

Dare to Dance

by ShilohDarke

This story is inspired by a one-shot that was written by Melisande88 by the name of **Don't Dance, But Thanks for Asking**. However, this story will be multiple chapters. Hermione is given a choice between two dares. She steps up to the challenge and discovers that Professor Snape knows how to dance... Rated for later chapters.

Chapter 1- The Dare

Chapter 1 of 10

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A/N: My Beta that works with me on Mirror's Reflection has also agreed to help me with this story as well. I owe her debt of gratitude. RobisonRocket is the sweetest person!

ALSO... This story was inspired by a one-shot that was written by Melisande88. The name of the fan-fiction was "I Don't Dance, But Thank You for Asking." I liked it so much that after I read it, a certain plot-bunny began to take shape in my head. I wrote her and asked her permission to allow my plot-bunny to go free, and she gave me the go ahead, so I went ahead...

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Chapter 1 ***The Dare***

Hermione sat frozen to the seat. Her heart pounded in rhythm with the music. Ginny and Lavender sat on either side of her with expectant looks on their faces. Harry sat beside Ginny, watching her with a raised eyebrow. Ron held Lavender's hand and smirked in Hermione's direction before telling Harry, "She isn't going to do it. Even if she has to choose her other option, she would rather do that. I'd wager, than dance with that greasy bastard."

Choice! She rolled her eyes before glancing between her two choices. *This isn't a choice! This is humiliating!* Her mind wandered back to the previous evening. It had been a celebration of two things, really: The defeat of Voldemort and the reappearance of Dumbledore. He had not died at Snape's hands. But instead, it had been an elaborate trick, thought up by the two of them to make the Dark Lord careless.

It had worked. Severus Snape had reappeared at the school at the same time Albus Dumbledore had. They had briefed Harry, Ron, and herself on the situation and their plan. Harry had confronted the Dark Lord with Hermione and Ron at his side. Severus had turned on him at the last moment, and between their four wands, the *Avada Kedavra's* aim had been true.

During the celebration, which had eventually died down to just Harry, Ron, Ginny, Lavender and Hermione, she had just a little too much to drink. Ron had teased her unmercifully that she had never indulged herself in sexual relations with anyone.

She had scoffed and told him that she was far more worldly than he was. Yes, she thought with a shake of her head. *You sure got yourself into a mess, didn't you?* Now, because of her boasting that she was far more worldly than Ron, she had two choices. Either snog Draco Malfoy senseless or ask the greasy git to dance at the Celebration Ball.

Looking between the two, Hermione felt the urge to go bury herself beneath the Whomping Willow. Draco stood close to Parkinson. The two of them only had eyes for each other. It was obvious to see. If she dared to kiss him right now, then it was a definite that she would be hexed ten different ways to Sunday.

Her gaze moved to Professor Snape. He stood alone, leaning against the far wall, watching the couples dancing with a kind of detached interest. He had been missing from the wizarding world for most of this last year. It was understandable that after it was believed that he had killed the Headmaster, he would have to go into hiding.

Hermione found herself staring at him. His hair had grown longer in his absence. He also seemed larger than he had before. She wondered if he had put on a few pounds while away from Hogwarts? She noted with a smile that it suited him. The hair, although still straight, seemed far healthier. His clothes were missing his usual teaching robes that he had always worn for as long as she could remember.

His wardrobe was still a black ensemble, but it seemed that instead of hanging over his tall, thin form, it clung to him in all the right places. She took in the slacks that fit like a glove over his lower body, and the black button-down shirt that was open at the neck, revealing just a hint of curly black chest hair. She felt a pain in her chest as it became difficult for her to breathe for a moment.

She felt rather shocked at herself. Was she really finding the Potions master attractive? There was something in his stance that she had never noticed before. As if he felt her eyes on him, he turned his face towards her, his eyes finding hers and returning her appraisal openly before he raised an eyebrow and looked back to the dance floor.

"Like I said," Ron interrupted her reverie, "She won't do it. She doesn't have the pluck to do either task, if you ask me." She didn't miss his smirk in her direction before he added, "If it doesn't have to do with reading out of a book, she doesn't know how to do it."

Anger made Hermione fairly tremble. Ron was just being cruel. This whole dare he had masterminded to corner her had nothing to do with her knowledge of kissing or dancing. Instead, it was his desire for revenge for turning him down when he had tried to gain more from her than a simple friendly kiss.

She had cared deeply for Ron. Deeper than plain friendship at one point. But he had continually chosen to share his affection with someone else. He always chose to be with someone else. Then, the night before the face-off with Voldemort, she had witnessed him sharing a rather intimate moment with Lavender, only to turn to her once the other girl was gone and use the same pitiful lines on her.

With a silent glare in his direction, Hermione stood, and with a deep breath, began her journey across the dance floor to the side of the dreaded Potions master. As she drew nearer, she felt her nerve falter. Memories of his cruel behaviors when she was younger made her wonder what kind of craziness she was submitting herself to.

Just do it, Hermione! she scolded herself quietly. *Just go ask him. Let him turn you down. Then return to your seat and know that all you had to do was ask!* Her eyes made another sweep of his body as she drew closer to him. But when she reached his side, words failed her, and she just stood there, taking in the width of his shoulders, the length of his hair, the

obsidian shade of his eyes as they turned to her expectantly. His scent was sandalwood. The smell filled her nostrils, making her knees weak.

Her eyes widened when she realized he was returning her stare. Her mouth opened and moved, but no words came. *Oh God! Don't freeze! Mione, don't freeze,* she told herself inwardly even as she forced herself to take yet another step toward him.

Snape's eyebrow rose, and he looked her trembling form over from head to toe before asking in his low, soft voice, "Miss Granger? Were you going to ask something, or simply stare like a dimwit?"

Brought back to her senses by his words, Hermione gave herself a mental shake, and answered. "Uhm... Yes, sir, actually... I was going to ask... if perhaps you might... That is would you... Sir, would you like to dance?" *There! The words were out! All he has to do is just look down his nose at you and refuse like you know he will. Then you will be free to return to your seat with no humiliation for your attempt to satisfy Ron's dare.*

The dark wizard looked at her and shook his head. "I am here in the capacity of chaperone, Miss Granger. And even if I were not, I don't dance." The barest hint of a smile touched his lips before he added, "But I do thank you for having the courage to ask."

Hermione found herself very nearly smiling as well and opened her mouth to respond, but was cut off when a very besotted, drunken Professor Trelawney stumbled straight into Professor Snape's opposite side. "There you are, you beautiful hunk of a whizzard... Do you have any idea how long I have wanted to get you alone?"

Severus turned an almost horrified look upon the witch who was groping him and tried to extract himself from her grasp. "Madam, I assure you, the feeling is not mutual." He looked over the tippler with some trepidation. He was always trying to avoid Trelawney.

Hermione had started to turn to go; but recognition of the obvious horror her former professor must feel, she turned back. Pushing her own fears aside, she stepped closer and helped remove the witch from Snape's person. "Forgive me, Professor, but Professor Snape just agreed to teach me the waltz." When the elder witch stepped away, Hermione clasped his elbow with her small hand and dared a huge smile up at her somewhat dumbfounded professor. "I think this song is a slow but steady enough beat for just such a dance, don't you?"

He looked back at her for a moment, and she feared he might refuse her help, but instead, he returned her smile and fully offered her his arm. "Yes, you are quite correct, Miss Granger." When she took his arm, he glanced back at the drunken witch. "If you will excuse us, Trelawney," he said softly as he pushed past her, leading Hermione to the dance floor.

A slow tremor pulsed through Hermione's stomach as she let Snape lead her to the dance floor. When he turned and placed a hand at her waist, then offered the other to take her hand, she found herself swept up into the strongest arms she had ever been held in. Slowly at first, he led her through some simple steps. "You already know the waltz," he observed blandly as he led her.

Hermione found herself smiling. "I've taken lessons every summer since I was twelve. I know most of the ballroom dances." She felt the blush rise on her cheeks even as she added, "Although I am a bit rusty since I lack a regular partner."

Suddenly, the music changed, and Hermione, thinking the dance was over, began to pull away, only to find herself swept back into the wizard's arms. The dance steps were the tango. Her breath caught as Severus dipped her low, almost bending her in half, before rising and pulling her after him.

A gasp escaped her as he spun her around the floor in a move that was a classic Tango step. Giving herself over to his lead, she let him guide her in the most intimate dance that could have been shared between a man and woman. Their bodies touched in suggestive ways, leaving little to each other's imaginations as to the contours of their bodies. With a surprised smile, she looked up into the eyes of her Potions master, only to find a look she had never seen in his eyes before. His body molded to hers in the intimate parts of the dance.

Captivated, she found herself following his lead as the dance floor emptied of the other couples. She knew that everyone was circled around the dance floor, watching the two of them with a mixture of shock and awe. Severus led her through the steps, dominating her the way a true ballroom dance partner was supposed to.

She found herself being drawn into the passion of the dance, and when it ended, both of them were winded and grasping each other as those around them stared in stunned silence before overwhelmingly loud applause erupted around the room. When he stepped away from her, he still held her hand as his dark eyes bore into hers.

Stepping closer to her, he whispered in a low voice. "Well, perhaps since we both know the steps, you would consider me a proper partner? I rather enjoy dancing..." His

eyes searched hers. "When my partner knows the steps." Leaning down, he placed a gentle kiss in the palm of her hand before turning and striding from the dance floor, leaving a room full of stunned wizards and witches staring after him.

One witch in particular stood in the center of the dance floor, stunned expression on her face as she stared at the palm of her hand where Severus Snape had pressed a kiss into her palm. A slow smile spread across her face as she remembered his parting words. He had danced with her. And if she had understood him correctly, he intended to do it again. Hermione smiled as the thought came to her. Hopefully it would be sometime soon.

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A/N: I so loved Melisande88's story that she inspired my own muse to nip at my heels to begin writing this story as well as Mirror's Reflection. This, however is not a one-shot, but a full, in depth story... Chapter 2 should be on the way soon.

Please read and review!

Chapter 2- Insulting Remarks

Chapter 2 of 10

This story is inspired by a one-shot that was written by Melisande88 by the name of **Don't Dance, But Thanks for Asking**. However, this story will be multiple chapters. Hermione is given a choice between two dares. She steps up to the challenge and discovers that Professor Snape knows how to dance... Rated for later chapters.

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Chapter 2 - Insulting Remarks

"What the bloody hell were you thinking?" Ron's voice actually echoed through the halls as he forgot discretion. "Everyone is going to think you want to shag the greasy git now..." He rolled his eyes, feigning disgust. "Dancing like that in public! It was positively indecent!"

Hermione's steps slowed, and a look of hurt crossed her face. "I was only doing what you dared me to do! I don't understand you. What have I done to warrant you saying such hateful things to me?"

Ron turned and glared at Hermione. "I don't guess you have done anything, except maybe become the laughingstock of Hogwarts. I swear, everyone's going to talk! Come tomorrow, there won't be anyone in the magical community that doesn't know about what happened tonight!"

Harry, who had been following silently up until that point, spoke up. "I didn't see anyone laughing," he interrupted softly. "Actually, I agree that they will be talking, Hermione, but I doubt anyone will be throwing jokes your way." At Ron's scowl, he shrugged. "What? Even Draco was drooling after she and the professor finished that Tango. Believe me. I saw him!"

Ron shook his head. "Well, all I'm going to say is don't sit with us in the morning for breakfast. I don't want my name associated with that kind of behavior from one of my friends."

Lavender dropped Ronald's hand at that point and slapped his arm. "You can sure be an insensitive git sometimes. Do you know that?"

Ginny agreed. "Yes, Ron. If Mum could hear the way you're attacking her right now, she'd charm your mouth shut for a month!" She offered Hermione a smile. "I thought the two of you danced beautifully." A dreamy expression crossed her face before she added, "I even saw him smile while you were in his arms."

