

Time Stood Still

by carley9

After a strange encounter one evening, Hermione Granger is sent back in time to straighten the time line of her present.

Prologue

Chapter 1 of 4

After a strange encounter one evening, Hermione Granger is sent back in time to straighten the time line of her present.

Although this is not my first HG/SS fanfiction, this is the one I've gotten the farthest on. I must thank my wonderful beta, Vicky, who was willing to take the time to sort out all of my errors and give pointers where they were needed. If there are any mistakes, they are my own and mine alone.

Prologue

Hermione waited patiently as the potion slowly cooled. It had been a fairly uneventful day in Potions; not even Neville had managed to blow up a cauldron. She leaned slightly over her cauldron to make sure it was still a pale blue colour, as described in the text, as she tucked a stray strand of hair behind her ear. She had read that anything 'organic' interacting with the potion could cause it to blow up. She cursed herself at not having the foresight to at least bring a ribbon to tie her hair back as a few strands fell in her face as she looked over her cauldron.

"Miss Granger, back away from your cauldron. I don't want anything volatile to happen today. Even Mr Longbottom has managed to conduct himself in a manner befitting a proper student. I am sure that if you kept a better eye on your own cauldron, I would not have to needlessly worry about you blowing up the classroom."

Hermione looked up and saw Professor Snape looking at her over the top of the text. She felt heat rising to her cheeks, and she knew it had nothing to do with the fire under her cauldron. It had been like that ever since her eighteenth birthday. Since then, Professor Snape had been almost courteous. She pulled her hair back and sat back down, perusing her notes. She leisurely appeared to look over her crisp, clean penmanship as she waited for her face to cool down.

"Nearly all of you have completed the potion. Those of you who have, please bottle a sample and place it on my desk. Then you are free to go." There was a slight pause before he added, "After you clean up your work area."

Hermione bottled the potion as quickly as she possibly could. As she placed the vial on his desk, she muffled a gasp as Snape covered her hand with his. He gave her a genuine smile as she slowly withdrew her hand from his. She returned to her area and slowly gathered up her supplies. As she left the room, she looked back once and saw that while the smile had disappeared, the look in his eyes had not. It was a look of pure hunger and longing so strong that she could not bear it. She hurried out of her classroom and into her bedroom. Hermione realized that she was shaking when her hands trembled so hard that her books dropped out of her hands and onto her bed. The more she tried to still them, the harder they shook.

Severus took a shaky breath after all of his students had left for the day. He left the labeled vials on his desk in his office and went to his private quarters. The short hallway through a door hidden by a Muggle tapestry in his office had always made it convenient to escape to his quarters after an especially trying day. After giving the password to the portrait standing guard (a painting of a dark-haired woman in a verdant Empire gown), he went directly to his bedroom. He sat on the edge of his bed and placed his head in his hands. He didn't know what to do or how much more he could take. He would be patient as he had always been, but he hoped that everything would all play out

soon.

He went into his private office and grabbed for the firewhiskey and a glass. *'A nip or two of this might make the night go by a little faster,* he thought to himself as he slowly sipped from the glass. He glanced at the clock and was surprised to see that it was nearly dinnertime. He set the empty glass down on the desk and headed toward the Great Hall. When he reached his destination...his frustration slightly alleviated due to a record amount of points taken away from a few first years and a pair of snogging Gryffindors...he stalked through the middle of the hall towards the professors' table and felt her eyes following him. He felt something resembling a smile coming on, but he turned it into a sneer as he passed the head of the Gryffindor table. He quietly took his seat and wondered, *'What ever could possibly possess someone to care for me?'*

"I'm telling you, Ginny, that's exactly what he did this afternoon." Hermione looked around the Great Hall to make sure no one was listening in. She had attempted to explain to Harry and Ron what had happened, but being boys, they had just shrugged it off. "If Harry and Ron hadn't been so preoccupied in finishing their potion, they would have seen it." Maybe the fact that he had known she was the only one who had finished was why he had done what he did. Hermione had been trying to rationalize "the incident" since it had happened, and still she had no answer.

"Are you certain he doesn't have any inkling of your feelings? I mean, you did spend a lot of time in the basement at Grimmauld Place." Ginny thoughtfully chewed on a carrot stick before she asked, "What were you two working on all summer anyway? That is, if it isn't a secret."

Hermione blew a wisp of her hair out of the way and carefully thought it over. It had basically been research, but it had been an intimate situation. She grabbed a slice of bread and answered, "It's not necessarily a secret. What we did was mostly research. If it wasn't for the fact that Dumbledore had been busy all summer, I don't think I would have even been in that basement." She tore the bread into tiny little bits and looked hopelessly down at the plate. "Gin, do you remember the birthday celebration we had here?"

Ginny looked at Hermione's face and realized she was serious. She shrugged and answered, "Yeah, I remember it. We celebrated it the first Hogsmeade weekend." They had been having a good time at Madam Rosemerta's when Professor Snape had shown up. He had sat in a corner the whole time, and when both Harry and Ron had kissed Hermione's cheek, some invisible force had slapped them. The boys had teased Hermione for learning a new spell, but Ginny had seen the look in her eyes, and she knew that Hermione hadn't done it. "Do you think he was the one who did it?"

Hermione nodded her head and stole a glance at the professors' table. Snape was watching her again with that look in his eyes. She quickly turned her head and lowered her voice. "Not only that, but Harry and Ron got detention for stupid things after that." Both she and Ginny had heard about it for every minute after that. For the whole week they had been belittled every time Snape saw them with Hermione; then after that, everything had simply stopped. "Gin, I think he's infatuated with me."

It was Ginny's turn to look toward the professors' table, and she saw Snape rising. "You may get your chance to ask him, Mione, because he's headed this way."

Hermione fixed her eyes to her plate and pretended to be thoroughly engrossed with a Pumpkin Pasty. She didn't look up when she felt him stop behind her. The only real warning she got was Ginny saying, "Good evening, Professor Snape." As she waited for him to answer, she felt butterflies in her stomach start to build. The last time she had been this close to him had been when they were conducting research in the basement of Grimmauld Place. She sincerely hoped he hadn't discovered her crush on him.

Snape had been watching those two with their heads together all evening. If he squinted, he was taken back in time nineteen years. Hermione had been the first to look at him. He could not help the overwhelming feeling of desire for her at that moment, but he kept it hidden as he always had. If he had seemed preoccupied, none of the staff or other students had noticed it. He was simply behaving as he always did. When he deemed it the perfect time, he rose from his seat and slowly stalked to the Gryffindor table, his robes billowing around him. He caught a fleeting glimpse of Ginny Weasley watching him. When he reached the table, he heard Ginny say, "Good evening, Professor Snape."

