

she had invited back to her room. It was Severus Snape she'd snogged in the hallway. While she had enjoyed herself, reveled in the feel of him if she were going to be honest, she had the distinct feeling she was in over her head.

"Perhaps a glass of port? I have a nice bottle in my room. I could Floo there and be back in a matter of minutes." Severus' tone was smooth, careful not to spook the suddenly nervous witch.

"All right. Good. I'll just get the glasses." Hermione disappeared into a small alcove, a tiny kitchenette with delusions of grandeur, better suited to heating a cup of tea than preparing a meal.

Severus stepped to the fireplace and grabbed a pinch of Floo powder. It was short work to Floo to his quarters, snag the bottle of port he'd set aside to toast the New Year in, this being a far more auspicious occasion, and returned to Hermione.

The pair settled themselves on the couch; a wave of his wand and the cork flew up, out of the bottle, to land neatly in his open palm.

"That's great. How'd you do that?"

Severus smiled. "Magic," he said, pouring the wine into the two glasses Hermione had set on the coffee table in front of them.

It was exactly what Hermione needed to relax. This was Severus a man she'd respected, a man whose intellect she'd admired, but above all, a man who had proved his true worth, his true loyalty to the light, when he showed his true colours and turned on his "fellow" Death Eaters, protecting Harry's back while he cast the final curse that ended Voldemort's reign of terror. And the man who had made her toes curl just minutes before.

"Did you want to see Tryson's book? It's just in the other room. I can get it for you." Hermione rose to fetch the book, only to have Severus stop her.

Gently, he pulled her back down to the couch. "Maybe later." Slowly, he slid his hand along her arm, his fingers softly stroking the smooth skin of her forearm. "Don't be nervous. I promise we won't go any further than you desire."

His left hand worked its way to her shoulder, alternately stroking and lightly raking the sensitive skin of her neck. "So lovely," he murmured, his voice husky with desire.

Mesmerized, Hermione's eyes drifted shut as she leaned toward him.

His fingers slid through her hair, tangling with the mass of curls cascading down her back, his arm resting on the couch back. His other hand rested at her elbow in an effort to calm the witch. Leaning forward, he gently brushed his lips across hers, his cock hardening at the sound of her quiet moan. His tongue sought entrance to the hot cavern of her mouth, her taste a sweet mix of port and Hermione.

"Severus." The sound of his name, whispered so wantonly, was almost more than he could bear.

Deepening the kiss, he pulled Hermione to him, feeling the press of her breasts against his chest as she slid her arms around his neck. A slight tug and he pulled a willing Hermione into his lap. He leaned back, the arm of the couch supporting Hermione as she shifted in his lap. Breathlessly, she pulled back to gaze at him.

Severus' black eyes, dark with lust, glittered warmly in the firelight; his thumb softly tracing an invisible line across her bottom lip. "You make a lovely picture: kiss-swollen lips, eyes so full of promise, a wonderful flush across your face. How is it I never noticed before?" His voice was low, pitched to seduce the young woman. "Tell me, Hermione, how low does this flush go?" He fingers followed the path of his eyes, tracing a light line along the column of her throat before stopping to rest in the hollow at the base of her neck.

He could hear her ragged breathing, her pulse pounding under his fingertips. A pulsing need that matched his own. Once again he leaned in to kiss the witch, his cock painfully hard as she moved against him. Slowly, he ran his hand up from her waist, he could feel her shudder, her sudden gasp followed by a quiet moan sounding suspiciously like his name as he stroked along outer edge of her breast. He cupped the underside of the soft globe, his fingers continuing their path to pluck at her hardened nipple. He could feel the heat of her body, her hips gyrating against him, driving him mad.

"Hermione..."

"Oh, God."

Flicking her nipple a bit harder, he was rewarded with another moan for his trouble. Hermione arched back, her head lying on the couch arm behind her. He kneaded her breasts through the fabric of her robes, enjoying the feel and weight of the soft globes in his hands. Leaning forward, he slowly licked a line from the hollow of her throat to the top of her cleavage, his tongue darting into the cleft he found there.

"Severus," abruptly Hermione sat up, shifting towards him. She could feel the steel of his erection against her bum. This was no boy she was dealing with, not just a fast grope on the Astronomy tower. This was a man, a hot-blooded, adult wizard, who just happened to be an ex-Death Eater, among other things. "What are we doing here?"

"Doing? Is there something more you desire?"

"No, you're... What I mean is... how can you go from hating me to... this? Are you just looking for a quick shag? What happens tomorrow?" Her breathing was shallow, the throb between her legs telling her not to worry about tomorrow, live for today. "I'm not asking for happily ever after. I'm just not sure how we got here."

