

There They Were

by ancientgirl

Based on the Marriage Law challenge. This is a one shot with a companion story to be posted soon.

Chapter 1

Chapter 1 of 1

Based on the Marriage Law challenge. This is a one shot with a companion story to be posted soon.

This is the first story I ever wrote with SS/HG. I thought it would be interesting to just focus on their first night together before they "really" got to know each other.

There they were.

So here they were. Two married people facing each other alone in a bedroom. Neither one really knowing what to say to the other. The silence between them never seemed to be a problem until now.

The ceremony had taken place and they had stayed for a small reception in their honor held in the Great Hall. Then after a while they slipped away and walked quietly down to his and now her new home. And here they were with one more final assignment. They had to seal the marriage bond. This was going to be interesting to say the least.

After what seemed like forever, Severus sighed heavily and looked at the large bed.

"Well Miss Gra....I mean Hermione, I suppose there is no avoiding the inevitable is there?" He turned and walked to the large wardrobe against the wall opposite the bed and began undoing the clasp that held together the formal robes he had worn for their wedding. He opened the doors in front of him and placed the robe inside, then began to undo the buttons from his dark green frock coat, only to be interrupted when he heard what sounded like light laughter behind him. He narrowed his eyes and slowly turned around to find Hermione sitting on the bench at the foot of the bed laughing.

"And what may I ask do you find so amusing?" he moved towards her slowly. She quickly realized that he most probably thought she was laughing at him, and not wanting to begin their marriage, however a charade it seemed to be, on the wrong foot.

"I'm sorry Severus, I wasn't laughing at you. I was actually laughing at both of us, and this whole situation."

"I find this *situation* idiotic, intolerable and quite uncomfortable, Hermione, not humorous." He turned and walked to the fireplace and dropped heavily on the large plush leather chair next to it. He conjured up a glass of a dark amber liquid and drank it down in one gulp.

"Oh come now Severus, just take a step back for a moment. Here we are, two people who other than the classroom or Order meetings have barely said two words to each other in the almost 8 years we have known each other. And now we are husband and wife expected to...." She made a waving gesture towards the bed, not being able to bring herself to say the rest. "I swear all I can do is laugh to keep myself from crying."

"Crying? I wouldn't go that far. I realize I am not what you or any young woman would want for a husband, but it could have been worse."

"Oh? How so?"

"It could be Moody you wound up married to." At that Hermione visibly cringed.

"Yes quite right, it could have been worse." She looked at him for a moment as he sat in that chair just a few feet away from her, now sipping his second glass of what she now surmised was brandy. She could never really understand why he was so self-deprecating. He wasn't as gruesome as some people thought. His hair wasn't the greasy mop most thought it was either. It was actually just very fine and quite soft to the touch, as she found out during their first kiss at the end of the ceremony. The fact that he hovered over potions most of the time made it a bit greasy during the day, but he did wash it on a daily basis. She found that out when on several occasions she caught sight of him coming out of the bathroom at 12 Grimmauld place after showering. It was during those unseen moments over the summer before her 7th year where she began to realize he was quite handsome.

True he was not what most women would call handsome. He was tall and lanky, but from what she could see under his slightly open bathrobe he had worn, he was very well muscled. Not a bit of fat on that body she thought. And yes his nose was a bit large, but it added character and a certain regal quality to his face. His eyes were dark and mysterious, and she found herself losing much of her concentration whenever she looked directly into them. Then there was his voice, well best now go there. No he was not what most women would consider handsome, but she was not most women.

"I can't imagine it is any easier on you though. It isn't as if I had men falling all over themselves to marry me either."

"Quite the contrary Hermione, you had many offers." He looked at her and tilted his head a bit taking a careful look at her.

"Boy's Severus, all boys. And all of them friends who wanted to keep me safe from men like Lucius Malfoy." She looked down and studied her hands for a moment, then let her eyes fall on the ring he had given her. It was quite exquisite. It wasn't gaudy or fancy, it was simple. A band of platinum with small diamonds encrusted around the entire circumference and a single 2 carat deep Emerald solitaire, simple but extraordinary, just like her husband she decided.

He watched her now for a long while. She was admiring the ring he had given her. He did not know much about women other than how to bed them, but he knew enough to realize she adored the ring. He could see it in her eyes, he knew the moment he had placed it on her finger that whatever he gave her in this marriage, that at least the ring she wore would be something she cherish. Woman and jewelry he thought shaking his head.

