

Exact Calculations

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Written for the 2007 Summer SS/HG gift exchange for FawkesFlames. Based on her prompt: She uses Arithmancy to find her perfect mate, but has a hard time getting him to come to her way of thinking.

Finding the Formula

Chapter 1 of 5

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Chapter 1: Finding the Formula

A/N: Thanks to FawkesFlames who prompted me with this wonderful idea in the first place.

'HA! That's checkmate, Harry! You always walk into that trap! You owe me a box of Chocolate Frogs!' Ron was pumping his fist into the air triumphantly as Harry sat with his head in his hands, staring dejectedly at the chessboard.

He sighed once. 'I can't believe it, mate; you did it again! Why did I let you talk me into a bet?'

Hermione, sitting nearby on the couch near the common room fire, looked up in annoyance at the noise both boys were making.

'Will you two please give it a rest!? Shouldn't you be doing your homework; neither of you have studied for Snape's test tomorrow, have you?' she said in a bossy tone of voice.

Both boys groaned, knowing what was coming. She wouldn't rest until they had finished all of their studying for the night.

'N.E.W.T.s are coming up in only a couple of months! You two have got to get more serious about your studies!' she said in a stern voice.

'It's only four o'clock, Hermione,' Harry said in a whiny voice. 'I promise we will study for Snape's test with you after dinner.'

'I've already studied for Defense class; you will have to study alone, Harry Potter!' she said with a huff as she turned back to her homework.

'What are you working on, then?' Ron asked as he walked towards her to peer over her shoulder. Seeing a parchment full of numbers and complicated-looking equations, he wrinkled his nose in disgust.

'I'm working on my Arithmancy homework,' Hermione said in a pleased voice. Arithmancy was by far her favorite subject, and she was close to being finished.

'Ugh, Hermione, that looks terrible! Why you are taking Arithmancy at N.E.W.T. levels is beyond me! You're mental!' Ron said as he plopped down next to her on the couch.

'Well, Ronald, at least Arithmancy is something I will be able to use. You're the one who attempted to get an O.W.L. in Divination!'

'Well, we all can't storm out of Divination after tossing Trelawney's crystal ball down the stairs, now can we?' Harry piped in, laughing. At that comment, all three members of the Dream Team – as they were officially dubbed by Rita Skeeter since Voldemort's defeat by Harry two months prior ... erupted into laughter, remembering Hermione's legendary exit from Divination in their third year.

'Don't you regret it just a little bit, Hermione, after finding out that prophecies really do exist, that Divination is real?' Harry asked after their laughter had died down a bit.

'Harry, prophecies can't be taught! I looked it up after our fifth year; you either make them or you don't. Think about it, when Trelawney did make a true prophecy, she wasn't even aware! Besides, if I want to know what's going to happen in the future, I will use Arithmancy.'

'You can tell the future using Arithmancy?' Ron asked, suddenly interested.

Hermione rolled her eyes. 'Of course, that's what Arithmancy is. It's a method of Divination by numbers first used by the ancient Greeks' she said, quoting her Arithmancy textbook. 'I can use Arithmancy to calculate percentages and trends of what might happen or how things could possibly happen in the future.'

Ron and Harry were both starting to get that glazed look in their eyes that said they didn't have a clue about what she was saying.

She sighed; sometimes it was so hard to talk to them. 'Listen,' she said, trying to get her point across. 'I can give you an example. Let's take Snape's test tomorrow.' She took out a fresh piece of parchment and started to write on it. She wrote Ronald Bilius Weasley and wrote down numbers under his name. She then did the same with Snape's name, the words Defense Against the Dark Arts, test, and tomorrow's date. Snape had been teaching them wandless magic, so she added some of the spells she was sure they would be tested on. Using the numbers she had come up with, she started to use a series of calculations and equations. Three minutes later, she looked up from her parchment.

'Okay, Ron, it says here that you have an eighty percent chance of passing tomorrow's test.'

'Really? Hey, not bad!' Ron said with a smile on his face.

'Well, it's not completely accurate. I don't know Snape's middle name, and if I knew his birthday, I could probably be more specific,' Hermione said. 'The more information I have to go off of, the more accurate the calculations are.'

'Tobias,' Harry said in a low voice.

Hermione and Ron looked at him blankly. 'What was that, mate?' Ron asked.

'Tobias. Snape's middle name is Tobias,' Harry said.

Hermione raised one of her eyebrows at this while Ron gaped at Harry.

'How do you know Snape's middle name?' the redhead asked incredulously.

'Occlumency lessons our fifth year. It was in one of his memories.... I think it's his father's name,' Harry replied.

Hermione smiled and wrote *Tobias* down on her parchment. She added another series of calculations to the already half full page.

When she looked up at the boys, Ron was saying something about nicknaming the Defense Professor Toby. She couldn't help but giggle at that.

'I wouldn't say anything like that in front of him, Ron. Your chances of passing just went from eighty percent down to sixty percent,' she said with a sympathetic look on her face.

'Bloody Hell, why should I even bother studying?'

'Because, Ronald, you still have a sixty percent chance. Use that to study hard and beat the odds!'

Harry rolled his eyes. 'We will both study after dinner, we promise, Herms. Okay?'

She smiled as his green eyes met her brown ones.

'Well, let's go to dinner now, since you two have managed to completely distract me from my work,' she said as she stuffed her books back into her satchel.

As Hermione sat down at the Gryffindor table between Harry and Ron, she glanced up to the Head Table. Snape sat in his seat frowning down at his plate as the newly appointed Headmistress McGonagall spoke to him excitedly. The DADA professor had changed little since the demise of Voldemort. The only changes being that he had managed to gain a few stones and looked a lot more relaxed in Hermione's eyes. Since her fifth year, she had made it a habit to check on him at every meal. After realizing his role in the fight against Voldemort, Hermione had started checking to make sure he was okay. Even now, when it was all over, she hadn't managed to break that habit, and so she still checked on the dour professor whenever she sat down to a meal. Last year, every time she had glanced up, he had looked more and more haggard and drawn as he drew nearer and nearer to the night he had been forced to kill Dumbledore.

Hermione sighed as she felt a small pang in her heart for the former Headmaster. It was still hard sometimes to believe that she would never again look up at the Head Table and see those blue eyes twinkling at her. At the beginning of their sixth year, Dumbledore had already been dying, so that when Snape had used Avada Kedavra, Dumbledore was already half-dead due to the curse inflicted on his hand that had slowly been spreading throughout his body. Dumbledore's portrait and a Pensieve had been used in the trial to clear Snape of all charges. Since Snape had used Avada Kedavra at Dumbledore's request, he avoided spending any more time in Azkaban. Even Harry had come to terms with the fact that the 'greasy git' was truly on their side.

Hermione was drawn from her thoughts when Lavender and Parvati squeezed into the bench next to her. Her reverie was broken by the two females ordering Harry and Ron to budge over; they needed Hermione for 'girl talk.' Hermione raised her eyebrows at the girls in question; they rarely bothered to try 'girl talk' with Gryffindor's resident bookworm.

'Hermione, Parvati and I couldn't help but overhear what Ron was telling Neville,' Lavender started. Hermione had long before learned to tune most of the boys out, so she had no idea what Lavender was talking about. She waited for an explanation.

'We were wondering,' Parvati started, her voice taking on a slight whining quality. 'Could you use Arithmancy to tell us who our soul mates are?'

Hermione laughed. She should have expected a request as inane as this to come from her former roommates. She took a second to thank the gods that she had the Head Girl's room all to herself this year.

