

Wedding Bells

by chivalric

Wedding bells do ring, but someone in the back row has something to say.

One-shot story

Chapter 1 of 1

Wedding bells do ring, but someone in the back row has something to say.

Thanks to my beta, potionmastersmistress, not only for crosschecking, but for her most useful suggestions as well. The wedding guests are only there because of her!

"If anyone here knows of a reason why this man and this woman should not be joined in holy matrimony, speak now or forever hold your peace."

The priest's words were audible even in the darkest corner of the church. Of course, no one present expected a response to this traditional saying.

The guests in the church benches, though, held their breath. One never knew... and everyone had to admit that the couple had set the wedding date in a ridiculously short amount of time. A few weeks ago they hadn't even been together!

"Wasn't Ron about to marry someone else?" Luna whispered to Ginny, who sat beside her.

"She got cold feet," Ginny whispered back. Looking round, she seemed to search for a certain blonde person.

Arthur Weasley was specifically dressed for this occasion in the most colourful Muggle clothes he had been able to find. He shot the girls a nasty look and knocked his son George hard on the head for sniggering. How dare they to interrupt such a holy...

"I object to this union."

Communal gasping. Molly Weasley coincidentally ripped the napkin apart she'd been killing slowly in her hands for the past twenty minutes. Craning her neck, she tried to see who had spoken, but even whilst doing so had to admit to herself that it was unnecessary. That voice was recognizable everywhere, simply for its rough snappishness. And of course, the owner of the voice was easy to spot as well, being so tall and so pale and so very crooked-nosed.

The said tall, dark figure stepped out of the shadows and lazily strolled towards the altar where the bride and groom stood hand in hand.

The woman, beautifully dressed in a creamy white dream of a wedding dress, shot her darkest scowl at the man approaching her. "Now that's the most dreadful thing you could have done to me, Severus!" she accused angrily, her voice betraying carefully suppressed emotions. Turning, she addressed her husband to be. "Sorry, Ron, I have to sort this out first."

The bride stepped away from the red haired young man who, she had to admit, looked undeniable good in his grey suit. But the other man, the wizard with the black hair... For some reason the way he looked at her awoke a thousand butterflies in the bride's belly, even with that thunderous expression in his face.

"How dare you to object to my marriage!" she hissed at the intruder, ignoring the butterflies and looking as thunderous as he did instead. Piercing him with furious eyes, she saw that he had bothered to search out a tailor he dared to be dressed magnificently, and not with one button too much on his very suiting frock, only for messing up her

wedding!

Standing so close to each other, they looked like day and night, like sun and shadow, like angel and devil.

The bride's words had carried throughout the church, and everyone was listening very closely. *Good question*, everyone thought. Why did the great, nasty bat object to Hermione's marriage? Snape so far had never shown any interest in the affairs of his former students.

Ron's older brother Bill took his wife's hand in his and leaned back, enjoying the spectacle.

Neville Longbottom absentmindedly ate his fingernails, as being in the same room with his former Potion master always made him nervous. Only Luna was able to hinder him starting to nibble on his fingers as well.

Ron's parents looked stern. They hadn't been too happy about that marriage, but were now here to see it through.

Hermione's parent's each had a small, knowing smile on their faces.

Ginny, one hand placed firmly on Harry's leg, held him down thus and forbade him to intervene.

"But it's Snape!" Harry hissed.

"I know!" Ginny smiled and shushed him up.

Crossing his arms over his chest, Snape calmly stated, "You cannot marry him."

"Of course I can! Why shouldn't I?" Incredulous, Hermione raised her chin in defiance.

"You don't love him." No emotion showed up in her opponent's cool voice. He could as well have told a class of how to skin mandrakes.

Gods, how much she hated him being so calm.

Clenching her teeth, Hermione took another step towards Snape. Her eyes swiftly took him in: lean figure, crooked nose, piercing eyes, and long, black, very clean hair, which was uncharacteristically tied back in a quite suitable ponytail. *Hmmmm*, she thought, slightly distracted at the sight.

"What would you know of who I love and who I don't!" she demanded just a moment later.

Taking a deep sigh, Snape saw himself forced to answer. "I recall you telling me that you do not love him. A few weeks ago, when you were... paying me a visit."

"I didn't 'pay you a visit', Severus! I lived with you, then, and I recall telling you that you are the one I wish to marry!"

More gasping.

Ginny, sitting next to Harry, leaned over and closed her husband's open mouth with her fingertips. "Told you," she whispered with a wide grin.

The bride's parents' smiles widened.

