

More Than a Dream

by Olethros

Sometimes a minor mistake, a slight error in judgment, is all it takes to save a life. Deathly Hallows spoilers. Warnings: non-consensual rending of clothing and snarky disrespect for the nearly-dead.

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Chapter 1 of 1

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Summary: Sometimes a minor mistake, a slight error in judgment, is all it takes to save a life. Deathly Hallows spoilers. Warnings: non-consensual rending of clothing and snarky disrespect for the nearly-dead.

Disclaimer: JKR owns it all. I just try to take better care of them.

A/N: I managed to drag myself away from putting finishing touches on my next chapter of *Memento Amori* to fill in this "missing" scene from Deathly Hallows. Don't even think about reading this if you haven't finished the book; there are **spoilers** from the first sentence onwards. This is for all of you who thought Snape deserved a break, though I have done my damndest to keep everyone in character and not make this just another Live!Snape fic. Thanks go out to my super-efficient beta Southern_Witch_69 who zaps grammar errors with the precision of a laser.

More Than a Dream

"Of course it is happening inside your head... but why on earth should that mean that it is not real?"
Albus Dumbledore

"Hermione... it's time to go."

"Wait, I need to see..."

"He's *dead*, Hermione. We can't do anything for him now. There's still a war going on."

Her gaze was riveted on the toe of his foot, now still. The usually immaculate leather boot was dusty, covered with splinters clinging stubbornly to the smooth, black shine from when his foot had slammed against the floor in his death throes.

"I need to *see*," she said again.

But to Harry, there was nothing to see other than the empty shell of a man that he probably wasn't sure if he still hated and the flask in his hand that glowed silver from

within. Ron squeezed her shoulder lightly, and the gentle touch brought her back from her daze.

A flick of one of their wands sent the crate flying back into place with a thud, raining dust and spiders down upon the crumpled black body on the floor of the Shrieking Shack.

They raced back to Hogwarts, tearing off the Invisibility Cloak when it became plain that the Death Eaters had retreated. Hermione shrugged Ron's hand off her shoulder; it impeded her movement.

A scene of silent destruction met their eyes. The dead and dying filled every square meter of space in the Great Hall. Harry broke off from them and ran up a side staircase. Hermione could not look away.

Death, death... so much of it, everywhere she looked.

Her eyes fixed upon Remus and Tonks, their faces peaceful, their rigid fingers mere inches away from each other.

Ron had already joined the rest of his family mourning over Fred's body. Nobody noticed as she slipped out of the Great Hall, casting a Disillusionment Charm over herself as she left. She could no longer stand not knowing.

She ran like the wind, meeting no one along the way.

The venom of the snake prevents the wound from closing.

When she reached the Whomping Willow, she was moving so quickly that she dove into the tunnel before the tree even had a chance to move.

She raced through the dark pathway, her hands scrambling for purchase on the dirt walls to hasten her journey.

"*Reducto!*" Hermione screamed, and the crate blocking the entrance turned to dust. Another sweep of her wand removed her Disillusionment Charm.

It was only when she pulled herself onto the floor of the Shrieking Shack and could not distinguish Severus Snape's fallen body from the rest of the darkness that she realized that tears were pouring from her eyes.

Gasping for breath, she moved across the floor on her hands and knees, feeling blindly. Her fingers encountered a small object that yielded under her touch, and she moved her hand over Snape's boot.

Hermione furiously rubbed the tears from her eyes as she moved towards his head. The sight before her had not changed. Snape's blank black eyes stared into nothing, and a crimson pool continued to spread from the ragged wound at his neck.

"No!" The strangled cry seemed to have been torn from her lungs.

Her hand flew to her side, only to remember that her beaded bag was lying on the floor of the Room of Requirement. Instead, she rose to her feet and pointed her wand at Snape, biting her lower lip in concentration.

"Diffindo!"

Snape's robe and frock coat fell off his body in pieces, split along every single major seam. He looked much smaller without his outer clothing, dressed in well-cut black trousers and a snow-white linen shirt. She allowed herself a millisecond to gaze in surprise that he would wear any color other than black.

Then she turned her attention back to the remnants of Snape's robe and coat. She repeated the Severing Charm again and again, slicing open the hems and remaining seams. Her efforts were rewarded as miniature vials and bottles emerged from concealment and fell to the dusty floor. Just for good measure, she sliced off the cuffs of his trousers and shirt as well.