'Arithmancy isn't that specific. I can't figure out something like who your soul mates would be,' Hermione said in an amused voice.

'We could give you a makeover for... like... payment!' Parvati suggested.

'Yeah, we know loads of glamour spells that would be perfect for you!' Lavender piped in, obviously excited about the idea.

Hermione was shaking her head. 'Girls, I don't need payment; it can't be done. All I could do is calculate the chances of you finding your soul mates, and even that would be really inaccurate. The more information you have, the more accurate my calculations would be.'

Lavender pouted and blew out a breath when Hermione said this. She turned to Parvati and said, 'Well, I guess Divination is better.... I knew it. Maybe Professor Trelawney could scry our soul mates in her crystal ball.'

Parvati nodded eagerly, and the two girls left the table to find the professor and divine who their soul mates would be.

Hermione rolled her eyes as the two girls flounced out of the Great Hall.

As Hermione finished her pudding, she thought about what she had told the two girls. Arithmancy was an exact science, but it wasn't specific enough for a number of applications. *I wonder if there is a way to be more specific,* she thought to herself. *Was there a way to alter her calculations to be more accurate?*

If she could change the calculations to come up with a solid number rather than a percentage, perhaps she could use Muggle mathematics to divide that number into the separate components. If she could come up with the separate numbers, she could then match up those numbers with their possible letters and spell the correct answer out. She chewed on her lip, her pudding forgotten as she thought about this. She would come up with a number of possible answers, but it would be more specific than a percentage.

In a flurry of bushy brown curls, Hermione stood up abruptly and made to leave the table. At Harry's questioning glance, she explained that she needed to check something on her homework, and she left the Great Hall, walking as quickly as possible. She wanted to get back to her books so she could test her theory.

When the boys found Hermione, thirty minutes later, she was in the common room surrounded by Arithmancy texts and furiously scribbling notes into a Muggle notebook. While her professors would only ever accept homework on proper parchment, Hermione preferred to take notes on the lined Muggle paper of her childhood.

True to their words, the boys took seats next to her and opened their book bags. They didn't try to speak with her as they recognized the look on her face. She was deep into her research and wouldn't be coming out until she found her solution. Ron sincerely hoped that whatever she was working on wasn't another campaign like the house-elf nonsense of the previous school terms.

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When Hermione finished her notes, the common room was empty. She vaguely remembered the boys calling out a good night to her as they left for their dorm rooms around midnight. Her mouth opened in a wide yawn as she looked around, wondering idly how late it was. She had come up with a viable theory, but would need to test it in the morning; she needed to get some sleep.

The next day was extremely busy for Hermione. Due to the test in Snape's class and her regular class load, it wasn't until after dinner when she had the chance to pull out her notebook again. She re-read the notes she had made the night before; her calculations made sense, and now she just needed to test them. She bit her bottom lip as she tried to decide what she should calculate first in order to test her new theory.

At that moment, Lavender and Parvati entered the common room giggling and whispering, and Hermione smiled widely. They had given her the idea, after all, and it couldn't hurt to know.... She bent down over her notebook once again and set about trying to figure out who her soul mate was.

It took about three hours to calculate all the specifics, but she was almost finished. She had finished the Arithmancy portion and had solid numbers! If her theory was correct, all she had to do was divide the numbers up using Muggle mathematics and she should have the three names most likely to be her soul mate.

As Hermione finished the math and started writing out the letters under each number, she felt the color drain from her face. She had just written the last name down: Severus Snape. She shook her head. It couldn't be him. The other names she had come up with were Stan Shunpike and Oliver Wood. She took a deep breath. It wasn't Professor Snape; that wouldn't make any sense. She thought of Oliver Wood, she remembered him from her first few years at Hogwarts. He wasn't bad. Maybe he was her soul mate. He was a Quidditch player now and quite famous.

Hermione turned to a fresh sheet of paper in her notebook. She could use traditional Arithmancy to calculate the chances each name had at being her soul mate. She started with Oliver Wood; he was the most appealing option after all. It only took a few minutes to complete these calculations, and when she was finished, Hermione looked down at her notebook with a frown. Oliver Wood only had a thirty percent chance of being her soul mate. She shrugged, she had never met Stan Shunpike, but Harry had mentioned that he was 'a decent bloke.' She started his calculations, only to feel her heart sink minutes later when she ended up with a fifteen percent chance.

Her breathing increased a little as she set about doing the calculations on the last name.

Ninety-eight percent chance that Severus Snape was her soul mate!

'No, it can't be!' she said aloud. She quickly tore out the piece of paper and threw it into the fireplace. She hastily grabbed her stuff and fled for the privacy of the Head Girl's room. Once in her room, she flung herself on her bed.

She thought of all the horrible names that Harry and Ron had called Snape at one time: 'the greasy git', 'the bat', 'the vampire'.... The list was a long one.

Add Hermione's Soul Mate to the list, she thought to herself.

Getting the Specifics

Chapter 2 of 5

What will Hermione do, now that she knows who her soul mate is?

Hermione looked down at the almost perfect Defense score she had earned on Snape's test. He was swooping about the classroom, passing out their tests while muttering about a class full of dunderheads. She couldn't believe that this man, this '*black bat*' was her soul mate. She had asked Lavender what the proper definition of a soul mate was within the magical world. Lavender had told her it was '*the one person in the world whom you are destined to find happiness with*'.

Snape was the one person who was supposed to make Hermione happy? It seemed impossible to her.

It had been one week since she had made that discovery, and she was still trying to wrap her mind around the idea. She tried to look on the bright side; if he was her soul mate, there must be something good about him, something about him that would be appealing to her. Otherwise, how could they be destined to make each other happy?

Hermione took out a small handheld Muggle notebook and a quill. As Snape stalked around the classroom, she decided to make a list of everything she knew about him.

Stuff I know:

1 Potions master

2 Always wears black

3 War hero

4 Ex-Death Eater

5 Hates all things Potter

6 Quite intelligent

7 One of the only known brewers of Wolfsbane

8 Tobias is his middle name

9 Mother is Eileen Prince

10 Bloody brilliant

11 He does have a nice voice, and those eyes are killer

12 Goes by 'The Half-Blood Prince'

13 Rations his shampoo?

Stuff I don't know:

1 Familiar? Does he have one?

2 Friends? Any that are not in Azkaban?

3 Family?

4 What doe...

Before Hermione could complete her list of what she didn't know about her soul mate, her notebook was torn out of her hands. She looked up and stared right into the obsidian eyes of said soul mate. She blinked a few times and swallowed audibly.

'Er... Professor Snape...' she started, trying to think of an excuse.

'Miss Granger, I apologize if my lesson is boring you. What in the world could cause a know-it-all like you to get so distracted?' he asked sarcastically as he looked at the small notebook he was now holding.

Hermione started to chew on her bottom lip as she watched his eyes move across the page as he read her list. She held her breath when she saw his eyes widen, and he quickly looked back up at her.

'Detention tonight, Miss Granger, right after dinner. From now on, pay attention in my class!' he said coldly before striding back towards his desk. He still held her notebook.

Severus Snape sneered as he watched his seventh-year Defense class scurry out of the room. It was always the same as soon as he had dismissed the class; it seemed as if the students were in a race to leave his classroom first. It was always amusing to watch, and he held back a chuckle as Longbottom tripped in his haste to leave the room.

As soon as the last student had left, Snape opened his desk drawer and pulled out Miss Granger's notebook.