He answered cordially, "Good evening, Miss Weasley. I am afraid that I need to speak with Miss Granger alone." He placed a hand on Hermione's shoulder and gestured that it was urgent. "Miss Granger, I need to speak with you about the... incident in Potions today." He watched as she reluctantly rose from her seat and saw Ginny whisper words of encouragement. He walked in front of her and led the way to his public office off the Potions classroom. He opened the door for her and motioned for her to sit in a chair in front of his desk. As she did so, he began, "I realize that this is unusually uncharacteristic of me, but I need your solemn vow that what happens in here will not be relayed to the ears of any authority figure or any of your friends." She slowly nodded her head, and he continued, "I can't seem to control myself any longer, and I need to do this before I go completely crazy."

Hermione barely had a chance to catch her breath before Snape's lips covered her own. This was something different from all the other times she had been kissed. There was something... right about the pressure of his lips against hers. She felt his hands gently cover the sides of her head, and she felt... loved and cherished, as if she was something precious to him and he would never let her go. She gave a little sigh, and that seemed to break the spell.

Severus slowly pulled away from her, reluctant to even leave her side, but he went to the other side of his desk and sat in the chair. She looked a little dazed as well as confused, but there was pink tingeing her cheeks. To break the silence, he said, "I plan on writing letters of recommendation to any college you choose to go to. However, I also want to offer you an apprenticeship, but given what just happened..."

"...it would be impossible for you to do so." Hermione bit at her lower lip and began to contemplate their situation. *'I don't even know how to handle this. He should be the adult in this situation, not me,'* she thought as she sank lower in her chair. She covered her face with her hands and began to visibly shake.

Severus stood and went to comfort her. He gently wrapped his arms around her and helped her from the chair. He gently held her and said, "Maybe it is time you returned to your room, Miss Granger." He slowly pulled away from her and calmly told her, "It would be best if, for the next few weeks, you stayed out of trouble. I might be sorely tempted to give you detention, and we don't want your reputation ruined." He led her to the door and firmly pushed her out.

He went to his bedroom, changed into a robe, and settled himself in bed. His erection raged, and he stroked it, thinking of Hermione. He remembered the feel of her lips against his, how warm and willing she had been, even in the face of her professor's advances. He thought back to the time when he had been all too willing to accept her advances, and the private memory of her skin sent him over the edge with the soft whisper of her name echoing in the room.

Hermione tossed and turned all night, unable...and possibly unwilling...to get thoughts of the kiss with Snape out of her mind. She sleepily got out of bed, stretching and yawning the entire while. She put on a robe and headed for the Prefect's bath. If she encountered anyone at this hour, she would be surprised since it was only six o'clock in the morning. She planned on an early breakfast and then maybe some studying in the library, but first a bath. On the way, she remembered vague dreams of his hands slowly moving down her body and slowly arousing her, and she growled at the door of the bathroom when her frustrations were getting to her. She let the water run as she undressed and put her hair up. She sank into the sudsy water and let her muscles relax.

Behind her, the door opened, and she looked up to see who else was up this early in the morning. Snape softly shut the door behind him and slowly made his way to her, making her fully aware of her naked state. She attempted to cover herself, but he just chuckled and kissed her the way he had last night. He softly stroked her face and let his fingers travel lower until they touched the sides of her breasts. She gave a small whimper as his fingers reached to touch...

"Hermione, are you okay?"

Hermione shook herself away from her early morning daydream and asked, "What are you doing here so early, Ginny?" Ginny's hair was up in a fashion like hers, only she was still wearing a pink bathrobe and bunny slippers. Hermione undid her hair and let it fall over her shoulders. She shook it out and looked back at Ginny.

"I should ask you the same thing." Ginny went to the other side of the huge bath and disrobed over there. "I'm up early because I decided to get a head start on the day. However, what I saw coming here this morning wasn't a happy camper."

Hermione washed her hair and grabbed for her wand. After casting a quick drying spell on her hair, she grabbed for her towel and dried off. She put on her clean clothes and said, "I'm going down to breakfast. Are you going to join me?"

Ginny shook her head. "No, I have some thinking to do. If you see Harry, will you tell him not to worry about me? I'll be along shortly."

Hermione exited the bathroom and nearly ran into Professor Dumbledore. "I'm sorry, sir. I was just on my way to breakfast. If you will excuse me..." Hermione turned and headed toward the Great Hall.

"Actually, Miss Granger, I am afraid that I need your assistance in a somewhat delicate matter." He gestured toward his office and added, "It would be easier if we talked about this in my office." He allowed her to go past him and wait at the gargoyle statue. After he uttered the password, she was quiet all the way up to his office. She patiently waited for him at the door, and he opened it for her, unable to contain his mirth at the situation. "Ah, Severus, glad to see you got my missive. I was nearly afraid that I would have to carry this out on my own."

Severus stood facing the fireplace, only looking away when he heard Dumbledore talk to him. He was not as severely dressed as he normally was...wearing only a white linen shirt and black slacks...but he had been practically dragged from his bed in order to come to this meeting. He looked to his left when he heard a feminine voice say, "Good morning, Professor."

Hermione blushed as Severus turned to look at her. She could see the lean muscle of his back through his shirt and realized that this was the least amount of clothes she had ever seen him in. Even when they were in the basement, he had taken to wearing his full set of robes; and in her little fantasy this morning, he had been wearing more clothes than this. She looked away after Severus cleared his throat to get her attention.

There was nothing erotic or even exciting about Hermione Granger dressed in her school uniform, but he felt his pulse quicken at her voice, and then there had been the open appraisal of his body. "Good morning, Miss Granger," he said with a calmness that belied his true feelings. He turned back to the fireplace, his thoughts racing. *'If I am here, and she is here... then we must be...'*

"Exactly, Severus," said Dumbledore as he went through a side room. "I found the final ingredient to that particular potion nearly nineteen years ago, but it wasn't needed until this day. I need both of you to come here." He grabbed a small vial on a chain and handed it to Hermione. "This is a return potion. It will return you to precisely this moment, but first, let us go back into my office."

Hermione went in front of them and sat in one of the chairs by the fireplace; she slowly drummed her fingers on the arms of the chair, waiting for one of them to come and speak to her. She fidgeted in her chair as the professors had a little conference on what exactly to tell her. She placed the chain around her neck and put the vial under her shirt. She heard a small pop as a house-elf popped in, holding a valise.

"Ah! Thank you, Dobby. You may go back to the kitchens now," Dumbledore said as he took the valise from the house-elf. He handed the valise to Hermione and said, "Please hold out your tongue." As soon as she did, he placed three small drops on it. "This is a moment recorded in your mind. The return potion will react to it." He stood and took a vial from Severus. "Once you get where you are going, everything will be explained. Just remember to live the time you have there until you are told to come back." Hermione cautiously took the vial and drained it. She felt light-headed and everything was feeling fuzzy. She passed out on the floor and faded from view.

Dumbledore put a hand on Severus' shoulder and said, "Everything will be fine, lad. She'll come back."

Chapter One

Chapter 2 of 4

First impressions are always the most difficult if you have met the person before...

Chapter One

"I think she's waking up."

"Damn it, James! Let Lily see to her!"

