

What Tangled Webs We Writers Weave

by sshg316

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A shameless plug for Subversa's newest story.

None

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Hermione Granger was in quite a snit. When she had knocked upon sshg316's door, she had been merely curious or so she had told herself but now that the rumours had been confirmed, she had worked herself up into a terrible temper indeed.

"I cannot believe the audacity of that woman! After all I have done for her, given her access to my most private thoughts, to my most cherished memories and this ... *THIS* is how she repays me? How *dare* she! Did you know she even has an icon on her Live Journal that says Severus and Lily are her OTP? Honestly! The nerve of that woman ..."

Hermione continued to rage around the room, gesticulating wildly as she castigated the author who had managed to incite the bushy-haired witch's ire.

sshg316 simply watched patiently, allowing the young witch to burn off the worst of her anger. When Hermione at last fell silent, her breathing strained after her exertion, the older woman stood and walked toward her. "Are you quite done?"

Cinnamon eyes glared at her.

Calmly raising a hand toward the sofa, sshg316 responded, "Please, have a seat and I shall explain Subversa's reasons for writing this story."

Hermione shook her head belligerently, her curls flying about her face. "I do not want to sit and I do not want to hear her reasons. I have learned what I came to learn. I thank you for your time," she said woodenly. She attempted to Disapparate, but nothing happened she remained in sshg316's living room. Brow furrowed, she concentrated, *Destination, determination, deliberation*. Nothing.

Spinning around, she turned to face the other woman. "What have you done? Why can't I leave?"

With a delicate shrug, sshg316 explained, "I made it impossible for you to leave until you have heard me out."

Hermione's eyes widened in shock. "B-but, you can't! You're a Muggle!"

A small smile played about the older woman's lips. "I am the writer I can do whatever I please. Now, take a seat, dearest ... or I shall simply write you doing so."

Gobsmacked by that statement, Hermione walked to the sofa and sat down in a disbelieving daze. Once there, she seemed to recall her indignation and crossed her arms over her chest, her back stiffening and her eyes staring unseeingly at the wall behind sshg316; defiance oozed from her very pores.

The other woman paced in front of her, apparently deep in thought, before she began to speak. "You are very angry with a woman who has given you much happiness with a man whom you love desperately. Why?"

Refusing to look at her, Hermione replied crossly, "She is obviously no longer concerned with *my* happiness if she is writing a story *without* me."

With a knowing look, sshg316 murmured, "No, I don't think that's it. I think there is more to it than that. Are you truly angry at Subversa or is it someone else someone tall, dark, and ... hawkish, perhaps?"

Brown eyes flew to green. "I don't know what you mean. Why should I be angry with Severus?"

As if she were some sort of psychotherapist, sshg316 lowered herself into the oversized chair adjacent to the sofa and cocked her head at the witch. "Why don't *you* tell *me*?"

Worrying her lower lip, Hermione looked everywhere but at the woman beside her. Closing her eyes, tears prickled behind her lids. She knew exactly what sshg316 was getting at, but to utter the words ...

"You might feel better if you talk about it," the other woman whispered as she took Hermione's hand in her own.

That was all it took for the dam to break. Horrified, but unable to restrain herself, Hermione burst into tears. Swiftly, sshg316 moved to the sofa to sit next to her and took the crying witch into her arms. With a maternal touch, she smoothed the wild hair that was threatening to choke her really, fan fiction authors were grossly underestimating just how much hair the witch had; it was everywhere!

After several minutes, Hermione calmed. Asking for a tissue, she sniffed as sshg316 reached for the box of Kleenex on the side table. She dried her tear-stained cheeks and then blew her nose before balling up the used tissue into her fist and raising her head to look at sshg316.

"Do you wish to talk now?" the older woman asked.

With a deep sigh, Hermione rose from the sofa to stand in front of the large windows overlooking a grove of trees. "I love him with everything that is in me. He often goes to Subversa, telling her things about his life just as I do, I suppose. Until now, however, everything he has shared with her, he has shared with me prior to speaking with her. But this ... he has shared with me nothing of his youth nothing of his ... *relationship* with Harry's mum." Tears filled her eyes once more as she turned away from the windows to look at the other woman. "And now he's going to allow her to tell this story, without ever even speaking of it to me first!"

sshg316 nodded sagely. "You're jealous."

Aghast at such a statement, Hermione opened her mouth to deny it but stopped as the other woman cocked an eyebrow in very Snape-like manner.

With an exasperated huff, Hermione snapped her mouth shut and looked away, folding her arms across her chest. "Maybe a little."

"A *little*?" sshg316 asked, her tone amused.

Hermione sneaked a glance at the brown-haired woman before her own mouth quirked into a small smile. "All right. Maybe a *lot*." Resuming her seat on the sofa, she stared out of the window again, the smile fading from her face as she considered the reasons for her jealousy. "It's never bothered me before that he speaks with Subversa. This is different, though. She's going to write him with another woman, a woman that Severus has told me precious little about. I've asked him about his days at Hogwarts, but he has always avoided speaking with me about that time in his life. Why would he talk to her first?"

"That stings a bit, doesn't it?" the other woman said compassionately.