He read through the list slowly. He wasn't surprised by most of it. He had found lists about him in the past. Usually they consisted of a list of all the 'names' that the students called him behind his back. Once he had found a list, in the possession of the Weasley twins, that had been entitled, '*Top Ten Ways to Annoy Snape*.' The number one way to annoy him was to write a list of 'ways to annoy him' and get caught with it in his class.'

Severus had bitten the inside of his cheek to keep from laughing when he read it. He had only taken twenty points from each boy, secretly enjoying their ironic sense of humor.

He wouldn't have suspected it of Miss Granger; it seemed more like something her idiotic friends would do. During class, when he had seen that she had written a list about him, he had felt a small pang. He had always thought that she at least had respected him.

He had been doubly surprised when he had read the content of the list. He read the numbers ten and eleven again; 'Bloody brilliant' and 'He has a nice voice, and those eyes are killer.'

So, Miss Granger liked his voice and his eyes... that was interesting. He wondered what had prompted her to make out the list in the first place. She had earned an almost perfect score on her test, no reason to be angry with him. He would have to wait until her detention in order to determine her reasons.

Hermione took a deep breath as she stood in front of the door of Snape's office.

At least, she thought to herself, his office wasn't still located in the cold dungeons.

She knocked twice on the door and pushed it open as Snape looked up from his desk and watched her enter.

Once Hermione had taken a seat in front of his desk, Snape opened a drawer and took out her notebook. He looked at her silently for a moment before speaking, his eyes boring into hers.

'Perhaps you would care to explain the meaning of this list, Miss Granger,' he said in a low voice.

'Sir, I don't think you would believe me if I did,' she said nervously.

He raised one of his eyebrows, and she could tell he wouldn't be satisfied with that answer.

She sighed audibly before answering him.

'Sir, do you know anything about Arithmancy?' she asked.

'Miss Granger, I asked you a question,' he said.

'I know, sir, I am trying to explain. Do you know how Arithmancy works?'

He regarded her for a moment before nodding his head.

'Well, I was thinking the other night about altering Arithmancy to make it more accurate, in case someone needed to find a more specific answer, rather than just getting percentages.'

She reached into her book bag and retrieved her other notebook, thinking of showing him her initial calculations.

'See, if I used Muggle mathematics, I could divide the numbers and come up with a few options....'

'Miss Granger, you will make your point now; I don't need to hear about your calculations,' he interrupted her in a curt tone of voice.

Hermione snapped her mouth shut before she could babble about the finer points of Muggle division.

'Professor Snape, I did some calculations and found out that you are my soul mate,' she said in a whisper.

The professor didn't speak for a full minute, and what little color may have been in his face faded completely.

'That is preposterous!' he burst out, startling the young witch after being silent for so long.

'I was bothered by it too, sir. That's why I made a list. I figured if we were going to end up together...'

He interrupted her before she could finish. 'We are not going to end up together, Miss Granger,' he said in a harsh voice. 'Your calculations were wrong.'

She reached towards her notes once more. 'Sir, if you would look at my calculations...'

'Miss Granger, that is enough of this nonsense. You will spend the remainder of your detention grading all of the first-years' essays. They were assigned four feet on the differences between the Asian and the African Manticores. I trust you are up to the task?' he finished as he gazed down his nose at her.

She nodded once, and he indicated a large stack of parchment near the edge of his desk.

She looked at him for a moment more, but he had already turned his attention back to the parchment in front of him. He leaned towards the paper as he wrote furiously in his distinctive, spiky handwriting, obviously having dismissed her from his mind.

She sighed once as she settled at the nearest desk and started reading through the first essay. She knew her calculations were correct. Snape was her soul mate. She didn't like it, but she could accept it. She wasn't going to pass up the opportunity to be with the one person who could make her happy. She gritted her teeth in determination. *Now I just need to convince Professor Snape of the fact.*

Three hours later, Hermione put down her quill and tilted her head side to side, trying to ease the pain that had developed after reading the first twenty essays and persisted through the rest. She now had a much better understanding of why Snape referred to most of his students as dunderheads. Most of the essays she had read were barely legible, some students not even bothering to use a Spell-Check Quill. She stacked the essays into a neat pile and carried it to Snape's desk.

'I'm all finished with these, sir,' she said.

As she leaned forward to hand him the stack of parchments, she couldn't help but look down at the parchment he had been working on all evening. He was working on a potion; she could see some of the ingredients that were commonly used in a number of potion bases. She leaned in to get a closer look, momentarily caught up in the chance to learn something new.

'Very well, Miss Granger, you are excused,' he said, making her flush guiltily and look back up at him. He had raised one eyebrow and was looking at her pointedly.

She stood there for a moment watching him.

'Miss Granger, you are excused. Please return to your dormitory,' he said in an impatient voice.

'Professor, if you would please just look at my calculations you would see...,' she started to say, trying once more to convince him.

'That is enough!' he said in a rough voice, standing up abruptly and towering over her. 'I don't want to hear anything more about this, Miss Granger. I refuse to listen any further about your deluded fantasies!'

Hermione involuntarily took one step back when he had stood so suddenly. She gulped once as her eyes widened at his show of temper.

When she opened her mouth to apologize, he held up his hands.

'Not another word. Out!' he said, pointing to the door.

Hermione gathered her things and fled.

I can't believe I'm destined to be with such a prat!

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Hermione decided to take the rest of the night off from studying. She was at least a week ahead of her classes, and she had more important things to do. She had to plan her future. If Professor Snape was the only person who could make her happy, then she was determined to be happy.

The first thing Hermione did was to re-write her lists. Snape had never returned her notebook, and she needed to compile what she knew about him. In the end, her list of what she didn't know about him was the longer of the two.

Hermione turned to the next page in her notebook. If she and Professor Snape were going to make each other happy for the rest of their lives, she would need to get to know him better. She barely knew anything about the man, and she was sure he knew even less about her.

During detention, he had made it clear that he wouldn't willingly listen to what she had to say about this. She couldn't exactly start hanging around his office, hoping he would talk to her. She chewed on her lower lip as she thought about her recent detention. Grading papers was certainly much better than some of the horrible things Snape had assigned to Harry and Ron when they had detention with him. It really hadn't been that bad, except for when he got mad at the end ... when she tried to show him her notes again.

Her eyes widened, and she smiled.

That's it! she thought to herself. *I'll just get detention again.*

If she got detention enough, he would have to get more comfortable with her. Maybe he would even get used to her help with grading papers. He would start to feel grateful for her help, and maybe he would start opening up with her and she could get to know him. It's perfect!

She smiled to herself as she thought of her plan and decided to get ready for bed. She needed an early night so she could come up with creative ways to get herself landed in detention.

Hermione sat in class, watching as Snape demonstrated how to block an object flying at his head without using his wand. It seemed to Hermione to be a basic Protego spell. He asked various volunteers to launch a teacup at his head, and with a flick of his wrist, the cup was broken at his feet. Hermione sighed; she was waiting for him to pair of the students to work on the Protego on their own. The general chaos that usually occurred during their practical application would provide a perfect cover for the Gryffindor witch to implement her plan.

Finally, Professor Snape called for them to partner up and practice the new spell. Hermione had deliberately taken a seat in the middle of the room, the one closest to the corner where the Slytherins traditionally sat. As Neville positioned himself opposite her, she made sure she was standing close enough to Pansy and Draco as they successfully performed their spells. Neville was breathing hard as he tried to wandlessly lift their glass bowl and launch it towards Hermione.

Hermione quickly lifted her hand and dropped it down while whispering a spell. Draco's trousers fell down as her hand dropped.

