

Inarra

by madjh

Harry Potter's Slytherin child can't be fooled. She knows who her father really is.

One Shot

Chapter 1 of 1

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A/N: Warning: There is a brief discussion of a rape that happened fourteen years prior to when this fic is set. There is no graphic description of the act, nor is there any glorification of the act.

"No, Harry, I won't marry you. I couldn't do that!"

"It's okay, Hermione," soothed Ginny. "I've still got another year of school, and Mum thinks I'm too young to be so serious with Harry. If anything, you'd be doing me a favour."

"A favour?! You think people won't talk about you for the rest of your life if I marry him when he's supposed to be in love with you?" asked Hermione, incredulous.

"Hermione, it's not forever, and it's not about us. Neither you nor me nor Ginny gives a whit what people think about us, but your baby should have a name." Harry held her hands loosely in his own. "Listen to reason, Hermione. No one would dare say anything to a child they perceived to be mine. Later, when you and I have divorced and I've married Ginny, they'll whisper behind our backs, but they won't ever question the legitimacy of your child."

"It won't be so very bad, Hermione. People will assume that Harry got you in trouble and did right by you and the baby. They won't be at all shocked when you file for divorce after the baby's born, they'll expect it even. The beautiful hypocrisy of society is that they expect a shot-gun wedding to legitimise a baby, but they never expect such marriages to work. Everyone will feel sorry for you because he did this to you, and everyone will feel sorry for me for being jilted." Ginny added her hands to Harry's, and Hermione broke down in tears.

"There **will** be a divorce, Ginny, and the marriage will be in name only. You need to promise me that I won't come between you two."

"Done," said Harry, grinning.

"If Riddle couldn't keep me from Harry, you certainly don't stand a chance!" scoffed Ginny.

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Inarra gave an appropriately condescending sneer as her sister stepped up to the stool. Gwen and Robbie had been giving her fearful looks all week. They were afraid that they too would land in Slytherin. While the House suited her perfectly, Inarra knew that her younger half-brother and sister would be Gryffindor. They were so forthright and outspoken and idealistic, that Inarra had never had any doubts that they'd do their father proud. But they were scared, after all, if Harry Potter's eldest child, the daughter of

two notable Gryffindors, could be a Slytherin, then anything was possible.

As Potter, Gwendolen and Potter, Robert were both declared Gryffindors, she let herself remember her own sorting. The silence in the Great Hall following the Hat's declaration had been deafening. The proclamation of Slytherin hadn't bothered Inarra so much as everyone else's reaction to it. She'd gazed fearfully at her new Head of House, it was no secret that Severus Snape hated Harry Potter, and the feeling was mutual. The disgusted sneer that the man had given upon hearing her name had disappeared though, and instead he granted her an almost pensive gaze. And so her career at Hogwarts had begun. Her dad had sent her a letter congratulating her on her sorting. Inarra had tried to find any trace of disappointment in the letter, but there was none. Her father still loved her, would always love her. She'd already begun to suspect that he wasn't, in fact, her father, so that bit of reassurance had touched her even more.

"Did you enjoy your first semester at school, Inarra?" asked Harry.

"I did, but that's not what I wanted to talk to you about."

Harry nodded. "Go ahead, though I'm afraid you're asking the wrong parent."

"You're the one who claims to be my father Harry. I think you're the perfect one to ask."

He gave a weary sigh. "I think that you are old enough to understand that there's more to being a father than an act of sex."

She nodded, flushing slightly. "I'm not complaining, sir. I know you love me as much as you do Gwen and Robbie. I know that Ginny loves me too, which is odd. Shouldn't she hate me? If I was really your daughter, that is. And then there's Mum. She doesn't resent Ginny or the twins or the time I spend here. She even spends some time here herself. If you and she had ever been lovers wouldn't that be awkward?"

Harry smiled. "You've called me 'sir' and 'Harry'. I still acknowledge you as my daughter, but does this mean you're through acknowledging me as your father?"

Inarra squinted her eyes and glared at him. "You're not going to come right out and answer me, are you? How very Slytherin of you."

He laughed loudly at the insult. "Inarra, the only thing I ever need to tell you on the subject is that I love you, and you will always have a place in my home."