But only after removing Snape's bloodstained collar and tearing open the seams did she find what she was looking for. She recognized the pale lilac color of the antivenin immediately, despite never having seen it in any Potions class or textbook. Then she knew that attempting to staunch the bleeding had not been the only reason Snape had brought his fingers desperately to his neck.

Hermione lifted Snape's head onto her thigh and squeezed his cheeks together, forcing his mouth open. She tipped the entire contents of the vial into his mouth, catching a few precious drops as they leaked out of the side of his unresponsive mouth.

"You're going to swallow this, you great bloody bastard, whether you like it or not," she snapped.

Hermione rubbed his throat as much as she dared without making the wound worse, ranting at Snape's body all the while. "You knew, you *knew* that he might use the snake. You'd better *pray* this works before it becomes pointless to even attempt healing this wound."

Yet even as she spoke, she could see the ugly swelling around his neck slowly going down and the sickly yellow of the skin around the wound fading into pale alabaster. She fumbled among the many vials rolling across the floor of the Shack until she finally found the brown vial that indicated dittany. It took ten drops and much coughing through billowing greenish smoke before the wound on Snape's neck looked even vaguely healed.

"You probably didn't even take the potion, Professor. You would do that just to spite me, you pig-headed stubborn man."

Even so, her fingers moved through the vials until they closed around the black vial. She forced Snape's mouth open again and poured three drops of the potion black and oily, the exact opposite of the potion it was meant to counteract into his mouth and massaged his newly healed throat vigorously.

"Why did you tell Harry to look at you? Anyone would think *he* was the last thing you wanted to see before you died. That's too melodramatic even for you, sir."

Hermione wasn't aware that she had cradled his head in her lap until she felt the slight movement against her thighs and forearms. She was certain her heart bruised itself as it leaped from her chest to her throat.

The movement repeated itself, and this time Hermione saw Snape's head turn slightly towards her stomach, as if to bury itself in the warmth of her body. His lips moved, just barely.

"Blood..."

"You lost it all, you great prat!" Hermione yelled, unable to look away from his deathly white skin. Then it hit her *Blood-Replenishing Potion*. "I... I've never seen any. I don't know what it looks like."

Snape's lips moved again. The shallow gasps that emitted from his throat might have been taken for laughter if Hermione could have believed it. "Red..." he whispered.

Hermione's fingers scattered vials every which way as she searched frantically. At long last, she found the round, red bottle, barely longer than her thumb, which had been tucked into a buttonhole of his frock coat.

She poured the liquid into his mouth, nearly despairing when she saw how little there was. Barely half a mouthful. How could that possibly restore the vast, crimson pool that she was currently sitting in, that was currently seeping through the fabric of her jeans?

But once again, magic proved itself immune to logic, and almost immediately, Snape's bone-white skin began to suffuse with color. Hermione never thought she would be so happy to see that sallow, disgruntled face again.

"You stupid, stupid man," she whispered, suddenly too weary to be angry any longer.

The last time she had seen that face, *really* seen it, it had been contorted into a perfect expression of concern and determination as Professor Snape raced from the office of a recently Stupefied Flitwick.

Needless to say, the sight had not left a favorable impression.

But she had seen that face one other time between then and now. At first, she had believed it to be no more than a dream.

Hermione burrowed deeper into her blankets, shivering despite the fact that she was sleeping in the corner of the tent furthest away from the entrance where Harry sat awake. They had arrived in the Forest of Dean two days ago, and Harry had insisted on taking the next watch.

If she was honest with herself, most of the coldness stemmed from the ache of Ron's departure. It throbbed from deep within her chest, still sore despite the many weeks that had passed.

Great bloody prat... pig-headed stubborn boy... it'll get him hurt... or worse.

But the wave of despair that washed over her at the thought of Ron dead was more than she could handle. She squeezed her eyes shut and told herself to go to sleep.

Of course, the problem with actively trying to fall asleep was that one ended up more awake than before. It took nearly an hour of tossing and turning before exhaustion finally closed her eyelids. She could just feel herself drifting off when...

She gasped when a bright, white mist filled her vision. She tried closing her eyes before discovering that they were already closed. Then she realized that she was dreaming, and she relaxed slightly.

Hermione became less relaxed when the white mist parted to reveal another person. Severus Snape came into view, a tall, black inkblot against an otherwise immaculate white canvas. He held the sword of Godric Gryffindor in his hands.