A good use of wandless magic! she thought to herself as Draco's face turned red, and the class erupted into laughter when they noticed him standing with his trousers pooled around his ankles.

He was wearing silk boxer shorts in glaring Gryffindor red. He hadn't figured out who had dropped his trousers, so he looked around the class with narrowed eyes as he hastily pulled his pants back up.

Snape tried to call order in the class, but Pansy's trousers went down next. Hermione giggled as the Slytherin girl shrieked and tried to cover up the large 'granny' pants that were holding in her tummy.

Without waiting to see how the class was reacting, Hermione quickly flicked her hand back towards Draco as his trousers dropped again. Hermione smiled as he yelled this time and tried to grab his trousers and take a step towards Pansy at the same time. He tripped, and they ended up as a mass of unclothed tangled limbs on the floor. Hermione could hear Harry and Ron roaring with laughter behind her.

Hermione deliberately crossed her arms and let a self-satisfied smile show on her face. That should be enough for Snape to think she wasn't deliberately trying to give herself away as the culprit.

The laughter died down as Snape approached the two students still tangled in a heap on the floor. He used wandless magic to Levitate Draco off of Pansy. Both Slytherins immediately pulled up their trousers and tried to regain some dignity.

'Who is responsible for this?' Snape asked in a low voice as his eyes scanned the classroom.

Hermione waited a beat and then dropped her arms and started looking up at the ceiling.

Snape stalked towards her and looked down at her menacingly.

'Miss Granger! Are you responsible for this?' he asked.

'Sir? Er...'

'Don't try to lie to me, Miss Granger!'

She was looking around the room as if she would see a means of escape.

'Er... well, yes, sir,' she finally said in a small voice, hanging her head.

'Well, the class know-it-all is playing pranks now. What do you have to say for yourself, Miss Granger?'

Hermione quickly thought about how she could answer that. What would Harry say?

'Well, Professor... I was simply demonstrating some wandless magic and how it could be used for defense. I was able to incapacitate both Draco and Pansy at the same time!' she said, trying to keep her voice innocent.

Hermione thought she could see Snape's left eye twitch in anger and decided to stop pushing him.

'Fifty points from Gryffindor and detention for two weeks, Miss Granger ... including Saturday and Sunday nights. Report back here at seven,' he said in a silky voice as a murmur of complaint came up from the Gryffindors at the large amount of points he was taking.

'Class dismissed. Leave now!' he said sharply as he stalked towards his office.

Making Your Calculations

Chapter 3 of 5

Hermione gets to spend the next two weeks in detention with Snape... Will she manage to make some mishaps ensue?

Professor Snape stormed into his office and slammed the door behind him as the students scurried out of his classroom. He cast a silencing spell, and when he was sure he wasn't in danger of any students overhearing him, he let out a roar of laughter.

It was slightly embarrassing that Miss Granger bested two of his Slytherin students, but he couldn't help but see the humor in the situation. Seeing Draco collide into Pansy and bring them both down into a heap of naked limbs on the floor was one of the funniest things Severus had ever seen.

He also couldn't help but be impressed by the display of wandless magic Miss Granger had displayed. *Merlin, but that girl was powerful!* Most of the students would not go much further than Protego in wandless magic; not every wizard or witch had the capability to do what Miss Granger had done today. Most students were too accustomed to using their wands and rarely got out of the habit.

Wandless magic was basically a form of elemental magic, and not everyone had the power or commitment needed to tap into the elements.

He briefly thought that she would be an excellent test subject for the potion he was researching currently, not that he would ever admit that to her. Perhaps one of her nights of detention could be used by testing his potion.

Severus grimaced and let out a small groan. He had given the girl two weeks of detention. That also meant that he was condemned for two weeks, every night spent with an annoying girl who was deluded into thinking she was his soul mate.

How am I to keep her busy every night for two weeks? How am I to keep her from prattling on every night for two weeks?

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Hermione sat at the Gryffindor table and filled her plate for dinner. She wondered if she would be grading papers again tonight for *Severus*. She had decided that, at least in her own head, she would get used to calling him Severus rather than 'sir' or 'Professor.' After all, they were going to end up together, and she would need to feel comfortable calling him by his first name.

She hid a smile; his name sounded so strange, even in her own head.

"Mione, you were brilliant today in DADA, but it stinks that Snape was so hard on you!" Ron exclaimed, shaking his head. "I'm just glad I don't have to spend the next two weeks with Toby the Bat!"

Harry laughed at Ron's use of his newest nickname for Snape.

"What are you going to do, Hermione?" Neville asked in an awed voice, clearly terrified of the thought of spending every night for two whole weeks with Snape.

"I'll be fine, you guys. I told you, last time all I had to do was grade papers for him. That's not so bad."

She looked into matching expressions of incredulity after saying that; the boys clearly were not convinced.

She gave up trying to convince them that she would be okay and finished her dinner. Snape wouldn't appreciate it if she was late, and it was almost seven.

She hurried to his office and knocked once before hearing an austere 'Enter' from behind the door. She walked into his office and took a seat opposite his desk. Snape was writing notes on what looked to be the same potion he had been working on the other night, and he finished what he was writing before looking up at Hermione.

"Miss Granger, what were you thinking when you pulled that stunt in class today?"

"Well... er... I don't know, sir. It was an impulse of sorts," she said in a hesitant voice.

She hadn't had the foresight to think up a good story and would have to wing it. She inwardly berated herself. She had been so proud when she came up with her plan; after all, she was using Slytherin ways to catch a Slytherin. She just hadn't figured all the angles.

"An impulse?" he said, interrupting her thoughts. "How very Gryffindor of you." The sneer in his voice made Gryffindor sound like the worst insult he could bestow on a person.

"Well, yes, sir.... Er... didn't you think it was even just a little funny?"

He scowled at her. "Miss Granger, Defense class is not for your entertainment and needs to be taken seriously. Now, since you are so fond of displaying your aptitude for wandless magic, you will write an essay for your detention. I want six feet detailing how one would draw magic from each of the four elements. You may start."

After setting her assignment, he looked back down at his parchment and went back to making his notes.

Hermione retrieved some parchment and a quill from her bag and began writing. The essay he assigned was long, but the subject matter would be easy enough for her. Last summer she had started reading everything she could about elemental magic. At the time, she had hoped it would aid in the search for the Horcruxes; Harry had mentioned Dumbledore's use of elemental magic in the cave when they searched for the locket. Harry had been very impressed with the power that Dumbledore had displayed. It had helped them to locate the Horcruxes faster, but she had also learned that she had a natural ability to tap into the elements. The subject had fascinated her, and she had been practicing elemental magic on her own for the last year.

In the end, Hermione used seven feet of parchment for her essay. Once she had gotten started, she couldn't help but cover everything she had researched. Once she finished, she brought the parchment up to Snape's desk.

"Professor, I've finished my essay," she said, holding out the rolled-up parchment.

He looked up at her in surprise; he had expected it would take her at least one more hour. *I'm going to have to think up better detentions for her.*

Her eyes were shining, and it occurred to him that the girl had probably enjoyed it. He held out his hand for the parchment.

"You are dismissed for the evening, Miss Granger, but I expect you back here tomorrow."

"Yes, sir. Of course," she answered. "Er... can I ask you something, sir?"

"If you must, but make it quick," he answered in a voice that implied he was doing her the greatest of favors.

"It's just that elemental magic is really interesting, and I would love to hear what you have to say about it all. Can you tap into the elements, sir? I know not everybody has that ability, but Harry said that Dumbledore could. I read in..."