Hermione woke up and began a mental tally of what was going on. After a few minutes...and realizing that the only thing wrong with her was a sore throat and a dry mouth...she sat up and took a look at her surroundings and was not surprised to be in the hospital wing. A younger-looking Madam Pomfrey came through the curtains surrounding her bed and began to shoo out the unwanted visitors. "Just because she is now in Gryffindor doesn't mean that you can all come in here any time you want." As soon as all of them had left, the Matron of the hospital wing closed the curtain behind her, sat on the edge of Hermione's bed, and began running diagnostic spells on her. Pomfrey withdrew the vial that had been hanging around Hermione's neck out of her apron pocket and handed it back to Hermione. "If I were you, dear, I would make sure this was kept in a safe place." She checked her pocket watch and said, "Headmaster Dumbledore will be down in a minute, and he is very interested to know how you came to be in his office."

Hermione stayed sitting when Madam Pomfrey left her area. The curtains had been fully opened...a good sign, Hermione surmised...and she was able to see the entrance to the hospital wing. She swung her legs off the bed and waited for the headmaster. She was not waiting long before he arrived with her misplaced valise and wand. She stood to greet him, but he motioned for her to sit. He closed the curtain around him and cast a Silencing Charm. "I guess introductions are in order. I am Headmaster Dumbledore. This is Hogwarts School of Witchcraft and Wizardry; I found you in my office when you appeared out of thin air. Unfortunately, a student was in my office at the time, but he can be discreet. You will probably meet Severus Snape before too long. Now, please tell me about yourself."

Hermione fiddled with the vial around her neck and licked her lips. "My name is Hermione Granger. I am a seventh-year Gryffindor. If my assumptions are correct, I am nineteen years in the past." She sighed and secretly wondered if this is where Snape's infatuation with her began. She looked up and said, "Your future self sent me here. Obviously, I am supposed to be here."

Dumbledore smiled kindly at her and said, "I had surmised as such. Was there a specific time when you had to go back?"

Hermione bit her lip and shook her head. She could feel tears welling up in her eyes, and she took a steadying breath. She would need to be strong if she was going to get through this. She swallowed and said, "You told me that I would go back when I was told to."

Dumbledore handed her the valise and said, "I took the liberty of going through your things, and I found a letter addressed to me. It explains your appearance as well as when you are to leave." He rose and opened the curtains; he motioned Hermione to follow him, and together they went to the Gryffindor Tower. "Miss Granger, make sure you live life as you are meant to. Forget these students' futures, only think of fitting in."

Hermione stepped into the common room and was nearly tackled as Sirius Black came to a halt in front of her. He ran a hand through his black hair and said, "Nice to see you're not laid up any more. Sirius Black is the name; you can just call me Sirius."

"Just like all of your other girls?"

Hermione looked over to an oversized armchair and saw Lily looking at her curiously over a book. She was dressed in a Muggle shirt and a pair of jeans and made Hermione envious. Lily stood and crossed so she was standing next to Hermione. She held out her hand and said, "I'm Lily Evans. You are to be put in the same room as me since the rest of the dorms are full."

Hermione smiled and shook Lily's hand. "I'm Hermione Granger. I hope you don't mind having a bookworm for a roommate." Hermione followed Lily to a small painting on the other side of the common room. Lily whispered, "Abracadabra," and the painting opened to the side to let her and Hermione in. Hermione was surprised to see that half of the room was already divided for her to put her things in there. She turned to Lily and asked, "How?"

"I had a few hours to prepare for your arrival. Dumbledore also let me know where you came from." Lily took Hermione's luggage from her and added, "Don't worry; your secret is safe with me."

Hermione and Lily both began unshrinking the things that had been packed in the suitcase. Mostly it was clothes and school supplies, but there was also a letter from Snape at the bottom of it. She placed it in the bottom of the trunk that had been provided for her. She would read it later. She turned to Lily and asked, "I thought only Severus Snape and Professor Dumbledore knew about me."

Lily gave a small smile and said, "He probably would not have said anything to me if it had not been for that letter..."

Hermione wrinkled her nose at mention of the letter. This was the second time she had heard of it today, and already she was getting annoyed with it. She slipped into some Muggle clothes and threw her robes over them. She asked, "Since today is Sunday, are there any restrictions about going out of the castle?" When Lily shook her head no, Hermione left the Gryffindor Tower. She wandered the halls until it was dark, missing dinner and not really caring.

By the time she had made her third circuit around the castle, she became aware of someone following her. She waited until she rounded a corner and waited for her follower to come around. When he did, she stuck out her foot and tripped him. Being on the butt end of one of Malfoy's pranks earlier that year had since made her wary of being anywhere alone, even Hogwarts. She pressed her wand against the back of his throat and asked, "Why were you following me?"

Her stalker turned around, and she found herself staring at a much younger version of her Potions professor. Her wand still to his throat, she impatiently asked, "Well? Are you going to tell me, or do I have to hex it out of you?"

"I wanted to watch you," he croaked out. "Will you kindly remove your wand from my windpipe?" When Hermione complied, he sat up and rubbed at his throat. He felt the tears rise in his eyes, but he was not going to cry. He needed to toughen himself up against physical pain if he ever wanted to best Potter and his rag-tag gang.

Hermione looked down at him and smiled. She didn't enjoy his pain, but she was surprised that he wasn't crying. The last time Ron or Harry had snuck up on her, they were both whimpering when she was done. She stooped down to his level and held out her hand. When he looked at it as if he were diseased, Hermione sighed and said, "I want to help you up. I won't hurt you." When he stood up without any help, Hermione...with her hand still stretched out...said, "I'm Hermione Granger, and you are?" When no answer came...unless you count the sneer...Hermione began tapping her toes and said impatiently, "This is where you say, 'My name is Severus Snape; nice to meet you.'"

Severus sneered at her again and began to think she was a bothersome creature. She kept acting as if she was annoyed, even though she was the one who had assaulted him. He was going to reply something snippy when she kissed him. Her lips felt soft and full against his. Her hands were on either side of his head as if to keep him in place. He reached for her hair to keep her where she was because he really did not want to let go.

Hermione didn't know what possessed her to kiss him. It could have been many things, but what it boiled down to is that she wanted some sort of response out of him that was not a sneer. She dropped her hands to his shoulders when his hands tangled in her hair. She parted her lips and licked his bottom lip, eliciting a groan from him. She pulled away a little and said, "The next time I catch you following me, I might actually have to hurt you."

Severus pulled her close and made sure she was looking at him when he spoke to her. He looked down at her lips and said, "Maybe I'll keep all of the other bogeymen away." He tried to lean down for another kiss when Hermione pulled away.

She smiled at him and said, "Until we meet again, Severus." Then she turned and went to the Gryffindor Tower. She was certain that Severus followed her the whole way there.

Hermione met the rest of the gang the next morning. James was nearly as bad as Sirius when it came to girls, but you could really tell he had a thing for Lily. Remus was very quiet, and Hermione didn't even give Peter a second glance.

