

Faking A Smile

by Gemxk2

Severus Snape makes a mistake casting aside Hermione Granger.

Pretending to cope

Chapter 1 of 3

Severus Snape makes a mistake casting aside Hermione Granger.

Pretending to cope

This feeling was ruining her life. She couldn't cope with the idea of never seeing him again. Oh, sure, it was fine, she wasn't bothered on the outside, but inside, she felt like her entire world had crumbled with five little words.

"I don't love you anymore."

She could fake a smile to those who only knew of her in academic circles. That was the easy part. It was trying to convince the rest of the world that she could cope with this, that she, Hermione Granger, Gryffindor know-it-all, could cope without him. But at this moment all she wanted to do was to curl up in her little room and cry her heart out.

Where had it gone wrong? Perhaps it was the way she changed every thing. Like when he wanted to go somewhere with her, she made everything complicated and changed the entire outing to suit her.

"Gods, Hermione! For just once, can we make an arrangement and KEEP TO IT?" he would scream at her in annoyance. This would cause a fight. This would usually end with some form of apology from her, a sweet smile, and some equally apologetic kisses. And then they would go around in circles, repeating the procedure until either he gave in to suit her, or the offending outing was cancelled.

Hermione remembered this with a choking sob and clutched at her bed sheets more tightly. This was too hard. How had she fucked up so badly enough to lose the one man she loved more than anyone in the world? How had she not realised that his feelings towards her had changed? Why hadn't she seen this coming?

Because she hadn't wanted to. With the fighting that they had been doing lately, she knew that it just wasn't going to work. Deep, deep down, she knew it. She had just not counted on his love for her dying. Well, no that was a lie, he still loved her. He told her so.

"Its not that I don't love you, its just I'm not IN love with you. I love you like a friend."

How much of a slap had that been? How can you tell someone you love them one day, and then the next its all Oh-sorry-Hermione-I-don't-love-you-and-now-I-don't-want-to-be-with-you-anymore? And-can-we-still-be-friends? That wasn't the acerbic Severus Snape she knew and loved. He had pitied her. She had hated that.

She couldn't stay here. She couldn't watch him lead his life with some skinny little bimbo and not want to choke the very life from her. To watch him hold another woman like he had once held her, to kiss the aforementioned bimbo, to sleep with her, to have her bear his children....

Not that she was ever to bear his children. There had been a time, shortly after him leaving her, that she had thought it may have been possible, but no. She wasn't carrying his child.

His child. She cried even harder when she thought of this. Maybe it would have brought him back to her. Maybe he would have stayed with her. But something deep in the back of her academically polished mind still niggled at her. He would have been unhappy. But she would have had him. Who was she kidding? The pair of them both knew that she wouldn't ever purposefully make him unhappy. At least he had told her straight away and not let her believe that things would get better. That would have only made it harder for her to let go.

It just pissed her off. The things that had happened the day before he told her it was over. He had kissed her, held her close, and told her he loved her. Had he lied? No, she was sure that he had loved her. At least at one point. Maybe. She gave a small whimper of frustration in the back of her throat and almost threw the bedclothes from her body. She stood up too quickly, and the room began to spin precariously, and before she fell over the mass of clothes all over her floor, she grabbed at the bed rail to steady herself. Slowly, the room came back into focus, and she moved towards the door. Twisting the handle, she heard voices coming from downstairs.

"I'm telling you, that girl is pregnant. She isn't eating properly, and the little food she does eat, she brings back up within an hour!"

"No, she isn't. Leave her alone, she misses him, that's all. Just give her some time to sort herself out"

"I'm telling you. She's bloody pregnant!"

Hermione crept to the top of the stairs and peered through the banister rail and into the lounge below. She could see her mother, father, grandmother, and from the outspoken voice shouting, she assumed her uncle was in there also.

"Look, leave her alone! She loves him, and he has broken her damn heart! What do you expect her to do? Be all hearts and smiles? Just get off her case and for God's sake, just let her get him out of her system!"

Thank you, uncle darling.

"I still say she's bloody pregnant. If she is, then she isn't welcome in this house. She can get out, I won't want her here"

Touché, Mother. I love you too.

Without a word, Hermione crept downstairs. Thankfully, her grandmother had started shouting at her mother, so no one heard or saw her magically change her clothes and straighten her hair. She slipped on a pair of heels and reached for a coat.

"Then she can come and stay with me! You call yourself her mother; all you have done for that girl is given her bloody grief since this Severus left her! She is pining for him, can't you see that?!"