The groom's parents looked flabbergasted. Then they started, bewildered, to look round as well as if expecting someone to snatch their youngest son away from this nightmare.

Narrowing her beautiful eyes at Severus, Hermione said waspishly, *And* at that time I also told you what I expected from you that it would be time to ask me for my hand. You didn't share my opinion, though."

Slightly frustrated, Snape turned his head just enough to cast Ron Weasley a stabbing stare. "If I had known that it really meant that much to you..."

"Too late," she said airily. "I'm going to marry Ron."

"YOU WILL BLOODY NOT!"

Hermione didn't even flinch. Several of the guests mainly Professor McGonagall either gave a delighted laugh or Neville, for example tried to hide under the benches.

Realising that shouting wouldn't work, Snape hissed the next words. "I really did not expect you to go to such great measures, only to force me into marriage!" There was emotion now in his dark voice. Quite a lot of it, actually. Emotions like anger, frustration, and determination to sort this out to his favour.

Raising a questioning eyebrow, Hermione corrected him, "I'm not forcing you into anything, Severus. When you didn't ask me to marry you, I assumed you just weren't interested. Therefore, I took matters in my own hands and chose Ron instead. Luckily, he agreed instantly."

From somewhere in the shadows one might have been able to hear a tiny little sob.

A low growl emerged from the throat of the Potions master, but was somehow overpowered by another small sound, then a piercing cry that interrupted any further reply. Hermione closed her eyes for a brief second, hearing it. *At last!* she thought.

"Don't marry her, Won-Won have me!" The voice piped up from the darkest corner of the church.

"Lavender!" Ron exclaimed, whirling around with a huge, relieved smile lightening his face. *Good grief*, he thought, *I feared she wouldn't find the guts to come forward in time!*

A young blonde woman ran along the aisle, throwing herself into the waiting arms of the groom.

"Marry me, please, please, marry me! She's not good enough for you, marry me!" she pleaded, hugging him close.

"Uh... I will, Lav, sure I will. If this is what you really, really desire... although it took you a while to figure it out... remember, I had asked you and you said it's too early? Well, now you're here that alright for you, 'Mione?" Not really waiting for Hermione's answer, Ron started snogging the woman in his arms.

Grumbling, Hermione observed this for a moment, rolled her eyes, nodded curtly, and turned back to Severus. One problem out of the way. She punched a demanding finger into her love's chest. "So did you finally make up your mind? You want me to marry you instead of Ron? Yes? Then the least you could do is to propose properly."

Sneering, Snape stared at her, trying to convince her silently that this was really an unnecessary form of torture.

She just crossed her arms in a very deliberate way. "I'm waiting," she said, tapping her foot.

Gracefully dropping down on one knee, he said loud and clear, "Hermione Granger, will you marry me?" He forced himself to stay rooted in this position instead of leaping back onto his feet immediately.

Harry had Ginny's elbow rammed hard into his stomach and therefore failed to jump up. "Don't, fool," his wife whispered. "She will kill you if you ruin this! It runs exactly as planned!"

Harry stared at her and paled. If Hermione had been planning this, then for nothing in the world he would mess it up. His friend was too good at planning and too scary if someone interfered with her ideas of how things should work out.

Hermione, meanwhile, considered Severus's proposal from every possible angle whilst looking thoughtfully into the face of the man to her knees. She was dressed in a beautiful gown, the restaurant was waiting, all the guests she wanted at her marriage were present, and her parents were now grinning from ear to ear... she simply didn't see a reason to refuse.

"Fine," she snapped. "But just for the protocol had you asked me those few weeks ago, this would have been easier for all of us." Impatiently, she pulled on Severus's hand until he stood safely beside her, not letting go of him even then. After a second thought, she pulled him down and placed the lightest kiss at the corner of his mouth.

His lips curved, and his thoughts showed clearly in his face: *Merlin! I must remember to never underestimate her again.*

With a sweet, persuasive smile Hermione turned round to face the priest. "Would you mind marrying two couples instead of one today, Father?"

"Not at all, my dear," Father Thomas replied, somewhat stunned, as he had never seen the changing of partners happen so quickly and so easily. "Just step a bit closer, the lot of you. And if someone could please tell me the names of all the involved participants? Lavender Brown and... Sevu... erm Severus? That right? Severus Snape, it is? Excellent. Now then... We are here gathered together to marry..."

Behind the backs of their true loves, Ron and Hermione exchanged a brief look. Ron gave Hermione a little wink *Worked perfectly thanks!* he mouthed, grinning.

Obviously, she thought, and smiled back.

Some people were just surprisingly slow in realising what was best for them and needed a little help to come to their senses.