

All Tied Up

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Love Will Set You Free

Chapter 1 of 1

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AN: *First and foremost, let me thank my wonderful betas amsev and Keladry for working on this for me. Any and all mistakes herein are my own, though.*

Second, this was brought on by a game of Spider Solitaire I was playing. That's the only excuse I have, pitiful though it may be. But, I came up with this phrase, and found I had to follow it:

"The red queen lay trapped beneath the black king, unable to see a way to free herself. The fact that the red king wasn't to be seen did nothing to decrease her discomfort."

This is the result:

Hermione struggled to free her bonds, but nothing came of it except for more chafing. Grimacing at the feeling of the ropes against her raw skin, she gave up and relaxed against the bed. Just as there was no use screaming, there was no use struggling. It would only weaken her. And, in the case of the ropes, possibly maim her.

She huffed a breath, hoping to move the strand of hair that was tickling her nose, but only served to tickle her nose more.

She was not amused.

She only had herself to blame, really. She hadn't had to accept the bargain. Dare, more like. She could have waited until she was sober before doing something as stupid as saying, "Okay then, I WILL!"

Oh, scratch that. If she'd been sober, she would have known how stupid that was and wouldn't have ever uttered it. Ever. No matter how badly she was losing.

Never, ever, ever, she thought to herself, bargain with an ex-boyfriend. Never. Never play cards with him, either.

She didn't want to know if he knew what she was in for. Actually, she did want to know, just so she could use the appropriate-strength hex when she finally got out of this mess. Of course, that was assuming she would get out of this mess.

She assumed that Ron would come and rescue her after a while. After all, he had to know where she was as it was he who had suggested the bet heck, the entire game including the players in the first place. And seeing as the owner of this delightful set-up was obviously not residing here, judging by the breeding dust bunnies, she figured it was safe to assume that she wouldn't be meeting that person. Thank goodness.

Whoever set a front door booby trap of ropes and nudity charms was a person she didn't really want to meet. At least, not like this. Perhaps after a drink and...

She shook her head, realizing she wasn't quite sober yet.

Suddenly, she heard the front door open. Before she had time to wonder what would happen to the newest arrival, there he was on top of her, naked and bound in a very similar manner only facing her.

Getting a good look at the interloper, she suppressed the urge to scream and swore instead. "Oh, for fuck's sake!"

The newcomer raised an eyebrow. Hermione blushed as she realized exactly what she'd said. She blushed even harder when she felt his penis twitch in interest against her thigh.

"It seems a little desperate to trap the front door for an unsuspecting bloke this way, don't you think, *Miss Granger*?"

Her embarrassment having faded a wee bit, her face flushed again, although this time it was more than just mortification.

"I'm sure you know full well that the trap was not mine, *Professor*. In fact, the door isn't mine, either."

"Mm," he hummed, pulling back to get a better look at her. She noticed him peeking down and cleared her throat.

"Excuse me, but don't you think this is a bad time to be checking me out?"

He looked back up at her, a smirk playing at the edges of his lips. "I would say it is a perfect time, Miss Granger. Or, may I call you Hermione now? 'Miss Granger' seems a bit formal considering the circumstances."

Hermione harrumphed but blushed again. Especially when his penis twitched against her thigh once more in increasing interest.

"Well, it hardly seems fair, *Severus*, seeing as I can't check you out in return."

Snape raised his eyebrow again, and his smirk grew a bit larger.

"If that's what you want, I could move to accommodate you," he said, pressing his hips against hers to cantilever his head and chest off of her.

She sucked in a breath and fought the urge to tilt her hips to meet his. Instead of taking the opportunity presented to her, she closed her eyes and gritted her teeth.

Suddenly, the pressure on her hips wasn't there, nor was his weight on her at all. Opening her eyes, she found him raising himself up off of her by his toes and elbows. Despite herself she was impressed.

When he spoke, his tone was no longer teasing, but the cool tone she remembered from school.

"I assure you that I have no intention of molesting you, so you needn't look so appalled."

Hermione looked at him in surprise. She opened her mouth to protest, but closed it again when she realized she hadn't a clue of what to say.

Finally, she relaxed and looked away.

