

Hook, Line and Sink Her

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Chapter 1 of 1

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Author's Notes: This story was written for the Live Journal SS/HG Summer 2007 Exchange, as a gift for the howlingmojo. Her prompt was: Hot teacher/student vibes, Professor Snape actively pursuing Hermione right under everybody's noses, double entendres and all that.

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Severus was sitting at the bar of the Three Broomsticks, staring morosely into a pint of Rosmerta's finest mead, his head fuzzy and heavy with drink. He had reached a crossroads of sorts. For weeks and weeks, he had contemplated his options and was no closer to a resolution now than when his world came crashing down around him thanks to a certain monumental revelation. As he knocked back the last of his mulled beverage, the various parts of his mind continued to wage a battle over his predicament.

They had never been friends. There were no playful conversations to fall back on, no moments of understanding. He had known her since she was eleven, though only in the academic sense. Their interaction during Order business was minimal, even less after he had killed Dumbledore. Fortunately for him, he did have his exoneration and subsequent reinstatement at Hogwarts working in his favor.

She was intelligent and witty, very friendly and liked by almost everyone. The war had changed her somewhat, mostly for the better in his opinion. No longer was she the bossy, slightly insecure, know-it-all witch of days old. She had blossomed before his eyes into a strong, confident woman. She was the only single female with whom he shared so much compatibility many hours spent spying on her told him that and he wanted her. Her soulful smile, though not overtly friendly, revealed no contempt or loathing whenever she looked at him. Her expressive eyes and her singsong laughter invaded his thoughts at every turn. Yes, he fancied one Miss Hermione Granger all right, and he had not one damned clue what he was going to do about it.

"I fucking fancy her to the point of ridiculousness," he mumbled to no one in particular.

"You fancy someone, Severus?"

Shite! Severus groaned inwardly, banging his head on the bar at the sheer magnitude of his blunder. He had absolutely no intention of broaching this subject with anyone, especially not Kingsley Shacklebolt of all people. Yet here Kingsley was, having walked into the tavern and directly to him, hearing every word he had blurted out, when clearly he thought everything had taken place in his head. He really should have been paying better attention. *Some spy you are, old man. The Severus of old would never have allowed the imbibing of spirits to dull his mind or reflexes.*

Severus raised his head and attempted to fix Kingsley with his most vicious glare. Kingsley merely rolled his eyes, immune to Severus' intimidation tactics, and flopped down on the stool beside him. While Kingsley had become his closest and most trusted confidante, there were times when Kingsley could not leave well enough alone. He was like a hound tracking a scent and would not dare let this go until Severus confessed completely.

Kingsley interrupted his internal monologue with the first of what he knew would be question after question. "So ... are you going to tell this mystery woman?" he asked tentatively.

"Are you out of your bloody mind?" he screeched. Instantly several heads in the place snapped in their direction. Not wanting to broadcast his business any further, lest the gossip begin, Severus lowered his voice several octaves. "There is no way I am going to breathe a word to anyone, let alone her."

"Why ever not?"

"Right! Howler to Kingsley Shacklebolt," the alcohol spoke more so than Severus himself, "I don't stand a chance in Hades with someone like Hermione Granger."

"Granger? You fancy Granger?" Kingsley whispered. Kingsley threw back his head and let out a rich, hearty laugh. Severus' eyes widened in horror at his additional slip of the tongue. There would definitely be no more alcohol for him tonight.

"I'm glad you find my situation a source of amusement," Severus snarled with eyes full of fury. If looks were Unforgivable Curses, Kingsley Shacklebolt would have been *Avada Kedavra*'ed on the spot.

Kingsley's laughter died down as he attempted to appear contrite. "Come now, Severus. It really isn't that bad, truth be told."

"Really? Not only am I the complete opposite of the males she normally tends to attract, but I have practically zero experience with this sort of thing. I must confess the inner workings of the female mind elude me, Kingsley. I have nothing to offer her. In addition, she is a student, my student, therefore making me feel older than I already do. And lecherous, quite lecherous indeed," Severus added to himself.