"Maybe she should never have gotten mixed up in all of this magical stuff anyway! We should have burned her Hogwarts letter and sent her to a normal school!" Hermione heard her father throw in as she pulled the sash on her coat tighter.

Whatever her mother said back, Hermione didn't hear. She was too busy wrenching the door open and fleeing down the street as fast as her feet would carry her.

Maybe he had been too harsh, Severus Snape reflected as he swirled the firewhisky around in its glass. Frustrated, he downed the glass in one swift movement, his throat burning as the heated liquid burned its way down his throat. He did love her. Just not in the way that she needed him too. Perhaps he should visit her. No, she would probably slap his face for him and tell him to leave her alone. Not that he wouldn't deserve it of course.

He, Severus Snape, for the first time in his life, was uncertain of how to proceed.

He wanted to get in touch with her, by owl, Floo, personal call, telephone, letter, email, anything damn it! He needed to see if she was coping. Anything to see if she was alright.

He hated himself for hurting her. If someone had told him a few short weeks ago that he would do this to her, he would have stood up and punched them out. It just happened. It wasn't anything that she had done. Hell, it wasn't even anything that he had done. It just happened. If he could turn back time, he would, but how do you carry on from something like this?

There was no going back. Never again would he allow himself to go back to her. The once all burning fire that had represented his love for her had all but simmered into a tiny flame, and that was about to go out.

Love was supposed to be eternal. Perhaps it was only lust he felt for her. That and that alone was not enough to make him love her like he used to. They both just had to accept the facts. It was over, and she would get over him. He was doing so.

But sometimes, although he would never admit it, he missed her so much it hurt.

Confrontations are never pleasant.

Chapter 2 of 3

In which Severus pushes Hermione further away, and Hermione retaliates.

Chapter 2 -- Confrontations are never pleasant.

Within a week, Hermione had regained some form of normality in her life. It wasn't really a normal existence, but none the less she could go about her daily routine without breaking into floods of tears. The first week or so had been awful, bursting into bloody tears every time she saw something that, no matter how vague, reminded her of him. She could look at him in the eye and smile. A faked smile, but nonetheless, a smile. She was getting back to being her. Slowly, she was returning to the Hermione that everyone knew, and surely it wouldn't take much longer.

Severus Snape had had enough of the dunderheads that he was forced to teach on a daily basis. How difficult could it be to remember that in this particular potion, the asphodel must be added before the newt scales and stirred three times clockwise, not anti-clockwise? It was simple; even a child could do it!

Well perhaps not. The children in this class didn't seem to be able to. Damned idiots. Twice today he had had to save the blundering fools from scalding themselves

because they had added the ingredients too soon, or had stirred the wrong way. A simple potion. That was all this had been first thing this morning.

Well, that blasted girl had gotten it right. Damn Gryffindor know-it-all. It seemed there was one in every class now that Hermione had set the tradition. Damn that woman. That blasted infernal woman who had had him running circles around her. Did she not realise that that was not how he worked?

Maybe that was where they went wrong. They were too different. Both ways, what was done was done, and she was out of his life forever. There was no way he was going back there. He couldn't take being with her.

But he couldn't take being without her. What a twisted turn of events.

With one reflex of his arm, he swept the desk clear of all parchments and bric-a-brac. His mind wandered back to the Floo call she had made on him at 6am that morning. Why she was awake at such a godforsaken hour was beyond him.

"I need to see you. You owe me this at least, Severus."

"I owe you nothing, Miss Granger."

"You owe me the explanation that you seem so good at keeping from me"

"I OWE YOU NOTHING!" He had shouted these words at her. "Miss Granger" he had all but whispered silkily.

"Yes. You do."

She had proceeded to nag him until he arranged to meet her the following Saturday, which was the first Hogsmeade weekend. He would meet her in a small café, set aside from the main shops. More attractively, it was the exact opposite of Puddifoot's.

She was right, he reflected, pushing his greasy black hair out of his eyes. He did owe her some form of explanation. He couldn't wreck her life without telling her why. So be it. He would make this as horrible for her as he could. He would tell her that he had never loved her. That she was just a waste of his time. A good fuck, and nothing more. He would use his shockingly good ability at deceiving people to convince her that she was better off without him. Because she was better off without him.

It sounded like a plan to him. Now to convince himself that his words were real and not farce.

She was ready. Well, she was about to break into a million tiny pieces, anything to keep her from going insane with waiting for this wait to be over, but on the outside she was cool, calm, composed. The three C's her grandmother had taught her when she was a child. Her eyes swam in front of the mirror, and she closed her eyes, remembering.