"You are welcome to relax against me. I wouldn't want you to hurt yourself."

"I am not a weakling, Miss Granger," he said, his voice even cooler.

She shot him an exasperated look. "And I wasn't implying that you are. But I do know that the more you struggle against the ropes, the tighter they grip. My wrists are rather raw thanks to moves similar to what you are doing right now."

He glanced at her wrists, and, seeing her skin was indeed raw, winced before slowly lowering himself back down onto her.

Making sure she could see his face, he quirked an eyebrow at her again. "Well, since you invited me so nicely, I'll admit this is a much more comfortable position."

"Mm, high praise indeed," she scoffed.

He snorted, then relaxed even further until his weight was more fully upon her and his head was beside hers.

"So comfortable," he purred into her ear, "I could easily fall asleep."

She tried to turn her head to see him, but only got a face full of greasy hair.

"Don't you dare!" she said as forcefully as her compressed chest would allow her to.

"It's not as if I have anything more interesting to do," he said with a yawn.

Hermione's hair tickled her nose again, giving her an idea.

"Well, I could always give you something to do," she said coquettishly.

Not surprisingly, he raised his head in interest. Or perhaps that was plural.

"I'm listening," he said, looking at her intently.

"Well, you see," she said, batting her eyelashes at him every so slightly, "I have an itch that I just can't reach, and I was wondering if you would scratch it for me."

His smirk was now the smug one she knew from when he was so very sure things were finally going his way. "I suppose I could accommodate you."

She smiled up at him and batted her eyelashes. "Oh, thank you, *Severus*. This hair on my nose has been driving me absolutely batty."

His expression froze for a moment, but then he started smirking again with increased potency.

"And we can't have you batty, can we?"

She shook her head with a small smile, wondering what he was up to now.

When he leaned in very close and brushed her face with his nose as he gently and ever so slowly nudged the offending lock of hair out of the way, she realized her mistake.

His breath was soft and sweet against her skin, and as he caressed her face with his nose, she noticed her skin was thrumming where he'd touched. When he finally

reached the edge of her face, tucking her hair behind her ear with his teeth, she shivered as his breath prickled the skin of her neck.

"Thank you," she whispered, her voice much breathier than she liked. Obviously the breathy quality was just right for him, though, because she felt his lips meet her skin in a soft kiss. More gooseflesh erupted down her neck at his gentle touch, setting her nerves on alert.

She was now very aware of every place their skin met, from their mingled calves and thighs, all the way up to her breasts pressed up against his wiry chest. As he created a trail of light, soft kisses along her jaw, she felt her nerves awaken something else inside her.

Unwittingly, she moaned.

Bypassing her mouth, he kissed his way to her other ear, and murmured enticingly, "We're so good together, Hermione. Won't you ever forgive me?"

And, just like that, the spell was broken. She slumped back against the bed with a sigh, ashamed that she had been straining against him in the first place.

"Was this all your idea, then? Tie me up and seduce me back?"

Severus shook his head, his eyes regretful. "No, I'm afraid the credit for this plan belongs to your Mr. Weasley. He thought the entire thing up."

She felt her shoulders tighten in anger. "I could kill him."

Severus winced. "Am I that repulsive to you?"

"You know very well that you are far from repulsive so don't even try that tack. No, I just wish he'd accept that we're done and don't need his meddling."

Severus cleared his throat quietly, and, if she hadn't been so close to him, she would have missed the tiny flash of... was that guilt?

"Severus?" she asked warningly.

He closed his eyes and rested his head next to hers again, although he kept his body light.

"I asked him."

"What?"

He raised his head back up, looking at her intently. "I miss you, Hermione. You haven't given me a chance to apologize or make it up to you, so I asked your bloody friend for help."

She swallowed hard and felt tears prickling at her damned eyes. "You're the one who threw it all away."

"And if you hadn't been so hotheaded and mistrustful..." He stopped talking and took a deep breath. "I never did sleep with her, you know."

"Whether you did or not isn't the issue, Severus! The fact that you were seriously considering it, to the point of taking her out..."

She stopped talking, too emotional to continue.