Severus sat back, his hand releasing her breast, moving up to stroke along her jaw line instead. He didn't hate her. He'd never hated her. She had consumed his thoughts the last few weeks, and now she stoked a fire in his veins. A fire that burned brighter than any he'd ever felt before. What *would* happen tomorrow? "I don't know what the future will bring. You may find I'm merely a passing fancy, something to indulge in before moving on to someone more... suited to you and your friends, someone younger, perhaps."

"Severus..."

"No, I believe you should know what you're getting into." Severus reach across her body and hooked her wine glass off the coffee table, offering her a sip before he took one himself. "I'm almost twenty years your senior. And while wizards are long lived, it is something to think about. I don't know what will happen tomorrow. Since the war is no longer looming ahead of us, I expect to live a more... sedate life, teaching, working on my private research. You might be interested in a new version of the first year's Potions text I've been working on. I've included an appendix for Muggleborns, things they should know but may not have been exposed to."

Severus watched her eyes light up with interest at the mention of research. She was someone he could discuss his findings with and know she possessed the knowledge to *understand* his theories, something so few he spoke with ever did. He chuckled quietly. "I've never hated you. To be honest, you've occupied a place in my mind these last few weeks, ever since you stopped talking to me. Tell me, what do you want tomorrow morning to bring?"

Hermione shifted again in his lap, hitching her robes up as she moved to straddle him. "I know I don't want tonight to be a one time thing. I would love to see your research. There's a potion mentioned in *Forbidden Brews: The Ancient Art of Potion Making*, and I think with a little alteration it could be used more effectively to treat burns than burn-healing paste does now, but there are a few questions I have before I could test my theory." Her mind was a jumble of thoughts, emotions; her body throbbled with desire, pulsated with need. She had always played it safe. It was time to take a risk. Taking a deep breath, she jumped off the edge. "I want... you."

Severus smiled, marveling at what a truly remarkable witch Hermione was. "Then we are in agreement, since it's you I desire. I will be here tomorrow if that's what you want, though I suspect at some point I may need to return to my rooms for a change of clothing. Perhaps you'll accompany me?"

Hermione watched his eyes sparkling with lust as she ground against his erection, her hands resting lightly on his shoulders as she slowly rocked against him. "And the

day after that?"

Severus nodded. "And the day after that. I'm not an easy man; you may find you can't stand me after all. I may be more trouble than I'm worth when your friends find out about us."

"Are we an us?"

Again, he nodded. "So it would seem."

Hermione captured his lips with hers, her kiss anything but gentle. Abruptly, she pulled back, her hand quickly reaching up to release the clasp at the top of her robes. "Then we'll just have to see where this will lead us." Grasping the hem of her jumper, she pulled it up and over her head, tossing the garment over her shoulder.

"Hermione..." The witch rocked against him, her skirt riding higher on her thighs. He thought he might be going mad. Here sat the object of his obsession, the witch he desired, barely clad in a lacy black bra and skirt, both garments soon to disappear if he had his way, and she wanted him. His hands dropped from her waist to the top of her thighs. Sliding under the bunched fabric, he slowly moved toward her core, his fingers gliding along the silky stockings she wore until reaching the band on her upper thigh marking the end of her hose. Shifting his hands, he lightly raked the inside of her thighs with his thumbs, stopping only when he reached her sex. Softly, he teased the damp fabric covering her mound and slit, marveling at the heat he felt against his fingertips. His cock twitched with the desire to be buried in that heat.

Somehow, Hermione had lost the upper hand, not that she truly minded. She had thought removing her top so suddenly might unnerve the dark man, allow her to see behind the stiff exterior. And while it might have done so for a second or two, his eyes seemed to widen just a bit, before quickly regaining control of himself. Sometime later, she decided, she would see his composure shatter, vowing to do whatever it would take to do so, but for now, she was willing to turn control over to him if the delicious feelings he was drawing from her body would continue. Holding tightly to his shoulders, Hermione rode the wave of sensations his skillful fingers drew from her body. Her sex continued to throb and clench with desire, anticipating the feel of his cock filling her to the core. Reaching for the front opening of her bra, Hermione released the clasp, freeing her breasts from their confinement.

Severus was fairly sure his heart skipped a beat. The sight of Hermione's breasts spilling forth sent a jolt directly to his cock. Palming one breast, Severus leaned forward and captured her nipple with his teeth, the peak stiffened further as he sucked it. He paid the same attention to her other breast, her quiet whimpers a symphony to his ears.