"Now, Hermione, just remember. When ever you feel like your heart is breaking, never let anyone see it. Especially if it's a man. They wouldn't understand, and it just makes you look weak. Remember, my darling, always be cool, calm, and composed. Even if you are outwardly fighting and dying inside, on the outside, never let it show..."

Jayne Granger had pushed her granddaughter's bushy hair behind her ears and smiled weakly at her as she stood in front of her looking at her in confusion.

"I didn't get it then, but I get it now," she whispered to her reflection. She opened her eyes, and a wave of relief washed over her. Her eyes, although a bit red-rimmed, looked alert, her hair, now fixed with a bit of magic so to speak, was unquestionably perfect and hung in little ringlets by her shoulders. She wore her usual robes of royal blue with a striking knee length black dress underneath. Satisfied with what she saw, she spun on her black pointed heel and Apparated to meet him.

She was late, he noticed. Hermione was always late. He should have known better. He on the other hand was always on time. He made a point of being punctual at all times. It was bad manners to be late. And she well knew his position on people being bad mannered.

Five minutes later he had finished his black coffee and had then refused 2 cups from an over attentive waitress.

Ten minutes later and he was wondering where the hell she was.

Fifteen minutes later and he was blazing furious. She had requested this meeting, the least she could have done was show up!

Or perhaps that was her point. To make him wait. To make a spectacle of him. Severus Snape had been mocked for the 35 years of his life; perhaps Hermione knew this and decided she could join the ranks of bloody Gryffindors who have at one point or another made his life miserable? No, that wouldn't be her style. He would give her five more minutes and then he would leave.

He glanced out of the window and caught sight of her appearing with a loud pop, clearly having just Apparated. He watched her as she subconsciously smoothed her perfect hair and tugged at the hemline of her dress. Always so self-conscious, with so little reason to be, that was Hermione all over.

She pushed the door of the tiny little café open and glanced around quickly, her eyes coming to rest on his. She almost smiled at him and thought better of him settling for something in between a smirk and a grimace. He smirked back as she approached. He schooled his face to reveal no emotion at all as she walked towards him.

"Severus"

"Hermione."

Hermione took a deep breath. She gave the owner a quick smile and then fixed Snape with a false one. His onyx eyes stared hers down without revealing a flicker of emotion. She was saved from speaking as the ever present waitress hovered with the still steaming black coffee pot.

"Coffee, honey?" She sounded American, Hermione noted, nodding her head in acquiescence. The aroma of the slightly burnt beans hit Hermione's nostrils, and her stomach growled silently. What did she last eat? Or, more to the point, when did she last eat? Yesterday? The day before that? She wasn't sure.

"How's the food here?" She asked nobody in particular, reaching to the centre of the table for a menu.

Severus snorted. "Are you trying to make this easier, Miss Grang---"

"Don't. You. Dare."

Severus' eyes whipped back to face her, sitting a few short feet from him, her eyes blazing with fury. Quickly regaining his Dungeon Bat demeanour, he let his eyes wander back across the café, taking in the scenery it would seem to her.

"Don't you Miss Granger me. After everything, we are back to this? Do you not think you can be mature enough to address me by my given name?" The lack of emotion in her voice momentarily had Severus taken aback. He had expected her to bite her lip all the way through the meeting, something she frequently did when nervous. He stared at her slender hands, usually twisted together in knots as she did when she was trying not to panic or worry. This wasn't Hermione. Hermione was a worrier, through and through. This woman opposite him sat, cool and calm, completely unconcerned at the situation she was faced with.

"As you wish, Hermione. Although I do rather prefer to keep things formal. You were, in fact, my student, of course---"

"Oh, I'm sorry, did you remember that happy fact before or after we had sex? Did you have an attack of conscience? Is that why you left me?"

"If you would permit me to get a sentence finished, Miss Granger" he hissed through gritted teeth. "I chose to end our relationship, as you deem it, because we no longer serve a purpose for each other."

Hermione looked as though she had had the wind knocked out of her sails. Her aloof demeanour visibly dropped and her eyes hardened in determination. "Explain." She snapped, lifting the hot coffee to her lips and taking a small sip.

"What else did you expect, Miss Granger? Ours was always more of a physical relationship. I thought I had made it clear to you what my expectations were. We gave physical pleasure to each other for a small amount of time. Nothing more. I am disappointed that you anticipated more. You were always top of your class; I would have assumed that you would have worked that out by now." He gave her a sardonic, crooked smile. "No hard feelings, Miss Granger. Our arrangement has expired, or that is to say, I grew bored of your somewhat clumsy attempts at the finer points of love making. I require someone a little more..." He let his eyes wander appreciatively over a buxom witch at the next table and smirked. "Experienced."