Lavender giggled and nodded. "Yes, he did. It was very romantic."

Ron turned and looked from his sister to his girlfriend in disgust. Stomping off, he waved a dismissing hand in their direction. "Why don't you all just sod off!" Lavender rolled her eyes and with an apologetic wave to Hermione, took off after him.

Wiping away the tears that had started to fall at his hateful words, Hermione looked to Harry. "I give up. I don't know what to do. He never ceases looking for ways to attack me now, and I don't understand why."

Harry wrapped an arm around her, giving her a big hug. "Don't mind him, Mione. He's just never gotten over not getting to be closer to you."

She threw her hands up in exasperation. "Whose fault is that, Harry? I tried to get closer to him, but he just acts like the only thing he wants is a willing witch beneath him." She shook her head. "I'll be damned if I'll let my first time be with someone that just views me as another notch in his broomstick!"

Ginny sighed and stepped forward to give Hermione a hug. "Ron's just not ready to grow up yet, Mione." She brushed the hair from Hermione's cheek that was now damp with tears. "But he doesn't want to lose your friendship. You just wait. This time tomorrow, he'll be apologizing and worrying that you won't let him live it down."

Harry smiled and nodded his agreement. Hermione hugged them both and kissed Harry's cheek. "Goodnight, guys. Thanks for the pep talk."

Ginny tilted her head. "Do you want Harry to walk you to the Head common room?" She smiled. "I don't mind."

Hermione shook her head. "No, that's all right. You and Harry go on. I'll be fine."

When she parted from them and headed for her own dorm, she paused outside the Head common room. The wizard in the portrait was standing there, wide-eyed. For a moment, she simply looked at him before opening her mouth to speak the password when he cleared his throat. "Uhhh... Perhaps milady would like to use her own private entrance into her own rooms? The... uh... common room has some activities within it that might be ... uh... inappropriate for your sensitive nature."

Hermione glared at the portrait before speaking the password, "Gryffindor and Slytherin alliances..."

With a sigh and a roll of its eyes, the portrait opened to allow Hermione entrance. Stepping through the portrait hole, she noticed nothing out of place. But after she shrugged and started towards the sitting area, she heard it.

Moans and pants invaded her ears. Dropping her jaw, Hermione turned to see Draco and Pansy rolling around on the floor before the hearth. Flabbergasted, she stepped backwards and bumped into the edge of the desk in her haste to get out without disturbing them. The vase that had been balanced on the edge of the desk toppled to the ground and shattered.

Instantly, Draco and Pansy shot apart. Pansy tried desperately to scramble back into her clothes while Draco just sat there in all his naked glory. A smile spread across his face at the ever darkening blush on Hermione's cheeks.

As Parkinson scrambled past Hermione, she slowed and offered Hermione a small, secretive smile. "That was fantastic dancing tonight, Granger. I have to admit, even I was envious." Turning, she ran from the common room, leaving Hermione staring after her. Had the girl who hated her almost as much as Draco suddenly paid her a compliment?

When she turned back, Draco was standing, still naked with his clothes in his hand. He was making no attempt to clothe himself, but instead was staring at her intently. At the look in his eyes, Hermione took an involuntary step back.

Draco's smile widened as he stepped nearer to her. "You know, Granger, you danced better than any pureblood I've ever known tonight. It was beautiful to see you move so gracefully with Professor Snape." He stepped closer, and she made a quick move towards her rooms. He smiled and shook his head. "You know, I've never seen my godfather dance like that with anyone. And I have always known that he could dance. Even seen him do it upon occasion. But never with such passion."

Hermione slowed her steps and turned back to Malfoy. "Y-you should get dressed or go to bed. Standing there like that you are liable to catch your death." Resuming her ascent into her rooms, she still heard his response.

"Keep dancing like that, Granger, and I'll offer to let you keep me warm. Pansy was doing okay, but I think you may know some better moves."

She squeaked as she entered her room, slamming the door shut. Quickly, she locked and warded it before sitting on the end of her bed and wondering out loud, "Oh holy Merlin! What have I done?"

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Severus sat before the fire in his rooms, swirling the contents of his glass before downing the liquid in one gulp. The firewhiskey went down smoothly, but gave him a warm sensation that traveled throughout his body.

Bringing his other hand up, he stared at his palm. This hand had held hers. Bringing it close to his face, he inhaled her scent that was still on him. When had Granger become a woman? She was no longer a little know-it-all girl. Instead, she was a woman that made him feel a passion he hadn't felt in a very long time.

Almost as if he heard his spy's thoughts, Dumbledore came through the Floo. "Ah, Severus, my boy. Excellent. I'm glad you are still awake."

Severus looked at the Headmaster with a faint smile. "Was there ever any doubt? You know I haven't been able to go to bed so early since I was allowed to join the Order." He smirked. "Not to mention all these years of patrolling the halls looking for wandering students."

Dumbledore smiled and nodded. "Yes, yes... But I wanted to speak with you about your and Miss Granger's dance tonight. It was quite moving." He paused for a moment before adding in a softer voice, "You were moved."

Severus looked at Albus with wide eyes. "She asked *me* to dance, Albus! I wasn't going to. *Surely* you don't think..."

Albus waved his hand. "That you were being improper with a student? No, of course not, Severus. Miss Granger will only be a student for another two weeks." He shrugged, "and besides, she's been over eighteen for almost the entire year, so technically if you wanted to pursue her..." He let the rest of the sentence dangle between them, and his eyes seemed to sparkle as Severus took in the meaning of his words.

Leaning forward in his chair, Severus asked, "Do you mean to tell me that you would condone one of your professors becoming romantically involved with one of your star pupils?"

Dumbledore smiled and leaned back in his seat. "It isn't unheard of, you know. Minerva had only been a teacher for a mere year when I first let my feelings for her become known. Look how well we've gotten on?"

Severus shook his head. "I can't believe you are having this discussion with me. I've known her since she was a mere child."

"Yes... and you have seen her grow into an adult." His smile grew. "And I haven't seen you smile the way you did tonight since you were a child yourself." He reached across the couch and patted the younger wizard's shoulder as he stood. "You deserve to be happy, Severus. The war is over. If you feel for this witch, do not let her pass you by."

With that the Headmaster left, leaving Severus staring into the fire. Hermione Granger? Romantic notions with her? It was impossible! He looked down at his hand, where he could still seem to feel the warmth of her palm touching his.

Warmth spread through him at the thought of pursuing the witch romantically. It was a wonderful thought. But Albus was daft. She was a beautiful young woman, and he was... Well, he was... him. How could she even take such a pursuit honestly? Refusing to dwell on the thought, he left his sitting room and made his way to find his bed.

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A/N: How's that for a follow-up chapter? Draco propositioned Hermione because he got all hot and bothered by the dance she and Snape did? Ron's a bloody git! And Dumbledore just gave Severus permission to pursue a relationship with a student? WOW! Please leave a review!

Chapter 3 - The Morning After

Chapter 3 of 10

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A/N: As always, RobisonRocket works hard to keep my story readable. Thanks, RR.

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Ch 3 -The Morning After

Hermione woke to a tapping sound at her window. Groggy, she got up and stumbled to it, only to find a large raven standing on the sill, looking at her expectantly. Tied to its foot was a small parchment. When he lifted his leg, Hermione untied the message. It squawked at her once and took to the air, leaving her staring after it in confusion. That bird seemed familiar, but she couldn't place it.

When she returned to sit on the side of her bed, she opened the missive and surveyed its contents. In the blink of an eye, she was wide awake and staring in shocked wonder at the words that were written elegantly across the page.

Dear Miss Granger,

I thank you for a very enjoyable end to my evening last night. It was a pleasant surprise to find someone that knows the ballroom dances that I, myself, have enjoyed upon too rare an occasion. It is with thoughts of our mutual interest that I would like the opportunity to make a certain proposal to you.

Please do not consider me presumptuous. But if I understood you correctly, you would welcome the chance to enjoy exercising those dances as well as I, with an appropriate partner, of course. Please stop by my offices if you would be interested in taking full advantage of a dance partner that would strive to be your equal in the dance. I shall look forward to your company. Shall we say... two o'clock then?

I eagerly anticipate our next dance,

Severus Snape

Hermione stared at the parchment. She was stunned. Never had she thought in a million years that Snape would dance with her to begin with. But to send her a letter, basically inviting her to come discuss the possibility of doing it on a regular basis? A smile spread across her face as she considered it.

She had always liked him. She thought he was noble and wonderful when it came to light that he was spying for the Order. Some small part of her had begun to have romantic notions about him even then. Rolling her eyes, she shook her head, reminding herself before she got carried away that he was only looking to have her as a decent dance partner.

With that thought, she sighed and began to dress. She would have to tell him about the bet. Just so he would know that she probably would never have bothered him otherwise. It was a strange turn of events that he knew her favorite style of dance. Who would have thought?

Charming her hair into a simple French braid that fell down her back, she then put a moderate amount of make up on to enhance her appearance ever so slightly. Looking in her mirror, she smiled her approval and nodded. She looked mature, attractive and Professor Snape would see that, she hoped.

Satisfied, she turned and made her way down to breakfast. She hoped that Ginny had been right and Ron would be eager to forgive and forget about the previous night. Her hopes plummeted when she reached the Great Hall. The first thing she saw was Ron. He looked over towards her, smirked, then turned to speak with Neville, who was sitting across from him.

With relief she saw that Ginny and Harry were not sitting with Ron, but several feet away, and were gesturing for her to join them at the empty seat beside them. Lavender had even sat with them, instead of Ron.

When she sat, both girls offered her sympathetic smiles. Smiling back, she sighed. "So, he hasn't gotten over it?"

Harry waved a dismissive hand in Ron's direction. "Oh, he might have, but I got so sick of listening to him prattle on about it, that I kicked him out of our room at three this morning."

Lavender giggled. "Yeah, and I was the first one to see him sleeping in the common room." She shook her head. "How do you sleep with all that snoring, Harry?" she asked.

Ginny covered her mouth, laughing. "Oh, Lavender... Imagine being in the Burrow with him! That tiny little house. His snores?" She looked at Harry, adding, "I used to ask Mum if it was earthquakes we were being hit with and they just sounded like Ron's snoring!"

Harry started to laugh, but caught himself. "That isn't very nice. He's still Hermione's and my friend. He's just going through an odd period in his life right now." He looked to Hermione, offering her a small smile. "He just needs us to be patient."

Hermione glanced from Harry to where Ron was sitting. She would always care for him. But she wasn't sure she wanted to wait for him to grow up and realize how hurtful he could be when he groused about things. "I don't know, Harry. I'm not sure I like the man that he's becoming." She blew out a sigh. "The adult he's becoming is almost as cruel as the boy Draco used to be!"

As she spoke that last bit, her eyes moved to the professors' table. She saw Dumbledore sitting between McGonagall and Snape. Her Transfiguration professor was talking animatedly with Albus. But the Potions master was staring directly at her. His eyes searched hers for several moments, and she could feel her heart beginning to trip over itself at the heat of his gaze before he slowly inclined his head to her in silent greeting.

A small smile flitted across her lips in response before she turned back to look at her friends, who had all grown silent. Harry and Ginny were both staring at her. Touching her face, she wondered if she had something on it, asking, "What? Do I have food on the corner of my mouth?"

Harry raised an eyebrow and looked from her to the professor and back. "He's too old for you, Hermione. And even if he wasn't... He's the greasy git, remember?"

Hermione scowled and argued, "He's not that old! And that *greasy git* is also one of the reasons we were able to defeat Voldemort." She shook her head. "I'm not thinking of him in a romantic way, Harry. Someone like him wouldn't want me. He'd be more interested in a more mature, prettier witch."