An arm was casually draped around her shoulders, and Hermione brushed it off as if it was a fly. When Sirius sat down to her right side, she pointedly turned to Lily and asked, "Does he think this is suave? Do all of the other girls swoon over this stuff?"

Lily giggled and said, "Yes, but he mostly goes after the younger girls."

Sirius attempted to pout and said, "Lily, that's not fair. The last three girls were our age."

Lily sighed and said, "That doesn't speak well for your track record." She looked around the table and asked, "Where is James?"

At that moment, James came barreling through the door and skid to a halt where they were all sitting. He sheepishly ran a hand through his hair and smiled at everyone. He sat down next to Sirius and asked, "Are you the new girl?"

Hermione nodded and went back to talking to Lily. She could feel a set of eyes watching her, but she kept her gaze away from the Slytherin table on purpose. She knew if she acknowledged him, she would cause rumors to build before she had even had her first class over. "So, what do we have first?"

Lily smiled and said, "Potions with the Slytherins. You will probably be paired with Severus Snape. He is the only student without a partner."

Hermione rolled her eyes and said, "I am not surprised. I ran into him in the halls last night and..."

"Did he do anything inappropriate, Hermione?" James looked the Slytherin table as he asked his question. He sneered in Severus' direction and said, "If Snivellus gives you any trouble, you just let us know."

"Believe me, boys, I can handle him," Hermione said as she stood up. She looked down at Lily and asked, "Are you ready to go?"

Lily put the last of a piece of toast into her mouth and nodded. She "led" Hermione through the halls to the dungeons where Potions was to be held. Lily stopped short and pulled Hermione to the side before they entered the classroom. "Professor Slughorn plays favorites, so don't be surprised when he constantly calls on me for the answers."

Hermione gave a little snort and said, "It will be a welcome reprieve not to be known as the only student who actually read the text the night before." They entered the room, and Hermione went to the desk Professor Slughorn was sitting at. She cleared her throat and said, "I am the new Gryffindor student. I believe Professor Dumbledore told you that I need to borrow a text until my books arrive."

The professor did not say anything as he handed her a battered text. When he looked at up again, he looked past her and asked, "Miss Evans, who are the students without a partner?"

Lily promptly replied, "Only Severus Snape, sir."

Slughorn looked back at Hermione and said, "Severus Snape will be your partner. If you have any objections, take it up with the headmaster."

Hermione bowed her head in mock meekness and said, "I have no objections, Professor." She turned away and was not surprised to see a few Slytherins snickering behind her back. She glanced at them with a raised eyebrow. She looked up at Lily and was not surprised to see James attempting to sit beside her. She walked up to a desk situated in front center of the classroom. She sat in the chair on the left hand side of the lab table and glanced out of the corner of her eye.

Severus glared at her and said, "Why ever are you sitting at my table? If you had not noticed, I do not have a lab partner."

Hermione turned in her chair so she was looking straight at him. She very calmly pulled a ribbon out of the pocket of her robes and tied her hair back. She then spoke softly, "Professor Slughorn has assigned you a lab partner. You will soon find that I am proficient at making potions."

Severus sneered at her and said, "You had better be or I will make you miserable here."

Hermione gave a grin that would have scared anyone who knew what it meant; Hermione Granger was never one who backed down from a challenge. "Fine, I highly doubt you could make my situation any worse than it is now. Besides," she lowered her voice, "I enjoyed our encounter last night, and I would like to repeat it again." Hermione turned her gaze to the front of the room with a satisfied smirk on her face. She might enjoy tormenting Severus Snape.

Severus felt annoyed by this girl. If it were not for the fact that the headmaster told him not to say anything, he would have told any and every one where she came from. It did not help that she seemed to have a desire to torture him. Maybe she had a personal vendetta against him; in the same vein, she didn't seem as malicious as Black and Potter. For the first time in memory, Severus Snape actually had to concentrate to complete the potion. "I hope you don't make it a habit to chop your rose petals in diagonal strips."

Hermione happily kept slicing her petals in a diagonal direction. She smiled at him and said, "I have found that slicing them in a diagonal direction has a tendency to yield more of the oils needed for this type of potion. Besides, my old professor recommended it." She glanced at his deft hands crushing pearls to a fine powder. She smiled slightly to herself and asked, "Why does Professor Slughorn have us making a beauty salve? I was under the impression that this was work better suited for fourth years."

Severus slowly added the crushed pearls to the cauldron and said, "I have to agree, but Slughorn is under the impression that most of the students only have the rudiments learned." He glanced up where James and Sirius were sitting and shook his head. He looked back at Hermione and saw a smile tugging at the corner of her lips. "What do you find so funny?"

Hermione added her rose petals and slowly began stirring the cauldron. She was only slightly startled when Severus' hand clamped over her own. She looked at him, and she could already to see the beginnings of the longing she saw in his eyes. She whispered to him, "They were afraid that you would hurt me." She gently pulled away from him and sat down. Things would have been far less confusing if her former Potions professor had not kissed her before she left.

At the end of the class, Hermione slowly packed up her things and carefully wrote down the reading for the next class. Severus hesitated as he went past her, and Hermione looked up at him. She asked, "Is there anything you want, Severus?"

He hesitated and looked into her eyes. Watching her expression, he put a hand on hers and said, "If you want to repeat what happened last night, I know of a classroom that isn't used on the second floor. Meet me where we met, and I will show you where it is."

Hermione nervously licked her lips and asked, "Are you sure you want to get involved with a Gryffindor?"

He drew small circles on the back of her hand and said in a silky tone, "At this point, Miss Granger, I would gladly date Potter, but you are by far more attractive than he is."

Hermione withdrew her hand and grabbed her bag. She turned to Severus and said, "Mr. Snape, as tempting as your offer is, I am going to have to refuse." She headed toward the door and stopped when Severus grabbed at her arm and pulled her back.

"Why the hell not?" he sneered at her. He had put himself on the line, and he was burned.

Hermione yanked her arm out of his grasp and said, "Until you can make me feel like I am not some consolation prize, I do not plan on meeting you anywhere." She pivoted again on her heel.

Severus grabbed her arm and swung her around so she was pressed against him. He looked down at her and said, "You are not a prize to be won, Hermione." He captured her lips with his and abruptly let go. Hermione looked confused, and he added, "But that doesn't mean I'm not going to try."

He brushed past her, and Hermione held a trembling hand to her lips. There were certain things that she was uncertain about, but one was for sure; she was going to have Severus Snape on his knees before she went back to her own time.

Chapter 2

Chapter 3 of 4

Some more Potions, and a whiff of lemon

Chapter Two

For the first time in days, Hermione allowed herself to think about all of her friends. There had been several times she wished she could hear the boys argue over Quidditch, just to hear their voices. She also worried about why Dumbledore had brought her here; was she the catalyst of Lily and James finally getting together, or the reason Severus became a Death Eater? Could she stop Pettigrew? What would be the consequence of her coming back in time, then going forward once again?