Nodding earnestly, Hermione realised she was about to tell this woman everything. "It hurts that he would exclude me from this *and* that Subversa would write him with someone else. I mean, I knew he had some sort of relationship with Lily Evans, but from what I hear, Subversa is actually going to write them ... *together*, if you get my meaning."

sshg316 nodded her agreement. "I do, and I can confirm that Subversa does indeed plan to write them *together*. But you knew Severus did not come to you untouched, did you not? He has never claimed that you are the only witch to know him in that way."

Whipping her head around to face the other woman, Hermione blurted out, "I know that!" Her face became sullen, her lower lip extending into a pout. "I just don't want to read about it. Really, why can't she just write another nice Severus/Hermione story and be done with it? Even *you* wrote us a very ..."

The other woman swiftly interrupted, looking a bit scandalised. "You can't discuss the exchange story! Not mine and not Subversa's. Shiv5468 and GinnyW would have my hide!" Her green eyes roamed around the room anxiously as if the fearsome moderators were about to jump out from behind a piece of furniture.

Chagrined, Hermione ducked her head sheepishly. "Sorry. Back to the topic at hand, then. Must this story be told? Is there any value to it whatsoever?"

Relieved at the return to a safer topic, sshg316 asked, "Is that a hypothetical question or should I answer you?" Receiving no response, she pushed onward. "Fine. I shall tell you, then. Yes, this story must be told and yes, it has much value. Severus Snape is a very complicated man we all know that. The circumstances of his youth the circumstances that Subversa wishes to write about are what made him into the man he is today the decent, brave, honourable wizard you so adore. The readers deserve to hear his story as painful as it may be to read, it is vital to our understanding of him."

"Fine!" the young witch shouted, startling the other woman. "Fine, but does it have to be this way? Can't Subversa just write him telling *me*, then? That would work, wouldn't it?" Warming to the idea, Hermione smiled. "Yes! That would work. A prologue, perhaps, with us as a couple. He could sit me down to tell me of his past. Perhaps with an epilogue, as well. With that, she could even post it on the archives as an SS/HG!" The young witch appeared quite pleased with this plan and looked at sshg316 expectantly.

A sad smile graced the older woman's lips. "I don't think SS/HG readers would be very happy with such trickery, do you? More importantly, to allow the reader to know ahead of time that he found such love and grace in your arms would take away from the power of the tale, don't you think?"

Pouting once more, Hermione leant against the back of the sofa. "I suppose."

There was silence for a few moments as the witch thought over what sshg316 had said. "Maybe ... maybe she can write just the epilogue showing that all is well in the end?"

sshg316 nodded noncommittally. "Perhaps she will."

Hermione mulled over the conversation once more before heaving a sigh and saying, "All right. I won't put up a fuss. I still don't like it, and Subversa owes me big time for this. She'll have to write a most excellent tale for me when she finishes the Snily."

Lips twitching at the witch's use of the fandom acronym for a story focussed on a Snape/Lily romance, the older woman replied, "I'm sure she will be most willing to accommodate your request, my dear."

Worrying her lower lip between her teeth, Hermione nodded and was about to tell the sshg316 of her acceptance of the situation when the fireplace whooshed to life, the green flames indicating someone was about to Floo into the room.

Shocked, Hermione asked, "You're on the Floo network?"

"I just wrote it, so I suppose I am," sshg316 said with a shrug.

Perhaps not so surprisingly, it was Severus Snape who exited the fireplace, brushing the soot from his black robes. "Madam," he intoned, "forgive my unexpected arrival, but Subversa informed me that Hermione is here."

"She is indeed," she responded, rising to her feet to allow the Potions master to sit beside the woman he loved.

Severus removed his cloak with a dramatic flourish, and then folded the material before handing it to sshg316, his obsidian eyes never once moving away from Hermione's hopeful gaze as he moved to sit beside her.

Feeling a bit self-conscious now, sshg316 backed out of the room, murmuring, "I'll just hang this in the closet, then. Feel free to take all the time you need." Realising that the pair only had eyes for each other, the new author smiled to herself as she stepped into the front hallway, inhaling the masculine scent which clung to the material before hanging the cloak in the hall closet. Sighing wistfully, she sneaked a peek at the couple, her ears straining to hear the conversation.

"Hermione, I apologise for my unthinking behaviour. I never intended to tell Subversa about my past before I told you. I would like to share my story with you now if you are willing to listen." His normally silky tones were raw with emotion. To those who knew him well, he was obviously distraught at the notion that he had inadvertently caused Hermione pain.

Throwing her arms around Severus' neck, Hermione embraced the typically taciturn wizard, peppering his face with kisses as she murmured her acquiescence. Severus quickly caught her lips with his own, relieved that he had not done irreparable damage to their relationship.

Lifting his head, he clasped her to him, her head resting upon his shoulder as he held her tightly to his side. Clearing his throat, he began his tale. "It all began at Hogwarts, when I met a fiery redhead named Lily Evans and eventually, her sister, Petunia ..."

Neither noticed the soft click as sshg316 quietly closed the door behind her, pleased with herself for a job well done. Perhaps Subversa would write a one-shot for *her* in gratitude for fixing the mess with Hermione. With an extra bounce in her step, she skipped up the stairs to consider her own plans for a new SS/HG story.

Ah, the joys of writing!