The problem, two years later, was that Inarra was pretty certain she knew who her real father was, and she wasn't at all certain how to act on that information.

When the meal was finished, the prefects began to gather up the first-years to take them up to their new homes. Inarra rose quickly from the table and positioned herself at the entrance so that she could congratulate Gwen and Robbie on their sorting. In the confusion of students milling about, she was surprised when she felt a pair of arms wrap around her.

"I'm sorry we're not in your House!" exclaimed a tearful Gwen.

"Oh, you silly cow," gasped Inarra, exasperated. "Of course you're Gryffindors, both of you, and Dad will be just as proud of you as he is of me!"

"But we're a family," sniffed Robbie. "Shouldn't we be together?"

Inarra sighed. She was a little out of her element with the twins so tearful. They'd missed her, she knew that. They'd obviously hoped that being at Hogwarts would mean spending more time with her. "Look you two, you got sorted into a great House. You'll have a brilliant time, I promise you. Now go, before your prefect leaves without you!"

Gwen released her and Robbie gave her a quick hug. Inarra then shooed them away.

"You're awfully patient with them, considering."

Professor Snape loomed behind her, and she felt every inch of her skin prickle with apprehension. Biting her lower lip to keep from fidgeting, Inarra searched her soul for some of her mother's Gryffindor courage. "They're my brother and sister, sir."

"Hmm," was all he said as he started to move away from her. Inarra clenched her fists and tried to force the words out of her mouth. Professor Snape never showed her any animosity, but neither did he ever speak to her directly.

"Professor," she blurted out. He turned and looked at her. She closed her eyes so as not to be distracted by his imposing stature. "I was wondering if I could speak with you at some point," she mumbled quickly.

"Of course, Miss Potter, my students are always welcome to bring their concerns to me. Would you like to meet this evening, or should we schedule an appointment for later this week?"

His voice was so stiff and formal that Inarra felt her courage fading. "This evening, sir, if it isn't an inconvenience." She wasn't certain she would make a meeting later in the week.

"Accompany me to my office then." He swept away and she had to scurry to follow him and keep up.

When they arrived at his office, Inarra turned to face the wall of shelves. She couldn't have this conversation with him and face him. This man to whom she was so connected also had every reason to hate her, and she didn't think she could handle seeing that hatred directed at her. He was uncharacteristically silent and waited for her to speak. She wondered fleetingly why she should be offered that courtesy instead of being told off for wasting his time.

"It's about my parents, sir," she began. "I've known for quite some time that Harry Potter couldn't be my father. He and Ginny are very kind to me, and I love them very much. Robbie, Gwen and I were raised together; they'll always be my brother and sister even though we've got no blood between us. I'm certain such loyalty is strange for a Slytherin, but then you'll remember that my mother was a Gryffindor."

"No, such loyalty and love isn't necessarily odd for a Slytherin. We all have feelings. Slytherins just tend not to express them so freely." His voice sounded old and tired, and it had lost the formality of his teaching voice.

Inarra found bravery in knowing that he was affected by this too, and she turned to face him. "The thing is, sir, I think I know who my father actually is, though I've no idea how it's possible," she said, her voice as teary as Gwen's had been earlier.

Snape sighed wearily. "There was a war, Inarra, surely you know that. I'm sure you're also aware that I appeared to be a Death Eater during that war. I don't think Harry Potter could have defeated Voldemort without my help, and this world is certainly a better place without such evil inhabiting it, but that doesn't make the acts that I was forced to commit any less heinous."

"No," replied Inarra. "I've heard some things, and other things are written in the history books for anyone to read, but you were completely absolved of your crimes and given an Order of Merlin for your service."

"Do you think that there can really be absolution? Especially when one of my crimes faces me nearly every day in class?"

"My mother was captured by Death Eaters, then, and you were forced to rape her?"

He winced. Despite being mostly a Slytherin, she still had some of her mother's forthright manner. "In a word, yes."

"So I'm nothing more than a reminder of your past sins?" she asked, pressing him further. It wasn't enough that he admitted to being her father. She wanted more; she wanted everything.

"No," he murmured. "No, your being my daughter is more complicated than that. I feel no shame when I look upon you."

Inarra nodded, pleased with the concession. "Harry Potter is a good dad to me. He's not my father, but he understands me in a way even my mother does not. He understands my need to know who I am. He respects that."