Above the whirring of her mind, she heard, "Do you have any idea what is going on between those two?"

Hermione looked at Sirius across the common room and then to where Lily and James were sitting. If one did not look too closely, you would think that they were studying,

but to the trained eye of their friends, they were having an argument. She said, "I think Lily is yelling at him because of that sixth year girl he was using to get her attention."

Sirius looked at her and asked, "How did you know about the sixth year?"

She smiled and said, "James told me."

Sirius shook his head and gazed back at the couple. Since Hermione had come, James had been straightening his act up in order to impress Lily. If it had not been for Hermione discreetly pulling James aside after the 'sixth year incident,' he probably would have screwed up even more. "Are you going into Hogsmeade this weekend?"

Hermione nodded. "I got permission from my guardian. I'm looking forward to going shopping." She hadn't expected Dumbledore to let her go, but he had given permission, only after he made an announcement about an informal ball to be held on Christmas. She suspected the old man to be up to something; however...without proof...she had nothing.

She looked at Sirius and saw the gleam in his eye that he saved for his latest conquests. "Sirius, whatever you are thinking, the answer is no."

"Come on, Hermione! I will behave like a perfect gentleman." He held up two fingers together and said, "Scouts honor!"

Hermione laughed at him and said, "No, you will only get in the way. Besides, Lily and I have shopping to do. She has decided to stay for Christmas this year because of the informal ball Dumbledore announced last week, and we are both sorely in need of some dress robes."

"Um, Hermione..."

Hermione looked behind her and saw Remus carrying a bouquet of flowers. She smiled at him and said, "Remus, you really didn't have to do that."

Remus blushed and said, "They're not from me. I found them outside the portrait hole." He handed them to Hermione and sat next to Sirius.

"Are you going to see who they are from?"

Hermione looked at Lily and saw her give a slight nod. Hermione slightly shook her head and looked for the card. In the middle of the bouquet, she found a small card. Written on it was, "You could never be considered a consolation prize. Meet me at the place." Hermione handed the card to Lily and inhaled the heady perfume of the flowers.

Lily flipped over the card and was not surprised to see no signature of any sort. That boy was playing a dangerous game, but the look on Hermione's face puzzled her. She looked torn. Lily scooted away from James, and sat on the floor next to Hermione. She leaned close and asked, "They are from Severus, aren't they?"

Hermione nodded and asked, "Do you think I should see him? He has been behaving." Severus had not made any overt gestures, but he seemed to be sincere in his attempts. He would lightly brush her hand when they were in a crowd or when they were preparing a potion in class.

Lily looked at James when she answered. "If you think you can find happiness with him, go for it." She stood and walked toward James. She talked to him for a little bit and then left the common room.

Hermione smiled when James scampered after her. Sirius draped an arm around her and asked, "So, do we have a date or not?"

Hermione brushed his arm off her and said, "Not." Hermione stood and went to her room. She quickly changed out of her school uniform and into a long skirt and a short-sleeved shirt. She threw her robes over the top of everything and quickly made her way to the hallway where she had assaulted Severus only a few weeks before.

She flattened herself against the wall and slowed her breathing so she would not give away her position. It seemed like a few hours passed while she waited for him, but the most that actually passed was only half an hour. When he passed by Hermione, she grabbed at him and pulled him close. "Looking for me?"

Getting over his shock, Severus grabbed a fistful of her hair and said, "I have been looking for you the past three weeks, Miss Granger. Please tell me you are not teasing me."

Hermione shook her head. She pressed her hands to his chest and slid them upward toward his shoulders. She lightly caressed his face, making sure to touch every inch of it. Lingering on his nose, she asked, "Is the old adage true?"

"What one would that be?" Severus felt a tingle move up his spine as she continued to stroke his nose. He felt himself slowly becoming aroused. She affected him in ways he never thought possible.

"Big nose, big..." Hermione deliberately trailed off as she continued stroking his nose. She moved her hand and tried to pull away, but his hand was still tangled up in her hair.

He pulled her back to him and he pressed up against her body. His arousal was becoming evident; Hermione gave a little sound of surprise. He leaned down and captured her lips with his own. He slowly coaxed her mouth open, allowing him to slip his tongue inside her mouth. He brought his other hand up and began groping at her breast through her robes.

Hermione gave a small moan and laced her arms around his neck. It had never felt like this with Ron. Now, she was really glad that they had broken up. As he pressed into her body more, one of her hands snaked down and lightly touched his erection. He moaned and trembled at her gentle touch. His mouth left hers, and he began a slow trek down her throat. He stilled when he heard someone clearing his throat.

Hermione pulled away and glanced over his shoulder to see Sirius tapping his feet at them. She groaned and placed her face into Severus' shoulder. "Go away, Sirius," she said into Severus' shoulder, "this is none of your damn business."

Severus slowly pulled away from Hermione and took a few steadying breaths. He then turned around and asked, "Why are you poking your nose where it doesn't belong, Black?"

Sirius grabbed Hermione's hand and began to walk away. Hermione stood where she was and said, "Answer his question, Sirius."

Sirius sneered at Severus and said, "I won't have you dirty one of our girls, you damn Slytherin." He dropped Hermione's hand and ran back at Severus, his fist raised.

"There you are, Hermione. I have been looking for you," Lily said as she rounded the corner, a sheepish James in tow. She gave an assessing glance at the group and said, "I don't want any of you to get detention with Filch, so Severus, you go back to your common room, and we will go to ours."

Severus left toward the dungeons where the Slytherin dorms were. He quickly went to his dorm and pulled the curtains around himself. After casting a quick Silencing Charm, he disrobed and lay on his bed. His shaft was pushing against his underwear and he slowly caressed it the way Hermione had been before they were interrupted. He softly moaned her name and imagined what it would be like to thrust inside her. He climaxed and decided to find out what she would feel like.

"Damn it, Sirius! You are not my keeper!" Hermione screamed at him and transfigured the chair he was sitting on into a pincushion.

"Ow!" Since the chair had been a little taller than normal chairs, he had quite a drop. He stood up and rubbed his rear-end. "If I had known that James was coming, I would have looked at the stupid map sooner!" He grabbed for Hermione and forced a kiss on her. She kicked him in the shin and punched him in the stomach.

Hermione sat down on another chair and glared at him. He was rubbing his shin and looking for a place to sit. She suddenly rose and had her wand pressed to his throat. He growled low in his throat, but Hermione didn't move her wand. She looked up into his eyes and said, "If you ever force your attentions on me again, I will be forced to neuter you."

Remus entered the common room and calmly sat in a chair. He looked at the expression in Sirius' eyes and laughed. This was the first time he had ever been bested by a girl. Still snickering, he said, "If I had known you wanted some alone time with Snape, I would not have shown him the map."

Hermione blushed and pulled her wand away from Sirius' throat. She walked to where Remus was sitting and she asked him, "Do you disapprove as well?"

