

Hermione Granger, Closet Poet

by Soul Bound

A one shot - Just when Severus has given up hope of finding a student worthy of the art he teaches, he stumbles across a book of poems written by Hermione and is forced to see her in a new light.

The One Shot

Chapter 1 of 1

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A/N ... This story is somewhat cliché. It's been done. But I hope I've still made it enjoyable, and I hope I've put enough of my own spin on it to make it worth your time. Enjoy!

Severus Snape rubbed his temples in a vain effort to rid himself of the headache he'd been fighting all day. No matter the strength of the headache relief potion he downed every morning, the throbbing behind his eyebrows invariably returned in full force by lunchtime. It was his damned students; they were all imbeciles every single one of them.

Truly, not one of them had an iota of genuine intelligence. How long had he now been teaching at Hogwarts... how long had he waited to no avail for some student to break the mold, to break the monotony?

Sure, there had been a fair few who had a talent for memorizing facts. There had been the odd overachiever who had gone above and beyond the call of annoying, but none had ever possessed any true worthiness to be in his class.

Potions were an art. Only a person with an understanding of that art, an appreciation of the beauty and subtlety of the cauldron in short, a person of depth would ever be worthy to be his pupil. So far, such a person had never entered his classroom. And he was beginning to lose hope...

It was as Severus stood contemplating this depressing thought, trying and failing to clear his head long enough to enjoy the ten precious minutes he would have before his third class of the day arrived, that he noticed a small, plain book lying on the floor near the door to his classroom.

Perfect. Some dunderheaded child hadn't been paying attention and had left their book lying in a place where he would have to pick it up and figure out which brainless brat hadn't had the presence of mind to hold on to their possessions.

Just perfect. Could this day get any worse?

He heaved a bitter sigh and sent an Accio at the book. It came sailing obligingly into his hands, and he inspected it with bored indifference. It was a plain, black, leather-bound tome with no outward markings. Smaller than a typical textbook in size and thickness by about half, it sent a small feeling of curiosity through Severus.

This was not a schoolbook; it was something else. He arched a reluctantly curious eyebrow and opened it, deciding to inspect the inside cover for a name or something to identify its owner. No such luck...

However, the first page was filled with a tidy scrawl that he recognized immediately with a slight twinge of annoyance... Granger. He was about to close the book without further ado when he actually took in what was written...

An Ode To Reality

Intrigued against his better judgment, Severus read on.

Life is unfair, relentless and cruel

I can't be naïve; I can't be a fool

My life is crowded and all too real

I'm weary, and tired of having to feel

But there's no way out

No way to let go

No way to forget the things I know

The feelings I feel are strong and deep

My joy and my pain keep me from sleep

You heighten my senses

You break through my fences

You leave me defenseless...

Hermione Granger wrote that?

Severus reread the verse in disbelief. Granger was a know-it-all, a bookworm with not an ounce of creativity in her. Where had this come from? Severus couldn't help himself; he turned the page...

The Intruder

As I sit here in a corner of a room that is not mine

I wonder if I'm wanted

I sleep in a bed not made for me, not made for someone else

I'm a stranger to this place

I stare at the ceiling and I remember that I'm an alien

I miss my ceiling of stars

I look in the mirror and see someone familiar looking back

Then the background comes into focus

The view from the window is beautiful; of forest and snowy peaks

But these mountains are not mine

My possessions are unwelcome here, my books are getting dusty

They sit on a new shelf now

I want nothing more to belong to me, only to belong

I want to be wanted

The footsteps above me echo the inconvenience of my presence

They count the days, as do I

I've been away from home for so long.

An unrecognizable feeling surged through Severus. This was beyond him. How could a girl of eighteen, the Head Girl, no less, write words of such... loneliness? This was Hermione Granger! Her life was perfect! Her friends were perfect! Harry Bloody Potter and that twit, Ron Weasley, adored her, clung to her every word. And where could she possibly be talking about? Surely not the Head Girl Suite, or Gryffindor tower... It was simply unfathomable that the bushy know-it-all was capable of this kind of depth. Almost belligerently, Severus turned the page, silently wanting to prove that this had to be a fluke of some sort.