He caressed her cheek with his nose, but she pulled away from him. He sighed in defeat.

"It was incredibly stupid, insensitive and cruel of me. I was stupid. But, be fair, Hermione. You hadn't exactly been forthcoming with your feelings! If I had known..."

She turned to look at him with blazing eyes.

"How can you say I wasn't forthcoming with my feelings? I was *sleeping with you* for God's sake!"

"Sex is just that! I had hoped you felt something, but you never said anything, and you never said anything and... and you were so God-damned *playful*, I thought it was just a lark for you!"

She looked at him like he'd slapped her.

"A lark?" Her voice trembled.

He sighed, leaning his forehead against hers. "I didn't mean it like that."

"Yes, you did."

"No, Hermione, I didn't. I don't want to hurt you. I've never wanted to hurt you."

She snorted. "Liar."

He sighed in exasperation. "Since that first kiss, I haven't wanted to hurt you."

They were silent, neither making any move until Severus sighed once more, muttering under his breath, "Fuck it. If I can get help from Weasley, I can do this."

He raised his head up again, and dove down to capture her mouth, not giving her enough time to dodge away if that was her wont. The fact that she moaned into his mouth was all the encouragement he needed.

He brushed her palms with his fingers, knowing how sensitive her hands were. He caressed her calves with his, cursing the limited moves he could make thanks to the damn bindings. He rubbed his chest against hers, and ground his hips into her, eliciting more moans and some equally fervent reactions.

Pulling back slightly, he nibbled her lips and jaw and neck until she was straining against him, gasping her pleasure. When he felt she was at fever pitch, he said, "I've loved you from that first kiss, Hermione. I want to be with you, and I promise that I will never, ever, ever hurt you like that again. If you'll have me, that is."

"You are such a manipulative bastard, Severus," she said as she swiveled her hips, trying to get into position.

"Mm," Severus agreed and moved his hips to subvert her efforts. "Will you?"

She relaxed against the bed with a growl. "Will I what, Severus? Believe you? Give you another chance? Take you back? Be your wife? You need to be more specific."

He leaned in as if to kiss her but stopped just short of her lips.

"Yes."

"No. I'm not letting you get away with that right now. Say exactly what you want, or the answer will be 'no.'"

Severus chuckled, much to her surprise. "Will you, Hermione, believe that I am sorry and will do my damndest to never hurt you again? Will you, Hermione, give me another chance to be your lover and earn your love and trust in return? Will you, Hermione, take me back into your heart, home and body? Will you, Hermione Jane Granger, be my wife?"

At her stunned look, he smirked and added, "Was that specific enough?"

She responded only with a heated, "Kiss me."

He shook his head with a smile. "No. I'm not letting you get away with that right now. Say exactly what you mean, or the answer will be 'no.'"

She growled and glared up at him. "Yes, Severus, I believe you're in earnest. Yes, I'll give you another chance to be my lover and earn my trust. Yes, I'll take you back into my home and body, although you've been a bloody bastard and wouldn't leave my heart. And yes, dammit, I will eventually marry you if you will just *kiss me already!*"

He didn't need to be told a third time. He captured her mouth for another hot and needy kiss that had them both squirming against each other in need. With his hands tied, he couldn't stimulate her as much as he wanted to, but he did manage to tease her nipples with his hair, tickling and brushing them to erect peaks. He managed to shift his body against her till she was once again gasping for breath. He also managed to nudge his head into position at her slick entrance.

"Oh, God, Severus! Please!"

Panting, he murmured into her ear, "And will you marry me right away if I give you what you want?"

Gasping on the verge of an orgasm, Hermione shook her head desperately and cried, "No!"

"Well," he said as he raised his chest up off her, "it was worth a try." And then he slid home.

They groaned in tandem. Even with the first thrust he could feel his scrotum tightening and the shivering beginning. He wanted to slow down, but one look at Hermione, head tilted back and eyes squeezed shut in concentration as she panted quickly and irregularly, and he knew it was all or nothing.

He pulled back and then thrust home again and again, grinding his pelvis against her at the end of each powerful stroke.

Too soon he could feel his orgasm coming, and he started shuddering with the effort of holding back. Hermione gasped underneath him and started chanting something inarticulate, though if he had to guess, it was her favorite mantra of more.