Harry scoffed and Ginny shook her head. "The way he danced with you last night didn't say that," she said. "By the looks of it, you were the *only thing* in this world that he had any interest in." She glanced up toward where the Potions master and the Headmaster were now conversing. "And it still looked like it just a moment ago," she added.

Hermione's eyes widened and she shook her head. But in her heart she found herself hoping that it would be so. "You don't know what you're talking about," she insisted. "The only reason he danced with me at all was because Trelawney was drunk and trying to throw herself at him."

Harry balked at that and Hermione nodded. "Yes! I tell you honestly, he told me no at first. When I started to walk away, she was there, running her hand down his chest

and telling him that she wanted to get him alone." She looked to Ginny and Lavender, who both looked shocked. "He only danced with me as a way of getting away from her."

Lavender was the first to recover. Leaning forward, she asked quietly, "Professor Trelawney was hitting on Snape?" She gaped. "Poor witch must be addle-brained."

Hermione waved her hand at them and turned to her breakfast that was starting to get cold. Muttering a quick heating charm on it, she began to feed herself while the others resumed other conversations.

When she realized they were busily arguing over Quidditch, she cast a last glance up to where Severus had been sitting. His chair was empty, and he was no longer in the room.

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Severus sat behind his antique mahogany desk that he kept in his private office. He kept checking the time to see if it was time for Miss Granger to be there yet. Some part of him expected her to stand him up. Making himself blindly go through students' essays, he tried to give the appearance of someone who was indeed busy, and not just waiting anxiously for another person to show up.

He was desperately annoyed with himself. Some part of this whole situation made him feel as he had when he was younger and desperately in love with Lily. She had never been interested in him that way, but she had always endeavored to be kind. Part of him wondered, *Will Hermione come here today with the same intent?* He scowled at the thought. *The last thing I want is for her to show up here and try to turn me down without injuring my feelings.*

Anger made his scowl deepen, and when Hermione walked hesitantly into his office, she paused and almost took two steps back before he saw her. Glancing at the clock, she asked, "Am I late?"

He spared his timepiece a fleeting glance before answering, "No, Miss Granger. You are punctual, as usual." He kept his voice flat because he feared that if he tried to sound pleasant he'd give away the quiver that hummed beneath his dark baritone.

At his rather brisk response to her, she found herself clasping her hands before her in an attempt to not fidget. "Well, then, I suppose I can assume that sadistic look on your face has nothing to do with me?"

Realizing at her words that he had indeed been glowering at her, he relaxed his shoulders and gestured for her to come into the room. "Please, Miss Granger, come in and close the door."

As she did what he asked, he found his eyes drawn to her Muggle wardrobe. She was wearing a pair of faded denim jeans and a rather snug baby blue t-shirt. His eyes roamed her backside appreciatively as she had her back turned.

When she swung back to face him, she noticed his eyes were fixed on a spot below her waist. Clearing her throat, she fought the urge to smile when his eyes flew back to meet hers. "You wanted to see me?" she asked.

"Indeed," Severus responded, trying to sound bored. "I wanted to thank you for rescuing me last night." He suppressed an involuntary shudder at the look in Trelawney's eyes as she had nearly drooled all down the front of his silk shirt. Forcing the vision out of his head, he continued, "It was very considerate of you."

Hermione smiled and nodded. "You are welcome, Professor." *It's now or never!* she thought to herself as she added quickly, "I guess it was a good thing that Ron bet me to ask you to dance." When his eyes flew to hers, she cursed herself for not thinking through what she was going to say. "What I mean is..."

Standing, Severus rounded his desk to stand before her. "You did what?"

Swallowing down her fear and ignoring her pounding heart, she tried to explain. "You see, Ron dared me to either kiss Draco, or ask you to dance." She shook her head. "I have never had the desire to be a foot within kissing distance of Malfoy, so I thought... Well, that is to say... Sir, I never expected that you would say yes." She felt like a bumbling fool. "And you didn't! You turned me down flat, and Ron never said that I *had*, to get you to dance with me. Only that I had to ask. But then, Trelawney came... and you just looked so miserable. I just... Well, I couldn't let you be groped by her. So, I..." Her shoulders sunk as she took in the look of pure fury across his features. "I'm sorry, sir."

Trembling with rage and humiliation, Severus nodded. "Oh, not yet you aren't. But you shall be, Miss Granger." His forefinger shook as he pointed at her perky nose, making her eyes cross. "You have detention every night for the next two weeks!"

Hermione sputtered, eyes wide with indignation. "*What?* But I... What for?"

Snape growled and stepped closer, making her shrink away, mortified. "For insulting a professor by agreeing to use him in one of your *bets*!"

Hermione found her own rage boiling at that moment. "But, I ended up helping you! I saved you from that loony witch with a severe hormonal imbalance! You should be thanking me!"

Severus growled, "Oh, I'll thank you all right! I'll thank you so much, Gryffindor shall never recover!"

"What?" Hermione sputtered.

"Two hundred points from Gryffindor!" Severus roared at that same moment.

Hermione fell silent at that. She stared at him, at a loss for words.

Severus, on the other hand, wanted to lash out even more. He wanted to accuse her of trifling with a man's emotions. He wanted to call her mean, petty names to make her feel wounded. He wanted her out of his sight before he kissed her senseless. "Go now, you silly know-it-all! Get out of my sight! But report to the dungeons after the evening meal tonight."

She gasped. "But, sir! Today is Saturday!"

He clenched his fists to keep from reaching for her. When his body took to trembling like this, there was only one thing that alleviated it, and it wasn't snogging. "Did I not say *every night*, Miss Granger? Now go! Get out of here!" He waved his hand at his office door, and it came open without the use of his wand.

Turning, she fairly ran from the room as he stalked to the door, furious. Albus had told him to pursue her if she was what he wanted. Well, the passion that ignited in him at their little heated discussion just now sealed it. She should have taken the dare to snog Malfoy. Because Severus knew now what he wanted more than anything. And he would not stop until he had it.

~~*~*~*~*~*~*~*~*

A/N: Woah! man! Did she open her mouth and insert her foot just then, or what? I want to thank all of you that have been following my stories and leaving me such fantastic reviews! They really feed my Muse and keep her throwing more and more ideas my way! Please continue to leave me some more reviews; it's food for the Muse of romantic writers!!!

Up next... What do you think he's going to make her do for detention?

Chapter 4 - Distraction of Detention

Chapter 4 of 10

This story is inspired by a one-shot that was written by Melisande88 by the name of **Don't Dance, But Thanks for Asking**. However, this story will be multiple chapters. Hermione is given a choice between two dares. She steps up to the challenge and discovers that Professor Snape knows how to dance... Rated for later chapters.

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Ch 4 - Distraction of Detention

Hermione was still fuming the next morning when she made it to the Gryffindor table. Tossing her bag down on the floor beside her, she lowered herself onto the bench in a huff. Every student at the table was in an uproar over who had cost Gryffindor 200 points. Gritting her teeth, she closed her eyes and took a deep breath. *It isn't my fault. Snape over-reacted that evening. He is just insulted about my taking the dare to ask him to dance.*

Looking up, she saw that Ron was watching her with narrowed eyes. Glaring back at him, she leaned forward and whispered in a low hiss, "*Not one word, you pompous, red-headed weasel!*" His eyes widened at her words, and his jaw dropped at her openly angry face.

After a moment, he muttered softly, "Not that I would want to waste my breath speaking to you anyway." He turned away from her and spoke with Harry, who was also a bit taken back by her anger.

"Uhm... Hermione?" Ginny asked softly. "Do you want to go somewhere and talk?" Hermione looked to Ginny and her shoulders sunk.

Before she could respond, she felt a shadow loom over her and knew before she even looked that it was Snape. "Detention will be held in a different place this evening, Miss Granger." He handed her a small piece of parchment with directions. "I expect you there promptly at seven."

She didn't look into his eyes. She couldn't bear to see his smug expression. She simply nodded. "Yes, sir. I will be there."

Severus' lips turned up for a split-second as he turned and made his way from the Great Hall. She watched him out of the corner of her eye, fighting the adolescent urge to stick her tongue out at his retreating backside.

Instead, she turned back to Ginny, who was looking at her with a curious expression. The younger witch leaned forward and glanced around before asking in a hushed whisper, "Hermione, did you do something last night that cost Gryffindor house points?"

Hermione looked sullenly at her untouched food and nodded. "I admitted to Professor Snape that I only asked him to dance because of Ron's dare." She glanced back at Ginny. "I didn't know it would offend him so!"

Her friends jaw had dropped, and she shook her head. "Wow!" she said simply, then, "Do you know what this means?"

Hermione nodded. "Oh, yeah! It means that I have detention with the greasy git every day for the rest of the year." She rolled her eyes. "I think he even expects me on the evening of graduation!" She let out a moan that betrayed her misery. "Oh, Ginny... I'm stuck in a nightmare!"

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Severus stood to one side of the large chamber. His eyes studied the floor to make sure it was indeed smooth enough for his needs. It would not do for there to be anything for Miss Granger to trip over or stumble upon.

Glancing at his timepiece, he moved to lean against the wall. She would be arriving at any moment. He could feel her approaching. When the large door opened, she entered with a crestfallen expression on her face. He almost felt pity for her. Almost.

Stepping away from the wall, he greeted her in a soft voice. "You are punctual as ever, Miss Granger. I am pleased."

Hermione smiled nervously. Professor Snape was leaning against the far wall. The way the room was lit cast him in shadow. She tried to see his countenance, but failed. Wondering at why the room was lit as it was, she turned in a slow circle, gazing about. She had never been in this part of the castle. In fact, she had never known that it existed. Taking in the room before her curiously, she asked, "Where are we?"

Severus moved out of the shadows to stand before her. "This is the old music room. It hasn't been used for quite some time." As he spoke, Hermione found herself staring. Snape's hair was loose and fell well past his shoulders. Instead of his usual robes, he was dressed only in a Slytherin-green silk shirt, and a pair of black pants with matching shoes. Dance shoes.

With a face full of confusion, Hermione looked back up at him. "Why are you dressed like this? Why are we here? This isn't a normal way to conduct detention."

Severus scowled at Hermione and cleared his throat. "As I am the professor here, it is my right to choose how you shall spend your detention. Is that understood?" At her nod, he continued, "I have decided that since Mr Weasley blessed us so by daring you to dance with me, that you shall be able to get your fill of it."

Turning and lifting his wand, he released the disillusionment that had hid the dress from her vision. When she saw it, a gasp escaped her. It was a matching color of green to the shirt he wore. There were beads of black, green and silver that adorned it. The hem of the dress was zig-zagged. As she moved closer to touch it reverently, he smiled and flicked his wand, whispering, "*Transpositionism garments!*"

Immediately, Hermione was swept up in a whirlwind. The clothes she had been wearing were dropped to the floor as the dress suddenly fit itself to her, shrinking just ever so slightly to fit to her modest curves. As a final touch, she felt a slight lifting of her bosom. Looking down in alarm, she saw that her cleavage was now hoisted up.

Crossing her arms protectively over her chest, she faced him as her face burned red with her modesty. She stammered, "B-but, s-sir... I-I don't u-understand. Why would

you want to dance with m-me a-after your anger last night?"

Severus chose not to answer her question. Instead, he stepped up close to her and gently took her hands away from her chest. With a lingering glance at her ample cleavage that was given graciously to him from the way the dress was made, he could easily see that she, indeed, had made the transition from child to woman.

Placing his right hand in the small of her back and clasping her other hand in his free one, he spoke with authority into the room. "Music." Instantly, more torches flared to life and a slow, sensual song began to play.

Hermione swallowed nervously as Severus began to lead her in a slow, erotic dance. It was a variation of one that she recognized as the bolero. It was almost as suggestive as the tango in that it was highly sexual. However, she felt somewhat unsure of it because it was a much slower dance. Instead of a hint of a touch of her partner's body against hers, it was a slower, lingering contact.