But it wasn't.

The Ostrich and the Enemy

There you are now

Entering, facing somewhere else

How can I decide if I can't see your face?

How can I stop myself

If I don't know where I started?

What if I love you?

What if that's where this leads?

I'm blind

I can't see

Anything

I'm out of control

Somehow

So now what happens?

I've given the enemy a weapon

I'm weak and wounded

Or am I the enemy?

My own enemy

How did I let this happen?

But it hasn't happened yet!

I can still stop it!

There may be hope

I'll stand with my back to the door

My head in the sand

Now there is no threat

No enemy, no weapon

No control to lose

No light, therefore, no blindness

No decisions

No love, none!

No place to fall...

Severus contemplated these words with a bit of confusion, not at their meaning; no, he understood that perfectly. She loved someone and was terrified of it. But who? Surely not Potter or Weasley, he thought with a snort. While a part of him contemplated who could possibly be the object of her desire, another part of him was reluctantly impressed by the honesty of her confession. This was not some sappy, teenage love poem. No, this was more than that. The girl knew what it was to be afraid of feeling, and she made no attempt to sugar coat it into something pretty.

There was something stirring in the brutality of the words she'd written. He could tell that she'd written that last poem quickly, without thought to reason or rhyme. Clearly, there was more to Hermione Granger than met the eye. As much as he hated to admit it to himself, his view of her was changing just from reading the words she'd meant for no one to see. If he'd given it more thought in that moment, he probably would have found it odd that he was so easily swayed, but as it was, he just wanted to read more, to know more. A tiny part of him felt guilty knowing he was reading without permission he could no longer claim that he had stumbled upon it by accident but he pushed the feeling away and plunged ahead with the turn of another page.

Beautiful Stranger

There is something in your eyes

That I almost recognize

Something about your hair

Or the way you sit and stare

I know you from somewhere

Your voice is like a rhyme

It echoes in my mind

I can't say exactly

What it is that attracts me

Your strange beauty distracts me...

Clearly that one was more structured, but no less intriguing. By now Severus' initial shock was fading, and he was simply fascinated.

Hermione Granger... closet poet; who'd have thought it?

Severus was beginning to desire very much to know exactly whom Hermione Granger was so eloquently musing about. But now the unsettling guilt was becoming stronger. He really had no right to her words...

He knew if someone read something of this nature belonging to him, he'd not soon forgive or forget it. But he was beyond reason now.

For You

I watch you, you know

Do you know that I watch you?

And I see you

But you don't see me

You mystify me

There is so much to you that I can't see

Try as I do

Would you smile for me?

Would you show me what's behind your eyes?

Those eyes

That voice

You are so much

I love you

There is no way around it

These thoughts I have of you betray me

I want you to take me

I want to lose myself in you

Breathe into me, my love

Breath life into me

Blind me

Make me see

Teach me everything

Come to me

Come into me

Teach me, take me

Take me with you

Love me as I love you

Severus' jaw dropped.

Closet poet was one thing, but closet sensualist was entirely another...

Severus knew that reading the words 'come into me' and knowing the Head Girl wrote them should repulse him, but it didn't. Far from it...

He tried very hard to ignore the sudden tightening in his trousers...

Whoever this person was who she was in love and lust with would have a lot to think about, should they ever discover her thoughts. But he shouldn't have been thinking this for even a second! She was a student, his student! A child! Well, he conceded to himself, clearly not a child if she was writing so blatantly about sex, but still his student. Still, he had to admit the girl was wise beyond her years. Clearly he'd underestimated her.

He pondered the nearly seven years he'd known her and found he honestly wasn't all that surprised, as much as he wanted to be. He couldn't explain why, he just wasn't.