On the dusty floor of the Shrieking Shack, Snape's eyes opened faster than she could have predicted. He was apparently unaccustomed to being called "stupid."

His black eyes moved left and right before finally focusing upon Hermione's face. She could hardly breathe, mesmerized by the incontrovertible proof that yes, yes, he was still alive.

Snape's mouth opened, and several gasping, wheezing sounds emerged from his throat before he could finally pronounce sibilant consonants without choking on his own blood.

"Miss Granger... sleeping at this hour?"

Hermione's hand flew to her sleeve before realizing that her wand was gone. Harry had it. But perhaps wands were not permitted in her dream because Snape had made no move to draw upon her.

In fact, he was standing quite still and looking at her not with loathing or menace, but with mild annoyance.

"I was expecting to see Potter here," he said.

"Harry's not asleep. I am."

"Ah," Snape replied. "My mistake. Well, in that case, I shall be off." He turned to go.

Hermione's mind took a little while to catch up with her disbelief. At which point her mind decided that there was no way something as impossible as she and Severus Snape conversing casually as if discussing the weather could be allowed to pass without her finding out what the hell was going on.

"Wait!" she shouted. "Why..."

Why did you kill Dumbledore? Why did you protect us for so many years when you were on their side all along? Why didn't you hurt me?

Each question was more impossible than the last, and Snape was drawing further and further into the mist, beginning to fade from sight.

"Why do you have Godric Gryffindor's sword? You sent it to Gringotts to keep it safe."

Snape stopped, although he did not turn around. He stood so still that Hermione was afraid that her dream had turned him to stone.

"Do not insult my intelligence," Snape said at last, although he did not turn to face her. "Or yours for that matter. We both know that sword is a fake."

Hermione stumbled back a few steps on the white plain. Snape knew? And he had still allowed the Death Eaters and Voldemort to believe it to be the real sword?

She had always taken pride in her quick mind, and even in a dream, she did not disappoint herself.

"Professor, why do you need to find Harry?"

"That is none of your concern, Miss Granger. I apologize for barging into your dream like this, and I promise you that this is the last place I want to be."

Hermione didn't think Severus Snape in real life would have apologized for anything, so she had no problem talking back. "Only true Gryffindors can possess the sword." Snape made a derisive sound. "You know what I mean!" she snapped. "The only people who can truly possess the sword are those who have taken it out of need and valor."

At this, Snape turned around at last, and Hermione nearly flinched from the very real fury in his eyes. "And what makes you think that I 'truly possess' this sword? I might have slit the throat of its previous owner and stolen it away."

Hermione paled slightly. "Then you would have no business carrying a sword that all of your friends believe to be in Gringotts. And you would only be looking for Harry to... what, taunt him that you have the sword? No, that can't be right. It would be an empty gesture. Unless you wanted him to feel that the sword was in danger. So that he

would go after it..."

Snape turned to leave again. "I believe I have heard enough of your mindless prattle."

Hermione took advantage of his turned back to pursue him, her feet flying soundlessly over the white nothingness. "You have no right to walk away! You intended to find Harry, but you got me instead, so damn it, I will see you!"

Snape turned so quickly that Hermione nearly collided with him. His hand flashed forward and closed around her forearm. "I think you have seen me enough, Miss Granger."

"Are you bringing the sword to Harry?" she insisted. She was dreaming, and therefore, she did not feel threatened.

His fingertips dug into her forearm hard enough to bruise. "And if I was?"

Hermione squirmed. "... I would advise against letting Harry see you when you do, sir."

"I beg your pardon?" Snape let go of her so quickly she nearly fell into him.

"Send him a message in a way that he would never associate with you. Something... non-threatening. He hates you so much right now that he would be just as likely to forget all about the sword and concentrate only on hunting you."

"Then he is less strong than Albus would have had me believe," Snape retorted, but he also looked mildly concerned.

"Sir... I wanted to offer you my thanks for not hurting Ginny, Neville, and Luna when they..."

"Indeed," Snape interrupted curtly. "And this will be followed by your condemnation for those I could not save? Mr. Finnegan, who will never see out of his right eye again? The nameless first-year hung by the wrists for two nights for refusing to cast the Killing Curse on his sister's rabbit? Dumbledore? If what I can do has been limited to assigning mock detentions in the Forbidden Forest and transporting rusty heirlooms, then forgive me if I feel that your thanks are a cold comfort."

Hermione thought that Snape was being unnaturally frank with her and told him so.

