

The Perfect Mistake

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Two Years after Snape rejects Hermione, she finds herself in a troubling predicament. Will he help her?

Chapter One

Chapter 1 of 1

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The Night Before the Final Battle

Hermione stood staring at the door. She'd been there five minutes and was still undecided as to what to do. She wanted to knock, but her nerves were frayed. Tomorrow was the day that would end things...one way or another.

Severus Snape, who was beyond that door, and Draco Malfoy had been ousted as traitors to the Dark Lord. The Lestranges had heard a conversation between the two and immediately went to their master with the information. The two Slytherins were beaten and left for dead at the Leaky Cauldron. Tom got in touch with Kingsley Shacklebolt, and he hid them both at Headquarters.

After many arguments and much deliberation, it had been decided that Severus had acted on Dumbledore's orders when he'd murdered him because of an Unbreakable Vow he had taken with Narcissa Malfoy. Not many of the Order members were happy to have him or Draco there, but they'd relented per Minerva McGonagall's orders.

Now it was the night before the final battle, and Hermione knew this could be her last chance to act upon her feelings. She had no doubt that both the professor and Draco would be the most sought after by the Death Eaters besides Harry, and Hermione didn't want anything to happen to him without her telling him how she felt.

Gathering up the courage she suddenly seemed to be in short supply of, Hermione raised her hand and knocked quickly before she could talk herself out of it.

"Enter, if you must," came the disinterested voice from behind the door.

Hermione slowly opened the door and stood in the doorway, not quite entering the room. She said nothing until he looked up from the book he was pretending to read and acknowledged her. "Yes, Miss Granger, what is it?"

Still, she stood there, only staring, nervously twisting her hands. Now that she was face to face with her former professor, all the scenarios she'd imagined earlier left her mind. She cleared her throat, but the words failed her.

Slowly putting his book on the small table beside his chair, Severus got up and walked toward her. "Miss Granger, what is it?"

She noted the highly annoyed look on his face and was quickly losing her nerve. "Um..."

Crossing his arms across his chest, he barked, "Well? Spit it out, girl. Does Minerva or someone need my assistance?"

"No... No, that's not why I came here. I wanted...needed...to tell you something."

After waiting a few moments, he asked, "Are you going to tell me, or are you just going to stand there watching me all night?"

"Do you think... Would it be possible for me to come in?" She saw one of his eyebrows arch in question, but he said nothing, motioning for her to enter. As Hermione closed the door and nervously paced for a moment, hoping to find the right words, she could see that his curiosity was piqued.

He finally said, "All right, what is it that you wanted to tell me? You have my undivided attention."

She couldn't think of how to put it. She could tell he was getting angry, and that was only adding to her apprehension. Finally, she looked into his eyes and said, "I have feelings for you, Professor, and have for quite some time." She held her breath and waited for his response.

Severus shook his head slightly as if he didn't understand what she meant. "Feelings? What do you mean *feelings*, Miss Granger?"

Drawing her eyebrows together in a moment of confusion, she told him, "I mean..." She motioned in circles with her hands. "Well, honestly! What do you think I mean?" She lowered her head and whispered, "I mean I fancy you."

"You *fancy* me?"

Putting her hands on her hips in annoyance, she asked, "Must you repeat everything I say? Are you trying to make this more difficult for me?"

"I am not amused in the slightest. I find this little scene distasteful, especially coming from you."

"Oh, for the love of... Professor, I mean what I say. These past few weeks, staying here with you, getting to know you outside of the classroom, I have discovered I feel things...things I've not felt for anyone else." When he only stood there, she asked, "Aren't you going to say anything?"

He simply put his hand on his stomach and began laughing. She looked at him with a haughty expression, and he laughed even harder. Hermione was beginning to believe he was one ingredient short of a finished potion. "That's quite enough, Professor."

He simply bent over and continued laughing. Calming down a few moments later, he said, "Thank you. I haven't had a good laugh in... Well, I don't remember when."