"He would."

Despite the terseness of his response when she mentioned her relationship with Harry Potter, she forged ahead. "I would not sever my connection with him and the family he's given me, but I would like a connection to my real father, sir. I'd like to be known as your daughter."

He coughed and Inarra knew the pleasure of being one of the few people to see a look of complete and utter disbelief on her father's face. "Have you any idea what you've just asked for?" he gasped. "You'd be ridiculed. The other students would taunt you! To have me acknowledge you as my daughter would be suicide!"

She smiled. "Your pardon, *Dad*, but it can't be any worse than being known as Harry Potter's Slytherin child."

Professor Severus Snape closed his eyes and leaned back in his chair. "I've known, Inarra, from that first moment I saw you enter the Great Hall when you were eleven. Seeing you made all the pieces fall together, and I suddenly understood Miss Granger's brief marriage to Harry Potter and their subsequent divorce. They did it to protect you, and now you would throw that back at them?"

"I think that they would agree it was my choice. Because of them, I have a choice, and I'm grateful."

He opened his eyes and studied her thoughtfully. "You *are* my daughter, Inarra, and I would be honoured to have the rest of the world know that, but you'll have to discuss this with your mother and Mr. Potter first." He motioned to the fireplace where there stood an urn of Floo powder.

"And the twins," she whispered. "I'd need to tell them too. I'd need to make them understand." And then she took a pinch of powder and stuck her face into the fire. "Harry? Harry, are you there?"

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"Well then, I believe that is settled. Miss Granger, if I might have a word?" Severus drew upon the tone of voice he used to quell his students and was amazed when it worked in present company. It was late and the discussion over Inarra's choice of surnames had gone several rounds more than it should. Minerva could glare at him all she wished, but the girl had made her choice, and all of her parents approved of it.

"Certainly, Professor," replied Hermione Granger. She turned her back on Minerva, lending credence to his declaration that the matter was indeed settled.

The Potters had already left, not long after Inarra and her younger siblings had been sent to bed. Minerva looked as though she'd like to argue the point a little further, but she'd finally realised that Hermione was immovable. Severus himself could not help but be impressed at how staunchly she'd defended their daughter. If Inarra wanted to be known as a Snape, then Hermione would see to it that her name was changed.

"Is my office all right?" Severus asked awkwardly.

"Your office is fine, sir."

"Go on then," sighed Minerva in defeat. "I'll see you at breakfast, Severus. Goodnight, Hermione."

"Goodnight, Minerva. Thank you," said Hermione graciously.

Severus led the way to his office and motioned for her to sit down. "I must admit that I was quite surprised, two years ago, when Inarra started school," he began without preamble.

"I should have realised that you'd put the pieces together. Should I have warned you?"

He thought on that for a moment. "No," he answered finally. "I think it's just as well that you never told me. I would not have handled it well."

Hermione nodded. "If I had ever thought, even for a moment, that you would have wanted to be a part of her life, I would have told you. I may have been wrong, but I assumed that you would only see her as a mistake and a burden."

He closed his eyes. "No, you're not wrong. I'm afraid that fourteen years ago I was not in the most pleasant frame of mind. I would never have imagined wanting to be a father. I would have told you to abort the child, tried to force you to, and if you'd succeeded in having the child, I would have hated you. I don't know that my reaction would have been much different if you'd attempted to warn me before Inarra began school. She was sorted into Slytherin, I'm her Head of House. It was a very difficult year, but I was forced to rethink my position on fatherhood."

A slow smile spread across her face. "You have no idea how very glad I am to hear that," she murmured.

"She is incredible. How could you know, though? How could you know that you carried an angel? Why didn't you get rid of the baby?"

"How could she have been anything but perfect, Professor? You saved my life that night. I didn't know it then, but looking back on what happened, I realised that they would have killed me. You prevented that just long enough for me to be saved."

"The evil acts I committed far outweigh any good I accomplished. I felt like I lost what was left of my soul that night."

She studied him a moment before speaking again. "Perhaps you'll allow Inarra to help you find what's missing. I can't really say why I didn't end the pregnancy. I wanted to. I had the potion brewed and sitting in a goblet before me, but I never lifted it to my lips. I have no doubt that had it been any of your comrades, I would have drunk without any hesitation, and I would have pressed charges. I was very angry, Professor."