It seemed to be a game of "One up man-ship," each party benefiting as one upped the stakes and tried to outdo the other.

"You are way overdressed for this little party," she purred. Deft fingers reached for the buttons at his collar.

"I agree, but perhaps we should move someplace a bit more comfortable?"

Hermione laughed. "I think there's a bedroom around here somewhere. Will that do?"

Severus pulled her tightly against him, capturing her mouth possessively. His hands roamed across her back, stroking and teasing the smooth expanse of skin. The witch in his arms melted against him, her breath ragged as the need to breathe ended the kiss. His voice was low, laden with desire and roughened by lust. "Lead on, witch."

Hermione slid from his lap, her skirt riding higher before dropping back in place. His hand on her hip steadied her. His quiet smile, the first she'd ever seen, went straight to her heart. Reaching back, she opened the catch at the back of her skirt, the garment falling to pool gently at her feet. Stepping over the fallen cloth, she toed it out of the way. The skirt slid across the wood floor, its journey ending as it hit the jumper she'd tossed over her shoulder just a few minutes before. "This way."

Severus sat speechless, not sure his legs would hold him. The images he conjured of a naked Hermione did not hold a candle to the witch that stood before him. Her figure was full, a fact he was most thankful for, dispelling any doubts that she was a woman, no longer a child. He drank in the sight before him...full breasts, shapely hips; his fingers twitching with desire to follow the gentle slope of her stomach to the thatch of curls covering her mound. She was virtually nude, sans the pair of black bikini knickers, thigh high hose and heels she wore. And she was breathtaking.

"Severus?"

"You look... You're... incredible."

"You don't have to seduce me. I think by now it's a pretty good bet you're going to get lucky." Hermione chuckled softly, a sweep of her hand indicating her current state of undress. "I'm hardly dressed for flying, or anything else for that matter."

"I imagined what you'd look like, but... it didn't even come close."

Hermione looked at him questioningly. "You imagined me nude?"

Severus coloured slightly, rising from the couch. "Yes, well, your comment about being nude, tied to my bed..." his voice trailing off with embarrassment.

"Maybe later, for now..." A nod of her head indicated the open doorway to her left. "Let's see how fast I can get those damn buttons of yours undone."

He followed her into the bedroom, preferring to walk a bit behind so he could enjoy the sway of her hips and the barest glimpse of the treasure that awaited him. Truthfully, he would've been happy to spell his clothes away and just jump the witch. His trousers were painfully tight, but he couldn't pass up the chance to feel her hands upon him. Shuddering as she planted butterfly kisses against his skin as she exposed it, he couldn't remember the last time someone touched him with such tenderness.

His hands refused to stay idle...stroking her back, kneading her ass, exploring her breasts, touching everywhere but the one spot she so desperately wanted him to touch. His coat and shirt hung open, their weight heavy in the suddenly warm room.

Hermione dropped to her knees, her fingers spread out across the placket of his trousers. She could feel his cock straining against the cloth, the steady throb under her fingertips as she traced the outline of his erection. Sliding her hands back to clutch his arse, she kissed along the length of his cock, alternating every other kiss with a breath of warm air through the fabric. She could feel him shudder in anticipation as she moved along his length.

Severus' eyes slid shut, the feel of Hermione holding onto him, the heat of her breath along the length of his cock, was quickly destroying whatever control he held over his body. He needed time to compose himself if this was to last. Gently tugging her up, he enfolded her in his embrace, his kiss soft, before deepening into an erotic dance of dueling tongues. He could feel her nipples, hard points against his chest. The delicious feel of skin on skin sending jolts of fire to his cock. A whispered spell and his clothes disappeared, his cock suddenly sliding free against her soft skin.

"You could've done that all along?"

"And miss having you touch me?" Another embrace, this time guiding her willing body down to the bed as he kissed her. Hermione opened below him, her legs hooking around his thighs, her pelvis rising up as she tried to impale herself on his cock.

"Severus, please." She needed to end the ache, needed to feel him slide into her body, to feel the pleasure she knew he could give her.

"Soon, we have all the time in the world." Slowly, he slid down her body, moving back and forth, enjoying the sensual glide of skin on skin, planting kisses as he went. He stopped to worry her nipples, laving around each nipple before sucking it deeply into his mouth. He smiled around the bud, pleased as Hermione arched of the bed, her hand at the back of his head trying to hold him in place.

"Severus," she moaned.