Tilting her chin up, she answered, "Causing you to laugh was not my intention. How dare you laugh at me?" She found that becoming angry was not as hard as she thought it would be.

"How dare I? Oh, I suppose I was to just welcome your *unwanted* affections with open arms?" He seemed to be angering as well. "You know, your kind nauseates me to no end. You come into my room, declare having feelings for me, and when you see they are not returned, you get all indignant, as if I should be down on my knees thanking the gods! Well, let me assure you, Miss Granger, there is nothing about you that is attractive to me. I don't like your personality, your looks..."

She held up one hand to stop him and laid the other hand between her breasts, as if to soothe her aching heart. "Stop. Say no more. I get it. A simple 'I don't return your feelings' would have been quite sufficient, sir. There was no need to hurt and humiliate me as well."

"But you are such an easy target."

Hermione's eyes filled, but she refused to let the tears fall. She would not give him any more satisfaction. How could she have been so utterly wrong? She'd honestly thought... Well, she had been wrong; that's all. Taking a deep breath to steady herself and calm her fast beating heart, she said, "I think that's enough target practice for one evening. No worries for you tomorrow. It seems your aim is spot on."

When she reached the door, Hermione turned to Severus. "I do want to say that despite this, I hope you will be all right tomorrow." She turned back and opened the door to walk out. As she was closing it behind her, she heard a soft, "And you as well."

Severus sighed. He'd hated hurting the girl in such a way, but he found it absurd that she would deem to have any feelings *for him*. Even if he did find her attractive...young, intelligent, full of life...things would never work out between the two of them. He just wasn't capable of giving that much of himself. Dreams of a family life had left him years ago. Besides, he was no fool. He knew he would be dead before nightfall the next evening.

Two Years Later

Hermione stood off to the side, by herself, and watched the goings on at the reception with a jaundiced eye. She snorted to herself and looked at the happy couple. Harry Potter and Pansy Parkinson...who would have believed it? Certainly not her.

She remembered how Mr. Parkinson came to the Ministry of Magic and pleaded with Moody to protect his daughter, and Moody had agreed. For a price. He'd wanted Mr. Parkinson to take Professor Snape's place as a spy.

At first, Mr. Parkinson had tried to deny that he could be of service, considering it had not been proven that he was actually a Death Eater, but Moody had not been swayed. In the end, Parkinson had agreed, and Pansy had been sent to Headquarters. And the rest, as they say, was history.

Harry had wanted to have his wedding reception at Headquarters because it was Secret-Kept, and no reporters or photographers would be able to find the place. At Pansy's insistence, he'd set up rooms so that the guests could stay and enjoy themselves without having to worry about getting home. It was a pity, Hermione thought, that she still had three weeks left to take her potion, or she'd get right pissed.

She was hit with an unknown curse by a rogue Death Eater while shopping in Hogsmeade a couple of months before, and Hagrid had taken her directly to Poppy Pomfrey. Thankfully, Poppy had spoken with some of the staff at St. Mungo's, and together, they'd come up with a potion to ward it off...only she had to take it for three months. She wasn't allowed any alcohol while taking it, as it would have adverse effects.

She looked around the room and spotted Ginny. Noticing the devastated look on her friend's face, Hermione walked over. "All right?"

As if coming out of a trance, Ginny looked over at Hermione. "Sure. I mean, I have to be, don't I? Harry is not for me. I love him still, but I'll get over it. It's not like we didn't know this was coming. But come on! Pug-faced Parkinson?"

Laughing, Hermione told her, "I know. I was as shocked as you when he'd told me he was seeing her. I almost fainted when he informed me he was going to marry her!" Putting her arms around Ginny, Hermione asked, "Is there anything I can do?"

"How about strangling that cow, Lavender Brown? How do you stand that, Hermione? I mean, Ron continues to go back and forth between the two of you, and you let him. Why?"

Sighing, Hermione looked over to where Ron and Lavender were standing, very close, as he put his arms around her and stroked her hair. Hermione wondered why she was even surprised that Ron had decided to ask Lavender. It was just that she and Ron were Harry's best friends, and she'd just assumed that Ron and she would go together.