He interrupted her before she could describe the article she had read in one of her journals.

"I do have the ability, Miss Granger."

"Sir, is there a way to tell if someone has the ability? Because if you could do that..."

'Miss Granger, I answered your question. Now, you are dismissed.'

Hermione sighed; getting him to talk was like pulling teeth.

At least he answered the one question. That could probably be considered progress when dealing with Professor Snape.

'Goodnight, sir,' she said, turning to go.

**

Over the next few days, Hermione and Snape had established a routine of sorts. When she got into detention the next day, he gave her a stack of parchments to grade. She felt a twinge of disappointment at this, hoping that she would get another assignment like her elemental magic essay, but she just took the parchments from him and started grading. After that, she graded essays for each of his first-, second-, and third-year classes. She would walk in the door each evening, and he would point to a stack of parchment, and she would sit and start grading. By the fifth night of detentions, she realized that she wasn't making any progress. She had barely even spoken to Professor Snape since the first detention, except to say, 'good evening, sir' or 'I'm finished, sir,' or, every once in a while, she could get away with some sort of comment about an essay she was grading.

Hardly what she would call progress.

After her detention on Friday night, she went back to her room feeling utterly frustrated. Her first week was almost over, and she hadn't gotten any closer to convincing Severus that they were meant to be together.

She started pacing the length of her room; she needed to think of something. She only had nine days left of her two-week detention period. She briefly considered trying to get detention again, but decided that would be too obvious.

He would probably assign me another two weeks of detention to be served with Filch this time, she thought to herself.

The part of her that was starting to feel just a little desperate considered just flat out trying to seduce the man. She had a vision of herself showing up for detention wearing nothing but a black thong and heels under her school robes. She could just walk in, drop her robes and ask him for a 'close, personal tutoring session.'

Hermione laughed to herself. He probably wouldn't even notice. She could walk in completely starkers, and he would point to a stack of parchment and tell her to hurry up. She sighed. *She needed to come up with a good idea, not rubbish.*

Tomorrow was Saturday, and she was pretty sure he didn't have anymore essays to be graded. Maybe if she could come up with a really good question, something that could start a debate between them... maybe he would talk to her then?

She thought back to the first day of detention. She had done that essay on elemental magic. He had the abilities to draw upon it, and so did she. That was one thing they had in common.

'That could work,' she said aloud to nobody in particular. She grabbed her book bag and headed towards the library. She would need to research more about elemental magic so she could come up with enough conversation to keep Severus interested. If none of this worked, well then, she would go back to her idea of the black thong and heels.

**

Severus took a large sip of coffee as he made his way through the last of his notes on his new potion. He allowed himself a small smile; everything seemed to be in order, and now, all he had to do was start testing the potion. He looked up for a minute and looked around the empty office. He had gotten so used to Miss Granger's presence these last few days that now, when he was finally alone, his office seemed too empty. She had proved herself surprisingly adept at grading the essays for his lower-level classes, and once they had found a routine of sorts, things had been working quiet well. He was grateful for the extra time it freed up now that she was doing his work for him.

He grimaced. Tomorrow he would need to come up with something new. There was no more homework for her to grade this week.

After reading her essay at the beginning of the week, Snape had been tempted to ask her questions about what she had written. She had made a number of insightful observations in her essay, and he was impressed in spite of himself.

He thought back to her display of wandless magic in class. If she continued to develop her skills, she would be a formidable witch. She could also be a great help in the testing of his new potion. He needed someone who had the ability to tap into the elements. He wondered if there was a way to get her help without showing that he needed it.

Snape smirked. He was the head of Slytherin after all.

**

Hermione dressed carefully for her detention. Nobody was expected to wear their uniforms on weekends, so she hoped she could make Severus see her in a different light. She wore a pair of her tightest jeans and a dark v-neck shirt.

Not exactly a black thong, but a little cleavage couldn't hurt, right?

She would just need to make sure she got the opportunity to ask Professor Snape her questions about elemental magic. He had answered that one question before at her first detention after all. If she could just get a conversation started, if she could just convince him to talk with her like an equal, she knew she could make him interested in her as more than just a know-it-all Gryffindor student.

When Hermione entered his office, expecting him to once again be at his desk, she was surprised to see him standing over a steaming cauldron.

He was working on a potion, she thought to herself as she remembered the notes she had seen him taking earlier.

He still was a Potions master, even if he no longer taught the subject.

'Good evening, sir,' she said as she sat down at the work table near his cauldron.

'Miss Granger,' he said without looking up from his work.

'What's that you're working on, Professor? Is it a new potion?' She leaned over to get a better look inside the cauldron.

He scowled at her for a minute and then put down his stirring rod.

'It's not really your business, Miss Granger, but yes, it's a new potion I have been developing.'

She got out of her seat and walked to get a closer look at the cauldron and the ingredients he was using. She leaned over to pick up a half empty vial of some sort of herb. As she leaned over, Snape couldn't help but glance down where her shirt gaped to reveal a small bit of black lace. He glanced away immediately, but felt his eyes drawn

back to that 'V' in the front of her shirt. Part of him missed the standard Hogwarts' uniform and part of him felt eternally grateful for the casual clothes most students adopted on the weekend.

'I don't recognize all of these ingredients. Could you tell me about your potion, sir?'

He was quiet for a minute as he considered her question. She was standing across the cauldron from him, and she gave him an eager look and smiled hopefully. In response, he deepened his scowl.

'I've been working on a potion that will enhance a witch's or wizard's use of elemental magic. That ingredient there that you didn't recognize is called ginseng root.'

Her eyes widened; this was a perfect lead in to all the research she had done the night before. 'I know what ginseng is! My mum used to make me take it every morning with my vitamins. Isn't it supposed to help you focus more or increase brain activity?'

'You are correct, Miss Granger. Growing up as a Muggle seems to have some benefits.'

Hermione couldn't help but smile; she could almost look at what he said as a compliment of sorts.

He is actually speaking with me! she thought. *This is going better than how I had planned it!*

'Perhaps, for the next few detentions, I could help you with your potion? I could maybe even help you test it. I do have ability to tap into elemental magic; you could start testing it right away,' she said, trying to tempt him.

Perfect, Snape thought to himself. *She is doing exactly what I hoped!*

He felt a surge of pride at using such basic Slytherin principals to get her to do what he wanted.

'Okay, Miss Granger, we will try it just for tonight. But, if you do anything wrong or fail to follow my instructions, I will make sure the rest of your detentions are served with Mr. Filch.'

She nodded eagerly. 'I promise to do exactly as you say, sir,' she said, trying to hold back a smug smile.

A/N: This is a short story that will end after four chapters and an epilogue. I want to thank you all for your reviews. I only hope that I fulfill your expectations for the rest of this story!

Coming to a Conclusion

Chapter 4 of 5

Hermione's detention comes to an end.

Snape pulled out his notes and started to look over everything. With Miss Granger's help, he had been able to test his potion a number of times, and it appeared to be a success. A dose of the potion enhanced both her and his abilities by a great deal, and they could do a number of powerful spells without the use of a wand. Snape felt a surge of satisfaction, knowing he had been able to create something like that. Miss Granger had really helped, and he would have to give her credit for her work. Her Muggle knowledge had helped a great deal, and she had come up with the final ingredient for the potion.

She had mentioned how popular green tea was in the Muggle culture right now for its healthy properties, and Snape had tried adding three fresh green tea leaves to the potion. The green tea had acted as a catalyst and had ultimately made the difference. He was hoping that the potion could eventually be used to help students who didn't naturally have the ability to tap into the elements. It could ultimately help students like Longbottom, who lacked a great deal of talent or power.