A few nips along her stomach brought him to the object of his desire. Settling between her legs, he could smell the musk of her sex, her slit glistening with essence. He held her hips down, sure she would rise off the bed if her previous movements were any indication; he had no desire to have his nose broken when he finally tasted her. Leaning forward, he ran his tongue from top to bottom and back again, tasting the fluid gathered there. True to her previous actions, Hermione's hips bucked up, restricted only by Severus' firm hold on her body. Alternating between licking and sucking, he paid homage to her clit, holding on as a thrashing Hermione orgasmed from his attentions. He marveled at the intensity of her emotions; who knew a siren hid behind her bookworm exterior?

He slid one long finger, then two, into her welcoming heat, feeling the walls of her sex spasm around him as she rode out the aftershocks of her orgasm. She was tight and hot, and he trembled with his own need as he moved back up her body. Positioning his cock at her entrance, he slid forward into the heat of her body.

"Oh, God." Hermione moaned, her hips rising off the bed as she drew him deeper inside. The feel of his balls, hitting her arse, sent a new wave of contractions through her.

Slowly, he pulled back before plunging into her depths again. "So tight." His voice was raw silk, the feel of being buried so deeply inside her overwhelming his senses.

"Severus, I need to feel you. Faster. Please."

Her plea was punctuated with small moans and whimpers as he moved within her. He had the barest hint of control, a sense that was shattered by her words, her hands urging him on. Forcefully, he captured her lips in a searing kiss, his tongue plunging in and out of her mouth as his cock mirrored its movement.

Hermione's hips matched his, thrust for thrust. Severus could feel her muscles contracting again, the feel pushing him to the edge. He gave himself over to the feeling, driving in and out of her body, his thrusts becoming erratic as he felt Hermione shatter around him. It was all it took for him to join her, his hips moving reflexively as he thrust forward one last time.

Hermione clutched his shoulders, the wave of feeling, the pure magic of their joining, enveloping her.

With the last of his strength, Severus managed to move to the side before collapsing into a boneless heap, his mind and body fully sated. He looped one leg over hers, reaching out to pull her to him.

"Wow."

"Mmh."

"That was... usually the first time together is not supposed to be that good. Trying to figure out what your partner likes, worrying about how you look, that kind of thing. Just think how great we'll be after a bit of practice." Hermione laughed as she watched his eyes narrow.

"You have a complaint?"

"No, none at all. It just usually takes time for two people to get in sync with one another. That was amazing. A man I can talk to without hearing about the most current Quidditch score, someone who likes books as much as I do, and a great lover. Amazing, just amazing," she said with a smile.

Idly, Severus stroked along Hermione's arm. "Yes, there aren't too many men that can fill a conversation if it doesn't include an in-depth analysis of the Cannon's latest game. Perhaps when we visit my rooms later I can lend you my copy of *Flying With the Cannons*? You can have the best of both worlds, books and Quidditch."

Hermione turned to Severus, an expression of growing horror dawning on her face. This was a man, an intelligent man, not one of the adolescents she normally encountered, and *he* had a fixation with Quidditch, too? "You don't really have a book on the Chudley Cannons, do you?"

"Is that a problem?"

"Severus."

Severus' hand slipped lower, gently teasing the side of Hermione's breast, his thumb flicking her hardening nipple. "Would you like to ride my broomstick again? We can plot a few new moves not listed in the book."

"I can't tell when you're joking or not." Hermione shifted to her back, a move that brought Severus' hand into further contact with her breast.

The dark man moved to his side, his gaze piercing as he watched her.

"What?" His ministrations were causing the ache in her belly to awaken again.

Severus shook his head. "I'm waiting to see if I wake up."

"Did you really imagine me nude?"

"Yes," he said quietly. "You've been on my mind quite a bit lately."

Hermione sighed, her lids heavy with sleep. "I'm glad. Remind me tomorrow to show you Tryson's book; it's on the dresser over there. I want you to look at the potion and tell me if I'm right about the changes to the formula."

Severus could just make out the title of the book in the dim half-light from the fire. It was the title of the book below it that really caught his eye. The title *The Claiming of Sleeping Hermione*, seemed to be an alteration of a very racy Muggle book he'd read years ago. "Care to tell me about the book below Tryson's?"

Hermione's eyes flew open. 'Don't tell me I left my Weasleys' Wizard Wheezes Fantasy Spellbook out,' she silently pleaded. "What book is that?" she asked him.

Humoring her supposedly innocent answer, he said, "*The Claiming of Sleeping Hermione*, interesting title, and the heroine has the same name as you. Imagine that."

"Yeah, imagine that."

Severus had heard of a line of adult fantasy spellbooks the Weasley twins were working on. The books were based on their popular patented daydream products, but adult in nature. "A Weasley Wizarding Wheeze product?"