He sneered. "As you said, Miss Granger. This is a dream, and you will remember nothing."

Hermione held Snape's head closer to her body, as if she could transfer her warmth into his shuddering shoulders and his rigid fingers. "You're not dreaming, sir. And neither am I."

"Bossy little know-it-all," Snape muttered into her stomach. His vocal cords were still too weak to form the required plosives and fricatives of the epithet, but Hermione understood. She moved her fingers to his neck to check his pulse.

Snape batted her hand away weakly. "I assure you, I am quite alive."

"Barely," she seethed.

"Indeed," he replied. "I hardly think anyone would recognize me now."

Hermione looked down at his body and flushed. The remnants of his robe and frock coat were scattered around them in ragged black ribbons. With his outer clothing gone and the tattered edges of his collar, sleeves, and trousers revealing glimpses of smooth, alabaster skin, Snape looked rather like a pale, malnourished pirate.

"It's your fault," Hermione said. "If you had taken that antivenin before Nagini decided to turn your neck into a chew toy, I wouldn't have had to go to drastic measures to find it on your person. Voldemort must have taunted you for several minutes before actually setting her on you."

Snape sighed. "I assure you, even my sleight of hand would not escape the Dark Lord's powers of observation."

His voice was growing steadier.

"Bugger the Dark Lord," Hermione growled. She choked down a laugh at the stricken look on Snape's face. "You could have escaped."

"It's never been about me, Miss Granger."

"Yes, that's rather the problem, isn't it?"

Hermione made to move towards him again. "If I'm going to forget everything, then tell me what's going on."

Snape glowered.

"I know you want to. I wager that you haven't been able to tell anybody, not since Dumbledore..."

"Dumbledore!" Snape exploded. "Not since Dumbledore decided that his own death would be a necessary sacrifice for the greater good! Kill me, Severus! But protect the school afterwards, even though you're expected by all to be the most cold-blooded man alive! You must never threaten your position as spy! Risk your life, again and again, for devil-knows-what because I never saw fit to trust you with that information. Trust me even after I am dead; trust me even though I don't trust you!"

Hermione bit her lip, realizing how disturbingly familiar Snape's rant sounded. "He used Harry just as badly, Professor."

"More so," Snape seethed. "Though none of you will realize that until it's too late."

"What does that mean?" Hermione asked, fear crawling up her throat.

"Precisely that, Miss Granger. It is not the right time for you to know. All that I will be useful for after delivering this sword is that my death might provide the necessary white flag for Potter to accept what I will have to say."

He turned away from her again, and this time he fairly ran away from her.

"NO!" Hermione shouted. And reminding herself that as this was a dream, he could not take points off for her actions later, she leaped at his retreating back and tackled him to the misty ground.

Snape smirked. "So you demonstrated to me very... exuberantly not so long ago."

"I could hardly leave you to your noble swan dive then," she said almost tenderly, "not when I was finally beginning to understand."

"Understand what, precisely?"

"That you were so used to living for someone else that you did not even stop to consider yourself."

Snape's mouth twisted horribly as residual pain wracked his body. He turned his grimace into a forced yawn. "Please do not make me into a martyr when I have yet to die, Miss Granger."

Her legs were now extended straight in front of her, and Snape's head and shoulders were resting in her lap. Her hand had somehow found its way into his hair, but it really was as greasy as it looked and also sticky from his blood, so she stopped stroking it. She swore that he had smiled, though.

"I'm glad you didn't hate me so much that you didn't listen."

In retrospect, Hermione conceded that tackling a man holding a very large, very sharp sword close to his chest was a poor choice. However, before Snape's cry of horror finished echoing across the shrouded plain, Hermione saw the sword seemingly jerk itself out of his grasp like Crookshanks the one time Ron had attempted to pick him up and fall harmlessly to the ground a foot away from where they landed.

Hermione swore that the rubies glinted mischievously at her from the misty ground.

Hah! *She thought*, Let him try to deny now that he won honorable ownership of the sword.

Fortunately in her dream, hitting the ground felt rather like hitting a hard mattress. She grunted as the breath was knocked out of her lungs, but neither of them was hurt. The same could not be said for Snape's robe, which she had grabbed for purchase and ripped along its hems and seams.

Half a dozen vials rolled out from concealed pockets in the lining of the robe. Hermione trapped them with her hand before they could roll out of sight.

"Analgesics, sir? Dittany? Skele-Gro?"