Snape smiled to himself and checked the time; she would be here for detention soon, and he was surprised to find himself looking forward to it. She had turned out to be a rather pleasant person to be around when she wasn't in class waving her arm furiously and quoting the textbook. She seemed a different person outside of the classroom when she wasn't trying to impress everyone with her knowledge. She was a little more relaxed, and he saw flashes a sarcastic, biting sense of humor that he could appreciate.

He briefly remembered that swatch of black lace showing underneath her v-neck shirt when she had leaned forward over the work table. She had taken to wearing those Muggle clothes every night during detention, claiming that they were easier to work in. He had found he had a new appreciation for those form-fitting Muggle jeans that were so popular with the younger witches and wizards these days. Snape scowled at his line of thought.

She was nothing more than a student, he thought to himself. I am only interested in her skills as a Potions assistant, nothing more!

Now that this potion was in its final stages, he thought about what his next project would be. He was considering trying to improve the Wolfsbane potion and wondered what Miss Granger would say about that. She was, after all, friends with the werewolf Lupin.

Perhaps she will want to work with me on that one as well, he thought to himself.

It would be a much longer project and would take a great deal of research. He took out a fresh sheet of parchment and a quill and started writing down some possibilities, and then he realized what day it was.

Today was Miss Granger's last day of detention.

Snape scowled. He had just started to really enjoy himself, and her detention was coming to an end. *No doubt she was looking forward to going back to spending her evenings with her idiotic friends.*

For a split second, Severus considered giving her another two weeks of detention, but she would probably see through that. He drummed his fingers on the desktop as he thought this through. He could come out and ask her to be his assistant, but according to Minerva, Miss Granger was interested in pursuing a career in Arithmancy, not Potions. Besides, it wouldn't do for him to openly admit that he enjoyed her assistance. He remembered Minerva going on and on about Hermione's desire to get a Mastery

in Arithmancy.

Arithmancy Masters were rare, and it was a difficult subject to grasp for most wizards and witches. Severus had never had much of an interest in the subject. He thought back to her revelation that she had used Arithmancy to discover that they were soul mates.

Could it possibly be true? Could he really be destined to be her soul mate? It wouldn't be entirely unpleasant to spend his time with a beautiful woman who could also keep up with him on an intellectual level.

Snape found himself imagining a number of evenings spent in his sitting room by the fire discussing the latest article in *Ars Alchemia* or in his personal potions lab debating over different ingredients as they experimented together. He was surprised at how appealing it was to think of such things.

Snape shook his head as if to clear it. She was a student. He should not be imagining cozy little scenes in front of his fireplace with a student. He cursed under his breath; he needed to get his head out of the clouds and stop thinking of Herm... Miss Granger in that way. Her detention would be over after tonight, and he would be grateful to be getting his peace and quiet back. He just needed to keep telling himself that.

Snape's reverie was broken by a knock at the door.

'Enter,' he called as he glanced at his clock.

She was predictably right on time. He watched her as she walked up to his desk with a friendly smile on her face. She was wearing those Muggle jeans again, and he could see her hips swaying slightly with each step she took. He found himself repeating the word '*student*' over and over in his head. He quickly looked down at his desk as the witch sat casually in front of his desk.

'Good evening, sir,' she said cheerfully.

'Miss Granger.'

'I don't see any potions supplies. Have you finished the testing?' she asked.

'Yes, the potion is in its final stages, and I don't foresee any problems.'

'What shall I be doing for my detention then, sir?' she asked when it did not look like he would be forthcoming with the information.

Damn! He hadn't come up with anything for her detention! *Think.... What can I assign to her?*

Hermione resisted the instinct to squirm as Professor Snape continued to regard her in silence. She wondered if he was deliberately trying to make her nervous by letting the tension build before answering her question. She finally opened her mouth to say something; it had been a full minute, and she was feeling anxious. Before she could ask him anything, he spoke.

'Miss Granger, I find that I am short on a number of different potions ingredients. You will help me collect them this evening in the Forbidden Forest.'

Brilliant! he thought to himself as her eyes widened. She was probably terrified at the thought of entering the forest at night.

Brilliant! she thought to herself, biting back a wide smile. She and Severus, alone, under the moonlight in the forest.

It was a perfectly romantic thought! Plus, she had never had the chance to help cultivate potions ingredients. It would be fascinating!

Hermione tried to keep up as Snape walked quickly to the front doors of the castle and out towards the forest. He carried a canvas satchel and had given her one to carry as well. She looked up and noted that the sun was descending in the sky and the moon had already risen. Most of the ingredients that he needed were only effective if picked by the light of the moon. They would get those last and start with the least sensitive ingredients.

Snape stopped abruptly, and Hermione bumped into him with a small 'oomph.'

'Miss Granger, do watch where you are going,' he said as he turned to regard her. He was standing rather close, and she had to tilt her chin up to look him in the eye.

'Sorry, Professor, you surprised me.'

He had stopped at the edge of a large clearing in the forest. Hermione peered around him to see that the clearing was full of bushes that were covered in small white flowers. She frowned as she tried to identify the plant.

'Eideweiss,' he said, answering her question in a low voice.

'I've never seen them on their plants before. When we get them in class, they have already been harvested and cut. They look beautiful.'

'They are, of course, very useful in a number of different potions. We will need a large amount of these. If you cut them wrong, they will become useless, so pay attention as I show you,' he said as he moved towards the closest bush.

She followed him around the clearing for over an hour before he was satisfied that he had enough of the small flowers. The forest was dark, and the moon was up by the time he decided to move on to the next plant.

For the next three hours, Hermione followed Snape around the forest as he collected fluxweed, aconite, monkshood, and lovage. The entire time, he kept a running commentary about how to properly pick each plant and what its uses were if picked in the moonlight. Encouraged by his willingness to teach her about each plant, Hermione found it easy to fall back into the routine of questions and debate that had been established earlier in the week.

Hermione was enjoying herself and felt a small pang of dismay when she remembered that this was her last detention with Severus. They had started to get to know each other this week, and she knew she would miss the camaraderie that had been established between them.

Snape looked at his watch and cursed softly under his breath. It was already midnight, and he needed to be getting Miss Granger back to the castle.

'Miss Granger, it is already midnight. We must be getting back,' he said, distracting her from her study of the fluxweed she had just picked.

Her face fell when he said this, and she sighed audibly.

'Yes, sir. Thank you for bringing me out here, sir. It has been quite interesting.'

He shrugged nonchalantly.

'I needed the ingredients, Miss Granger. You have just saved me a good deal of work.'

As he spoke, he had approached her and was leaning over her to heft up the satchel full of ingredients that sat on the ground next to her. Just as he reached for the strap of the bag, she stood abruptly, and her head bumped into his chin. She flinched in surprise, stumbled into him and fell, knocking him to the ground and landing hard on top

of him.

She heard a loud grunt as they landed hard on the ground, her face inches from his.

He blinked a few times to clear his head before he focused on the fact that Hermione was laying on top of him with her mouth only inches away from his.

Hermione felt his breath warm on her face as they lay there without speaking. She didn't know how long they lay there. It was probably just a few seconds, but it felt like an eternity to her. It occurred to her that this was the perfect opportunity.

There they lay, alone near the edge of the forest in the middle of the night, and their mouths were inches away from each other! *want to kiss him!* she thought to herself. Would he hex her if she tried?

