

My Hero

by HannahSmith

Snape's letter makes Hermione furious! But she forgives him... of course.

One-shot Story

Chapter 1 of 1

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AN: This is a response to the Potter Place's Winter Prompt Challenge, prompt no. 2: Days after Hermione's Potions apprenticeship with Snape is over, and she has left, she receives a letter from Snape. What does it say?

Hogwarts

Dungeons

November 20...

Miss Granger,

Dear Hermione,

My own sweet love,

Please don't throw away this letter in anger, please bear with me – it will be my first and last letter to you.

I know I never said to you what I just wrote. I know how much you wanted me to say it. But it wouldn't have been fair to you.

Much as I love you, it will not be possible for us to spend our lives together. When you receive this, I may not be alive anymore. I'm suffering from the effects of a very dark curse, thrown at me by Malfoy during the battle. It's a curse that insidiously damages the essential life systems, not showing itself for years until it abruptly claims its victim. That happened just after you left.

I'm grateful that I did not have to send you away to prevent you from knowing it too soon, before your apprenticeship ended. A certificate with my name on it will open all doors for you; you will be able to pursue your career as Potions Mistress in any way that suits you. I'm happy to know that I have been able to do that for you, at least. And you deserve it – you were the best student I ever had, and you will be the best Potions Mistress the wizarding world has ever seen.

Please know that you are the best and most beautiful thing that ever happened to me.

Yours forever,

with all my love,

Severus

Hermione neatly folded up the letter, grabbed her purse from the table and Apparated to the gates of Hogwarts. She headed straight for the infirmary and nearly ran into Madam Pomfrey.

"How is he?" she breathed.

Madam Pomfrey beamed at her.

"Oh, much better, my dear," she said. She took Hermione's arm and led her in the direction of the ward. "I started with the potion you prepared, which restored much of his strength for a short while, exactly as you told me. And then the spell you modified – it was difficult to perform, those anti-dark spells always are, you know – but it was amazing. He's completely fine now, just very tired, of course. He'll need much rest during the next few weeks."

Hermione nodded.

"That's no problem," she said. "I already arranged with Minerva to take over his classes. After all, I'm qualified now."

"You most certainly are," said Madam Pomfrey, giving her an examining look. "My dear, don't tell me that you will be wasting your time just teaching. With your abilities you should be doing advanced research. Well, here we are. Don't stay too long."

Hermione smiled at her, but as soon as Madam Pomfrey had left her, the smile froze on her face as she opened the door to the ward and stalked towards the bed where Severus was lying.

Men, she thought furiously. Not an ounce of practical-mindedness; wasting all that precious time, suffering in silence, writing romantic letters when he thinks it's too late – full of self-denial, beautiful words, and best wishes for my brilliant but lonely future. Wait until I get my hands on him!

But when she stood next to the bed and saw him lying there, pale and exhausted, knowing that he had very nearly died, her anger disappeared. She looked at his face and he opened his eyes.

"You," he said.

"Yes, me," she replied.

"How?" he asked.

"What do you mean?" she said. "How did I find out about your illness? Or how did I find a cure against the curse? Or how did I know that you've been successfully treated today? Or how – (her tone suddenly became sharp and accusing) – did I feel when I received your letter?"

He closed his eyes.

"What do you think of 'How shall I apologize for not telling you about my condition'?" he whispered.

"Well, I should think that 'How shall I apologize for not telling you that I love you' is just as much to the point," she snapped.

And suddenly she sat down on the bed, buried her face into his blanket and cried. She felt how he lifted his arm and started stroking her hair.

"Marry me," he said.

"On one condition," she said, sniffing and looking up at him. "No more secrets."

"I cannot promise that. I'm Slytherin."

"Well, no more uncalled-for heroics then. *You're* not Gryffindor."

"Promise," he said, offering her a kleenex from the box on his bedside table.

"Good," she said, wiping her nose. "I will."

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