But if Hermione were honest, at least with herself, she knew that she had been pushing Ron away. It had been three months since they'd been together intimately, since right before she was cursed, and she knew that was something Ron needed on a regular basis. The passion just wasn't there for her, though, and she was tired of pretending. It was over between them, and it looked as if Ron knew it...and accepted it...too. He wasn't even trying to display any of the discretion that he usually did.

"It's over between us, Gin. We do love each other, but not passionately. It's past time to move on."

"I hate this," Ginny said as she tossed back her drink. "I don't think I'll stay. How about coming back to the Burrow with me? We could get pissed and bash Ron and Harry!"

"No, I can't drink, remember? It's okay, really. We both saw it coming. I think I'll hang out until Harry and Pansy leave, but I understand if you want to go."

"Okay, but if you feel like it later, stop by."

"I may. Thanks, Gin. Come to Hogwarts next week. We'll go to the Three Broomsticks."

"It's a date! See you...they are making toasts! Gotta run!"

Hermione shook her head as her friend made her excuses and left. It was a pity that she and Harry couldn't make a go of things, but the heart wants what it wants, and Harry's heart wanted Pansy Parkinson.

Hermione raised a speculative eyebrow when she saw Draco Malfoy slip out behind Ginny. *Hmm. I wonder what he's up to?*

Suddenly, Hermione had a prickly feeling on the back of her neck and looked up, right into the eyes of Severus Snape. *That's what Harry gets for marrying that girl...a hodgepodge of people who wouldn't normally socialize with each other, and Professor Snape, especially, attending his wedding reception!*

She shivered. It had been a long time, but she still had the occasional erotic dream or three about that man. She could just imagine how he'd be... She decided that a cold drink was definitely in order.

Considering it safe, Hermione headed for the punch bowl. She filled a cup and downed it in one gulp. When that didn't cool her down, she downed another. She sat her cup down and turned to watch the newlyweds. *He really does look so happy. How can I begrudge him that?* Hermione decided right then to make an effort with Pansy Parkinson...Potter...if it killed her.

When the room started spinning, she immediately found a chair and sat. Putting her hands on either side of her head to attempt to stop the spinning, Hermione looked towards the punch bowl. Spotting Dean Thomas, she asked him, "Is that punch alcohol free?"

"Er, no. Why? There aren't any children here!" he told her defensively.

"No, it's not that. I am not supposed to have any alcohol! Damn! I am going to have to lie down."

Stumbling her way across the room, Hermione decided that she'd better not attempt to climb the stairs to her room, which Harry had insisted she keep in case she ever needed it. On impulse, she decided to go lie down in Professor Snape's old room. *Not like he is using it anyway.*

She'd barely made it to the bed when struggled out of her constricting robes and fell down on it. Everything was spinning, and she felt as if she were floating. She snuggled in and smelled a familiar scent. *Ah, looks like another erotic dream tonight... Seeing Snape and having the alcohol must've triggered something.*

Severus Snape stood at the ridiculous reception watching all the ridiculous people there who were pretending to like one another for the evening. He wouldn't have come had it not been for Minerva coming to his home and badgering him. He detested Potter as much as Potter detested him, and he'd be damned if he'd pretend otherwise.

He heard people speculating as to whether or not the Potters' marriage would last. For himself, he could care less. Deciding that the only good thing about being here was the amount of free, and quite decent, liquor, Snape poured himself another. *No doubt Parkinson provided this whisky,* Snape thought gratefully.

He looked around the room, enjoying the slight buzz rattling around his brain. Most of the people would never willingly socialize with him...he knew that. They certainly would never buy his potions. If they only knew that he supplied over half the potions provided in Diagon Alley and Hogsmeade, he was sure they would all brush up on their potion-making skills.

When he spotted Ginevra Weasley, he curled his lip in disgust at the sight: her breaking her heart over Potter. He couldn't understand why a young woman such as she could not see what was right in front of her eyes...which was Draco Malfoy panting after her like a hippogriff in heat. Several steps up from Potter, that was for sure.