Kingsley's demeanor changed instantly. "Severus Snape!" he hissed through clenched teeth. "Only you could come up with such nonsense. Nothing but a bunch of bollocks, if you ask me. Old and lecherous you are not. I have no doubt you've many things to offer a woman."

Severus had to stifle the guffaw that threatened to escape him, lest Kingsley give him a solid cuff on the head.

"And furthermore," he continued matter-of-factly, his anger having somewhat abated, "she is not your student per se an illusion of sorts merely a woman in student's clothing. If memory serves, Minerva brokered an agreement with the Board of Governors and the Ministry making Granger, and several other war heroes with similar circumstances, adult audits for the purpose of sitting their N.E.W.T.s," Kingsley pointed out. "Granger's new status allows you to pursue her while she is at school, successfully skating around the Hogwarts charter section on student/professor relations right under their very noses."

Severus could see the mischievous glint in Kingsley's eyes. "Since when did you become so well versed in such a manner as this?"

Kingsley's smile was wide. "I needed to be certain I would not encounter any problems."

"Problems? What is it you are not telling me, friend?"

"I will be filling in for Aurora Sinistra the last term of the school year. Minerva approached me last week. I was on my way to the dungeons to see you when she cornered me about whether I had made a decision," he said, an exasperated look crossing his striking features. "You know how persistently persuasive that woman is."

Severus snorted. "I do indeed. Sometimes I wonder if she inherited that particular trait from Albus."

Kingsley nodded in agreement. "At any rate, I needed to be sure my foray into the shaping of adolescent minds would not interfere with my courting of a certain young woman. You are not the only one who's discovered he has an object of affection of late."

Severus' curiosity was genuinely piqued. "And who might she be?"

"Miss Ginevra Molly Weasley. So if you are old, lecherous and doomed to suffer the fires of Hades for an infinite amount of time for simply pursuing what you want, then I shall be sharing your fate."

At that very moment, Severus looked at his friend more clearly than he had in a long time. He always knew Kingsley was clever, but he never truly appreciated the depths of his wisdom, compassion and understanding until now. Reaching out in a rare gesture of affection, he gave Kingsley's shoulder an awkward squeeze. "I am pleased for you. Now, what do I do?" he asked in a strangled whisper.

"Tell her, mate. If that swot has the slightest bit of sense in that pretty little head of hers at all, and I am fairly certain she does, she will grab onto you tightly and never, ever let you go."

Immediately, Severus' shoulders slumped and he vehemently shook his head. "I can't, Kingsley. I just can't."

Kingsley grasped Severus' arm tightly and said reassuringly, "You can do this, Severus. I know you can. Not only can you do it, you deserve it after all you have experienced. Who cares if no one approves? Do you?" he asked disbelievingly. "The Severus Snape I know certainly doesn't."

Severus gave another groan that bled into a whine as he buried his face fully into the crook of his arm. "How in Merlin's name will I ever be able to express my feelings for her without tripping over the words?" he garbled. "Intimidation, sarcasm, verbally eviscerating someone, those are things I know. Expressing one's ardor? That is a territory in which I have no true knowledge."

Kingsley fixed him with a sympathetic look for a moment before forcing Severus upright again. Severus could almost see the gears turning in Kingsley's head as he tried to solve Severus' dilemma. It did not take long before his ebony face broke into a wry grin.

"You know, Severus," Kingsley said coyly, "they say actions speak louder than words. If you cannot tell her, maybe you should show her."

Severus stared at Kingsley in disbelief. Was Kingsley suggesting what he thought he was? Sweet Nimue, he was indeed! "Kingsley! You are one debauched Slytherin."

Kingsley rolled his eyes and slapped Severus' back playfully. "Oh, grow up, man! You have no time to play the naïve schoolboy when clearly we both know you are not. Get yourself up off that stool, go back to Hogwarts and sober up. This is war, your own personal battle, and you are the general. Plan your strategy carefully; leave no detail unaccounted. Lure your enchantress; bewitch her mind, ensnare her senses, or whatever else it is you do best," he added teasingly. "You will regret it for the rest of your life if you don't take this chance."