She could tell by the scowl that was re-emerging on his face that he was recovering his wits.

'Perhaps I should have asked Miss Tonks to join me,' he muttered in a scathing tone, referring to her clumsiness.

Before he could speak again, Hermione screwed up her courage. She was, despite her Slytherin machinations of late, a Gryffindor at heart, and she would regret it if she didn't take this opportunity. Keeping her eyes focused on his, she closed the distance between their mouths.

Snape couldn't believe it. Somehow the annoying girl had displayed incredible clumsiness and managed to land herself right on top of him. He felt a sharp root jabbing him in his back as he felt the warm weight of the girl on top of him. He blinked a few times, trying to recover his senses after the tumble to the ground. As he recovered his focus, he realized he was looking directly into a pair of amber eyes; Hermione's face was very close to his. He could feel her body pressing against his as she lay on top of him. He felt her breasts pressed up against his chest and her hip bones pressing into his torso. He stifled a groan; her body felt so good.

He felt the beginnings of arousal stir in him at the feel of her soft body lying on top of his. He had to get up now before she felt how hard he was getting. He muttered something sarcastic about how clumsy she was and started to get up.

He was startled into speechlessness when she leaned forward and brushed her lips against his. It was light and chaste as far as kisses went, and she pulled back immediately to look into his eyes. Whatever she saw in his eyes must have encouraged her because within a second, her lips were back on his and she was applying a bit more pressure this time. He held himself stiffly, trying to resist the desire she was awakening in him.

It proved his undoing when her tongue traced his bottom lip and tried to gain entrance into his mouth. He groaned and wrapped his arms around her and slanted his mouth across hers.

Hermione felt the change in Severus immediately. She reveled in the feel of his arms wrapped around her as he kissed her aggressively. He rolled her over and lay on top of her as he continued his assault on her mouth. It was the most erotic experience of her life; rolling around on the forest floor in the moonlight, being thoroughly snogged by her professor. She wanted to curl her toes, and she felt her skin prick up in goose pimples as he lightly sucked on her bottom lip. She whimpered and threaded her fingers through his hair when she felt his hand at the side of her breast.

She would never get enough of this.

It was her whimper that brought Severus back to his senses. What was he doing? He was rolling around in the Forbidden Forest, snogging Hermione Granger. He tore his mouth from hers abruptly. She gasped in surprise and looked up to see her professor hastily getting to his feet. He was brushing his robes of frantically and still breathing hard from their exertions.

'Severus...' she said in a questioning voice.

He looked at her sharply at the use of his given name.

'Miss Granger, we must be getting back. I have kept you out here too late.'

She gasped. Was he going to pretend this hadn't happened?

She hastily got to her feet as he picked up the bag that he had dropped when they fell and started to walk back to the castle.

'Severus, you cannot pretend this didn't happen. We kissed... You kissed me, and you liked it!' she said in a shrill voice as she tried to keep up with his long strides.

'Miss Granger, you may call me Professor Snape; I never gave you leave to use my first name'

'Oh, no, you don't!' she yelled. 'After snogging me the way you did, I will call you what I damn well please!'

She stopped walking and stomped her foot in frustration. She thought she had finally gotten somewhere, and now he was acting like it hadn't even happened.

He stopped and turned towards her.

'Miss Granger...'

'My name is Hermione, and I want you to use it.'

He took a deep breath.

'Hermione. We can't.... I shouldn't have let that happen. You are my student.'

'I am of age. I have been eighteen since September. I will also be graduating in a few months.'

He sighed in defeat. She stood before him, crackling with anger and energy, her face flushed and her lips still swollen from their encounter. She was irresistible, and all of a sudden, he lost the desire to fight.

'It's late; I need to get you back to your dormitory,' he said in a low voice.

Hermione huffed in frustration and followed him back to the castle, trying to hold back tears. She was going to have to come up with an entirely new plan.

Maybe I could convince the headmistress to assign me as an assistant to him....

Severus' voice interrupted her scheming; they had come to a stop in front of the portrait leading to the Head Girl's room.

'Miss Granger, you have leaves in your hair and dirt all over your trousers. Five points from Gryffindor, and you will serve another two weeks detention,' he said in a silky voice.

She had time to gasp once before he grabbed her shoulders, pulled her towards him and snogged her senseless for the second time that night. After a moment, he reluctantly pulled his mouth away from hers.

She was too stunned to react and was looking up at him, her eyes wide.

He smirked.

'Hermione, bring your Arithmancy calculations with you to our detention tomorrow,' he said in a low voice before turning on his heel and striding away.

Epilogue: Revision

Chapter 5 of 5

How did things ultimately turn out with Severus and Hermione?

Epilogue: Revision

AN: Well, here it is, the last part of this story. I hope that everyone enjoyed reading this as much as I enjoyed writing it. Once again thanks to all the wonderful people who put in the time and effort to put together the ss/hg gift exchange, and to fawkesflames whose idea this originally was.

Hermione smiled as she walked down the familiar stone hallways of Hogwarts. She had just seen her friends off on the Hogwarts Express, and the castle was eerily quiet and empty; devoid of all the students. She came to her destination and knocked on the large, wooden door. She didn't wait long before the door opened, and she was pulled roughly into the room.

'Sever...' she started to say, startled by the slamming of the door behind her.

He cut her off with a smoldering kiss as he grabbed her face in his hands and slanted his mouth over hers. Her eyes widened for a second before she closed them and slipped into the kiss, her arms wrapping around him. A few minutes later, he pulled away breathlessly to look into her eyes.

'I have been waiting far too long for this day,' he said in a low voice.

Despite the frequent detentions she had garnered in her last months of school, Severus had wanted to wait until she had graduated for their relationship to proceed past a few passionate snogs.

She smiled up at him. 'I love you, Severus.'

She watched as his eyes became even darker after her declaration.

'And I love you, Hermione. More than you could ever know. I am so thankful that you are so clever with Arithmancy.'

She smiled in response. He had finally acknowledged, grudgingly, that her calculations were correct and they were destined to be together.

Before she could say anything else, he was lifting her up in his arms and walking through the office to his quarters. She looped her arms around his neck and started nibbling on his ear lobe. One of her 'detentions' had revealed how hypersensitive his ears were to her ministrations.

He growled low in his throat when her tongue flicked along the shell of his ear, and she was abruptly dropped in the center of his large, four-poster bed. She looked around the room and was only able to take in the dark blue of his coverlet before he had joined her on the bed and was assaulting her mouth once again.

He rolled on top of her without releasing her mouth and slipped his leg between hers. She instinctively separated her thighs and bent her knees to give him greater access. She was kneading his back as he kissed her along her jaw line and down her neck.

His hand was warm and calloused as it moved slowly up her thigh from her knee, bunching up her skirt before coming to rest at her hip. He pulled back and looked her in the face, his eyes dark and glazed with passion.

Hermione felt a wave of elation rise up in her as she looked into the eyes of her lover. His lip quirked up on one side in a crooked smile that made him seem both vulnerable and sexy at the same time. Without breaking eye contact, he slowly started to flick open the buttons of her blouse. She could feel herself growing wet as he slowly peeled back her blouse to reveal her lace-covered breasts. He leaned down and started kissing the swell of her breast above her bra. He slowly pulled the lace aside as his mouth moved lower and lower, finally settling over her erect nipple as he lightly sucked.

Hermione arched her back and moaned as she felt his lips and tongue on her nipple.

He pulled her up slightly to remove her shirt and unclasp her bra before he moved his mouth over her other breast.

