

# I Wonder

*by tialangela*

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*Chapter 1 of 1*

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### **I Wonder...**

Her left leg was broken. She knew this because it was sending a white-hot pain shooting through her and had been ever since she'd been sent sprawling on the ground by a powerful *Expelliarmus*.

As she lay there, one of the things she noticed was that rain was steadily soaking her cloak and clothes, and yet with the pain, she couldn't be arsed to do anything about it.

She was surprised she wasn't dazed, considering the impact she'd made when she'd hit-hard enough to send her wand flying from her hand.

It was as she was scrambling around searching for her wand in the mud that she saw it.

A green glow.

Green glows like that only meant one thing in the wizarding world.

Death.

And she somehow knew exactly whose death this one signalled. She didn't know how she knew, but she did.

Harry had won. He may be drained to the point of unconsciousness, but... he'd won. With relief that was soul deep, she passed into oblivion.

After an unknown length of time, the sharp stabs of pain in her leg made her slowly claw her way back into wakefulness.

The others must be fighting whatever Death Eaters remained, because she was alone.

And she realized two things: her leg was definitely broken; and someone was slowly coming towards her.

The rain made it hard for her to see clearly, but she was fairly certain that whoever it was, he was a Death Eater; there was no mistaking the dark cloak or the mask.

Suddenly, the Death Eater reached up with a shaking hand and removed the mask, and with a shock she recognized Severus Snape.

He was walking quickly; already he was close enough that she could see his hooked nose, his hair, greasy and limp from the rain, his sallow skin....

She quivered like a rabbit caught in the gaze of a hawk when she noticed that he was smiling. It was not a nice smile.

Particularly since she had yet to find her wand. Unarmed, she panicked since not having a wand made it impossible to take a calm view of such matters.

Her vision filled with the nasty smile, the raised eyebrow, and they were moving closer....

With a few more steps he reached her, towering over her where she was still sprawled on the ground in the mud.

And then the world turned upside down as he descended on her. She could see his eyes, see the malice lurking in them and it paralysed her, terrified her. She couldn't move. Her leg was throbbing fiercely—her arms were sore and tired. He was so close now, his face so near.

And then he was kissing her! Kissing her as though he were drinking from the fountain of life.

She could feel his lips on hers, cold yet soft, relentless, demanding. He smelled of smoke, of rain and grass, smells that she could taste on his lips and tongue, smells that became more intense than anything she'd experienced yet as his arms closed around her, constricting, forceful.

His mouth was moving in synch with hers, which is when she realized that *(oh my God)* she was kissing him back. No, no, no... this was wrong... she mustn't... she mustn't.... But something inside her was melting, and she couldn't help herself. The pain in her leg was forgotten and a moan came from deep inside her chest as she felt his hand grasping her head. He was deepening the kiss and she got a warm, fuzzy feeling in the pit of her stomach, her breath catching as his body pressed against her –

**BANG!**

Hermione was thrown back yet again, but this time there was a body smothering her.

Just as suddenly the weight disappeared as Ron pulled Snape's prone body off of her and proceeded to gather her in his arms. "Hermione, are you hurt? I thought it was a Death Eater attacking you, I didn't see it was Snape.... He's just Stunned, though. We'd better go before he throws it off and jinxes me back," Ron said anxiously, grimacing as he looked at the body of his former Potions Master.

"My... my leg is broken, and I can't walk...."

"That's all right, I'll carry you back to Hogwarts."

"Where is he? What happened to.... Ron, what did you do to...."

"Don't worry, he's just Stunned; let me take you to Hogwarts, and then I'll come back for him. Was he helping you to stand up?"

"Um, no – yes. Yes, he was trying to help me stand up."

"Come on, Hermione, there are still some Death Eaters around. Don't worry about the g... about Snape. He can defend himself pretty well, you know."

She didn't want to go, despite the fact that the pain in her leg came back full force and made it harder to think by the minute. It seemed very, very wrong to leave her former professor alone, unconscious. But with every movement she made, her body protested that she needed to be in the capable hands of a Healer, and Ron was pleading with her, "Hermione, please, we have to go back now. It's still too dangerous...."

Giving in, she let herself be carried away from the patch of mud where Snape lay.

When they reached the castle, she looked back and saw a dark figure approaching the man on the ground.

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In the years to come, she would remember that figure, that day and wonder what her life would have been like, had he survived Bellatrix's last spell.

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