Severus took a moment to consider Kingsley's words before leaping off his stool. He dragged Kingsley forward into an awkward, manly hug and replied dryly, "What would I ever do without you?"

Kingsley returned Severus' embrace before chuckling. "I shudder at the mere thought."

Severus gave Kingsley one last squeeze. "Ginevra will be lucky to have you."

"I'll be sure to tell her you said so." He beamed. "Now, stop trying to chat me up. Go get your witch."

Severus nodded to his friend and made a hasty dash for the door.

After many days of careful planning, Severus began weaving his elaborate web. His initial seduction was comprised of subtle nuances. During class, he would circle the area of the room where Hermione sat, quietly appraising her curvaceous body. On one such occasion, he stated aloud, "My, my, my, Miss Granger, your *form* is quite ... impressive."

"Thank you, sir. I have been practicing my chopping method," she stated proudly.

Severus raked his eyes over her body once more. "Dear girl," he leant in to whisper in her ear, "that's not the *form* to which I was referring." As he moved away from her to continue monitoring the progress of the other students, he noticed a blush had begun to stain her cheeks.

When the following Thursday's lesson commenced, he went a step further. He instructed the students to open the various phials of ingredients he had lain out for them. Severus watched as Hermione struggled in particular with the pomegranate extract. Gliding over to where she sat, Severus stepped behind her, hovering once again, and placed his hands atop hers to direct her motion. "You must use a firm hold, Miss Granger," he murmured. "The *rim* tends to get a bit *slick* when heated by the hand."

Severus could feel the trembling of her body as she cleared her throat to respond. "I shall try my best, Professor. I would not want to waste any of the *precious juice*," Hermione innocently emphasized.

Over time, he escalated his pursuit. When he passed her in the corridors, he would brush against her, making certain there was always some form of skin-to-skin contact between them. A chance meeting in the Restricted Section led to Severus issuing Hermione a detention after he reprimanded her as to the proper handling of the *texts*. "The older, more powerful books must be held with a solid grip, Miss Granger."

Severus was pleased when he saw her absentmindedly caress the spine of the book as she spoke. "Even though this is an older text and I can tell it's been read a time or two," she said while continuing to stroke, "it is remarkably rigid."

Severus reached over to guide her movements. "Like so," he crooned. "Can you feel the pulse of magic in your palm? At times it *comes in rapid spurts*."

It did not take long before Hermione became an active participant in the flirtatious dance, much to Severus' relief, and in full view of the students and staff. While patrolling for ne'er-do-wells late into the night, he surreptitiously lay in wait for her on the west side of the castle. As she rounded the corner, Severus engulfed her in a sea of black robes, luring her back into a tight, dark niche near the end of the passage. He pressed his lean body to hers with excruciating precision. "Miss Granger, I've caught you out after hours once again," he said huskily as he nuzzled her neck, backing her against the stone wall. "Becoming quite the habit, isn't it?"

"Sir," Hermione smiled slyly as she stared into the dark depths of his ebony eyes, "I think you've got me between a rock and *hard place*," she teasingly replied and shifted her hips to prove her dilemma.

Whispers amongst the gaggles of giggling girls became fodder for the busy-body witches and wizards on the staff. Severus was careful to avoid Minerva lest he suffer the ire he was certain she felt.

His monumental opportunity arose to sate his longing during the Easter hols. Hermione was one of several that chose to remain at Hogwarts throughout the break. During the first meal in which the professors and students would share a single table, Severus would take the plunge, making his intentions known beyond any doubt. He made certain, with the help of the house-elves, that their arrival to dinner would coincide and that they were seated next to one another.

After the pudding was served and conversation waned, Severus cleared his throat, turning toward Hermione. "Miss Granger, might I enquire as to what your plans are for this evening?"

It was so quiet you could hear a pin drop. Several forks were poised en route to the various mouths that hung open from shock. All eyes student and professor alike focused on the two of them.

"Well, *Professor*," Hermione said, deciding to give as good as she got, "it just so happens I am free of any obligations this evening. Did you need assistance with something in particular?"