He had realized during the previous summer while most of the prominent Order members were staying at 12 Grimmauld, that although they never spoke much, they were quite alike in many ways. With the threat of Voldemort no longer looming over them, since Harry and the rest of the Order had taken care of him the summer before, they had kept up the bi-weekly meetings. There were still a few Death Eaters roaming about that needed to be caught, and there was always the thought that it would be best to keep an ever-watchful eye for any future Dark Lords.

She enjoyed her solitude, and she spent many days and nights reading either in the study or in her room. He knew from others she had planned to go onto the University, although she still had not made a decision as to what her major would be. He often studied her when she thought she was alone. Her hair was still at times wild but no longer a bushy head of frizz. She had learned to tame her curls to look like silken threads that he often found himself wanting to run his fingers through. And while she was not considered a classic beauty he thought she was quite pleasing to the eye.

When the summer was over everyone went about their normal lives, and then the Order meetings were held on a monthly basis, unless there was something of great importance.

So it was, that one night during the month of January in their final year of school when Albus Dumbledore called an emergency meeting of the Order. It seems that The Ministry of Magic in their infinite wisdom to correct the instances of too many squibs being born to pureblooded unions decided to pass the Marriage Law. While they all sat in the small parlor at headquarters there was much curiosity. Harry, Ron Ginny and even Neville who had been inducted into the Order after fifth year, knew they would not be affected by the law, but Hermione however knew she was a different matter. After having used the time-turner during her third year, then sporadically during her fifth and sixth year without the knowledge of her friends, it was discovered just after the past summer that it had accelerated her aging process. Where the rest of her friends were still under age, she was now eighteen.

She sat in the corner way from everyone and noticed another solitary figure hiding in the shadows. They both stayed in their spots, seemingly unnoticed by the shouting and protestations of Harry and Ron and the rest of the group for that matter. Albus and Minerva were busy trying to calm the boys down telling them there was nothing they could do other than accept the facts as they were. Finally after almost 20 minutes of non-stop shouting and shushing and several temper tantrums on Ron's part, she got up and walked to the shadowy figure.

He looked down at her knowing she had been close to him the whole time. She looked at him and gave him a tentative almost apologetic smile, and he in turn let the corners of his mouth curve up slightly. There were no words between them, only understanding. Accepting that there was no other course to take they walked forward and accepted Albus' solution. And that was it. There was nothing more to say. Hermione told her friends this was her decision and they had to live with it. Knowing they would lose her as a friend if they did not, they all begrudgingly accepted. That night all three boys came to her and asked her to wait until they turned of age and they would marry her. She would have none of it. While she was not initially happy at having to be forced into a marriage, she felt confident that she was marrying the right man.

Severus would protect her from anyone who would do her harm. He would allow her to pursue her choice of careers, and he would give her what solitude or privacy she would want. She wondered if she had made the right decision.

"When I said earlier I was laughing to keep from crying, I didn't mean for you to think I wanted to cry because I married you."

"Why then?" he asked, now truly curious.

"Even though I seem to be more interested in books and learning, I still want some of the same things other women want. I always thought I would marry for love. And now here we are. Married and I don't even think you like me very much."

"I never said I didn't like you."

"Well maybe not in so many words, but you certainly gave the impression." At that he snorted and stood.

"I rather think I have given everyone else that same impression of how I feel about them." He said as he took a step towards her. She smiled.

"You have a point." She stood and started to take off her robe.

"Hermione. I am a difficult man. You know this by now, both from experience and by word of mouth. Being married to me will not be easy."

"I know. You expect perfection in your students and drive some of them to the brink of tears. You rarely give a kind word and more often than not you can be counted on to hold nothing back when it comes to insulting someone and taking advantage of their weaknesses. But what of me?" she asked as she took a step towards him now.

"More often than not you can be found bossing everyone about, for I gather it's the only way you have been able to keep those friends of yours in line. You are no doubt as stubborn as a mule when it comes to your opinions, and I have heard first hand that you have a temper not to be trifled with. What a pair we make then." he smiled and stepped closer to her.

"But you are also brave, and you have always held yourself with dignity and grace. You are the most intelligent man I have ever met and even though you would wish others to think the opposite, you have a kind heart." She stepped closer to him.

"Your intensity to learn is equaled only to your bravery. You have so much natural power that it would not surprise me if you surpassed even the most powerful of witches some day very soon." He stepped closer to her, until they were both inches away from each other.