His eyes shifted a little to the side when the Weasley chit left and landed on Hermione Granger. Another demon of many from his past. When she raised her head and looked into his eyes, Severus felt a strong punch of unwanted lust. He could hate her alone for the many nights he'd spent thinking of her and her unwanted declaration two years before.

It made him think of what could have been, and that was something he'd never allowed himself to do. *Enough!*

Feeling a slap on his back, Severus turned his attention to the beaming smile of the father of the bride. "Roger."

"Severus. I say! What a charming couple the newlyweds make, eh? I never would have thought, not in a million years, that Potter'd be sniffin' after my Pansy!" He weaved some as he gestured with his drink. "But I can see how he'd be tempted! Good-looking lass, my Pansy is! Wouldn't you agree, Severus?"

Curling his lip, Severus replied, "I wouldn't know. I have never looked at a student in that way." Hermione immediately came to his mind, and he quickly squashed the thought.

"Student?" Roger burst out laughing, slightly embarrassing Severus. "Why, she hasn't been a student for awhile now. Come now, Severus, you can admit it! My Pansy is gorgeous!"

"Mmmm," Severus mumbled noncommittally. He'd always thought the poor girl looked too much like her father to be attractive in any way. Suddenly, Roger exclaimed, "Blimey! They're leaving! We'd better hurry, old chum. I want to see them off."

Severus watched Roger weave his way through the crowd. Shaking his head, he decided to turn in for the night while he only had a buzz. He'd decided not to allow himself to become intoxicated. He didn't want any ill effects when he awoke in the morning.

He went into his old bedroom, glad to see that it was not occupied. He really didn't feel like throwing anyone out. Stripping completely, Severus poured into the bed and let his mind clear and sleep come.

Just as he was drifting, Severus felt someone fall into the bed beside him. *Bloody drunks!* "Excuse me, but this bed is occ..."

"Mmmm, Severus, you smell delicious," Hermione said in a throaty whisper. "I've always loved your scent..." She began unfastening her bra and then slid out of her knickers.

"Miss Granger! What do you think you're doing?" Severus tried to move further away from her, but he was close to the edge as it was. Suddenly, he felt small and sure hands feel their way across his chest.

"So much strength here." She started rubbing from his chest to his arms. "I've often wondered what it would feel like to be held in these arms, to feel all safe and secure...wanted and loved."

He had to stop this. What was she doing to him? If he'd ever wanted anyone more than he wanted her right now, he couldn't remember it. "Miss Granger, you're drunk. Stop this now, please. You don't realize what you're doing..."

She bent her head and lightly licked a nipple. "You taste as I've always imagined...salty and male." She began kissing and licking her way down his torso, moaning with pleasure as she went. *God! This is the most realistic dream I've had yet! This is wonderful.*

Sighing with the pleasure of her dream, Hermione continued. "I want to really taste you, Severus." She bent down and took him into her mouth, sucking a little harder than normal in her haste and pleasure.

"Oh, dear Merlin, woman! I am not made of stone! Unless you want things to continuefully, then I suggest you stop this!"

*Stop? Why is he telling me to stop? This is one dream I hope to never wake up from..*She began tickling his balls as she lightly sucked and nibbled his length. "I don't want to stop. I want you. I've always wanted you."

This was too much. How much was he supposed to take? She was making it perfectly clear that she wanted to be intimate with him, and he could think of no reason right now not to grant her wish. Her hands and mouth were making him quite needy. Deftly flipping her over, Severus kissed her long and hard.

Hermione ran her fingers through his hair, moaning into his mouth. As her need built, she began grinding her hips into his, searching for release. Following her lead, Severus rubbed himself across her opening, lubricating himself with her natural juices. After a few seconds, he entered her swiftly and fully. "Umm, you feel good," he whispered into her ear, grinding as he stroked her.

"Nothing has ever felt better to me." She ran her hand down his back and grabbed his arse, pulling him further into her.

