of the students had paired off into couples and were dancing to the slow, mournful beat of the Weird Sisters. Hermione watched as Harry and Ginny moved slowly around the dance floor.

She had been feeling sorry for herself most of the evening. Her mood was rapidly going downhill from there. Albus appeared at her elbow. "Hermione, would you mind checking on Severus? He retired to his quarters sometime ago. Poppy checked in on him once tonight but I fear she has had a bit too much eggnog to check him again. Would you mind?"

"Of course, Albus. He should be just about free of the mistletoe by now." The Headmaster gave her the passwords to bring down the wards to Severus's private quarters and she left the dance.

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Hermione found the door to Snape's quarters hidden behind a large tapestry depicting a snake. Albus had told her to knock first. She was only to use the passwords if he did not answer the door. Hermione could hear movement inside in answer to her knock. A very annoyed Severus briskly opened the door.

"Granger. What are you doing here?" Three lone sprigs of mistletoe continued to orbit him.

"Poppy was unable to come. I am here to check you."

"I'm fine." Nonetheless, he stepped back from the doorway to allow her entrance into his sitting room.

Hermione took in the room around her. A glass of brandy was sitting on a side table next to an open book. A fire glowed warmly in the grate, dispelling the chill of the dungeons. She indicated he should sit in the chair by the fire. He appeared to be wearing a floor-length, black silk dressing gown tied tightly at his waist, and little else. She eyed his bare chest as he tightened the belt on the gown.

"Shouldn't you be at the dance with your friends? I am sure you've all had a great time laughing at the evil git," he said, sneering at her.

Hermione paused in her scan of his body. "Don't you ever give it a rest? I am tired. It has been a long day. It is Christmas and I am going to go back to my rooms, alone. Again. Just let me finish and I will leave you alone."

Severus sat back and observed the young woman. Now that he looked at her, he could see circles under her eyes. And her usual confident air seemed to have deserted her. "Do you need a Pepperup Potion? I have one in my office."

Hermione smiled, "What's wrong with it? Is it poisoned?"

"No, but it is charmed to turn you silver and green." He smiled as she started to laugh.

"Did you just make a joke? My God, maybe the solution is dissolving your brain, too." Hermione had never seen him really smile before. He looked years younger.

One of the remaining sprigs seemed to slow before dropping to the floor. Severus blasted the mistletoe before banishing it to the fire.

"You really seem to enjoy doing that," she said, indicating the burning mistletoe.

"It is one of the few pleasures I have left. Well, will I live?"

The two sprigs of mistletoe continued to orbit his body. "I think you will survive, though I must say, these last two do seem a bit tenacious." She watched mesmerized as the mistletoe floated lightly over his shoulders before descending the length of his torso.

"Hermione, are you okay?"

"You called me Hermione?" Wonder filled her voice.

"That is your name. You were not answering me. Are you all right?" She had seemed off in another world. Severus was a bit concerned as he peered into her eyes. She had not seemed to hear him when he first called her name. He actually had nothing against the young woman, short of her being Potter's best friend. She was an easy target, responding repeatedly to his taunts. "Perhaps you should see Poppy."

"Say it again."

"I beg your pardon?" What the devil was she talking about? This was exactly the reason he preferred his own company.

"My name, I never thought I would hear you say it." While distinctive, she had never been thrilled with her name. It took on a whole new meaning when caressed by the velvet tone of his voice.

"You have thought about me saying your name?"

Hermione could only nod her head. Obviously she was too tired to think straight. They seemed to have struck some sort of truce. She would do well to get out while the getting was good. "I, uh, should go."

Severus watched her face, the open play of emotions as they crossed her features. "Hermione, what else have you thought about?"

His voice was soft, deep, infused with that erotic quality that caused her body to tingle low in the pit of her stomach. She stared deep into his black eyes, lost in the intensity of his gaze. Slowly, she lowered her lips to his. Her eyes drifted shut, her heart hammering in her chest.

The kiss was soft, sweet and took him completely by surprise.

Hermione pulled back, her cheeks flushed in embarrassment. She had to get out of there, fast. She turned to leave. "I'm sorry. I didn't..."

Severus stood pulling her tightly against his chest, one hand tangling in her hair. He kissed her passionately, with a longing that surprised both of them. He deepened the kiss as she eagerly responded. Her tongue gently pressed against his lips, seeking entrance. Their tongues tasting one another, dueled for control. It was some minutes later, when the need to breathe asserted itself, forcing them to break apart.

His arms remained loosely around her waist as he gazed into her eyes. "Would you like to explain what just happened?"

Hermione arched one brow. "You don't recognize a kiss when you see one?"

The mistletoe had moved to circle his head while they kissed. The orbit changed again as it moved around his body. "Why?"

Her voice was quiet as she lay her heart open. "Because I don't want to be alone. Because I've had a crush on you since my seventh year. Because you seem to be interested, too." Hermione could feel his erection pressing against her stomach. He was definitely interested in her.

Severus pulled back. "You had a crush on me your seventh year?" He failed to notice the sash of his dressing gown caught on Hermione's wand. The sash pulled away. His dressing gown opened to reveal his very prominent erection. Severus looked down, forgetting the mistletoe. One of the sprigs faltered and dropped to the floor. The other followed the path of his concentration and circled his member.

"I suppose I should follow tradition and plant a kiss under the mistletoe."

His mouth had gone dry. She didn't mean what he thought she meant, did she?

