

In the Garden of Eve

by FicklePen

Voldemort has gained power and Hermione has lost everything. In the midst of all the chaos, Severus Snape has the one thing he always wanted; a woman to love and possess. SS/HG.

Ring-a-Ring-a-Roses.

Chapter 1 of 2

Voldemort has gained power and Hermione has lost everything. In the midst of all the chaos, Severus Snape has the one thing he always wanted; a woman to love and possess. SS/HG.

Author's Note: This story is an expansion of *The Things He Does* although it is not necessary to read it. So, enjoy!

Disclaimer: I don't own it. But if I did, Severus and Hermione would have embarked on a passionate affair.

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Chapter I:

Ring-a-Ring-a-Roses.

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Hermione ran her hands carefully through the rich and fertile soil, enjoying the gritty sensation of tiny dirt granules pushing their way beneath her fingernails. A soft, content sigh slipped passed her lips as she pulled her hands away, pausing to brush the moist pads of her fingers along the blossoming petals of baby's breath, bluebells and Siberian irises. Once again, she felt the wonder of magic at allowing her to grow these particular blossoms all in the same soil. The irises preferred a much more acidic soil to the baby's breath, and wild bluebells normally grew in woodland areas.

"Your garden is coming along rather nicely."

Her eyelids grew heavy at the sound of his cold, but mildly amused voice. The urge to harm him bodily returned with a vengeance, and she forced herself to tamp it down ruthlessly. All good things come... That particular mantra was the only saving grace in her current situation.

"It's not my garden," she returned flatly, her expression devoid of any emotion that could cause him an ounce of satisfaction.

A muscle at the corner of his mouth ticked nervously.

There was a pause — a rather strained pause — that caused her to shift restlessly on her knees.

He didn't seem to know how to reply. He never did.

Then again, he never seemed to know much of anything in the way of social skills, for all his purported intelligence. He was so awkward and gauche in her presence that it was almost painfully embarrassing. She believed she preferred it that way. It meant that he could continue on with his business, and that the sooner he was done, the sooner she was free to retire from his tedious company.

Hermione didn't expect that to happen today.

On days like today, he became maudlin to the point of being excruciatingly dull and tender towards her. It was exactly the kind of behaviour that made her want to vomit violently — on him. On his pristine, black robes that taunted her with ghostly memories... memories she had tried to put to rest, but couldn't quite seem to find the courage to bury completely.

Hermione jumped as his thumb gently caressed away the smudge of dirt across her right cheek. It took all her willpower not to bat his lingering hand away. He became more erratic and upset when she tried to resist him. He also had a tendency to spit when angered, which was quite revolting. She avoided that at all costs, lest she be drenched with his saliva of doom. She had to bite her lip to halt a hysterical laugh that threatened to burst forth as she lowered her eyes with forced bashfulness.

He drew himself together, becoming stiff and stern — utterly unyielding — as his nails bit into the supple skin of her unblemished cheek.

She winced.

"I know." He forced her to look at him, and her stomach churned at the iciness of his gaze.

"Know?" She tried her best to look confused, which was not that difficult as she had no idea what he was babbling about now.

His lips twisted into a thin, resigned smile. "You are punishing me," he made an awkward gesture, "for your... losses."

Hermione felt her fingers clench tightly into a small but deadly ball, ready to strike out.

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A Pocket Full of Posies

Chapter 2 of 2

Voldemort has gained power and Hermione has lost everything. In the midst of all the chaos, Severus Snape has the one thing he always wanted, a woman to love and possess. SS/HG.

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Chapter II:

A Pocket Full of Posies.

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He moved against her slowly.

She exhaled into his ear, a sigh of deepening pleasure. Their hands were clasped, bound together by a golden, knotted cord that sang of ancient magic.

It had belonged to his mother and father. He missed them, and so did she.

Something was building inside her. Something that was strangely foreign, but also familiar, like a baby blanket or an old slipper. She'd heard that the first time was painful. And it was.

It was almost too painful. Awkward. Clumsy... but oddly magical. A Magical Secret. AMS. Their secret and their love.

They bumped noses.

He laughed.

She felt it shake her whole body and couldn't help but laugh along with him. He liked to make her laugh; there wasn't much to be happy about these days, so they clung to it, like they clung to each other.

She watched him silently. She liked the way that his eyes would crinkle at the corners. Her cracked lips kissed the thin creases of crows-feet, both knowing that even though he was young, they'd still made a premature appearance. She loved them, all the same.