For some reason, that action from Hermione was very erotic to Severus, and he pounded harder into, wanting to please her.

"Yes, yes! Harder... I'm almost... Ahh! Severus, it's coming! I can feel it... Ahh, God!" Hermione screamed as she finished, grinding her hips into his as fast as she could.

Severus stilled as he poured himself into her, and then he kissed her hard and long. He was breathing so heavily that he barely noticed when she drifted off into a deep, sated sleep. Chuckling, he rolled off of her and drifted off himself.

Severus woke four hours later, rested and content. He looked down at the sleeping witch beside him and couldn't stop the grin that came. He didn't want to disturb her, so he gently got out of the bed and Scourgified himself. Then, as an afterthought, he Scourgified her too.

After dressing, he covered her, gently brushing the hair from her face.*Now that the war is over, I wouldn't mind things progressing from here,*he thought. *I will leave the next move up to her. If she comes to me, I will agree to give things a go.*

He shut the door quietly as he left. Hermione never stirred.

Three Months Later

Hermione nervously walked the halls of the Ministry of Magic to Nymphadora Tonks-Lupin's office. She hadn't told Tonks she was stopping by. Hermione only hoped that she would be available. When she got to the Auror's door, Hermione tentatively knocked.

"Yes, come in," came the distracted call from inside the office.

When Hermione opened the door, she watched as Tonks finished writing a report. Clearing her throat, Hermione hesitantly said, "Tonks? Have you got a minute?"

Finally looking up as if suddenly remembering someone was standing there, Tonks laughed. "Sure. What's up, 'Mione? You look sick..."

"I... I need a favor...a *discreet* favor, Tonks."

Eyeing the nervous movements of her friend, Tonks assured her, saying, "Okay, that's no problem, I'm sure. What do you need?"

"Well..." Hermione hesitated. She hated this, but there was nothing else for it. It had to be done, and Tonks was the only person she would trust. Biting her lip, she went on, "Is there any way you can check me for a Memory Charm or a possible *Obliviate*?"

"Yes, there are ways to check for those. I would need to know why. What's going on, Hermione?"

Fighting tears, Hermione took a deep breath and decided to tell her friend. She had to tell someone before she burst. "I'm pregnant, and I have no idea who, when or where."

"WHAT? Are you sure? Ron..."

"No, it's definitely not Ron. I am around three months along, and it's been around six since I've been with Ron. It's just... Tonks, I have no recollection of being with anyone *at all*! The only thing I can think of is that someone has messed with my memory. You'll check for me, won't you, Tonks? Please."

"Of course I will! Are you sure though? Saw a Healer?"

"Yes, Poppy. I thought I had the flu, you see. After so many weeks had gone by and I was still getting sick, I thought I had better get it checked out, you know? And here I am." Suddenly, Hermione burst into tears. "Being pregnant is bad enough, but to not know by whom, or even remember anything about the conception... Tonks, it's horrid!"

"Okay, love, calm yourself. Just sit back, relax, and let me look into your eyes. I promise to look for Mind-Altering Charms only. All right?"

"Yes, that's fine."

After a few moments, Tonks looked at Hermione in confusion. "There's nothing. No Mind-Altering Charms there. This is odd. What will you do?"

"I don't know. I am about to begin my second trimester, so if I am going to do end it, it would have to be soon. I just don't know if that is something I want. I am so confused. If I only knew..."

"Well, who all knows?"

"You and Poppy. That's it. And I don't think she keeps a supply of Abortion Potion on hand."

"So, you're leaning towards ending it?"

"No, I don't think so. I don't know! I just want to have some on hand, you know, if that's what I decide I want to do. Only, I wouldn't want to be seen in public buying that particular potion...you know?"

"Indeed. You know, if it were me, I would go to Snape. He would most likely brew it for you...for a price. And he'd be discreet, I'd wager."

"*Snape?* No, I don't think I could face him." Hermione reddened remembering the last conversation she'd had with her former professor. She didn't think she could face being alone with him again, especially in his home.