Snape knocked her hand out of the way and scooped up the fallen vials. "As Head of House I must always be ready to heal dunderheads that have hexed each other."

"But not as Headmaster, you don't. Not to mention that these have been concealed very carefully on your person."

His face was thunderous as he carefully picked up the sword of Gryffindor from the ground. "Does your meddling never cease?" he hissed.

"What does Voldemort do to you at meetings?"

Snape flinched at her use of the name. "Hereminds us, Miss Granger. If you would kindly return my last vial?"

"What does he remind you of?" Hermione asked quietly. She opened her hand, revealing a vial filled with pale lilac-colored liquid.

Snape's eyes were fixed upon the last bottle in her hand. "He reminds us that we are more likely to die at his hand than at the hand of our enemies."

Hermione grimaced. "How does he manage to keep an army at all? What's in this vial, Professor?"

"Meddlesome creature." His hands grasped thin air as he made a grab for the bottle.

Hermione held it easily out of his reach. "Tell me."

A resigned sigh. "Antivenin. The most powerful that I can brew. The Dark Lord has a disturbing habit of feeding the bodies of his enemies to his pet."

Snape probably expected her to recoil in disgust. Instead, she threw the vial at him in undisguised fury, and he barely caught it before it hit the ground. "As far as I can see, you've protected yourself from all probable forms of death for years. How can you be so bloody resigned now?"

"Because it is and has always been all about your friend Potter!" Snape snapped. "There are things I must tell him, but only when the time is right. More of Dumbledore's plans, of course, but he neglected to consider young Potter's attitude toward me after his demise. A minor oversight on his part, I'm sure. As you have said, Miss Granger, Potter will not even consider that he might be wrong unless I am dead."

"You and Dumbledore must have talked. Pensieve memories..."

"And certainly Potter would be willing to stick his head in a Pensieve and leave his defenseless body behind at my mercy."

"Fake it, then."

Snape blinked at her. "I beg your pardon?" he asked a second time.

"Fake your death long enough that Harry feels at ease to watch your memories, read Dumbledore's journals, yap with his portrait, whatever it is you intend to happen so that he finds out what he needs to know. Harry is the best friend anyone could ask for, but he's never been terribly bright."

"Much as your friends might pale in comparison to you, I can guarantee that the Dark Lord will be more difficult to fool."

Hermione decided to wait until later to puzzle out his second compliment he had ever paid to her. Instead, she looked at him carefully and wondered how such an intimidating man could appear so anxious. The tear in his robe allowed her to see how thin his arms were, and dark circles ringed his eyes. As they were both still half-lying on the ground, he also appeared much smaller.

She allowed herself a moment of grief that she would not remember this, for she never remembered her dreams. And yet this somehow felt more real than any of her dreams before.

"Then you might remember that you are the Potions master, sir, and Voldemort is not," she told him. "Or was all that rot in your first-year speech about putting a stopper in death mere theatrics after all?"

This time he really did smile. "Hate you, Miss Granger? You assaulted a Hogwarts headmaster, and I did not demand retribution. I fail to see how you could imagine I hated you then."

Hermione was only half listening to him, transfixed as she was by the impossible appearance of his smile. She toyed with the idea of telling him that he might have considered smiling more often as a means to keep order in his classroom. His students would have been so frightened of what he was plotting that they would never have

caused disruptions.

"You took the Draught," she said.

"Obviously," he intoned blandly. Then he lifted his hand and placed his thumb on her chin, tilting her face down until she was looking directly into his eyes. The tip of his finger was so cold she nearly shivered. But either he was too weak for Legilimency or else he had touched her for other reasons she did not begin to understand. His hand fell away, and he looked off into the distance.

"I think," Snape said, "the more pressing question is how you managed to remember anything of our meeting. I made sure..."

"You tried," Hermione replied with a smirk.

He told her about the Draught of Living Death and explained how he had invented a variant of the potion that could be absorbed through the skin. He would keep a dose in a plastic capsule that he wore against his chest. When the Draught was needed, he would break the capsule, which would then disappear a few seconds later. After much wheedling, she then convinced him to show her the antidote.

"Do you really want to risk that someone will really think you're dead and bury you?"

"I fail to see how this could be useful as you will remember none of this when you wake."

"Humor me."

So he showed her the black vial filled with a few drops of precious oily liquid. She memorized the container's size and shape.

"Be careful, sir," Hermione said. "And thank you... for trusting me."