He never saw it coming. One moment he was congratulating himself on a speech well pulled off, and the next he had dived out of his chair, holding his ruined, hot, coffee-soaked robes away from his body, cursing all the while.

Hermione stood from her chair and picked up her handbag. She carefully adjusted her robes around her and then fished in her bag for some coins which she tossed with indifference on to the table. Then, she faced him.

"Our arrangement, as you call it, was more than just sex, and you damned well know it. Do you forget? Do you?" She hissed under her breath. Taking a deep breath, she levelled her voice out and spoke again.

"Your ability to become my perfect enemy was in the few short words you said," she told him, her voice dripping with hatred. "Believe it or not, I no longer care what you do. Enjoy the coffee, Severus. I hope it warms that icicle you call a heart"

And on that note, Hermione Granger walked away.

He'd never see the tears that she spilled.

She'd never see the hurt in his eyes.

Breaking the Rules

Chapter 3 of 3

Severus Snape makes a mistake casting aside Hermione Granger.

Author's Note I feel I should say a quick thank you to all of those whom have reviewed for me so far! I should also point out that Deathly Hallows is partially unrecognised in this story. Dumbledore is dead, Voldemort also, but Snape was merely wounded by Nagini, not killed as first thought. More explained later! Also, a mention to Livvy6, who emailed to ask me was I going to update!

Chapter 3 Breaking the Rules.

The students in Professor Severus Snape's seventh year advanced Potions class snapped to attention when he stalked into their morning class. Slamming his classroom door behind him. Snape marched to the front of the class, flicking his wand at the chalkboard, instructions appearing in his small spidery handwriting. He turned to face them abruptly, his robes billowing as he did.

"You will copy my instructions, exactly, and finish your potion by the end of class." His voice was the merest of whispers with a steel undertone to it that made even the bravest of Gryffindors shrink back in trepidation. Snape was in a foul mood and out for blood. Judging from the look on his face, he did not particularly care whose blood either.

The students scrambled to collect their ingredients from the store cupboard in silence. They did not need to be told not to speak. It was standard practice in advanced Potions; speak when spoken to by your professor. If you were talking, you were not concentrating, and there was no room for error in Snape's classroom.

One Ravenclaw student giggled at something her friend said. She soon realised her folly when the silkiest of voices interrupted her.

"Pray tell, Miss Abbey, what could possibly be so amusing that you saw fit to interrupt my classroom with your bout of hysterics?" He towered over her. Katie Abbey took several steps backward in alarm, tripped over an uneven stone in the floor, and fell backwards onto her stool with a thud.

"Professor, sir, I'm sorry," she began.

"Irrelevant, Miss Abbey." He turned on his heel and glided away from the girl, who exhaled a visible sigh of relief. He spun again when he reached the end of the row, startling Katie Abbey, who jumped.

"You will pack up your things and leave my classroom. Instantly," he barked, glaring at her. She scrambled to gather her books and quills, not daring to meet his eyes. He watched in satisfaction as she ran out of the classroom, not bothering to stop for the quill she dropped.

He stalked back up to his desk and sat down, pulling a pile of third year essays towards him. Glancing up at the class, he frowned meaningfully. They were watching him, all with expressions of purest fear on their faces.

"Nobody leaves this classroom until this potion is completed to my satisfaction. I recommend you begin instead of gawping like fish."

It was enough. His words sent the students into a flurry of activity. Silent activity, he noted with a glimmer of satisfaction.

He wondered why it did not give him the thrill it used to.

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Hermione Granger on the other hand, was not doing quite so well as Severus Snape. It was the third time that morning that she had been reprimanded by Headmistress McGonagall for staring into space.

"Really, Miss Granger, I do not know what has gotten into you! You don't seem to be yourself, dear."

Hermione wondered how it was Minerva McGonagall's tone could instantly make her feel like an adolescent again. She was 21 and often dubbed the brightest witch of her age.

"I'm fine, Professor. Just thinking about my parents." Her mother and father had been murdered in the fight against Lord Voldemort. Simply in the wrong place at the wrong time. Hermione cringed at using her parents as an excuse, but she had found over the years that if she said she was thinking about them, people generally left her to her musings.

At once, Minerva McGonagall's face softened. "Time will make it easier to bear, dear"

McGonagall paused, giving Hermione a sympathetic look. "Now, child, I must ask you to run an errand for me." All business again, Hermione noted.