It was then that a sound at the door startled him soundly out of his thoughts. And there she was out of breath and slightly flushed. The bushy, all right, not so bushy anymore if he was being honest, more unruly curled know-it-all Head Girl herself flung her breathless body around the corner and into the room.

"I'm sorry, Professor," she breathed. "I think I dropped my..."

Her gaze landed on the book that was very open in Severus' hands, and her eyes widened in alarm.

"Notebook," she finished unnecessarily.

Severus closed it quickly, though it was a little late for that. He stood quickly and approached her, not knowing what to say. An apology seemed to be in order, but it wouldn't seem to form on his lips. A hundred questions that he was too proud to ask warred inside him.

"How... how much did you read?" she asked quietly.

Well, there was no point in lying. "A few pages," he answered, his features arranged in a blank expression.

"Which few?" she asked, her eyes widening even more.

"Don't worry, Miss Granger, I didn't stumble across any names," he answered with a smirk and saw her relax slightly... This of course roused his curiosity even further. "Perhaps I should read on," he teased, wanting to gauge her reaction. He was rewarded most satisfactorily with a desperate snatch at the book.

"That's not yours to read, Professor," she chided coldly.

"Then perhaps you shouldn't have left it on my classroom floor, Miss Granger," he retorted with equal chilliness, fixing a cold glare on her.

"I dropped it by accident!" she spat indignantly. "Give it to me!"

"Ten points from Gryffindor for your tone, Miss Granger."

"Why you..." she began, and he raised an eyebrow as if daring her to finish the sentence. She apparently thought better of it. Smart girl...

"Please give it to me, sir," she said in a voice of forced calm.

Severus knew what he was about to say was beneath him; childish and immoral, but he said it anyway. Curiosity truly had the better of him, and he could face himself later.

"I'll return it to you the moment you've told me just who you... think yourself in love with." An evil smirk played around his lips as he expected her to spit back something acidic at him, but he was disappointed.

Instead of the expected glare, Hermione's face blushed red, and she looked at the floor. Interesting...

"Just a name, Miss Granger."

Severus watched her struggle internally for a moment before she finally found her voice and met his eyes.

"Why do you want to know?" she asked evenly.

Severus didn't have an immediate answer for that, at least not one he could voice. He stared appraisingly at the girl for a moment, considering his words.

"Let's just say I'm intrigued, Miss Granger," he said. "I think I've underestimated you."

"Underestimated?" she repeated with another raised eyebrow. She was blushing again, but was looking him determinedly in the eyes.

"There's more to you than meets the eye," he admitted, though he didn't know why. He wasn't generally one for tipping his hand...

A smile crept over Hermione's features... "Likewise, Professor," she said.

Severus was reminded of the words he'd read. 'There is so much to you that I can't see.'

But before he had time to process the thought, she surprised him again. "Please give me my book, Professor."

He didn't know what made him do it; maybe it was the honest, conciliatory tone in her voice, but he handed her the book without hesitation.

"Thank you," she said quietly with a small smile. And with that she turned and left, leaving Severus to ponder... everything.

Hermione had just proved to be the student he'd been waiting for. It was a pity she'd be graduating in two weeks, and an even greater pity that she was... well... Hermione Granger.

Over the next few days, he couldn't get her out of his head, but it wasn't until the following Wednesday, three days before graduation, when he overheard with a great deal of pleasant shock, two small sentences that made him decide he might be willing to overlook the fact that she was Hermione Granger.

It happened whilst he was heading to the Great Hall for breakfast.

"Hermione doesn't seem very excited to be graduating... I wonder why," mused Ron Weasley.

"That's because she fancies Professor Snape, Ron," came Luna Lovegood's earth shattering reply.

She was clearly no longer a child, but in three days she would no longer be his student. This thought put the first genuine smile on his face that had been there in a long while.

Maybe he wasn't doomed to die a miserable, lonely old man after all...

More Author's Notes ... I love reviews! A stand-alone sequel is in the works, for those who are interested.