Hermione gently circled the head of his penis, spreading the drops of pearly fluid around the smooth tip. Severus groaned as she fingered the slit at the tip of his erection. The lone sprig started to falter in its path. Hermione slowly got to her knees as she continued to stroke his length. The mistletoe stopped and fell to the floor. A quick spell and the mistletoe once again hovered over his cock. Hermione smiled before taking his length into the warmth of her mouth.

It had been a long time since a woman had pleased him orally, longer still since he has been with someone so willing. If he didn't stop her, it would be over before it began. He had no intention of waiting for his body to recover before burying his aching erection in the warmth of her sex.

The piece of mistletoe on the floor magically rose to hover over his head. He gently pulled her up and planted a line of soft kisses along her jaw, trailing to the hollow of her neck. Her small moans and whimpers fed the lust coursing through his veins. Her obvious desire was an undeniable aphrodisiac for him.

He opened the catch at the back of her dress and stepped back. The dress pooled to the floor, leaving her clad in only a black lace bra, an abbreviated pair of black lace knickers, and low heels. His cock twitched taking in the scantily dressed witch before him. He definitely approved of her attire. "You look lovely."

Hermione pushed the robe off his shoulders. The mistletoe hovered over his head and erection. "I think I might just like Christmas after all," she said with a smile.

Taking her hand, Severus led her into his bedroom. A whispered spell later and her bra and knickers disappeared. Hermione blushed at the intensity of his gaze. Severus's eyes traveled her body, revelling in the curves and creamy expanse of skin. A gentle finger across her nipple sent a shiver through the aroused witch. His hand caressed the sensitive underside of her breast. Sitting on the edge of the bed, he was eye level with the objects of his desire. He licked and sucked each hardened bud, his hands kneading the globes of her arse.

He could smell her arousal from where he sat. Another whisper and the mistletoe hovering over his head moved to adorn her mound. "I thought I should return the favor," he said with a smirk. Severus moved to lay Hermione on the bed, turning his attention to her sex.

The hat on his head dropped off as his knelt between her legs. "It looks like you're cured." She lost the ability to speak as his tongue circled the edge of her sex before lapping through the wet slit and delving deeper into her body.

She could barely breathe as he moved to circle her clit with his tongue. He sucked and nipped the sensitive bundle of nerves, sliding one finger, then two, into her throbbing sex. Hermione could feel the familiar tightening of her groin signaling her approaching release. Her hands tangled in his hair, urging him on.

He could feel the walls of her sex twitching around his fingers. Severus hummed as he sucked the small nub into his mouth, the vibration sending her over the edge. She came panting and moaning, his name a whisper.

Severus spelled the mistletoe to the floor and moved up her body. He lay in the valley between her thighs, his stiff shaft positioned at her entrance. He moved along her body, slowly nudging her slick sex open with his hardened member.

Hermione moaned, her hands moving to his arse in an effort to pull him in. She arched off the bed, his cock filling her. He stilled, his shaft fully sheathed in her sex. He moved to nip at her neck as he thrust deeply into her body. Her walls tightened around his cock, straining his already failing control.

His name fell from her lips, wrapped in a moan. It proved to be his downfall. Severus growled as he pumped in and out of her body. Her muscles clamped down on his length, signaling her climax. He could feel his own release building low in his gut. His balls tightened as his member continued to piston in and out.

Hermione groaned, riding out her climax, as he thrust into her heat. She could feel the tension coiled within him. Severus came with a growl, his seed releasing deep within her body.

Severus gently kissed her forehead, trying to regain his control. He rolled to the bed in an effort to avoid crushing her with his weight. Hermione moved to snuggle into his side.

"Hermione..."

Her smile was bright, "Happy Christmas, Severus."

His laugh was warm as he hugged the enticing witch next to him. "Happy Christmas, Hermione. I suppose this means we will no longer be at odds with one another."

"Mmm, somehow I doubt we could ever stop arguing entirely. This just means we have a reason to make up when we fight." Hermione noticed the two pieces of mistletoe lying on the floor.

Severus reached for his wand, intent on blasting the last two pieces of the offending plant. Hermione's hand on his arm stilled his movement. "Please, don't. I would like to save them, if you don't mind."

"As you wish," he said, before pulling her in for a soulful kiss.

They spent the rest of the night and the next day talking and making love. It proved to be a very Happy Christmas, indeed.

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Years later, Hermione would continue to name Christmas as her favorite holiday as she decorated their quarters with sprigs of mistletoe. Two pieces of charmed mistletoe remained on their mantle, under glass, year round. Most of her friends thought she had an odd fascination with mistletoe but chalked it up to a seasonal quirk.

In the privacy of their bedroom, the pair continued the tradition that started the night they found each other, using the original sprigs of mistletoe that Hermione had saved that night.

Few understood their laughter as the tradition of kissing under the mistletoe took on a whole new meaning for them. They continued to enjoy Christmas, ever after.

~~~ The End ~~

A/N: The story is inspired by Corazon's Live Journal Icon. I have her permission to archive the image in my deviant art gallery. The icon is titled, Kiss Snape. It is a picture of a very muscular Severus, nude, wearing a Santa's hat. He is holding a piece of mistletoe over his head, the other hand is covering his groin with another piece of mistletoe; a tree and fireplace are in the background. Definitely elements to insure a very happy holiday!

Kiss Snape - <http://www.deviantart.com/deviation/13491790/>

Happy Holidays and a Happy New Year to all!

A grateful thank you to Nakhsh, for her corrections and suggestions, on Christmas no less. Another set of eyes is always helpful, the mistakes, however, are still my fault.

Let me know what you think.

Please review, I love hearing from you! As always, thoughts, comments, reviews, whatever are always welcome.

Regards, Pearle