Severus told himself he was only doing this to punish her. She would be made to understand that a young woman could not toy with a grown man's affections. Even as he convinced himself, his body knew better.

His chest pressed to hers. She could feel the solid muscle of him beneath the thin, silk shirt that covered him. That, combined with the scent of him made her almost weak with an unfamiliar emotion. She wanted something. Something ached deep inside of her, but she couldn't place something she had never felt before.

As Severus led her through the dance, his eyes held hers captive. She couldn't have looked away if she'd wanted to. His touch, his scent and his gaze had set her on fire. As the song came to a close, he stilled, but did not release her.

He fought to calm himself. Waves of desire shot through him, making it hard to concentrate on anything besides his growing desire. He could not release her. It was as if to release her would be to cut a part of himself away. Severus let go of her hand to brace his own against her back and aid in drawing her closer.

His arms tightened around her, drawing her closer. Hermione found herself bringing both hands to his shoulders in an effort to not be pulled off-balance. He watched her responses closely as he pressed his arousal close to her body, making her fully aware of the fact that she was not the only one affected by their contact.

I must stop this! she thought wildly. *He's caught up in the moment and doesn't even realize what it is he does* She intended to use her hands on his shoulders to push him away. Rather, she found herself gripping his shirt as he pulled her closer. When his head began to descend toward hers, her eyes widened and she shook her head slightly, even as her eyes closed.

When his lips were a mere breath away, he flicked his tongue out and let himself taste the skin of her lips. Her voice betrayed her with a moan. It was his undoing. His mouth claimed hers in an instant, covering the gasp that escaped her as he crushed her to him.

Her own mouth answered the question in his. Her hands twined in his hair, and she moaned in ecstasy. Her tongue dueled with his in a way that made him want to take her right then, on the stone floor. Alarms went off in his head. *You cannot do this! It is too soon!* Groaning, he drew away from her, panting for breath as he leaned his forehead against hers.

Trembling, she reached her hand to her mouth. A look akin to a mixture of horror and desire crossed her features as she moved to put distance between them. Who had kissed who first? She didn't know. Severus watched her as she began to shake her head, enlightenment dawning before she turned and ran from the room.

He started to go after her, but stopped. It was enough for now. She would come back tomorrow evening. A slow smile made his face look softer as he ran a forefinger across the bottom lip of his open mouth slowly. "Soon, my darling," he whispered softly. "Soon."

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Hermione ran all the way to her room. Gasping out her password at her private entrance, she stepped through into her room and sank into the nearest chair. Her whole body was alive and tingling. She moaned as she ran her hand over the dress that was still covering her flesh.

"My clothes!" she whispered as the realization that she had left them in the music room hit. She didn't care. She wasn't going back down there. She wasn't fool enough to think that if she went back she could leave with her virginity still intact.

With that thought, she remembered the terms of the detention. She would have to go back. Come tomorrow evening, she would be obligated to return to that room. He would again touch her, holding her to him, drawing her into all of the passion of the dance. Closing her eyes, she leaned back against the back of the chair.

A tapping at her window drew her attention. Frowning, she moved to let the bird in. It was Snape's raven. The bird held out his foot for her to take the parchment. Taking it, she snatched a treat to reward the bird for his labor. Tossing it to him, she opened the parchment and stared in confusion at the sentence written there.

The dress is NOT to leave the music room.

Just as she was about to wonder out loud at the missive, she felt a sudden shock of cold air as the dress that covered her nude form vanished, leaving her in only what the gods had granted her at birth.

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A/N: Thanks to Robisonrocket for helping me make this story easier to read.

Chapter 5- If Only. . .

Chapter 5 of 10

This story is inspired by a one-shot that was written by Melisande88 by the name of **Don't Dance, But Thanks for Asking**. However, this story will be multiple chapters. Hermione is given a choice between two dares. She steps up to the challenge and discovers that Professor Snape knows how to dance... Rated for later chapters.

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A/n: As always, without RobisonRocket being kind enough to point out my mistakes, this would be so hard to read. Thank you for the help, RR.

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Ch 5 If Only

Severus had stayed in the music room until the dress Hermione had been wearing reappeared. With a broad smile that never made its way to the sight of any student, he had turned and left the room, warding the door to keep any nosy intruders out of a space he now considered private for Miss Granger and himself.

Now, lying alone in his bed, Severus let his thoughts drift to his next plan in her punishment. She had nearly succumbed to his desires by giving in to her own. He imagined she would have if she hadn't been so spooked by them.

The soft silk of the sheets rode low on his hip as he turned onto his back and used his arm to cushion his head. He stared out into the darkness and wondered what his witch was doing right now? Closing his eyes, he let his thoughts continue to drift.

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Hermione tossed restlessly. Her nightgown felt tight and frumpy. Her body was all jittery, and she didn't understand why. Flipping onto her belly, she blew out her breath in frustration. It was Snape! This was all his fault! Her body still burned in all of the places where his hands had touched her. Her lips felt swollen and full.

Angrily, she got up from the bed and pulled her gown off. Maybe, just this once... if she left her gown off, she would sleep better. Crawling back under the covers naked, she sighed at the feel of the soft cotton against her skin. Yes, this was better.

Closing her eyes, she began to drift off to sleep. When the dream began, she knew something was off...

Looking around her, she noticed she was back in the music room. People lined the walls in medieval dress. Her eyes rounded when she saw Severus standing opposite her. His eyes looked at her with what appeared to be as much surprise as what she was feeling.

When he moved close to her, she shivered when he took her into his arms. He smiled at her response. "I have been waiting for this," he whispered softly. "You look absolutely stunning!"

Hermione looked into his eyes as they began to dance before all the others in the room. She was afraid. Something was wrong. "Why is this happening, Professor?"

He shook his head slowly. "No, my love. I'm not that man here." He smiled and Hermione found herself staring in awe at the transformation on his face. "Here, I am whatever you want me to be."

Baffled, she looked around them. "But, this isn't what I want! I have never desired something like this. I never even imagined it!"

Severus led her through the dance; a waltz that was correct for the period the dream was in, yet unfamiliar to her. After a moment, he asked. "Didn't you?" He shrugged. "This is your dream, so one would assume that you wanted it on some level."

She closed her eyes, forcing herself to remain calm. Then she looked back at him. "But what does it mean? If this is a message from my subconscious, then what in the friggin' hell is it trying to say? Could you translate, because I, myself, am a little confused!"

He smiled, which only served to infuriate her more. "Like that!" her voice rose. "You aren't really Severus Snape! The Severus Snape I know would never smile like that! He hardly ever even attempts a grin. If he does, it looks more like a smirk."

He grew solemn and met her eyes with his. "Perhaps I am not the Severus Snape you know. Maybe I am the Severus Snape that could be... if you loved me."

Hermione stopped dancing. The look in her eyes was positively lost. "L-love you? But you... I... I don't even really know you? All I know is that you are the greasy git that doesn't even know how to pay a compliment when I do a good job in your Potions class."

His arms closed around her, and he drew her closer to him. Before she knew what he intended, she was enveloped in a deep kiss that made her body hot and shaky. When he withdrew, his eyes burned into hers. "Find a way to love me, Hermione. I need you to love me. If you can't, then I am lost."

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Startled awake, Severus panted in alarm. He had watched his dream self from inside, horrified at the things he was telling the witch, but helpless to stop him. His eyes wide, he groped for his black robe to cover himself with. It was thick and almost as modest as his usual garments, besides offering a slight glimpse of a few chest-hairs. That was of little importance right at this moment. Right now, he had to find out if the library had any information regarding the dream he had just had.

Love him? He'd asked the know-it-all to love him? "What am I, daft?" *Either that or crazy!* he thought. Hopefully, his fears were not founded, and Miss Granger would have no knowledge of the nightmare he'd just had. Optimistically speaking.

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Across the castle, in her private room, Hermione lay beneath her covers, tears streaming down her cheeks. She felt the kiss from the dream Snape on her lips. His words stirred feelings within her she couldn't deny. That dream had felt so real. The plea from him was so genuine. *Love me. If you can't, then I am lost.*

Knowing that she must discover the meaning of this dream, she stood and pulled on her burgundy robe her mother had given her for Christmas. It was silk with a soft inner lining that kept it from being see-through. As she doubted that anyone would be awake at this time of night, she wasn't worried about donning anything more appropriate. There were hours left before the rest of the castle awoke.

As Head Girl, she was granted access to any part of the library whenever she had need of it. She knew she would have no more sleep tonight. She had to find out if there was any information about this kind of dream, and why it haunted her so.

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Severus stood at a section of books, a frown marring his features. He had found nothing on the dream to prove what he feared. Of course, he'd found nothing to disprove it, either. Placing the latest book back in its place on the shelf, he sighed quietly. Maybe it was all in his mind. Perhaps his only true problem was that he was bothered by the Headmaster's suggestion to pursue Hermione. The reason for that was because he knew all too well that he really wanted to do just that.

As he was turning to leave, he heard a very feminine sigh. Quietly, he tiptoed to the end of the bookcase and peered around to see where the sigh had originated from. Unruly, curly brunette hair was the first thing his eyes beheld.

Damning the gods that cursed him, Severus turned and leaned against the end of the bookcase. His eyes stared in shocked silence at an unseen spot on the floor. Well, wasn't this a mess? There was no way to sneak out of the library without her seeing him. *No!* he scowled at the knowledge. *To get out of here, he had to walk past her. Crazy little chit! What was she doing here, anyway? Didn't she realize it was past curfew?*

"Of course not," he whispered in a falsetto voice. "When a student is Head Girl, with perfect scores, she should be able to stay out as late as she wants!" He smirked at how Minerva McGonagall had won that fight fair and square just a few years ago. Damn the old witch anyway! Sometimes he thought she just tried to help her precious Gryffindors find ways around intelligent *school rules!*

His hands stilled, but he moved to rest his chin on her shoulder. "Hermione," he whispered her name before trailing soft kisses along the exposed skin of her neck. "Do you know, I don't think I've ever wanted to shag anyone as badly as I've wanted you."

Hermione shook her head to clear her senses and stepped away from the hands that were beginning to work a bit of seductive magic over her already heightened senses. "Malfoy, that is the most absurd thing I think you have ever said to me!" She turned to face him. "You hate me! I'm the Mudblood, remember? Your father would probably disown you for simply touching me!"

Draco stood there, looking at her with an expression that made her take a step back. It was an expression she had already seen once tonight. Severus had worn it as he ravaged her on the library floor.

Longing shot through her at the thought of Severus and the ways he had touched her. She wanted this, but not with Draco. He may have been so much closer to her age and all, but he just wasn't the man who stirred her senses to life.

Draco seemed to recognize that the longing she felt wasn't for anything he could offer her, and his expression fell. Running his hands through his now longer hair, he turned and moved to sit on the couch. When he looked back at her, he asked, "Does Snape know how you feel?"

Bemused, Hermione shrugged. "I don't even know how I feel." Moving to sit in the chair across from him, she added, "I only asked him to dance because Ron dared me to do it." She smiled and rolled her eyes. "Either that, or kiss you."

When she looked back at him, he was staring at her in a dazed way. "What?"

Laughing, she nodded. "Yes! Isn't that crazy? I would have grabbed you, but Pansy was all over you that night! I didn't want to receive the *Grucio* just because I kissed you on a dare." She gave in to her urge to laugh hysterically for several minutes until she realized that Draco was still just looking at her with an odd expression. "What?"

He hadn't joined her in laughing and now looked completely miserable. Looking down at his hands, he muttered, "No... it doesn't sound so crazy to me. I wouldn't have let Pansy curse you for that."

