

Slow Hands

by expected aberrance

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Chapter 1 of 1

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Be warned: Obsessive!Snape ahead.

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We spies, we slow hands...

There are no words to describe how much I envy my copy of Exanimalis Caligo right now as it lies face up across her torso, the upper corner of the binding just beneath her right breast. Even in sleep she handles the book carefully, one hand splayed delicately over it to prevent its fall from that sacred place. Her small fingers are arranged perfectly; her index finger just grazes the indent of the last letter of the title, her pinky lightly covers the silver script of the author's initials, with the two remaining fingers spaced evenly across the leather of the cover. Her thumb fondles one of the raised ridges of the binding, and her palm curls around the right angle made by the book's top and side. Her other hand is occupied with marking the last page she read, somewhere around the hundred and tenth formula, if my guess is correct, and though I am concerned for the two fingers holding space between the pages, as the book is hardly featherweight, her determination not to let slumber interfere with her thirst for knowledge captivates me; when she wakes, she fully plans on resuming her perusal of the more painful poisons of the wizarding world right where she left off. The display of her passion for what I teach her sparks a pleasure in me entirely inappropriate for its innocence. I have never witnessed a more beautiful sight than the goddess draped over the couch in my sitting room, clutching one of the most advanced texts I own; I believe I am jealous of the piece of furniture as well.

Her head is elevated on top of one of the cushions, her face tipped toward me slightly. The rebellious mass of curls in shades of brown, though less in length than recent years and slightly more tamed because of it, rests pulled over her left shoulder; she must have moved from when she first laid her head down. I watch the slow rise and fall of her breasts, timed with that of the book below them. My gaze slides down her stomach to the edge of her shirt, which bunches up enough to reveal a sliver of pale flesh between it and the top of her slacks. With much effort, I continue my sweet journey of observation over her hips and thighs and what lies between, down past her knees and calves to her feet, which, encased in Muggle footwear bearing the name "Reebok," hang over the edge of the couch to avoid soiling it, though I would not have minded in the least. I do not dare breathe as I draw closer and kneel before the space on the couch between her shoulder and angled head. Slowly, I lean against the sofa, my right hand gripping the cushion by her knees, my left clasping the carved wooden leg, the bottom of the frame hitting me mid-thigh. With utmost care and almost imperceptible movement, I lower my forehead to the cloth surface, almost but not quite touching her, letting my eyes slip shut as I reach out to the form of beauty in front of me with my other senses.

Counting one, counting two...

My reaction to her presence is as shameful as it has been predictable these past few weeks since I killed the pride of my house, and I press my body harder into the couch's frame. I can feel her warmth across the hair-width distance between us, hear the rustle of cloth across skin with each slow breath, the soft double thump of her heartbeat coinciding with the waxing and waning of the heat in my loins. I imagine what it would be like to run my fingers over the rough fabric of the crease in her jeans on the inside of her leg, and my left hand bites into the wood of the post.

My inhalation is deep but still silent as I take in the subtle mix of scents emanating from her body. Almond from a lotion she's used on her skin blends with the hint of vanilla on her hair and the sweetness of the apple that I'd given her earlier on her breath. That she smells edible is a fact I do not miss, and I itch to taste. But this is a task not to be rushed, as there is a very large risk of waking her. I raise my head and open my eyes to begin searching for the spot I will permit myself to touch. The base of her throat is enticing, but the collar of her shirt may impede my enjoyment of it. The memory of her pulse brings my attention to her jugular, and I decide on the hollow just beneath her jaw.

My approach is cautious as I stop breathing, and I close the tiny remaining space with my tongue, settling gently at first on the lightly pulsating skin. The flavor and feel are exquisite; I can't bring myself to move for the first few seconds. I brush across her throat, and the combined sensations of her heartbeat and the texture as my tongue slides over her flesh force me painfully into the hard frame of the couch.

Counting fifty-nine, counting sixty...

The time I've allotted myself is at an end, and I withdraw, composing myself, carving this moment into my memory.

"Miss Granger."

She stirs, but does not yet wake. I repeat her name, raising my voice just enough to draw her out of sleep's embrace, and am rewarded by the welcome in her bright eyes as she looks at me. Her expression soon grows troubled as she realizes where she is, and the welcome is replaced with anxiety.

"I'm so sorry, Professor. I didn't mean--"

I still her with a raised hand and the friendliest smirk I've ever granted anyone.

"No need to apologize, Miss Granger. I forgive you for your creative use of my couch. However, as it happens to be well past curfew, I must insist on escorting you back to your dormitory."

She smiles in return and sits up, dropping the book to her lap. She glances down at it, her hand still keeping the page, and back up to me, and I read the question in her eyes without the aid of Legilimency.

"You may come back tomorrow after class to read that, if you like. We can discuss whatever topics you wish then."

Her eagerness at my response stokes the fire in my belly, threatening my impassive countenance as I guide her out of my quarters. The trip to Gryffindor Tower is comfortably silent save for her when she tripped on a trick stair, necessitating a steadying hand on the arm. I rejoice inwardly at her gratitude and the complete lack of flinching or unease at my touch. I bid her goodnight content with the promise of the morrow and make my way back to my own bed.

I've experienced what was by far the best single minute of my life tonight, and it will banish the cold and loneliness for as long as I hold it in my mind. To Hades with guilt; I will do everything in my power to repeat it.

I hope you liked it enough to read further. Please let me know how I did. Thanks!