He glowed, shaggy, red locks falling into dazzling blue eyes, as his body strained attentively over hers.

Her thighs ached.

They ached fiercely, like her inner walls, stretched and filled with his love.

She was happy.

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The glare of the sun burned her eyes, making them water.

She blinked the liquid away, fluttering her lashes as a camouflage.

The anger she felt had faded, leaving her hollowed out and empty, like the shrivelled remains of the Whomping Willow.

He wanted to talk about her losses. Her losses. Loss was a funny word to use in her opinion. She hadn't lost anything. Not really. How could a person lose something if it had been taken from them? It was absolutely absurd to assume that Hermione Granger would *lose* anything. She found herself scoffing at the very thought of it and prepared herself to tell him exactly what she thought of his ridiculous assumptions.

But she found herself stopping abruptly as she looked at his hateful face.

He was eyeing her fist greedily, and she noticed that it was still clenched.

It was almost as if he was waiting for her to react violently to his thoughtless words.

Severus Snape was a many things, but thoughtless was not one of them. He never spoke without dissecting every minute detail of the sentence first.

A cold chill of comprehension trickled down her spine.

He wanted something from her. Something that she had never given him before.

He wanted the truth.

He wanted her to be angry, to take her anger out on him.

Flicking her eyes between his hungry face and her fist, she decided that she wouldn't give him the satisfaction of seeing her affected.

Instead, Hermione smiled at him coldly, pleased to note that his gloomy eyes had widened a fraction.

She took a small step forward, forcing her body not to revolt against his proximity. "Punish you for what?" She wanted to make him say it again. She wanted him to squirm like he had made her squirm for the first six years of her life at Hogwarts.

Hermione crowed inwardly with triumph as his pale cheeks flushed with mortification. She wanted him to suffer.

Snape cleared his throat. "Your losses," he repeated hoarsely, hesitantly. "You are punishing me for your losses."

The smile that played at her mouth grew into something cruel, and had Hermione noticed exactly how unhinged she looked, she would have been appalled at the sight.

Ron would have been appalled.

"You're not worth punishing, *Snape*." The words, delivered in an icy, whispered hiss, sounded oddly loud in the vacant garden.

Snape seemed bewildered, almost hurt, as if her response wasn't what he expected – what he wanted. She stared at him blankly, watching as he floundered and sputtered, trying to search for something to say.

She wondered if he would start spitting.

"Why else would you allow me to... to t-touch you, Polyjuiced *ashim*, if not to punish me?" As disbelieving and as furious as he seemed, he still couldn't say his name.

Hermione snorted. "Don't be pathetic, Severus," she spat, not waiting for him to reply. "It was never about punishing you." She allowed herself to look smug for a moment. "It was about servicing your needs – needs that you forced onto me – and I couldn't do that without an incentive. Polyjuicing yourself was the only requirement I had, and you agreed to my terms. It was a fair trade."

He looked as if he wanted to throttle her. "You enjoy it." It was a question.

She wondered if she should reply honestly. "Yes."

"But I am not worth punishing."

She raised her eyebrow. Hurt and anger radiated off of him in waves, and something akin to confusion furrowed her brow. "Do you want to be punished?"

He said nothing, and she didn't press him. This part of the conversation was over. For now.

"Will you come again tonight?" A week had passed since the last time, and she was growing restless.

He nodded brusquely. "If you wish it."

"I do."

"The lock of hair will not last forever."

"I know."

They both seemed resigned to it. They both knew that the Polyjuice potion was only reason she allowed him to be with her. Kiss her. Fuck her.

As they continued to eye each other silently, a gentle breeze tugged at the ends of her hair. If she closed her eyes, she would have heard the sound of flowering petals brushing up against one another.

She felt oddly drained.

Snape looked at her pointedly before turning to leave, his shoulders bunched together, and his manner reminding her of a kicked puppy.

Sometimes, she pitied him.

Hermione was surprised when he stopped suddenly. She watched, fascinated, as he bent down to pluck a few flowering buds from a tangled bush. Before she could understand the significance, he had pressed them into her hand. One lone flower found its way into her hair, tucked behind her ear and an errant curl.

"Little Eve," he murmured wistfully.

She touched the flower behind her ear, avoiding his eyes. "Sneaky snake."

"Adam has left the garden."

He was gone long before she could form a response.

Looking down at the multicoloured posies in her hands, Hermione wondered if he wanted to be forgiven instead of punished.

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