She looked at him and found herself feeling rather stupid. Her mother had always suggested that one of the reasons Draco had always picked on her so when she was younger was because he secretly liked her. Suddenly, all those years of hateful remarks and dumb tricks made sense. "Oh, Draco." She shook her head. "I never knew. It never occurred to me that you..."

Draco raised a hand to stop her confession. "It wasn't like I held out a big sign saying, *'pureblood prince has it bad for Muggle-born beauty!'*" He rolled his eyes. "I couldn't admit to it while Voldemort lived! My dad would have killed me!"

Feeling genuinely sorry for him, Hermione moved to sit beside him and placed her hand on his knee. "I guess I can understand you a bit better now. I'm sorry for not catching on earlier."

He shrugged, then turned to look at her, saying, "Why didn't you try to kiss me? What made Snape more approachable?"

Hermione looked away. "It wasn't that he was any easier to approach. I just expected him to say no!" Then she muttered, "He did say no."

Draco tilted his head before smirking. "That was the hottest nonexistent dance that did-- but didn't-- happen, that I've ever seen..."

Sighing, she said, "No, it happened. But only because Trelawney was trying to rape him. I stepped in, and as a result," she shrugged, "he danced with me."

Draco made a gagging noise before recovering. "Trelawney? Oh, my dear Merlin! That poor wizard! She's a nightmare!" He began snorting in laughter.

"No, I can think of one worse!" Hermione interrupted.

Draco stopped his laughing and looked at her for a moment before they both said in unison, "UMBRIDGE!"

He shuddered, whispering, "Gods! That woman was disgusting to look at!"

She nodded, adding, "She did some awful things, too."

The blond nodded before asking, "Granger?"

Turning to look back at him, she answered, "Yes, Malfoy?"

"Do you think... I mean if I would have been nice to you... Could you have ever seen yourself with someone like me?"

Hermione eyed him for several moments before nodding. "Yes, I think that if you had always been at least this nice, then I could have..."

Her words were cut off as Draco crushed her to him, claiming her lips in a passionate kiss. She could feel all the longing and desire there in his touch. She even felt something more coming from him: a desperate emotion that was begging to be recognized.

All the passion he poured into the kiss did nothing to her. Her heart didn't begin raging like it did for Snape. Her palms didn't get sweaty. She placed a hand on his cheek as he kissed her. He moaned dejectedly as he gave up and leaned back. His eyes searched hers. "Nothing?"

With a sigh, she attempted, "It isn't you, Draco. I think Severus has ruined me for anyone else. All I think about is him. Even when you kissed me just now, I was comparing you to him." She shook her head. "And that isn't fair to you."

Standing, he moved to stand before the fire for a moment before turning and giving her a rare, genuine smile. "Well, look at it this way. Now, if that weasel starts smarting off, you can always tell him you took both his damn dares!"

Laughing, she nodded. "You know, I think I may just do that!"

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The next morning found Hermione doing some last minute studying for one of the many tests they still had to take. She knew that the detentions were going to take a lot from the time she had to prepare, so she tried to use as much time as she could to her advantage.

When Ron found her, she didn't even hear his approach until he was sitting across from her, watching her intently. Feeling his eyes on her, she looked up and met his gaze. "Yes?"

Looking somewhat surprised by her greeting, he sighed. "I was waiting for your apology." His expression let her know the words were not spoken in jest.

Giving him a baffled look, she asked, "Apology for what?"

He crossed his arms before him, answering, "For making such a scene with the git! You know I haven't had a moment's peace since that night? Everyone keeps asking me if you're shagging the bastard!"

Smirking, Hermione went back to her studies and prayed silently that he would just leave. When he didn't, she looked back at him and gestured at her books. "I'm trying to study here, Ron."

"Yes, I can see that!" he sneered. "You know, I pity any fool that decides to marry you. They'll have to accept that you're a lousy shag, 'cause you never took the time to learn anything else other than what could be taught by a book..."

As he spoke, a shadow had fallen over him, but he had paid it little mind, choosing instead to berate the girl who had once been his best friend. When the tears began glistening in her eyes, a hand descended on Weasley's shoulder, cutting him off.

"That's quite enough, Mr Weasley. I think you should leave the library, post-haste, as there is nothing for you here." Snape stared the redhead down and hesitated for a second before adding, "Only students that wish to excel spend much time here." He reached to urge the boy up and then offered, "Why don't you run along and find a nice underachiever to go play with? It seems even Potter has outgrown your useless prattle!"

Ron sputtered, but turned and stomped off, leaving the two alone in the quiet library. With a sigh, Severus sat in the seat he'd just boosted Weasley from and looked the solemn witch over. After a moment, he asked, "Has he been acting this way towards you for long?"

With a nod, she answered, "Almost all year. Ever since I refused his advances when I knew he had Lavender believing he was in love with her."

Leaning forward, he couldn't help but ask, "And do you love him, Miss Granger?" He waited, holding his breath.

"No, I care for him. But it is more like the love one feels for a sibling." Closing her book, she stared at its cover for several moments. "But I'm not sure I can even feel that for much longer. I just don't understand what's wrong with him. He acts like he hates me, but I didn't do anything to him."

Sitting back, Severus pondered this for a moment. Truth was, he had sensed something off with the Weasley boy. Something not quite right, but he wasn't sure what it was. He couldn't imagine that the boy would risk losing one of his best friends over something so trivial as her not wanting to be the other woman.

That didn't sound right. It wasn't something Ron Weasley, who was part of the Golden Trio, would do. Be selfish, yes. Hold a grudge until he calmed down, yes. Treat Hermione with such cold, cruel hatred? No. There was definitely something wrong here. Knowing he had to find out what the problem was, he stood and began to leave. Stopping, he turned back to her and bowed his head for a moment in silent salute. "I look forward to our time tonight, Miss Granger. Do be punctual as always, please?"

With a sweep of his robes, he was gone, leaving only a slight hint of his scent behind. Hermione inhaled and allowed herself a small smile before opening her book and resuming her studies. She looked forward to their time together this evening as well.

~~*~*~*~*~*~*~*~*~*~*~*~*~*~*

A/N: Yes, I know, short chapter. But I wanted to get Draco's moment in there, and then Ron had to be a git yet again. What's up with him, anyway? He's not usually a prat with Hermione for that long... (okay, maybe he is) but he's really being meaner than normal! Ah, well, please read and review!

Chapter 7- Touched and Tormented

Chapter 7 of 10

This story is inspired by a one-shot that was written by Melisande88 by the name of **I Don't Dance, But Thanks for Asking**. However, this story will be multiple chapters. Hermione is given a choice between two dares. She steps up to the challenge and discovers that Professor Snape knows how to dance... Rated for later chapters.

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Ch 7 - Touched and Tormented

Severus sat in the Restricted Section, the books before him. He wondered at his find. Could it have been possible? He definitely remembered Ron had been standing in the closest proximity to the Dark Lord as they had vanquished him. But was it really possible that he could have centered all of his hatred and anger to land on Weasley at the point of his death?

Also, why would it wait for so long to begin to manifest? It had been a good two months now since the final battle, and Weasley had just begun to show the signs that were related to this kind of attack.

The boy was showing anger and hatred toward his best friend, who was a Muggle-born, but was he exhibiting it at anyone else as well? Was it an actual possession they would be dealing with? Or just negative energy? Would they be able to stop it before all the good had been drained from the Gryffindor, or was it already too late?

The questions filled his mind at an alarming rate as he searched for answers. He would have to speak with the Headmaster and get his aid in looking into this. Also, he would have to warn Potter and Hermione both that until they knew for sure what was going on, it would be best for them to keep a safe distance from their lifelong friend.

He resolved to speak to them both about this. The sooner he told them, the better. But as he considered it, he found himself longing for one more night without any distractions between them. Tonight, he wanted her to himself. Tomorrow would be soon enough to alert the others to his suspicions.

Tonight, he wanted to alert her to something else entirely. He wanted her to know about the feelings that were beginning to stir to life within him. Tonight he would ask her if there was any way that she could let herself care for someone such as he.

A small smile graced his lips before being replaced with a scowl as he again let his thoughts turn to the problem of her friend. It seemed that even from the grave, yet again, the Dark Lord would always have his revenge.

~~*~*~*~*~*~*~*~*~*~*~*~*~*~*

By the time Hermione had to report to the music room, she was trembling in anticipation. A million questions ran through her mind *What did he think of when he held me in his arms? Was this just some cruel game he was playing with my feelings? Did he plan this as revenge for the dare? Was it possible that he was really attracted to me? Did*

he feel anywhere near as nervous about what was happening between us as I did?

Stopping outside the door, she stood there with her hand pressed to the door for a moment. Closing her eyes, she took a steadying breath before finding the energy to knock. When she rapped, the door opened of its own accord, revealing a room lit with hundreds of candles.

Stepping hesitantly across the threshold, Hermione gazed in wonder at the room around her. Soft scents of lavender and myrrh tantalized her, relaxing and calming her simultaneously. Smiling at the nervousness she'd felt, she turned slowly, enjoying what she saw before coming face to face with the man who made all her senses come to life.

Drawing a shaky breath, she whispered, "The room is beautiful."

Severus' lips quirked for only a moment at the hint of a smile before he spoke. "Yes, well, if we are going to be dancing in such ways, we might as well have the correct atmosphere for it."

She found her brow furrowing at his attempt to sound nonchalant when he snapped his fingers. Immediately her clothing was once again replaced by a gown. This one was elegant, but modest. It fit her snugly, coming to her neck in the front, but dipping to her waist in the back. Also, the skirt fell just above her thigh on one side only to cascade well past her calf on the other. The color was dark blue, and the slippers that now adorned her feet matched it perfectly.

Looking from her new apparel to the wizard before her, she was rewarded with a slow smile as he gathered her into his arms. Mesmerized by the way his body seemed to fit so well to hers, she took his offered hand while her other found its way to his shoulder.

His eyes never leaving hers, he said in a low, seductive voice, "Slow rhumba, please." As the music began to play, Hermione found herself holding her breath as he started to lead her through the steps of what she had always considered a nice, but less than sensual, dance.

She found herself having to rethink her opinion as he closed the distance between their bodies, bringing her closer and letting her feel every line of his physique mold to hers. She began to shake as he leaned his head so close to hers that she could feel his breathing against her cheek. Waves of heat began to roll over her internal organs, building a fire that threatened to consume her.

She could feel her body responding to his in ways she had never thought possible. Her pulse raced. Her breathing became hard to control, and she could feel the flush rising on her cheeks as he dipped her down to where the only thing that kept her from falling was the strong arm that held her. Then, he kept her there as if waiting for something. Her eyes were closed, and she didn't dare look at him for fear of seeing any hatred or cruelty in his eyes. *This is where he will warn me never to trifle with his life again and say some hateful thing before sending me on my way.* Her heart broke at the thought.

This had to be some cruel intent on his part. She knew he couldn't possibly look at her in a truly romantic way. She was his student, and more than that, he had never made any effort to hide the fact that he really didn't care for her, or even her efforts in a scholastic sense.

She made up her mind to open her eyes and face him. Let him have his victory by humiliating her. The school year would be over in just another week and a half. Then, she need never feel his scorn again.

But when she opened her eyes and let herself see him, his own emotions were laid bare before her. His eyes, usually so cold and callous, were instead hot and devouring her in a way that made her own pulse beat ever faster.

His lips were open ever so slightly as he drew ragged breaths into his lungs, as if fighting an urge to do something. Unable to resist, she opened her own mouth to ask what he was thinking and why he had stopped, but was unable to do so as she was swept tightly into his embrace.

His lips descended on hers in a way that had her moaning into his mouth as she held to him and returned the kiss. Greedily, he sucked her tongue into his mouth and twined his tongue with hers. Her fingers found his hair, and she was surprised by its texture. It wasn't greasy at all, but instead, soft and silky. She let herself give in to the urge to hold his head to hers as she let him deepen the kiss.

