

Laced Eggnog

by Southern_Witch_69

Hermione and Severus decide to make their private relationship a public one; it's the eggnog's fault! Written for Parked_Soul (Happy Christmas), who kindly responded to an LJ entry in which I requested prompts.

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Chapter 1 of 1

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Disclaimer: The characters are not mine.

SW says: This was written last year for Parked_Soul, who was kind enough to reply to an LJ post I made requesting prompts.

Her requests were:

Pairing: Hermione/Snape

Keyword: Eggnog

Hermione had been at the Order's Christmas party, hosted by the Weasleys, for an hour and was finally able to break away from her friends when she spotted the object of her desire across the room. He was finally alone as well. Slipping next to Severus at the refreshment table in the corner of the Weasleys' living room, Hermione asked, brow furrowed in confusion, "What are you doing?"

"I'm pouring myself a glass of eggnog," Severus replied. "Would you care for some?"

"No, thank you," she said. "You refused Minerva's offer of eggnog in her office earlier."

"That I did."

"You said that you didn't drink it, and yet, here you are drinking it. Just when I think I know everything about you, you surprise me."

He simply smirked and brought the glass to his lips. "Ah, it's very good. If you must know, the only eggnog that I've come to like is any eggnog that the Weasley twins have had a hand in making. They spice it up nicely," he said with a small smile. He looked down the length of her body and then met her gaze, his eyes suddenly narrowed.

"You're standing just a little too close to me, Hermione. You wouldn't want any of your friends to think there is something between us."

"But there is something between us." Her eyes lowered as she filled a glass with punch for herself.

"Indeed there is, but you were quite adamant about not letting anyone—aside from Minerva—know about it," he said, bitterness etching his voice. "Which is perfectly fine with me."

From the way his words were laced with sarcasm, Hermione felt that his last words were no longer true. They'd decided to keep things quiet when they'd first started seeing each other the year before, but sometimes he said things that made her want to ask if he'd changed his mind about the secrecy. However, she feared she might be misreading his expressions or tones. She looked away for a moment and then quietly whispered, "I wonder if we should keep something so important a secret any longer."

"Excuse me?" he asked quietly, turning back to her and placing his empty cup on the table. "I don't believe I quite heard that."

She knew he'd heard her, but he apparently wanted her to spell things out more plainly before commenting. "Severus, after a nearly a year of being in a relationship with you, I think it's clear that things are going to work out for us—"

"Did you say 'work out for us'? What do you mean by that?"

"Are you mocking me?" she asked, feeling slightly annoyed.

"I'm not understanding you."

"I did say it, meaning there will only be us for the rest of our lives: marriage, maybe children, and that sort of thing." Her cheeks reddened. "Is that not what you want?"

He cocked his head to the side, opened his mouth, and closed it again as if debating on how to reply. She felt her throat close with emotion. Had she misread things? Was he perfectly happy to simply keep things quiet between them and never go any further with things?

"Apparently, I've misunderstood. I thought you felt the same way and was tired of hiding." Before she could turn away completely, she felt his hand on her arm.

"I mean no disrespect; it's just—"

"No disrespect?" Ron Weasley asked, having joined them without them realizing it. "Wadusay to her, Snap... er... Snape?" he asked drunkenly.

"Our conversation is none of your business, Weasley," Severus replied calmly, not even sparing him a glance, but he did release his hold on her arm.

"Well, I can't have you treading... no... treating her like rubbish in my home. She's always been welcome here and shouldn't have some git—"

"Ron!" Hermione scolded. "I would appreciate it if you would stay out of this." She looked at Harry with a silent plea for help when she realized that he'd come to stand next to her as well.

"Come on, Ron," Harry said, tugging on Ron's shirt. "Hermione can handle this herself."

"But, Harry, see? I told you he's been staring at her all night! Now he's gone and said something she doesn't like! He can't talk to her like that," he said, pointing his finger back and forth between them. "And another thing..."

"Why shouldn't he look at me?" Hermione demanded. "He's my boyfriend!" She put a hand over her mouth the instant she realized what she'd blurted. "Oh, Severus..."

"You call him 'Severus'?" Harry asked in surprise.

"Boyfriend?" Ron and Snape said in unison.

Hermione looked between the two of them uneasily, but she was relieved when Severus spoke.

"I've not considered myself a 'boy' in many years, Hermione."

"You call her 'Hermione'?" Harry asked in surprise.

"Bloody hell. He's her lover! Ginny said she was seeing someone," Ron said, gaping at them.

"He's so much more than that," Hermione said softly, smiling at Severus, admitting, "and has been for a long time now."

"Indeed," Severus agreed, leaning forward to kiss her lips gently. When he pulled back, he glanced at her two best friends. "What are you still doing here?" He made a show of sweeping Hermione aside when neither said anything. "You must want some eggnog then. I must say, it's quite good."

"And a right eye opener," Hermione said with a giggle, placing her punch glass on the table. To Severus, she whispered, "Let's get out of here."

The couple said their goodbyes to everyone and left together, hands entwined, a completely different departure than their entrance, which had been staged so that they entered separately and alone. Ron and Harry stood staring at the refreshment table in surprise for many minutes before Ron broke their shocked silence.

"Stay away from the eggnog, mate." He placed his cup down deliberately. "Fred and George, I think they laced it with something other than whisky." He nodded to himself. "Tha's right. Made me hallucinate about Hermione and Snape—kissing and holding hands." He shuddered and eyed the punch. "Should have stuck with the straight stuff tonight."

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SW69's Notes: I always like seeing the reactions when people find out about Snape/Hermione. I'll admit that I prefer when it's accepted with a minimum amount of fuss from her best friends, but sometimes it's a little funny how authors portray them.