Snape looked at her hard for a moment before sneering. "None of this was real, Miss Granger."

In the next moment, Hermione found herself staring down a length of black ebony, for Snape had had his wand the whole time.

"Obliviate!"

Hermione opened her eyes to the flickering light of her bluebell flames and a voice hissing her name with increasing urgency.

"Hermione? Hermione!"

She felt as if she were swimming through thick syrupy darkness as she finally dragged her mind into consciousness. "What's wrong?" she asked. "Harry?" She looked at the two blurry figures in her vision.

She only half-heard Harry's excited reassurances, for her eyes were riveted upon Ron Weasley her erstwhile-she didn't know what he was anymore! She launched herself at him, striking every inch of him that she could reach, calling him names and forcing herself to hold back the words she longed most to say.

You left! For weeks and weeks, even when we begged you to stay! Professor Snape stayed, for years and years, even when we all cursed him to leave.

Later, she burrowed into her blankets, shutting her ears against Ron's pleas and attempting to calm her roaring temper. Taking a deep breath, she looked down at herself, her eyes sweeping over her arm. In the flickering light of her little fire, she saw the five small bruises on her forearm, evenly spaced as if someone's fingertips had dug into her skin.

"Huh," she said.

"It didn't work," Snape grumbled.

"Obviously," Hermione smirked. "You forgot that you were in my head. Also, it is impossible to Obliviate something that wasn't a true memory anyway."

"It figures that you would save my life only to make me feel a fool."

Hermione's eyes narrowed. "I kept your secret for months, Snape. Even when Harry despaired the most that he would never have what he needed to complete his task. I trusted that you knew when the time would be right."

"Such a change of heart from a mere dream?"

"It was only *because* you believed it to be no more than a dream that you could be honest with me, and I have always been thankful for that."

She didn't tell him that the knowledge that he was on their side all along had saved them all in Malfoy Manor. As she had writhed under the Cruciatus Curse for what felt to be eternity, her mind had been torn asunder, and she had been willing to say anything, *anything* if only the pain would stop. Only the triumphant knowledge that Snape had truly fooled Voldemort's best lieutenant kept her sanity from falling apart. Only the knowledge that Snape had suffered through this for the better half of his life and the determination that *she* was the overachiever, and she'd be damned if the Slytherin bastard was going to outdo her in anything, moved her lips to spin the false tale that had allowed them to escape.

"Everyone will know what you have done for us," Hermione said to Snape, her eyes blazing. "You'll see."

Before he could protest, before she could think about what she was doing, Hermione dipped her head and pressed a gentle kiss to his forehead. His forehead was still cold and clammy from near-death, and her lips clung briefly to his skin as she pulled away.

Snape looked at her as if she were Voldemort, half-disbelieving, half-frightened.

Hermione's lip quirked. "I expected to be cursed soundly for my nerve."

Snape groaned deep in his throat and brought one hand to the new skin on his throat. "Death has a way of reorganizing one's priorities. As does the impending demise of the Dark Lord."

Hermione could not stop herself from emitting a squeal of glee. "So Harry will be able to do it then?"

Snape rolled his eyes and then winced when that seemed to hurt his head. "It is inconceivable that Potter will do anything other than what must be done. From the day he was born, he was gifted with the most unambiguous and boring moral character of anyone I've ever known."

"He... he will be okay, though?"

Snape hesitated for an eternal second as Hermione's heart also froze in her chest.

"Yes," he said. "I have had more time than Dumbledore to think over the many circumstances surrounding Potter's destiny, and I have come to the conclusion that Dumbledore was even sneakier than I originally believed. Potter will live to irritate me for many years to come."

Hermione smiled, not only because of his confidence in Harry but also because of the determination Snape had shown to live as well.

"Are you well enough to join us in our fight?" she asked.

"Not even remotely," he replied matter-of-factly. "But you must return soon, or people will become suspicious."

"Voldemort gave us one hour. Will you be okay here until I can return?" Hermione tried but could not keep the overwhelming concern from showing in her voice. But he did not appear irritated.

"Conjure me a mattress then, you harpy. And some tea."

Finite Incantatem

A/N: Hope you enjoyed! If so, drop by my other story *Memento Amori*, which is unashamedly HG/SS.

An epilogue to this story has been added on fanfiction.net.

Needless to say, it should not be taken too seriously.

Epilogue: http://www.fanfiction.net/s/3695682/2/More_Than_a_Dream