He brought her up slowly and held her body in a way that kept every inch of them touching. Slowly, he let one hand leave her waist and travel down towards the thigh that was partially exposed. When his hand touched her bare skin, he moaned at the contact before releasing her and stepping back.

"I'm sorry, Miss Granger. I had no right to do that just now." He turned away from her, leaving her feeling chilled and rejected.

She stared at his back silently as he refused to turn. She wanted to touch him, but was afraid to. What if he not only rejected her, but went into his normal defense of belittling and humiliating her out loud? *No*, she decided. *This is humiliating enough.*

Turning, she began to slowly make her way from the room before his voice stopped her. "Miss Granger?"

Stopping, she didn't turn, but asked, "Yes, sir?"

There was no answer for her, but instead, she found herself once more enveloped in his arms from behind. "I am an old man, Hermione. I am battle scarred and miserable." He shook his head before leaning to rest it against her cheek, his eyes closed. "Is there any way that an intelligent young witch like yourself could possibly become attracted to the likes of myself?"

He chuckled mirthlessly. "I just cannot fathom it. Dumbledore can. In fact, he is the one that insisted I try to build a relationship with you, but I just cannot seem to believe that you would ever want me."

Hermione found her breath coming in gasps as she turned in his arms to face him. "You are attempting to find a romantic outlet with me because Albus Dumbledore wants it?" Her voice shook and her eyes betrayed her hurt. "Do you *always* do everything that he asks of you?"

She stepped out of his reach and looked down at the dress he had enchanted her into when she had first arrived. In a painfully even voice, she asked, "May I have my clothes back, please?"

Realizing his mistake, he tried to explain. "Hermione..."

"I think I would prefer if you called me as you had before. There is no reason to drop the formality, as I am only a student to you, and you cannot force," her eyes met his, "what isn't really there." She drew a shaky breath before adding, "Please tell the Headmaster that I would appreciate it if he would stay out of matters that involve my personal life."

She looked around the room, feeling as if she had just lost something very precious and sacred. "If it's all the same to you, I think perhaps we should refrain from holding the rest of our detentions in this room."

Severus stared at her, speechless. He understood her hurt. He had unknowingly caused it. Much as he had thought that she asked him to dance only on a dare, she thought he was pursuing her only because of his mentor's request.

Her eyes held his for a moment before looking back at the gown she still wore. She bit the inside of her cheek, refusing to succumb to tears before saying, "Fine... If the clothes decide to magic off of me before I reach my rooms, I shall just have to walk through the halls naked!"

Turning, she ran from the room, leaving Snape's ears ringing at the stifled sob she hadn't been able to hold back.

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A/N: Another somewhat short chapter... I am sorry, but it seems these few chapters around this part of the story are pivotal to the flow of the story. New things are happening. New developments are threatening the lovers before they can even find happiness, and my MUSE is giving me no choice but to write it exactly as she deems... And when will the LEMONS get here already??? ;..((I wish I knew! Forgive me and review anyway, please?

Chapter 8 - When Friends Attack

Chapter 8 of 10

This story is inspired by a one-shot that was written by Melisande88 by the name of **Don't Dance, But Thanks for Asking**. However, this story will be multiple chapters. Hermione is given a choice between two dares. She steps up to the challenge and discovers that Professor Snape knows how to dance... Rated for later chapters.

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A/N: As always, the chapters you read are made so much easier because I have such a fantastic beta. RobisonRocket, you're the best!

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Ch 8 - When Best Friends Attack

Hermione's tears were falling freely when she finally reached her room. She was so completely confused. How could she have been so stupid? Why had she let herself believe for one moment that Severus Snape would truly have any interest in her?

Closing her bedroom door and warding it, she slid to the floor, letting her pain have its moment. "You're a fool!" she whispered as she rested her head against the wall. In the dark, she listened to the sounds of her breathing.

Suddenly, a feeling of unease crept over her. She felt as if she wasn't alone. Grabbing her wand, she whispered, *Lumos!*

Ron's face became illuminated by the light from her wand, as he was mere inches from her. His eyes took on an evil luster that made her blood chill as he reached for her. Her scream echoed through the Head common room.

Draco stirred from his slumber and sat for a moment, listening for the sound to come again, when he heard Hermione's panicked voice yet again. "No! Ron, please, DON'T!"

Up in seconds and racing up the stairs to her private rooms, he banged on the door. When nothing happened, he tried to open the door, only to feel a shock pulse through his arm at the ward she had placed. "Hermione!" he screamed through the door. "Release the ward, Hermione!" Banging on the door, he felt horror race through his veins at her screams.

"Draco! Draco, I can't! Help me! Ron, don't!" As he listened at the door, he heard tearing fabric, and her screams began anew.

Yelling back through the door, he said, "Hermione! Fight him! I'll get Snape!" Turning, he stumbled down the stairs in his haste to reach the common room. As he stood before the hearth, he opened the Floo. "Professor Snape!" he screamed into the flames.

After a moment, a rather bleary-eyed Severus stepped through to stand before Draco. "What is it, Mr Malfoy?"

Draco opened his mouth to answer, only to snap it shut as Hermione screamed again. "Oh, Sweet Merlin, what is wrong with you, Ron? Oh, please, someone help me!"

Racing past Draco and up the stairs, Severus grabbed the doorknob of Hermione's door, only to feel the same twinge of shock before Draco caught up with him. "Sir, it's warded! And for whatever reason, she can't release the ward."

Hermione's pitiful cries made both Slytherins panic that much more when a crash came from inside the room, then silence.

Drawing his wand, Severus aimed it at the door, focusing all his energy on removing the ward. *Eradicate Shield!*

The blast hit the door with such force that the entire door blew apart. Stepping through the threshold, both wizards saw Hermione standing, shaken, in the center of the room with an unconscious Weasley at her feet. Part of her desk lay atop him. Her wand was broken in two and lying close to the red-head's hand.

As she looked up, her expression went from relief to modesty at her near nudity before the two. Wrapping her arms around herself to hide her exposed and bruising flesh, she whispered, "I'm afraid I m-may have k-killed him."

Severus knelt beside Weasley, checking the boy over. "No, Miss Granger, Mr Weasley will be fine." He paused, looking back to her and trying to comfort her without touching her. "Aside from a terrible headache when he awakens."

Draco had grabbed a terrycloth robe from her bathroom and moved to wrap it around her shoulders in respect for her modesty. "I'm sorry, Granger. I tried to break through your ward, but I just couldn't." He didn't add that her screams had him so panicked that he was beside himself by the time he reached Snape.

When Severus caught her hesitant smile of gratitude, he scowled deeply. "Malfoy! Take Weasley to the infirmary. Tell Pomfrey to put him in isolation." He glanced at Hermione before adding, "It is imperative that he not have any contact with any other students at this time. I will explain when I bring Miss Granger to her."

When Draco hesitated, he added shortly, "NOW, Mr Malfoy. Miss Granger and I will be along in a moment." With a reluctant nod, Draco turned and levitated the unconscious Weasley from the floor and guided his body out of the room, leaving the two alone.

When Severus was sure that Draco was no longer in hearing range, he turned and moved to wrap his arms around her. She flinched at first, but relaxed after a moment and leaned fully into his arms. For several moments, he just held her in his arms. Then, with a sigh, he said softly, "I did not explain myself to you very well earlier. I think I gave you the mistaken impression that I was not truly interested in what is growing between us."

Slowly, she pulled back and her eyes searched his face. "You don't have to explain...." *But please tell me I was wrong to think you didn't want me* her mind cried silently.

"I have wanted, for some time now, to be a part of something special for once in my life." His hand traced her cheek, and he frowned at the beginnings of a bruise on the side of her neck. "I have never had the pleasure of being truly happy." He quirked an eyebrow. "Albus saw the potential for the two of us to find the happiness I speak of when we were dancing together." His hands moved to grip hers, and he placed them over his heart. "It was after he spoke to me of it that I realized that being something to you besides your professor was something that appealed to me."

She smiled slowly at that. "You want to be more than someone I remember as my professor?"

His eyes seemed to catch fire as he pulled her even closer. "I want to be more than just a memory to you. I want to create memories with you." He smiled. "And share them together." Almost as if he had gotten carried away with himself, he dropped her hands and stepped back, clearing his throat. "But I want you to be sure first. I want to know that you are happy with such a choice and want it as well."

Hermione nodded and started to step toward him, but her robe opened slightly, and his eyes fell to a huge bruise that was beginning across her collarbone. Severus dropped his jaw as he stared at it.

A mixture of pain and anger lanced across his features before he cleared his throat. "But for now, I think we must get you to the infirmary so Madam Pomfrey can tend your wounds." He took her hand and urged her to walk with him. "I must also speak to you of what has happened to your friend, Mr Weasley."

Hermione drew a shaky breath at the reminder of the attack from someone she had trusted. "I am not sure I would call him my friend, now."

Severus turned to glance at her. "But you must, Hermione. You see, if my suspicions are correct, Ron has no control over what he is doing right now."

Hermione stopped walking and pulled him to a stop along with her. "What are you saying?" Her eyes gave away the worry she felt at his words.

"I'm saying," Severus explained in low tones, "that when we struck Voldemort with the Killing Curse, Weasley was standing the closest to him." He shook his head. "I'm not sure how, yet, but for some reason, all his malicious hatred and anger was transferred to Ron. It has been festering inside of him, and unless we find a way to draw it from him, he may very well be consumed by it."

"Oh, dear Merlin," she whispered as she leaned against the nearest wall. "Will he be okay?"

Severus shook his head and sighed. "I do not know, my love. He may never be the same person again." He sighed and ran his free hand through his hair. "I must admit that I do not know how to go about battling this yet."

Hermione moved closer to him. "You will find a way, Severus." The way she spoke his name made him turn to look into her eyes. She smiled and squeezed his hand. "I believe in you, and I will do anything I can to help you."

Reaching out, he again folded Hermione within his arms and held her tightly for a moment before releasing her and stepping away. "I suppose for a while we will have to abandon our dancing to take care of this more important matter."

She smiled sadly but nodded. "I don't mind if we are dancing, or if we are working on potions, Severus. If we are together, I am satisfied." She winced and placed her hand over her side when she mis-stepped.

Immediately, he turned and investigated the cause of her pain. "At least one of your ribs is broken!" He scowled. "That stupid prat is lucky he's not in control of himself at present." He took a deep breath to steady himself. "It's probably the only reason the idiot is still alive!"

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When Hermione and Severus reached the infirmary, Draco and Harry were speaking in hushed tones outside a private room. Hermione noted that the two of them were actually being civil to each other, which was a first. Even after the war was over, there had never been anything but cross words between them.

She wanted to join them, but Severus led her to a bed and pulled back the covers for her to get in. "Not one word, Miss Granger..." he teased when she had started to protest. "Until Poppy has had a chance to tend your wounds, I do not want to risk further injury to your person."

Rolling her eyes, but choosing to remain silent rather than argue, she slid stiffly beneath the covers. When Poppy emerged from the room she had been in with Ron, she walked directly to Snape and Hermione. "Miss Granger... I see you have finally decided to put forth an appearance." Glancing up at Severus, she scowled and spoke louder. "Okay, the rest of you may leave now. There is no need for an audience while I assess Miss Granger's wounds."

Shooing them out of the room, she turned back to Hermione. "Now then, my dear. Let's see what that poor demented boy has done to you..."

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A/N: Okay... This is my second transitional chapter in this story... Now we have a clue as to what is going on with Ron... I wonder if Severus and Hermione can find a way to put him back to normal... I hope you don't mind this chapter that has been put together for the sake of a plot. On a lighter note, I can promise Lemons next chapter! Please read and review!