"Why?" Tonks had no idea that Hermione had ever had any feelings for the Potions master, much less confessed all to him. "It's not like he would care one way or another, and Hermione, he wouldn't tell anyone. It's an option anyway. Think on it."

Twisting a loose thread on her robe, Hermione looked at Tonks. Sighing, she relented. "You're right; I know that you are. Okay, I am going to go now before I lose my nerve. Thanks, Tonks, for everything. Say hello to Remus for me."

"Will do. And Hermione, if you need anything at all..."

"Right. Thanks. I'll let you know what I decide, when I decide." Hermione left hurriedly, not wanting to chicken out.

Severus was sitting in his library, eating a sandwich, and enjoying a rare novel he'd only acquired the day before when the pounding startled him. "What the hell?" Scowling, he went to the door and threw it open. Standing there on his stoop was none other than Hermione Granger, nervously biting her lip and looking at her feet.

Folding his arms across his chest and looking bored, he asked, "Yes?"

Still refusing to look at him, Hermione asked, "May I come in, Professor?" Even though he was no longer a professor, old habits died hard. He didn't bother to correct her.

Obviously thinking he was going to refuse her entrance to his home, as he'd stood there for a long moment trying to fathom why she'd come to his home, she sighed and began to leave. He said, nearly inaudibly, "You may."

After she was inside and he'd shut the door, he escorted her to his library. "What can I do for you, Miss Granger? After all, it's been several weeks without any contact," he said bitterly.

Her brow furrowed in confusion, and she asked, "Several weeks? I don't understand you, Professor."

"Please, call me Severus, as you had no problems doing so the last time we were together." When she only looked at him, clearly dumbfounded, he asked, "What are you doing here?" He knew he sounded bitter, and the truth of it was that he was bitter. She'd come to him, made him want her, and then he'd never heard another word from her. It was as if the night had never happened. As if it meant nothing at all to her.

Shaking her head to clear it, she looked everywhere but at him. She couldn't face him when she asked for the Abortion Potion, knowing what he would think of her. "I would like to purchase a potion if you'd be agreeable."

"What? You want me to brew a potion for you? That is the last thing I thought you'd say to me." Suddenly he laughed, and Hermione had a strange feeling of déjà vu. "Well, I have to hand it to you, Hermione, you never cease to amaze me. What is it that you need?"

More confused than ever at his outburst, she all but whispered, "I need an Abortion Potion."

Suddenly, Severus stiffened. "Excuse me? You're pregnant? How far along..." He couldn't continue.

"Oh, I am still in my first trimester, so it's safe. I'm only around three months, and..."

"HAVE YOU LOST YOUR BLOODY MIND, YOU TWIT? Do you think I would let you...?"

"Let me? What do you mean 'let me'? I certainly don't need your permission to..."

"Don't need my permission, do you? Well, tell me, how many are there that you could possibly need permission from?"

Hermione laughed, but it was not a joyous sound. "*You're* questioning *my* morals? If I want to end this pregnancy, I will...it's no concern of yours!"

"It most certainly is my concern! I will not allow this!"

Hermione put both of her hands on either side of her face in confusion. Had Severus Snape finally snapped? Was he mad? "You can't stop me. If you won't sell me the potion, I will just buy it somewhere else or brew it myself."

"Just try it, Hermione, and you will face Azkaban. I will not let you murder this baby."

"Oh, my God! What's it to you? Why do you care? And I won't be sent to Azkaban. Women are free to make this choice."

"Not if the father wants the child!"

"How do you know what the father wants? You don't even know who the father is!"

"Have you been with someone else, Hermione?"

"Someone else? I don't understand."

"Who fathered this child? Tell me now!"

"I DON'T KNOW!" Falling to the couch, Hermione buried her face in her hands and started sobbing.

"Have you been with another since me?" he asked calmly.

Jerking her head up, she said, "Since you? What do you mean by that? We haven't... Surely I would remember... When..."