"I do some beta testing for the boys. Help them check the quality of the products. That type of thing," she answered, colouring slightly.

Severus smiled as he watched Hermione blushing after everything they'd just done; she was shy about the book? He watched fascinated as she flushed further, a gentle blush spreading across her neck and breasts. "It would seem there are quite a few books we shall have to investigate over the next few days."

"You really want to stay here with me?"

"For now. At some point, we'll need to visit my quarters. While clothing may not be necessary at the moment, there are a few... personal items I would like to retrieve. Too, my bathroom is much larger. I don't believe we'll both fit in your tub, however, I'm sure mine is large enough to accommodate us both." The vision of Hermione, tied to his bed, came to the forefront in his mind. His cock twitched in anticipation of actually fulfilling his fantasy, a fantasy that had haunted him since that day in the staff room.

"Mmm, that does sound nice." Hermione smiled. It seemed she was going to have a very happy Christmas after all.

"Hermione, won't your friends question where you are?" Severus lay back. He didn't want reality to intrude on them, but he did tend to be a realist, and the fact of the matter was the ruddy Boy Who Lived and his obnoxious sidekick always seemed to be hanging around the witch. It would only be a matter of time before they showed up looking for the young woman, or God forbid, walked in on them. He supposed if they were to continue seeing each other, he'd have to become a bit more adept at tolerating the brats, if only for Hermione's sake.

"Are you worried about Harry and Ron?"

"Not at all."

"Liar."

"I've faced down the Dark Lord. I believe I can handle two childish adolescents."

Hermione laughed. "Yes, you helped destroy Voldemort, but you're not allowed to curse Harry."

"Don't remind me," he grumbled. When had the conversation taken this turn? The last thing he remembered, he was stroking her breast, his cock gearing up for round two, and now... well, a discussion of the Potter brat was hardly conducive to romance.

"Severus, don't worry about my friends. I don't live my life worrying about what they think. They have no choice but to accept you and I seeing one another. I can be very creative with my hexes."

"You can hex them, but I can't?"

"I don't want to kill them, just make sure they see my point of view."

"Ah, yes, there would be a difference there."

"Maybe we should see how well you and I fit together in your tub. I'm really not that tired at the moment." Hermione cuddled into his side, exploring his chest as she waited for his answer. Their previous coupling had carried an air of urgency about it. Now she wanted to take her time to get to know his body, see what made him groan, what it would take to make him lose control.

"I believe that can be arranged." Severus marveled at the pleased look she gave him. She really was a remarkable witch. An amazing woman, if only Potter and Weasley weren't an issue. While he believed she meant what she said, he'd had six years of firsthand observation to know how close the Golden Trio really was. "Hermione, if you rather keep our seeing one another quiet for a bit, until we see if you can tolerate me, or if only to stop your friends from disowning you, I do understand." That was not to say he planned to stop shagging the vixen, especially not knowing how things might turn out in the end; he might as well enjoy his time now, as their future was most likely to be questionable at best.

"Severus, I don't give a damn what my friends think. I make up my own mind. Now about that bubble bath?"

"Now it's a bubble bath?" One brow rose dramatically. "And if I said I didn't 'do' bubbles?"

"Yes, but I do." Slowly, she looped one leg over his, drawing her foot along his leg, his cock bobbed gently with her movement, once again standing at full attention.

Severus shook his head. "Beauty and the beast," he mumbled. "Who will believe it? They're going to say I've put a spell on you."

"Thanks, I don't think I've ever been called a beast before."

"Hermione."

"If I don't care what they think, why should you?" She smiled softly. "You did put a spell on me; now let's see if you can keep it up."

Severus growled deep in his throat. Moving to face her, he took her hand in his. A sudden shift found Hermione on her back, the Potions master moving over her, long fingers laced through hers, pinning her to the bed.

Hermione could feel his erection, hard against her thigh. "I think the bath can wait."

Severus captured her mouth in a searing kiss; he could feel her wrap her legs around him, urging him to plunge deep within her again. He pulled back, smiling evilly. "Hermione, how would you feel about being tied naked to my bed?"

~Fini~

A/N: Time to let our favorite couple have a bit of privacy. The above mentioned book, *The Claiming of Sleeping Hermione* is a reference to my story *Severus Snape and The Claiming of Sleeping Hermione*, complete at four chapters long and can be found on this archive on my author's page.

A grateful thank you to the wonderful Southern_witch_69 (who did get to read the smut first) for betaing this. Any mistakes, however, are still mine.

To one and all: A very Happy Holiday to all!

Pearle