Chapter 9 - Promises of Passion

Chapter 9 of 10

This story is inspired by a one-shot that was written by Melisande88 by the name of **Don't Dance, But Thanks for Asking**. However, this story will be multiple chapters. Hermione is given a choice between two dares. She steps up to the challenge and discovers that Professor Snape knows how to dance... Rated for later chapters.

Disclaimer: JKR owns all that you recognize. I just like to borrow the characters to play...

A/N: RobisonRocket is the wonderful beta that goes over all my chapters before I submit them. If it wasn't for her catching my mistakes, this story would probably be one gigantic run-on sentence! Thank you, RR!

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Chapter 9 - Promises of Passion

When Madam Pomfrey let Hermione leave the next morning, Ron was still in isolation. Wards were placed on the doors so no students could enter because his condition seemed to be worsening. As she'd gotten into the hall, she remembered her forgotten cloak. When she went back to get it, she had overheard the Mediwitch telling Dumbledore in a worried voice that she had been given no choice but to place a full paralysis spell on him, as he was becoming more and more aggressive.

" *He even tried to attack me when I was simply checking his vitals!*" she had whispered in a worried voice. "I'm telling you, Albus. I do not know how much longer the boy can survive this! His parents must be notified. They must be prepared in the event of his demise."

Hermione had gasped, covering her mouth to catch the sound. Her eyes widened in horror. She knew Ron was in trouble . . . But bad enough to cost him his life?" Not wishing to be seen by the two elders, she had grabbed her cloak and left quickly.

Her heart raced with the panic she felt. Ron was a prat! He had been a pain in her backside more times than not, but the truth was, she cared deeply for him. He was one of her best friends. He always would be.

As she walked blindly, her thoughts were not on her destination. She walked into Severus Snape's office without even knocking and closed the door behind her, leaning against it. She was relieved to see Snape behind his desk.

He spoke without looking up. "Class does not begin until after lunch! You can save your questions until then!" Setting his quill down, he turned to pin the invader of his privacy with the snarkest stare he had ever mastered.

When he saw Hermione before him, leaning heavily on the door and looking at him with worry-filled eyes, he rose from the desk and moved to her side. "What is it, Hermione? What is wrong?"

She reached out and wrapped her arms around his neck, holding on to him as if he was the only thing that could save her. "What's happening, Severus?" she asked shakily. "Why do I feel like my world is turning upside down?"

Severus was completely out of his element. He wasn't very good when it came to showing sympathy or even just listening to someone else's problems. He wanted to help her, but was unsure how he could comfort her. Hesitantly, he put his arms around her and patted her back gently. "I'm not sure what you mean, Hermione. What are you speaking of?"

Hermione pulled back from him, although she didn't let him go. "After Pomfrey let me leave, I heard her talking to Dumbledore. She thinks that Ron might die." She blushed as she looked away from him. "I am upset with him for what he did to me last night. But I know that it really isn't him." She shook her head. "At least, not the Ron I know."

Severus dropped his hands from her, pushing the sudden feeling of emptiness from his mind as he tried to focus on sharing the research he had been doing with her. "I've been looking into this." He walked back to his desk and retrieved several scrolls of parchment before turning to hand them to her. "These go into detail about the different effects of being hit by someone's emotion. Some of them look to be very similar to what we seem to be dealing with."

She looked at the scrolls and nodded. "I appreciate your help with this, Severus. I don't think I could do this alone."

Severus watched her for a moment before saying softly, "You aren't alone, Hermione. I'll never be far." Although they meant far more, he doubted she heard the true point of his words. When she looked up at him and smiled, he cleared his throat. "Now then. You have tests this morning. Classes start in just a little over half an hour, so you should go for now." His eyes searched hers as he added, "I'm beginning the potion for Weasley's predicament this evening. I would very much appreciate your assistance. If you are free?"

Hermione nodded. "Seven o'clock, then?" At his solemn nod, she turned and opened the door, leaving him staring after her.

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"I just don't get it! How could this have happened?" Harry walked the courtyard angrily. Pausing, he kicked the nearby tree before resuming his pacing.

Scowling, Ginny shook her head. "Well, it isn't the tree's fault, Harry! This wasn't something that anyone could have foreseen!"

He stopped pacing and dropped his head. "I know. I just feel useless! I thought we killed Voldemort! I thought surely all of the negative things were past us." He shook his head. "I just keep thinking surely this is a nightmare, and any moment I'm going to wake up and discover that everything is okay."

Draco sat on a bench across from where Harry stood. Pansy leaned against him and watched the couple, amused. "I have to say this, and then I promise I won't speak another word," she whispered.

Draco smiled and rolled his eyes before answering, "Okay, my pet... Tell me what you are needing to say."

She smiled, happy to be able to be honest about her feelings now that Voldemort was no longer in control of her family and friends. "I'm honestly glad that you and Harry have found a way to co-exist." She looked him in the eye as she said this, watching for any sign that her words displeased him. When he smiled, she relaxed, adding, "And I am glad that Granger turned you down."

He leaned away from her when she would have leaned back into his embrace and questioned, "What?"

Her smile faltered and she sighed. "I know I'm not as pretty as she is, or even as smart." She took a deep breath and looked over at Harry and Ginny again before saying, "But I love you, Draco. I think I always have, and it would really have hurt me if I had lost you."

Draco shook his head. "What I meant was, what do you mean you're glad she turned me down?" He leaned closer to her. "How do you know she turned me down?"

Her eyes lit, and she smiled devilishly. "You don't think Potter's the only one that has an Invisibility Cloak, do you?"

He bellowed, "You were there?"

Immediately, she looked contrite. "I-I j-just wanted to check on you... I don't always invade your privacy."

Draco leaned down, capturing her lips with his own. She moaned as he deepened the kiss and returned it with a tender passion that pulled at his heart.

When he pulled back, he smiled at her. "You know I'm a prat, Pansy." When she nodded, he asked, "You know that I push boundaries?" Laughing, she rolled her eyes, but again nodded. Suddenly, his face grew sober and he squeezed her hand. "And you know I'm gonna marry you, don't you?"

Pansy's eyes grew wide and she swallowed hard. "I- I mean... uhm..."

Laughing, he kissed her quickly on the lips before saying, "I had a crush on Granger forever. I loved to bully her when we were younger." Pulling her to sit in his lap, he whispered in her ear, "But, you've known me forever. You know exactly who I am and what I want out of life. And you are one of my best friends. What luck do you think I would have trying to find anyone else that understands me?"

Pansy opened her mouth to answer, but Harry had walked over and interrupted. "Sorry, but... Draco, do you have any ideas about what we can do to help Ron? I spent nearly three hours at the library after the tests were done for the day, and I've gotten nowhere."

Harry scowled. Severus Snape was not someone he really trusted a hundred percent. He may have been just a spy, but Harry would never have guessed that he was unless they had told him. He still wasn't sure that Severus had always been on their side. Now that he had eyes for his best friend, he really wasn't sure he trusted him. "I know... But---"

Reluctantly, Harry nodded. "You're right. I'm just... Well, for once, there is nothing I can do, and I hate that!"

Harry immediately smiled, and the two were off, walking towards the practice fields, leaving the two witches staring after them. With a hesitant smile, Ginny sank down next to Pansy. After a moment, she looked at the other girl curiously. "Well... what do you say?"

Ginny shrugged. "Well, I know I play... I know you play...." She pointed at the two boys who were walking away. "Are we just going to let them have all the fun? Or are we going to go teach them how to play?"

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Closing her eyes, she nodded. "Yes, sir."

Biting her lip, she moaned, "Mmm-hmmm." His hands were working a magic on her that was far worse than what she had felt the few times they had danced together. Leaning back into his arms, she found her head resting on his shoulder.

She knew what he really wanted. She wanted it too. Swallowing down her nervousness, she turned in his arms to face him. With a smile she hoped didn't give away her anxious desire, she nodded. "Oh, yes, sir. I came prepared to have to stay the night." She gestured to her book bag. "My nightgown and toiletries are all there."

She had come prepared for it. Her whole body seemed to be primed and ready for what was about to happen between them. Her tummy had butterflies flitting about in it. Her skin tingled with the need to have his touch. Her nipples were pebble hard, and her very core was hot and aching.

As they entered the next room, Hermione held her breath. Of all the things she had been expecting, nothing could have prepared her for this. Severus watched her with a silent smile as she stepped into the center of his bedroom. There, in the center of the room, was a huge bed that was round. The covers were done in gold and silver, with green and red silk trim along the edges.

When Hermione finished her perusal of the room, Severus asked, "Does it meet with your approval?"

Severus nodded. "Yes. To me, the colors, by themselves are just that: color. But when you add them all together, allowing them to accent each other, they become more than what they can be when they are just alone." He reached out, taking her bag from her. "Very much like you and I."

Hermione let herself be drawn into his arms. "I see," she answered. "Like I am a Gryffindor. Brave, honest, and loyal. A student and a dancer without a partner." She reached up, and unhooked the clasp to her robes, letting it slip down her body, revealing that all she wore beneath was her silky black knickers and matching lace bra. "But when you are added, I become a woman. Whole and fulfilled and no longer alone." She smiled. "And best of all, you give my body a reason and purpose for dancing!"

He nodded, loving the feel of her hands on his chest, opening his shirt and pushing it off of his shoulders. When she leaned down and placed a light kiss to the hollow of his neck, he fisted his hands to keep himself from taking her right then and there.

She gasped and wrapped her arms loosely around his head, cradling him to her when he began to suck at the rosy peak. His hands continued roaming over her exposed skin. As one hand cupped her other breast, the other moved to slide her knickers from her hips, exposing her soft, hairless mound to his touch.

When he moved to touch it gently, her legs gave and the only reason she remained standing was his arm holding her up. Breaking the hold his mouth had on her breast, he rose and swept her into his arms. As he carried her to the bed, he let his eyes travel over her. Setting her down on the edge of the bed, he went down on his knees and pressed her back so that she was lying down. He knelt between her legs, and she arched when he used his fingers to part her folds and ran his tongue between them.

Moaning, she reached for him, only to find his hand holding hers so she couldn't stop him from his purpose. Gasping, and crying out, she rose to watch as he nuzzled her heat with his nose.

With his thumb, he began pressing on her nub, making her moan, then he began using the fingers of that same hand to spread her open, pushing first one, then two, and finally three into her. She gasped at the stretching sensation and tried to pull away.

Gently, he continued to push inside of her until she swore she felt all four fingers shoved into her core. Crying out, she begged, "Severus... No! It's too much! I I can't!"

"Shhh..." he whispered, coming over her. "I am not a small man, Hermione. Although I can't stop all of the pain you will feel from me, I don't want to hurt you more than I have to."

She stilled as he urged her to move to the center of the bed. With some trepidation, she watched as he disrobed. When he stood before her in all of his naked glory, she felt her breath leave her. "Oh, heaven help me," she whispered softly when she saw his staff.

It was long and softly curved. It had to be at least ten inches long, and its head reminded her of the top of a mushroom. It was, by far, the largest penis she had ever seen. Although she was a virgin, she had seen a man's sexual organ a few times. But nothing that she had seen had ever prepared her for this.

Moving to join her on the bed, Severus took her in his arms and kissed her gently. "I won't hurt you, Hermione. There will be a passing pain, but it won't last long." He let a hand fondle her breast, drawing a sigh from her before he reached for her own hand. "Touch me," he commanded gently.

Urged by his hand, Hermione found herself grasping his width. Her fingers barely brushed her thumb as she gripped him. Slowly, she began to move her hand over him, exploring his feel and his reaction to her touch.

Severus closed his eyes and moaned softly at her touch. His eyes closed as she gripped him a little tighter and began to move somewhat faster. Before she could repeat the motion a third time, he stopped her. "If I climax too fast, I fear you won't be very satisfied by this experience."