Suddenly, it was too much for him. The feeling of her surrounding him, loving him once again, the sight of her on the cusp of nirvana, and the sounds of her growing pleasure all overwhelmed him in a burst of emotion that tightened his heart and bollocks in tandem.

"I love you, Hermione!" he cried, and promptly lost control. He propped himself up onto his elbows and started pumping into her fervently and desperately, unaware of anything beyond his need to climax.

Dimly he was aware of a wail rising from the woman below him as she started bucking against him, fighting for her own pleasure, but that did nothing but intensify his desire and need to finish. And then, all of a sudden, it crashed upon him, pulling pleasure from every nerve ending in his body as he came into her tight, sweet body.

As he came back to reality, he became aware that she was still bucking and shuddering under him, crying his name in a drawn-out hiss that made him instinctively thrust into her again. Her walls spasmed around his shaft, and he thrust again, ignoring the sensitivity as he watched her come like he'd never seen before. He thrust again and again, getting harder as she keened in pleasure until she collapsed suddenly, out of breath and slightly shaky.

He stayed there watching her in wonder, and smiled as she opened her eyes and started smiling back at him.

Before she could say anything, he dove down to kiss her wanting to show her how much he loved her how much he'd enjoyed being with her again.

"I missed you," he said as he pulled back, looking at her relaxed face and sleepy, mostly-closed eyes.

She snorted, though it was softened with a half-smile. "I could tell." She opened her eyes to look at him and smiled fully. "I missed you, too."

He let out a bark of joyful laughter and nuzzled her neck, bringing his hands up to stroke her breasts. It only took a moment for Hermione to notice that his hands weren't bound anymore. Testing out her arms, she found she was similarly unbound, the ropes having vanished into thin air.

"Severus?"

"Mm?"

"Where are the ropes?"

His hands stilled, and she felt his shoulders tense then slump. Dragging himself up to look at her, he grimaced at her expression.

"They disappeared."

"And why did they disappear?"

"Because I might have said the safe word."

She narrowed her eyes. "And what would this safe word be, precisely?"

He swallowed. "Well, it's more of a phrase, really." At her raised eyebrow he swallowed, but said, "'I love you, Hermione.'"

Her other eyebrow joined her first as her look of hard suspicion shifted into softer surprise.

"'I love you, Hermione'?"

He nodded, preparing for the worst.

"And how long... why... what's going on, Severus?"

A muscle next to his eye twitched, and he decided he might as well roll off of her before she kicked him off.

"It was supposed to be a surprise for you, before... all of that. I was going to trap you down here, and coax you into marrying me."

"Like you just did." Her voice was toneless, and a glance at her found her looking at him inscrutably.

"Yes, although, truth be told, I wasn't planning on proposing today. But since you suggested it, I felt I couldn't pass up the opportunity."

"Uh-huh."

"I haven't lied to you, Hermione. I know how it looks, but you were never in any danger, and I never would have held you against your will. I..." He trailed off, not knowing what else he could say to salvage the situation.

"The safe phrase is, 'I love you, *Hermione*'?" Hermione reiterated, the suspicion back in her voice.

Severus nodded his head. "It's always been you, Hermione. It's why I didn't sleep with her. I couldn't. I found I didn't want to. I didn't. I don't want anyone but you, no matter what."

She continued to look at him inscrutably. "You know that my agreement to your proposal could be considered to be coerced."

He closed his eyes as a fierce weariness overtook him. "I'm not going to hold you to any promises made here. All I wanted was to talk to you."

He felt a hand on his chest and opened his eyes to see Hermione smirking at him. "Well, I was just thinking that it would be a great story to tell the grandkids how you lured me into your trap and then manipulated me into marrying you. Kind of plays you up as the consummate Slytherin, don't you think?"

He held his breath for a split second before saying, "Grandkids?"

"Mm-hm," she replied, curling up next to him, her head on his chest. He stroked her hair out of habit, eliciting a soft hum from her, not unlike a cat's purr. As he lulled her to sleep with that, he smiled.

He'd have to play cards with Weasley more often.