Forcing a smile to her face, she stood, smoothing the non-existent creases from her robes. "What can I do for you, Headmistress?"

"I need you to take these to Severus." McGonagall looked away as she handed the parchments to her Librarian. "I can't ask a student they are much too valuable. Nor do I trust a house-elf, or an owl. You don't mind, do you?" Minerva's tone left little doubt that even if Hermione did mind, she was still playing delivery girl, and that was that.

Making sure her smile never faltered, she outstretched a hand and took the papers. "Not at all, Minerva. I won't be in the Hall for supper. I've some filing to do!" With a cheeriness she didn't feel, she gathered her things and sauntered out of the Headmistress office, trying not to look perturbed.

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Katie Abbey hated Professor Snape. What sort of mean teacher made her dissect chicken livers? Eugh! It was gross and horrible, and the second she got out of there she was going to owl her mother and tell her exactly how horrible Professor Snape was!

So deep was she in thought, she dropped her knife when a curt knock sounded on the door.

"Clumsy fool! Five points from Ravenclaw for your stupidity!" He spat as he marched past her to the door. Flinging it open with his usual flurry, he came face to face with the last person he expected to brighten his chamber door.

Hermione Granger.

Feeling the knots in his stomach tighten painfully, he schooled his face to reveal no emotion. She looked bored, he noted. Remembering their last encounter, he briefly glanced down at her hands and was relieved to find them bereft of any hot liquids.

"No coffee this time, Ms. Granger?" he inquired coldly.

"I wouldn't waste my galleons trying to scald you. You aren't worth the effort," she quipped back, walking past him into his classroom. She knew he would hate that.

"Miss Abbey?" The Ravenclaw student winced on hearing her name. She had thought her presence was all but forgotten. She relaxed visibly when she realised it was Ms. Granger speaking to her and not her dreaded Potions master.

"Katie, its almost curfew. I think you are just about complete here. Why don't you run along back to Ravenclaw Tower?"

Severus bristled at her sentence. Who did the impudent wench think she was, breezing into his classroom in a cloud of alluring perfume, dismissing his detention student like that! And her robes had no business swinging around her body like that. Not that he was looking at her body. Severus Snape was not looking Ms. Granger's slender form as she chatted to the student. Her robes accentuated her hips as she walked. He wasn't seeing the way her soft, rounded backside shifted as she walked past him, gently escorting the girl out of the classroom and pointing her towards her common room.

She turned and caught him looking a lot lower south than he should have been.

Fuck, he'd just been nicked copping a glance of Granger's arse.

She clicked her fingers, and his eyes snapped back to meet hers.

"How dare you!" She marched up to him, reaching for her wand. Snape could see his next movements before they happened. She reached to her left pocket with her right hand and drew it out of her pocket. He didn't think. He stepped closer to her as she began to point her wand into his throat. Deftly moving his arms around her, he pulled her into his arms and kissed her hard.

She resisted, but only for a moment. It was still there, the want for him. Like flicking a switch. It couldn't just be turned off, Hermione realised as she began to kiss him back. She tried to pull away, but he only drew her in even closer and deepened their kiss. Giving up, Hermione pressed herself as close to him as she could, hearing a low moan of satisfaction as her body rubbed along all the right places.

"Severus..." She could barely speak, much less tell him no. He was doing wonderful things now to the side of her neck.

It happened so suddenly. One moment, she was deliciously warm, enjoying every moment of Severus' attentions. The next she felt like she had been doused with cold water. Summoning her strength, she shoved Severus away from her. He had hurt her. Beyond anyone else had ever hurt her before in her life. Reaching inside her robes once more, she thrust the documents into his chest, forcing him to catch them before they hit the ground.

"McGonagall gave me these for you." The words came out in a rush. Without waiting for a reply, Hermione fled the chamber, banging the door behind her. He heard her heels click-clack their way along the passageway, eventually fading from his hearing.

Severus allowed himself to laugh. He couldn't have been more stupid when he broke off his relationship with Hermione, he realized that now. One kiss. One fucking kiss made him realise that he wanted her more than anything he had ever wanted before. He would get her back. He would use his Slytherin charm and cunning to make sure he did. It couldn't be that difficult. She had kissed him back, so surely she still wanted him?

He reached into his desk and pulled out his Firewhiskey. Settling himself back into his chair, he poured himself a large measure. He downed the burning liquid in one swallow and poured the same amount again. It was, after all, a cause for celebration. Laughing again, Severus began to make plans to recapture his Hermione.