He slowly shook his head. When he heard a protest from Sirius, he added, "It is not my place to judge. If I was to judge, she could have done worse."

Hermione smiled and wrapped him in a loose hug. Remus seemed surprised by her display of affection, and he blushed profusely. Hermione ruffled his hair and turned back to Sirius. She narrowed her eyes and said, "Maybe in time I can trust you enough to be friendly towards you. However, until then, if I hear about Severus being targeted for being with me, you will regret it." She turned and went to her room. She shed her robes and slipped into a nightgown, then lay down and fell asleep.

The next two days were a pain for both Hermione and Severus. Hermione constantly had Sirius hovering over her, and Severus constantly had someone watching him. Friday morning in Potions, Hermione asked, "Are you going to Hogsmeade?"

He shook his head and sighed. "Every time I do go, Potter and Black manage to find a way to humiliate me."

Hermione touched her hand to his and gently smiled at him. "I have an idea; come with me." As he shook his head, Hermione peered into the cauldron and gave it a few brisk stirs. When she resumed her seat, she caught Severus staring at her. She leaned into him and asked, "Do you like what you see?"

Severus nodded and attempted to swallow the lump in his throat. Their last encounter had been lying heavily on his mind. He remembered the way her body fit against his and the way her breast felt in his palm... He groaned and attempted to concentrate on the potion. He cut the heat underneath it and sat back, waiting for it to cool. He leaned into her and asked, "Do I get some sort of incentive to come?"

Hermione got close to his ear and gave it a small lick. She whispered, "I plan on getting some new dress robes for the informal ball. I have yet to find a date..."

Severus felt his cock stir and he turned back to her. He watched the way the light hit her face, and he couldn't help touching her. "The ball is not for another two months. I am sure you will find a date by then."

Hermione growled at him and pulled away. He could be dense when he wanted to be. She checked the potion and ladled it into two separate flasks. Labeling them, she deposited them on Professor Slughorn's desk and gathered her things. She didn't say anything else to Severus as she left.

"What did he do this time?"

Hermione looked up from the book she was reading and looked at Remus. "He who?"

Remus placed another bouquet from Severus on Hermione's lap. "That makes the second one today and the third this week. I know what he did the first time; so what did he do this time?"

Hermione pulled out the card from this set of flowers and read the simple, "I'm sorry." She held the card to her lips and sighed. She turned to Remus and asked, "May I see the map?"

Remus motioned for her to come with him. They went to the boys' dormitory, and Hermione stood outside while Remus grabbed the map. Remus opened it up and saw Severus near the Gryffindor dormitories, and Sirius was sneaking up behind him. He folded the map back up, grabbed Hermione's hand, and led her to the portrait hole. "He's out there. He should just be around the corner."

Hermione stepped out and turned the corner. Severus saw her and grabbed her hand. "Come with me, I need to talk with you in private." When Hermione nodded, he led her to the abandoned classroom. He shut the door behind him and placed a Silencing Charm so no one could hear what was going on in there. He took her to the window and asked, "Will you tell me what I did to make you mad at me?"

She licked her lips and said, "Is it so hard to imagine yourself with me in two months? Believe me, if I did not allow myself believe I could make it with you, I would not have allowed us to get caught in the hall by Sirius." She threw her hands up and walked to a spot farther away from the window. She turned back and said, "I think we are going way too fast anyway. I had only gotten a little farther with the last guy I was with, but it took us months to get there, and we have only known each other a few weeks."

Severus took Hermione into his arms and said, "If I didn't think you were too good for me, I would not have been careless with my words." He found a seat and sat down, pulling her into his lap. He buried his nose into her hair and just breathed in her scent. He could feel the baser part of his nature beginning to stir, but he kept his mind off that. He cleared his throat and asked, "If I take you to this ball, do I get to have you exclusively?"

Hermione giggled at his tone and leaned back against him. She faced him and said, "Well, I did promise Remus a dance. He's the first genuine male friend I have made here, so I felt it would be nice to include him in my plans."

Severus nipped at her neck and said, "I guess I can handle Lupin; as long as it isn't Black or Potter."

Hermione smiled and leaned back. She felt safe here with him, and at this moment, she never wanted to go back. She nuzzled into his shoulder and said, "Don't worry about James. Lily has her own plans for him."

Severus tangled one hand in her hair and softly kneaded her scalp until she gave a purr of pleasure. He pulled the hair away from her neck and slowly left kisses and tiny bites. She shifted in his lap and he turned her face towards his. He slowly kissed her, taking his time to make her want him. When he finally pulled away, she had color in her cheeks and he was fully aroused.

Bringing a hand to his face, she made sympathetic noises and kissed his nose. "You're going to have to fix yourself, aren't you?" She turned so she straddled his lap, and began leaving small kisses on his face.

Severus pulled away with a frustrated groan. "Hermione, you are not helping the situation."

Hermione gave him a wide-mouth smile and said, "I know. I am showing what could happen at the end of the ball."

"At the end of the ball?"

"Yes," Hermione nodded to emphasize her point, "but before then...starting tomorrow...you have to be on your best behavior until then." She put one hand to his face and moved the stray hairs out of the way before she kissed him. She slightly opened her mouth to allow him access. She slid her hands down his torso and moved his robes out of the way. He started to protest, but she recaptured his mouth with her own. She slowly stroked the bulge in the front of his pants.

"Hermione, don't," he cried as he pulled his mouth away. "This wouldn't be fair."

"Then you can get me next time." She dragged his hands to her breasts as she slowly kissed and stroked him. Her nipples drew up to fine points and her breathing became

ragged. "Oh, Severus," she moaned as he tugged at her nipples through her shirt.

"Hermione... you are too good to be true." He slid his hands up her shirt and got skin-to-skin contact. She skillfully stroked him through his pants and he shuddered as he had his climax. He pulled out his wand and said a simple cleaning spell.

Hermione got off his lap and stood before him. "So, are you going to come with me to Hogsmeade tomorrow?"

Severus pulled Hermione toward him and softly kissed her. "After what you just did for me, I will be certain to never leave you alone again." He kissed her one more time and lifted the Silencing Spell. As he opened the door, he saw Sirius barreling around the corner. He held onto Hermione's hand and kept walking toward the Gryffindor dormitory. When they reached the portrait hole, he planted a small, chaste kiss on her lips.

Hermione stood on her tiptoes and tried to make the kiss deeper, but Severus wouldn't let her. She settled back down and asked, "Where should I meet you?"

"Outside the main doors." He caressed her cheek and said, "I will wait for you then."

As he left, Hermione cast an admiring glance at his backside. *'What an adorable tush.'*

"Where were you and Snivellus?"

Hermione gave a startled jump at Sirius' voice behind her. She turned around and said, "It's none of your damn business, Sirius. Do me a favor; go chase someone else."

Sirius watched as she entered the portrait hole. He sniffed and he let out a groan. She had his scent on her. He shook with need and a deeper hatred for Severus Snape. Snape had better treat her right, or he was going to face Sirius Black.