Severus fixed her with a salacious leer. "As a matter of fact I do. Would you care to help me *polish my stirring rod* later?"

Hermione smiled saucily and said in a husky voice, "Would that be before or after you *stir my cauldron* with it?"

"Perhaps both," he purred in a smooth baritone. "And please, call me Severus."

Madam Hooch nearly choked on her pumpkin juice, and Professor Flitwick fell out of his chair. Headmistress Minerva McGonagall simply stared at her place setting, her lips pressed into a tight, thin line. Several of the table's occupants began to wonder if they had stumbled into an alternate universe somewhere between the courses.

"Bugger, bugger, bugger. Bloody fucking shite," Severus swore as he paced back and forth in front of the door to Hermione's rooms. He attempted several times to muster the courage to knock, but his hand failed to connect completely with the wood each and every time. *How could something so simple feel so damned hard? Why in Merlin's name did I ever allow Kingsley to talk me into this? Moreover, since when do I allow myself to resort to such base language?* Severus growled in frustration at his lack of nerve. He could not do it no matter how hard he tried.

Just as he turned to walk away, the door whipped open, surprising him fully. Severus spun around and immediately froze in place; there stood Hermione, barefoot, in a pair of dark green, low-slung pajama bottoms and a camisole. She looked completely relaxed as if she were settling in for the night. "Professor SnaerSeverus! You're here! Did you knock? I came out here because I heard a noise. I thought maybe one of the students was playing a prank after our little display at dinner," she prattled, color staining her cheeks.

Severus remained there staring in disbelief. His mouth gaped open in an attempt to respond, though nothing resembling anything coherent came out. Here she was, his dream of perfection, his everything. Weeks of teasing, suggestive banter and unresolved sexual tension all culminated into this quintessential moment. Had she really meant her entendre-laden question earlier? Would she truly welcome his advances, or would she turn him away?

"Are you all right?" she asked, breaking into his silent reverie.

Severus took several tentative steps toward her, eventually stopping when they were only an arm's length apart. He cleared his throat and wet his lips. "Miss Granger. Hermione. I ... I need ..." He trailed off, his voice choked with emotion.

Severus recognized the full-blown alarm that spread across Hermione's face as she watched him struggle to articulate his thoughts. "Give me two tics to throw on a dressing gown, and we'll get you to the infirmary straight away."

Severus reached out quickly to grab her wrist before she slipped back into her rooms. He pulled her as close as possible to him without frightening her more. "Not cursed. Need ... need to tell you ... damn it all!"

Severus brought his lips down to hers in a searching, electrifying kiss. This was it, his one chance. He wanted to make her remember this moment, to imprint himself on her soul forever. Hermione gasped in surprise but did not push him away. Taking this as a good sign, Severus deepened the kiss, sliding his tongue into her mouth to explore its warm depths. She responded in kind, her tongue thrusting forward to meet his. With agonizing slowness, he dragged his long, calloused fingers up and down her bare arms, causing her to shiver with what he hoped was pleasure. Her skin felt like raw silk, and she tasted of honeysuckle. She was an earthly delight, a delicacy which he could feast upon for an eternity.

Hermione wasted no time throwing herself completely into the moment, pressing her body seductively to him. Severus groaned as her crux connected with his; he was thrumming with desire. Never in his wildest dreams did he ever imagine anything like this.

Severus abandoned his titillation of her upper torso and began to trail his hands down her sides to the swell of her bottom. He cupped her arse, pulling her tight against his now painfully hard cock. Hermione whimpered at the contact and tangled her hands into his hair at the base of his neck. It was not long before Severus was laving the pulse point on her neck, suckling at the delicate flesh.

After what seemed like a lifetime of touching, tasting and exploring one another, Hermione pulled back to catch her breath. "While this is certainly a rather welcome development, how about we take this inside, hmm? I don't believe the ghosts, students, staff or Headmistress would be too thrilled to see what comes next."

Severus fixed her with a lopsided smirk before he acquiesced. As Hermione proceeded to drag him from the corridor to inside her chambers the bedroom no doubt he made a mental note to put in a good word for Kingsley with Arthur. His friend had been right all along.