'Oh, Merlin, Severus, that feels so good... Yes, oh yes.'

She couldn't stop herself from moaning and whimpering as his mouth alternated between her breasts. She ran her hands through his hair as his hands moved to the waistband of her skirt.

In one smooth motion, he had removed her skirt and knickers, leaving her completely naked.

Hermione gasped in surprise. There was something strangely erotic about lying naked on his bed while he was still fully clothed. He looked down at her with wonder in his eyes.

'You are beautiful,' he said in a soft voice.

She smiled at him. 'Your turn, my love.'

She reached up and started to unbutton the buttons on his frock coat. She moaned in frustration when she opened up the frock coat to reveal a shirt underneath, fully buttoned up.

'How many layers are you wearing?' she asked breathlessly.

'Let me help you, love,' he answered before sitting up on his knees. He quickly peeled off his frock coat and started to unbutton his shirt. She sat up next to him and slipped her hands over his chest as he removed his shirt.

She looked up at him hesitantly for a minute before she leaned forward and kissed one of his flat nipples. She heard him suck in a breath, and she smiled slightly as she mimicked what he had done, alternating between sucking and kissing his nipples.

Severus sighed, and his head tilted back at the feel of her mouth busily moving over the expanse of his chest.

He stopped her only so he could stand up and remove the rest of his clothing, toeing off his boots and pulling his trousers down to reveal a pair of tented navy boxers.

Hermione's eyes widened a bit at the sight of his obvious arousal, and he smirked before pulling his boxers off to stand before her completely naked.

Hermione licked her lips tentatively as her eyes moved over his body, and he groaned before joining her on the bed.

He lay on his side and faced her on the bed, looking deep into her eyes for a moment before taking her lips up in a gentle kiss. His hand skimmed down her side, following her curves, moving lower and lower until he slipped his finger between her wet folds.

Hermione arched up and gasped at the sudden rush of sensation. 'Oh gods! Severus!'

She was wet and slick, and he easily slipped another finger in as his thumb caressed her clit. She was panting and gasping his name now as her hips bucked up to meet the movements of his fingers. She screamed as her orgasm ripped through her, incoherent in her pleasure. He muffled the sound of her scream by slanting his mouth across hers in a tender kiss.

She looked up at him with awe in her eyes. 'That was.... I never knew I could feel that way,' she said softly.

His lips quirked up in another of his crooked smiles.

'My love,' he murmured before kissing her again.

He rolled on top of her, bracing his weight on his elbows. She reached up and threaded her fingers in his hair as he kissed her face and neck.

He met her eyes one more time before thrusting into her.

Her eyes widened in pain as he stilled to allow her body time to get used to his invasion.

'I'm sorry, love; it will feel better in a moment,' he said softly as he stroked her hair in a soothing motion.

She grabbed one of his hands and laced her fingers with his as he tentatively started to move in her. He watched as the pain faded from her eyes and they started to glaze over with passion.

He groaned at the sensations flooding him as she started to respond to his movement. Her hips met his thrusts over and over again until he couldn't wait any longer. He could hear her cries of pleasure as he thrust one final time, calling out her name as he spilled his seed into her.

Severus collapsed on top of her, breathing hard as her hands moved up to caress his back.

'That was amazing,' she said breathlessly.

He couldn't manage much more than a hum of contentment as he rolled over, pulling her with him to rest with her head on his chest and one leg draped over his.

Three hours later, Hermione woke up and looked around the darkening bedchamber. They had napped through the rest of the afternoon, and she could see the rays of light fading from the window as the sun went down. She looked over at her companion and smiled. His face looked so innocent and young in sleep, absent of his usual scowl. She brushed some of his tangled hair away from his face before quietly slipping out of the bed.

After slipping his shirt on, she padded around his living quarters taking the time to look around. He had already asked her to stay here with him through the summer before starting her apprenticeship with Professor Vector in the fall, and she wanted to get a good look at their quarters. She walked into his sitting room and smiled when she noticed he had cleared off some of his bookshelves in preparation of her coming.

Next to the bookshelf in a place of honor was a piece of parchment, framed and hung on the wall. She felt tears well up in her eyes when she realized what it was; he had hung her Arithmancy calculations up on the wall.

She smiled wistfully as she remembered when she had finally shown him her calculations and notes. Although not as proficient in Arithmancy as he was at Potions or Defense, he had understood enough of the subject to concede that her calculations were 'most likely correct.'

At his suggestion, she would be improving on her method of combining Arithmancy with Muggle mathematics for her apprenticeship.

Hermione pulled the framed parchment off the wall to take a closer look at the calculations she had made in order to determine who her soul mate was. He had sneered with distaste when she had confessed to getting the idea from Lavender and Parvati.

The smile on her face was suddenly replaced with a frown of consternation as she looked over her calculations.

That can't be right, she thought to herself.

She had counted wrong when she calculated the numbers for his middle name. Chewing on her bottom lip, Hermione brought the framed parchment to his desk and grabbed a quill and spare slip of parchment.

Severus Snape woke up from one of the best naps he could ever remember taking and reached for the witch sleeping at his side only to find... nothing. He sat up and looked around the bed chamber, blinking the sleep out of his eyes. The sun had gone down while they had slept. Swinging his legs over the edge of the bed, he grabbed his trousers and slipped them on, not bothering to button them up.

Then he heard it; a low murmuring coming from his sitting room. Following the sound, he walked out to see Hermione sitting at his desk furiously scribbling out some Arithmancy calculations as she muttered numbers to herself. She was wearing his shirt, her hair was in complete disarray, and she was nibbling on her bottom lip as she frowned with concentration. He decided that she was the sexiest thing he had ever seen.

He walked up behind her and massaged her shoulders, leaning over to kiss her on the top of the head. She jumped in surprise when she felt his hands on her shoulders, dropping her quill and slapping her hands down flat on the parchment.

'Severus, you scared me!'

'What are you doing, love?'

'Oh... I just wanted to start polishing out the methodology for my Arithmancy and Muggle mathematics calculations,' she said in a voice that sounded a bit breathless.

'Hmmm,' he said as he nibbled his way down the back of her neck, moving his shirt to give him better access to her collarbone and shoulder.

'I can think of a much better way to spend your time. You will have plenty of time to work this summer.'

She sighed with pleasure as he lightly sucked on her earlobe.

'Ah... well... I guess you could be right. Oh, that feels good.' She moaned.

'Come back to bed, witch,' he said, grasping her elbow and pulling her to stand in front of him.

She put both hands to the sides of his face and pulled him in for a searing kiss, soliciting a low hum from his throat.

'Go to bed. I will put this away and join you in a few seconds,' she said in a sultry voice, her eyes glazed over with passion.

Still trying to gather his wits from her kiss, he simply nodded and headed towards the bedroom.

Hermione released a breath as she watched him walk away, admiring the way his trousers looked riding low on his hips. After he had entered the bedroom, she quickly looked down at the parchment she had been working on.

When he had joined her, her hands had covered up her new calculations, re-done to account for the mistake she had made with his middle name.

With the new information, there was only a sixty percent chance that he was her soul mate. She nervously looked over the door he had just disappeared into.

Should I tell him?

Hermione thought of that last kiss they had shared and made her decision.

Sometimes it's best not to know the future and just go with your gut instinct, she thought to herself as she crumpled up the parchment and threw it into the fire. *At any rate, I've never really believed in destiny, soul mates, or any of that twaddle that Trelawney is always spouting.*

She shrugged her shoulders and smiled to herself as she went to join her lover.

END.