Chapter Three

Chapter 4 of 4

A trip to Hogsmeade and a letter

*I would like to thank my beta **Ashley** for taking the time to look over every chapter for me. Any remaining mistakes are mine.*

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Hermione took care in dressing the next morning. She dressed in a peasant blouse and a long, flowing skirt. She thoroughly brushed her hair and decided to leave it hanging loose. Her textbooks finally arrived that morning and were neatly put away. She turned to Lily and asked, "Are we ready to go?"

Lily nodded and let Hermione exit before her. She saw Remus, James, Peter, and Sirius forming a semi-circle in front of Hermione. Lily sighed and shook her head. She went up to James and asked, "What is going on?"

James looked uneasily from his girlfriend to Hermione and began shuffling his feet. He stopped when Lily leaned into him and pressed herself against him. He felt the heat rising to his cheeks as she boldly rubbed against him. He stuttered out, "W-we are going to escort H-Hermione to the boutique."

Hermione glared at the other three...because it was now evident that James was whipped...and said, "I already have an escort, thank you. Since he is probably already waiting for me, I am going to leave now." Hermione moved toward the doors and was stopped when Sirius closed his hand around her upper arm. She winced at the bruising she knew would appear, and she stomped on his toes, and when he refused to let go, she growled at him.

Sirius was surprised, but he stood firm and said, "You are not going with Snivellus. You have no idea what kind of person he is!" He lowered his voice and said, "Besides, if it is a bed companion you are looking for, I would be more than willing."

Hermione balled up her fist and slammed it into Sirius' nose. As he pulled away, she screamed, "I hope that gives you an attitude adjustment toward women!" She glared at Peter and Remus and turned around, stalking out of the door as she went.

Lily wasn't far behind, with James in tow. When they exited the tower, she kissed him and said, "Now you be good and I will meet you at the Three Broomsticks later." James watched her as she walked away, admiring Lily's figure. Tomorrow, he was going to send an owl to his parents.

Hermione quietly acknowledged Severus' appearance at the main door. As he watched her, he could only think of the night before. The way they had kissed and cuddled in the abandoned classroom. Oh, he was in a sorry state indeed. As he walked a step or two behind her and Lily, he let himself enjoy the scenery. All of the leaves were beginning to turn and the air was turning crisp. He heard a noise behind him and was not surprised to see the Marauders following behind them. He took the few steps necessary to reach Hermione, and he placed an arm around her waist. He was rewarded with an appreciative murmur, and he smiled at her.

Hermione gazed up at him and saw the smile touching his lips. She smiled back at him and let Lily lead them to Madame Francine's Boutique. They entered the doors, and Lily went to where samples were kept. Hefting the heavy book, she sat in a chair and placed it on a small table. Hermione and Severus sat on one side of the table while Lily flipped through it. Since she had already picked something out, she quickly found the page and motioned for Madame Francine to copy that particular pattern.

As Lily was getting fitted, Hermione turned the book around and began leafing through patterns. She placed one of her hands on Severus' knee and asked, "What is your favorite color?"

He nuzzled her ear and looked at the pattern she had stopped at. It had a full, floor length skirt with a generous dip in the front. On Hermione, it would give more than a hint of cleavage, and he didn't want her on display. "Black, but you don't really want that one, do you?"

Hermione made a face at him and asked, "What is wrong with this one?" She touched a color indicator on the pattern and saw the dress in black. She shook her head and said, "Pick another color."

He pulled out his wand and drew a line on her chest where her neckline would fall. He said, "Too much of you would be on display in that gown, and I don't want to share you with anybody." He placed a small peck on her cheek and tapped the dark green indicator. "If you do not like black, I guess this will do."

She smiled up at him and said, "Think of that neckline as an incentive. As soon as Lily is done, it will be my turn, and then we will go where no one else will be."

"Where is that?"

A slow smile emerged, and she said, "My little secret."

"Come on! Only a little bit further," Hermione coaxed Severus as they climbed a hill next to the lake. When Severus made it, she gave him a small kiss and disappeared into a small alcove hidden in the side of the hill. She had held onto his hand, so Severus soon followed.

Severus cast an Illusion Charm over the opening and sat next to Hermione. At first glance, this was not a very big place, but it was larger than it looked. In their efforts, Hermione's blouse had slipped from her shoulder; the smooth creamy surface was beckoning to him as he gently touched her. She jumped a little and he smiled at her. He kissed her shoulder and slowly trailed his way up to her neck as his hands groped her through her blouse.

"Severus, we shouldn't," Hermione panted as he pulled the blouse up and began sucking on one of her nipples. One of his hands wandered up her skirt and began caressing her through her underwear. She moaned and tried to reach for him.

He lifted his mouth from her breast and said, "It's only fair that I return the favor before I commit myself to behaving." He moved so he was lying between her legs, and he rubbed his fly over her area. He moaned and buried his face into her hair, trying to hold himself in check. He had heard the other boys in Slytherin talking, and he knew that if he couldn't please her, he was a failure. He fastened his mouth to hers and swept inside with a silky deftness.

Hermione strained against his swollen member and bucked her hips against his. She grabbed at his hair and threaded it through her fingers. She arched up against him and said, "Please, Sev. O-oh please, Sev."

He ground harder against her and asked, "Is this what you want?" He heard her crying gasp a moment before he had his own orgasm. He lay down beside her and gathered her into his side. "Are you sure you want a two-month break from this?" He softly asked into her hair.

She nodded and nestled into his side. She stared at the dirt wall ahead of them and said, "I don't want to go too fast and have us in a situation we might regret later." She turned so she faced him and continued, "We both know that I don't belong here, in this time. I don't regret any of this now, but how will you feel when I leave?"

He kissed her deeply, not wanting to face the reality of the situation. "I don't know, but I do know that I want you now." He rolled on top of her again and began kissing her, silencing her protests. He rubbed the inside of her thighs and when her legs fell open easily, he knew she was still aroused. He sat up and pulled her into a sitting position as she had been in the night before. He reached into her underwear and found the little bundle of nerves situated in the center of her womanhood. Using his thumb to keep her mind pleasantly clouded, he slipped in a finger.

Hermione arched against him and could feel wave after wave of pleasure shooting through her body. Her hips undulated to the steady rhythm of his finger plunging inside of her, and she gave a small cry as her climax hit her. He wiped his hand on her underwear and kissed her fiercely, as if he would never be able to get enough of her. She pulled away and asked, "Are you aroused again?"

He blushed a little at his member forcibly twitching in his pants. Before he could say anything, Hermione slipped off his lap and had unbuttoned his pants, freeing his hard member. She looked to his nose, then back to his penis, and said, "I guess in your case, the adage is true."