"I am assuming that this baby is mine, and unless you tell me otherwise, I have to say I insist that you have it. Should you not want to keep it, I will take the responsibility."

"But how? When did we?"

Looking at her shocked expression, he asked, "Don't you remember? The Potters' wedding reception? You crawled into my bed and..."

"You *took advantage* of my situation? Knowing how I've felt about you?" She jumped up, astonished. "How could you do that? I was not in the right frame of mind to..."

"I most certainly did not take advantage you or the situation! How dare you! I was in bed when you came crawling in with me, taking off your clothes and practically attacking me."

"Oh, and I suppose you hurt yourself fighting me off."

"No, and why should I have? You wanted me, Granger...at least let's be honest about that. As you've just pointed out, it would seem you have wanted me for quite sometime," he said smugly.

"But... But... I was not in my right frame of mind! Someone, Dean Thomas I think, had spiked the punch, and with that potion I had to take, it addled my brain. I didn't realize..."

"Well, how was I to know that? All I knew was that you climbed into my bed, started taking off your clothes, murmuring my name, and telling my how much you wanted me. How was I to know otherwise? What do you think I am? A mind reader?"

"Yes, actually." Giving in, Hermione folded her arms and laid her head on the arm of the couch. She remembered the dream...what she'd thought had been a dream anyway...she'd had, vividly. "What have I done?" Looking back up, she said, "I swear to you, Pro...um...Severus, I had no idea. I thought I was dreaming again."

"I am aware, now, that you didn't realize what you were doing." He sighed, regretfully. "What concerns me now is: what about our child?"

Looking into the fire because she was suddenly unsure again, Hermione asked, "You... You want us to have the baby?"

"I do, yes. I never thought I'd ever have the chance to..." Not seeming to want to say too much, he looked back at her. "What about you?"

"Well, I wasn't sure because to be honest, I didn't know who...I mean, that is to say...I didn't remember... But now, I think I would like to have it. Actually, I don't think I would have gone through with it anyway. I just wanted to have some there, you know, just in case."

"Yes, I think I understand. I don't know where to go from here, Hermione, or what to do. I do know that I want to know and be a part of this child's life. I think the first step would be getting to know my child's mother."

Smiling, and feeling lighter in the chest, Hermione said, "Yes, that is a very logical step. Should we start with dinner?"

"I'd like that. I'd like that very much."

One Year Later

Severus walked into the nursery, wanting to watch Hermione nurse the baby. He knew she wouldn't nurse much longer. Bending to kiss the baby's head and then his wife's, he greeted, "Hello, love."

Grinning, Hermione said, "Hello yourself. She's almost finished. Would you like to put her down?"

"Yes, I would." Taking his daughter and snuggling her close, Severus looked at his wife. "She looks more like you everyday. I can hardly believe how much she's grown already."

"They grow fast." She felt her chest filling with love as she watched Severus hold the baby, hardly believing that fate had brought them together. She'd loved him for so long it seemed.

"Did I tell you that Ginny found out she's pregnant? She said Draco almost passed out." Hermione laughed at the thought of Draco turning green.

"No, but I hope the baby is just like him."

"Please! I will have it in class in eleven years! You wouldn't wish *that* on me, would you?"

"Nothing you couldn't handle, I'm sure." Severus laid the baby in her crib and then turned to Hermione. Holding out his hand, he told her, "Come, let's take advantage of this quiet time. I've thought of you all day."

Feeling quite content, Hermione took her husband's hand and followed him to their bedroom. Perhaps it was time to let fate take its course again.

Finis

Christy's Notes: This is a response to one of the Potter_Place Fall Prompts! I chose #17. Hermione finds herself pregnant... and has no idea who the father is. She's been in a monogamous relationship with Ron, but he's been off

playing Quidditch for longer than she's been pregnant. Who is the

father, and how did it happen? (Rape isn't a creative option.) I didn't quite follow the last part about Ron, but I hope you like it anyway!

Southern's Notes: I'm happy things worked out for them, though I figured it would. Muahahaha.