He nodded. She should have been furious. He'd never been so cruel as he had been to her that night. "Fourteen years isn't so long a time, Miss Granger. How is it that you can be so forgiving?"

She laughed. "I'm not. I most certainly have not forgiven you. First of all, you've never apologised, and second of all, how does one get over being brutally beaten and raped in front of a crowd of cheering Death Eaters? It's not something that ever leaves you."

Severus winced and she continued. "You waited for Inarra to approach you, and when she did, you told her the truth. You didn't give her any details, obviously, though if she ever asks me, I will tell her everything. She decided for herself that she wants to be your daughter, and not only have you given my little girl what she wants, but you made certain that she spoke with not only me, but Harry too. You are the sum of your parts, Professor Snape, and the night you raped me, you also conceived Inarra. I would not force fatherhood on you, but if you willingly take it, who am I to deny you?"

"This won't be easy for her, but she is very insistent," he said while he absorbed what she'd just told him.

"She's very proprietary, is what she is. She wants what's hers, and you are *her* father."

Severus laughed then. "This won't be difficult for her, will it?"

Hermione nodded. "No, it won't. People will talk, but she won't even notice. It's you who will have to deal with the whispers. She couldn't care less."

"What have I done?" he asked in mock horror.

"I may have my revenge yet, Professor," said Hermione, not quite teasing.

He sobered. "Severus. I don't think that we can share a daughter and be 'Professor and Miss Granger'."

"No," she whispered. "I suppose not."

"Thank you, *Hermione*. Our daughter has your strength of character, and for that I am extremely grateful."

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It was sunny out, and Inarra was seated under a large oak tree with her brother and her sister on either side. Their exam in Potions was in the morning, and they had quite a bit of revising left to do. Robbie's notes were completely illegible, and Gwen's grasp of the theory was disgraceful. Inarra was doing her best to sort it all out and help them prepare for their exam. None of them noticed the adults who watched them from a distance and listened in to their conversation.

"It was never about you, you know that, don't you? I was afraid for her."

"I would never endanger a student, Minerva, much less my own daughter. I know you thought I had manipulated the situation, but it was entirely her decision. Her mother never told her that Harry wasn't her father, and Harry himself would not admit it when she confronted him. And I was very careful, Minerva. She came to her own conclusions and made her own decisions. If I benefited from that, so be it."

Headmistress McGonagall sighed. "I've known that girl her entire life, Severus. I saw how Harry doted on her and how wonderful Ginny was as her step-mother. I must admit I was shocked to discover that Harry wasn't really her father. It was a lot to take in, in one evening. And to be told that she would be called Inarra Snape from that moment onward?"

"Yes, and she was quite perverse about that, wasn't she? Pomona confided in me later that she believed I was the one insisting on the name change. She refused to call Inarra 'Miss Snape', and Inarra refused to answer to 'Miss Potter'."

Minerva rolled her eyes in exasperation. "I've called Molly Weasley 'Miss Prewett' once or twice since she's been married. It's difficult to get out of the habit, but if you could have seen the glare on your daughter's face when I made the mistake of calling her 'Miss Potter' the following morning in class... I almost took points for her blatant disrespect, but then I realised I'd have to explain to you what had happened. I've not made that mistake since."

Severus smirked and then sobered. "You weren't the only one who was afraid for her, Minerva. I was as well."

There were tears in Minerva's eyes when she spoke again. "Your daughter was a beautiful child, Severus, and she's becoming a beautiful woman. You should be very proud of her."

Severus simply nodded. He was proud of her and in awe of her. No single event had changed his life more than the moment he realised that that incredible creature had come from him.

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Inarra put on her most petulant glare as her soon-to-be stepfather, Viktor Krum, leaned in to kiss her mother. "How many parents does one girl need?" she groused.

Harry grinned. "As many as she can get her greedy little hands on of course. Has your father found anyone yet?"

"No, but I'm looking. He seemed to like the witch who works at the apothecary, but she's closer in age to me than him."

"Does that really matter, if she makes him happy?"

Inarra levelled him one of her best glares. "Of course not, Dad, but try explaining that to my greasy git of a father!"

~ *Fin* ~