He let out a hiss as her mouth slowly descended on the tip of his penis, licking it in small, careful strokes. He tangled his hands into her hair and would have happily died right then. He nearly lost it when she eagerly took all of him into her mouth; his hands fisted in her hair, and he said, "Take it easy, I don't want to come yet." She pulled away and slowed down, sometimes using her teeth a little to rake down the sides. He groaned and came into her mouth.

She lapped it all up and rose to leave. She helped him up and she looked outside. Most of the students were entering Hogwarts and the sun was setting. She grabbed Severus' hand and led him back toward the castle. She stopped just sort of the entrance and asked, "Do you think you can be on your best behavior for two months?"

He brushed a stray hair away from her face and answered, "I will try." He gave her a light kiss and they entered the castle together. Then they separated and each mentally kicked themselves to agreeing to such a plan.

"Good morning, Miss Granger. I realize that students normally have Sundays off to themselves, but would you come to my office after you are done with your breakfast?"

Hermione felt her fingers nervously twitch under the table and wished she had brought a ring of some sort to play with. She caught the headmaster's gaze and knew what it was about. "Of course, Professor. I do hope I am not in trouble."

Dumbledore gave a small chortle and said, "No, not at all. I just want to check on your progress."

As he left, Hermione gave a small sigh and concentrated on her eggs. This would be the first time she had been in Dumbledore's office since she had come to this time. She shook her head and told herself not to worry. Worst-case scenario, she had to go back tomorrow, but come hell or high water, she was going to let Severus know. She quickly finished her breakfast and was leaving when Sirius, Remus, and James entered the hall. She let an inaudible sigh escape her lips and attempted to brush past them. She jerked back a little when Remus grabbed her hand and said, "We need to talk, Hermione."

Hermione stopped and cast a worried glance at the Slytherin table; Severus hadn't spoken a word to her since they had returned to the castle yesterday, and he didn't appear at breakfast this morning. She turned back to the boys and saw by the hard set of Sirius' jaw that it was serious. She asked, "Can it wait until I get back from Dumbledore's office? He wanted to check on my progress this morning." Remus nodded and let her by. Hermione headed toward the gargoyle and realized that she did not know the password. *'Why did I forget to ask him the password?'* Hermione thought as she stood looking at the statue.

"Lemon drop."

Hermione turned around as the statue began to move and Hermione was surprised to see Severus standing behind her. He didn't look too happy, and she wondered if the other boys had done something to him. She reached out to him, but he stepped back and Hermione's hand touched only air. He brushed past her and started up the staircase to the headmaster's office. Hermione frowned at him and followed him up the staircase. He was acting very strangely, even for Severus.

"Ah, here you are." Dumbledore shut the door behind them and carefully warded it against any one who may be listening. He ushered Severus and Hermione into chairs in front of his desk. He studied the two of them and slowly nodded. Then he turned to Severus and asked, "What is the last thing you remember?"

Severus turned to Hermione and sneered. He looked her up and down and said, "I remember her assaulting me in the hall last night. She tripped me and then threatened to hex me within an inch of my life."

Calmly Dumbledore asked, "What day was yesterday?"

"Sunday, September 30th. I do not see the purpose in being interrogated like this."

Dumbledore looked at Hermione and asked, "Do you understand what I think may have happened?"

Hermione's hands flew to her mouth, and she let out a startled gasp. The past month had been erased from his mind. Everything they had done was all forgotten. She rose angrily from her chair and pushed Severus' chair so he was facing her. She grabbed at his robes and asked, "Do you remember who I am?"

Severus licked his lips nervously and he studied her face. He felt that he knew her, but he couldn't figure out her name. He shook his head and said, "I cannot remember who you are."

She knelt so she was eye-to-eye with him and stroked his hair. She was falling in love with him, and it hurt to know that he had forgotten her because he had been Obliviated. She gently kissed him and turned back to Dumbledore. "I need to go take care of something quickly, Professor. If you do not mind, I will be back in about an hour." As soon as Dumbledore gave his assent, Hermione stormed out of his office, in search of three boys who were beginning to become the bane of her existence.

As she stepped to the portrait hole, she quickly drew her wand and prepared to begin throwing hexes on sight. She would give them all one chance to explain themselves before she would begin doing anything, but she hoped that she would have a chance to use one or two. Remus was sitting quietly in a chair by the fireplace. As soon as he saw her, he leaped up and said, "I can explain, Hermione. I didn't want it to come to that. James and Sirius..."

"Speaking of those two, where are they?"

Remus flashed a worried look at the boys' dormitory and said, "They are hiding up in their rooms. Dumbledore poked his head through and warned them about your mood." As she brushed past him, he asked, "Where are you going?"

She smiled at him and said, "Up to the boys' dormitory." He began to say something when she cut him off by saying, "If you follow me, I'll be forced to hex you, too."

Remus stayed where he was and only jumped a little when he heard a large thump followed by two yelps. Hermione came down a few minutes later, looking supremely satisfied with herself. Remus gulped and asked, "What did you do to them?"

"Nothing more than they deserved. Be sure to tell the two of them that I could have done worse, and I will do so if they Oblivate Severus again." She turned on her heel and headed back towards Dumbledore's office.

After she left, Remus ran to the dormitory and stood in the doorway flabbergasted. After he collected his senses...and his jaw off the ground...he promptly began to laugh his head off. Sirius was covered in a fur that resembled his Animagus form and a set of bunny ears. James had eyes blinking everywhere, and he had antlers growing out of his head. Sirius growled at him, and Remus said, "If I looked as ridiculous as you two do, you would be laughing at me too."

The next morning, Severus was surprised to receive a post-owl at his breakfast. He hastily broke open the seal and hungrily read the neat handwriting before him.

Severus,

In the past month, I have found you to care on some level for me. While I realize that, it is not your fault you have forgotten me. I guess some part of me is too scared to approach you in person, especially after the spectacle last night, but I wanted you to know that I deeply care for you.

You promised to be my date to the Christmas ball, but I do not want you to feel obligated to go with me. If you have decided that it would not be fitting for you to go with me, then I will strive to find another date.

Eternally yours,

Hermione

He spied her across the Great Hall, her head leaned into Lily's, and he felt a rush of something wonderful and indescribable. Lupin came to stand behind her, and he felt jealousy burn in the pit of his stomach as she smiled up at him. He hastily rose and went to the Potions classroom in the dungeon. He felt and saw other people protesting as he passed them, but right at this very moment, he didn't give a damn.

He quietly sat at his desk and remained quiet throughout the class, pointedly ignoring Hermione. She quietly and efficiently copied the notes from the blackboard; and he foolishly watched her. He wanted her with a hunger that surprised and amazed him. He turned to her and pulled her to him, his mouth hungrily searching for hers. She softly melted into him and gave a small laugh. He pulled away and asked, "What is so funny?"

"If I did not know any better, I would have thought that you had faked being Obliviated so you didn't have to act on your best behavior until Christmas." She laughed as he kissed her again and Hermione decided that she could live with this and she would have no regrets.

Author's Notes

I know that they're going a little fast, but it's part of the plot. :)