Moving to rest himself between her legs, he whispered, "Open for me, my love. Spread yourself with your fingers. Obeying his prompting, she reached down between her legs and opened her core to him. When he began to push into her tightness, he murmured, "Touch your clit with your forefinger, Hermione. Rub it while I am moving inside of you."

Frowning, but wanting to please him, she did just that, and the sensation of his small, slow movement into her, combined with her touch on her clit, made her vagina spasm. When she gasped at the sensation, he thrust in all the way, burying himself within her moist heat.

"Oh GODS! Hermione!" He cried out with her when she arched off the bed, bucking her hips as if to escape the moment of fiery pain. The feeling it brought made her gasp, but with pleasure. He stilled inside her, letting her adjust to his girth. He waited for her to be ready, and she surprised him when she began to rock her hips, moving him inside her while he just lay nestled between her legs.

Slowly, he joined her movements, letting himself thrust slowly in and out of her core as she set the speed. When she started moving faster, he took over, thrusting deeper and harder. Clinging to him, she began to beg for him to do more. "Yes! Oh... Severus, please! I... Oh, you.... I want!... Oh, it's hot! It's getting hot... I ..."

Her scream nearly threw him over the edge as she came violently in his arms. He held her tightly, seeing her through her first orgasm before beginning to work his way toward his own. As he finally began to feel his building, he whispered a charm to prevent pregnancy and felt her second climax coming yet again. He held his own in check until she was almost over her second, then let himself empty inside of her.

Still semi-hard, he rolled to his side and positioned her next to him, so he could stay inside of her. Her eyes focused on him, and she kissed him deeply, her eyes holding his the entire time. When she relaxed and began to fall asleep, Severus pulled the covers over them and said a prayer of thanks for the gift whatever gods had seen fit to give him this night.

He would marry this woman if she'd have him, he knew. Perhaps she would be the mother of his children, someday. But more than that, she would be his equal. A Potions mistress that he would be proud to work alongside. That thought made him smile as he closed his eyes and gave himself over to sleep.

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A/N: I hope everyone enjoys the serving of LEMONS I just gave you! They are perfect for Lemonade! Please read and review!

Chapter 10 - When Death Knocks

Chapter 10 of 10

This story is inspired by a one-shot that was written by Melisande88 by the name of **Don't Dance, But Thanks for Asking**. However, this story will be multiple chapters. Hermione is given a choice between two dares. She steps up to the challenge and discovers that Professor Snape knows how to dance... Rated for later chapters.

Disclaimer: JKR owns all that you recognize. I just like to borrow the characters to play...

A/N: I received a few reviews that surprised me. They told me that they didn't really like how graphic I got with the lemons in chapter 9. It was a first for me. I don't believe that anyone has ever complained about the lemons I offer. But I went back and reread it... I can see where some of you may have seen it as a bit much, but I feel I must explain it.

I meant for it to be a somewhat uncomfortable experience. Hermione was a virgin... This was her first *complete* sexual experience. I was trying to make it seem a bit uncomfortable for her. If you, the reader, felt the slightest twinge as she noticed the size of the man she was about to accept as her lover... then I did the job I set out to do. However, I do promise that now that they have consummated their union, the future lemons won't be quite so intense.

Also, I wanted to take a moment to thank my incredible beta. RobisonRocket, you are awesome!

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Chapter 10 - When Death Knocks

Hermione sighed and stretched in the big bed. Opening her eyes, she found herself alone. Alarmed and a little disoriented, she sat up, clutching the sheet to her breasts as she looked around. "Severus?" she called out in a soft voice. "Where are you?"

No sooner had she spoke than he came walking back into the room, wearing a green robe and carrying two cups in his hands. He gave her a warm smile as he moved to sit on the edge of the bed and offered one of the cups to her. "I thought you might like some hot chocolate, my dear," he soothed. "There is something for discomfort added to it."

He had worried that she might wake to find herself rather sore after their lovemaking the night before. He had meant to be a gentle lover, but had found it impossible not to lose control once he had joined with her. His heart beat wildly in his chest when she offered him a timid smile before taking a sip of the rich, hot drink.

She sighed in pleasure at the sweet, comforting taste. "Thank you for this," she whispered. "Hot chocolate is my favorite. How did you know?"

He shrugged, answering, "Most women like chocolate, and I find that it hides the taste of the draught better than most other drinks."

He took a drink of his own cup before looking back at her. "The potion for Ron is complete. It should be ready to try within the next two hours." His eyes clouded with passion when the sheet slipped from her as she moved to get off of the bed. "Hermione," he whispered harshly before reaching out to pull her to him.

She melted into his arms, letting her hands creep up around his neck. When their lips met, she felt her body beginning to respond to his touch. Moaning, she pressed her breasts against his robe-covered chest.

In response, he deepened the kiss, holding her tighter as he leaned her down into the mattress. Her hands pulled at his robe before sliding over his exposed skin. She kissed him deeply, and he lost himself in the feel of her, running his own hands over her naked body.

When he touched the still somewhat sensitive flesh of her womanhood, she tensed slightly, and he pulled away. "You're still sore. Forgive me. I should give you time to heal."

She chuckled and held him tighter when he would have left her. "I'm a little sore, Severus. But I'll be alright." She smiled up at him and blushed as his gaze turned intense. "I thought the best way to get rid of sore muscles was to stretch them and work the kinks out." At his raised eyebrow, she smiled. "So, won't you help me stretch it out some?"

Growling low in his throat, Severus leaned down to capture her lips with his own. Gently, his fingers found and began to rub at her core. The soreness she felt began to disappear, being replaced by a heat that threatened to burn her up. Gasping into his mouth, she raised her hips even as she reached for his erection.

Her hand closed over him, and he groaned deep in his throat at her touch. She ran her thumb over its tip before tightening her grip and sliding her hand over his shaft repeatedly. When he would have pulled away, she whispered, "Make love to me, Severus. Let me feel you inside me once more before we go back to the real world."

His eyes bore into hers for what seemed like forever before he turned and lay down on his back beside her. Rising up, she turned to face him. His hand caught hers, and he pulled her to sit on top of him. "Take me," he whispered softly.

For a moment, she could only stare at him. Then as his meaning hit her, she reached down between them and guided him into her. Slowly, she lowered herself onto him, moaning as he filled her. Unlike the night before, there was no pain. No discomfort. Instead, it felt as if he had been made to fill her.

Rocking her hips, she began to move over him as he lay beneath her. His eyes closed, and his mouth opened for a moment in ecstasy when she tilted her pelvis to take him deeper. His hands rested on her hips as he allowed her to set the pace, taking them both down the path to fulfillment.

When they came together, Severus wrapped his arms around her, holding her to him. He longed to give voice to the thoughts racing through his head, but he didn't dare. He simply held her as she held him. For now, it was enough.

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Hermione clutched the empty vial in her hand and watched through the privacy glass as Ron thrashed in the bed. His hands were bound magically to the bed, as were his feet. He looked terrible. Tears filled her eyes as she watched helplessly.

Ginny was beside her, holding her free hand while Harry held hers. Madam Pomfrey had spelled the potion into a syringe and was going to put it into Ron's system through a vein. *It has to be introduced into his bloodstream, otherwise the potion will be of no use.*

Severus had offered his assistance, and Pomfrey had gratefully accepted. Now, he stood at the head of the bed, wand at hand, watching for the slightest sign that Ron might be breaking free of the bonds that held him. Pomfrey leaned over Ron, and within seconds, the deed was done.

Ron went limp on the bed. His eyes rolled back in his head, and his mouth opened as if he had just fallen asleep.

Severus and Poppy exchanged looks before nodding. Turning, Severus left the room, joining the others who waited. His eyes fell on Hermione, and she looked back anxiously. After several seconds, Severus spoke softly. "All we can do now is wait. Mr Weasley has a long night ahead of him."

Turning to look at Ginny, he asked, "Any word from your parents?"

Ginny nodded. "Yes, sir. They were with Charlie, but they are on their way now." Her smile wavered. "They should be here by tomorrow."

He let out a sigh of relief. "That is good. It will help to have them nearby." His gaze went to the young man behind the glass. "They must be prepared for the chance of our transporting him to St Mungo's."

Hermione looked up sharply at the man that had become her lover the previous night. "Do you mean the potion may not work?"

Severus looked Hermione up and down for a moment before replying, "I cannot guarantee that it will work. I told you that when we began compiling the ingredients." His expression went from infuriated to patient. "However, I am confident that this will work."

Harry tilted his head as he watched Ron through the glass. "How long will it be before we know if it worked or not?"

Severus shrugged. "An hour or two will pass before he regains consciousness. After that, we will have to watch him cautiously over the course of the next month."

Ginny gasped. "That long? Why will it take that long?"

Hermione sighed and explained, already knowing. "It could take forever to purge all of the side effects of this hatred that burns in his system. The potion acts as a deterrent as it moves through his bloodstream, forestalling any hateful actions on his part until it is able to neutralize what is actually causing the problem." Her eyes met Snape's as she added, "If at the end of the month there is anything left, it will resurface, and we will have no choice but to begin again."

Smiling at her ingenious way of explaining it, Severus nodded. "Well put, Miss Granger." He longed to call her by her given name, but didn't dare in the company of her friends. Instead, he inclined his head in farewell. "I still plan to hold you to your detention, Miss Granger. Seven o'clock! Don't be late."

Turning, he made his way from them, leaving Hermione staring after him, trying desperately not to smile when she turned back to face her friends.

Ginny was staring after him as well. "Great greasy git!" Turning a sympathetic expression toward Hermione, she said in her best comforting tone, "I'm sorry you have no choice but to tolerate that Neanderthal's company, Hermione."

Hermione couldn't hide her smile at that. Her face beamed with it, but she quickly covered her reaction by saying, "You sounded so much like your Mum just now!"

Ginny returned her grin, but Harry raised an eyebrow and looked in the direction Severus had gone. Hermione didn't seem so terribly put out by her detentions. Truly, she hadn't really complained at all after that first one. Giving his curly-headed friend a last, contemplative look, he muttered to himself, "*Detention, my arse.*" Determined, he resolved to get to the bottom of these supposed detentions.

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Ron awoke feeling at ease for the first time in a month. The pain in his head had finally stopped. He looked around and found that he was in one of the private rooms of the hospital wing. Rising up, he sat on the edge of the bed. For a moment, he felt overcome with dizziness, but it passed swiftly.

"So, you're awake then?" Madam Pomfrey spoke from the doorway. With a welcoming smile, she moved to his side and gave him a strengthening potion.

He accepted it and drank it down before looking at her curiously. "What happened, Madam Pomfrey? Why am I here?"

The mediwitch raised an eyebrow in his direction. "Do you remember nothing of what has happened?"

Ron gave her a baffled look. His expression was one of utter confusion as he drew a shaky breath before answering, "Truth be told, the last thing I remember was the Celebration Ball." He rubbed his head as if it hurt.

Madam Pomfrey gave him a disbelieving look. "You don't remember assaulting Miss Granger?" she asked in a mocking tone.

"*WHAT?*" Ron squeaked and jumped from the bed as if he'd been bitten. "I would NEVER! Hermione would... You can't mean!... Did she?..." The indignation fizzled from him after a moment, and he sighed. "Did I hurt her?" His eyes glistened with worry.

The witch smiled slowly. "Actually, she had a few scrapes, and a few broken ribs... But at least she was able to walk here. You..." She clicked her tongue. "Well, for a while it was debatable if you would wake at all."

His face fell, and he looked to the floor as he murmured, "Probably deserved it if I hurt her."

At his words, Pomfrey smiled. He had just passed the test to show that the potion had indeed begun working. "Congratulations, Mr Weasley." She gestured to the door. "I do believe your friends are waiting for you outside. They will be glad to know you are well enough to join them!"

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