

Gravity

by bound_by_passion

Hermione falls in love with a stranger on a train. Very Cliche. Very Fluffy.

Gravity

Chapter 1 of 1

Hermione falls in love with a stranger on a train. Very Cliche. Very Fluffy.

Disclaimer: I do not own these characters. They belong to JKR. I make no money.

A/N: A gift fic for the lovely Workaholic1231. I have no idea if Longwood is a real place or not. In this fic it is a Wizarding Village.

The pitter-patter of rain echoed throughout the cabin, rousing Hermione from her restless sleep. It had been a less than eventful day, and the steady rocking of the train as it made its way down the track had sent her into a fitful dose. She had no idea how long she had been sleeping, but when she opened her eyes, she found the cabin dark. Night had fallen and the lights didn't seem to be working.

She thought, briefly, about calling the guard when the compartment suddenly filled with light. A man's face swam into focus, his wand the source of the light.

"Feeling well rested, Miss Granger?" he asked, his deep voice not at all kind. He sounded almost as if he had been inconvenienced. Hermione felt guilty. He must have kept the cabin dark for her comfort.

Unsure of what to say, Hermione simply nodded, tearing her gaze from his face to the window. She recognised him vaguely, though to put a name to the face was rather more taxing at the minute than it had any right to be. Clearly he knew who she was. But, then again, who didn't these days? Her name was barely out of the papers, more so than ever now that her divorce had come through. She sighed gently to herself, thinking back to how she missed her anonymity. If one simply had to be famous, she reasoned, then why ever couldn't it have been purely on academic merit, rather than for being the friend of a hero?

Life, she had come to realise, was dreadfully unfair.

She rested her head against the cold glass of the window, watching with tired eyes as the trees and hills flew by. Though she enjoyed the countryside, from the train it looked entirely too desolate. Ramshackle buildings sprawled across farmland, the tiny, flickering lights in the windows the only sign that these barns and houses were places somebody called home. She thought of her own house, way back in the overcrowded city, and of the man who occupied it. As much as she longed for the comfort of the familiar, she knew she wouldn't return. That door was one that had been closed to her.

"Where are you traveling to, Miss Granger?"

She startled at the sound of his voice.

"I hardly think it's any of your business," she said, her tone icy. She did not appreciate people prying into her business. The media did enough of that.

"Undoubtedly. However, I am simply trying to make polite conversation. There is a good hour of my journey left, and I am damned if I'm going to sit in silence."

Hermione turned to him, her eyes meeting his. They were as dark as the sky outside, the edge of the pupil almost indistinguishable from the iris. She shivered a little under his cold, assessing gaze, suddenly regretting her actions.

"I apologise, then. I have no wish to appear rude."

His eyes softened slightly and she continued.

"I'm going to stay with an old friend in Longwood. Yourself?"

A small smile curved the edges of his thin lips. It was oddly pleasant, and Hermione felt herself begin to warm to him.

"Usually I would comment that it is entirely irrelevant, but, considering I asked the impertinent question first, then I shall dignify you with a response." He leant back in his seat, folding his arms. "I am off home. To Longwood, in fact."

"Having relatives over for the festive season, I take it?"

"No. The few relatives I have take no interest in socialising with a blood-traitor like me. Besides, I make for rather miserable company. I am not a particularly sociable creature."

"And yet you're talking to me," she said, smiling slightly.

"Indeed I am."

The train sounded its horn as it sped into a tunnel. Hermione jumped at the sudden noise, digging her nails into the velvet-covered armrest. It took her a moment to realise what it was. The man in front of her raised an inky eyebrow. She felt foolish, her face burning as heat suffused her cheeks.

In an attempt to hide her embarrassment, she spoke, hoping to draw his attention to other things.

"I feel as though I know you," she said. "But I can't place a name to your face."

"I go by many names, Miss Granger, most of which are practical, a few of which are derogatory, and all of which are accurate. However, in light of who we both are, and the circumstances in which we last met, for we have met before on numerous occasions, you may call me Sir," he said with a flourish, his pale hand coming to rest upon his heart.

"Very well then," she replied, chuckling slightly. "If that's the way you like it."

He smiled. "I most certainly do."

Hermione looked down, blushing. She'd read about men like him in those romances she denied she owned. They were always cast as the dashing, daring heroes with the dark secrets, and, whilst she couldn't say he was handsome, he had a certain... something about him. It made her feel flustered, as though uncomfortable in her own skin. She picked at a loose thread on the front of her robes, embarrassed.

"However, I do insist that we forgo the formality on my part and have you call me Hermione," she said, looking at her shoes.

She felt a hand cover her own and a thrill shot through her, rendering the radiator quite unnecessary. Barely breathing, she watched as he rested their entwined hands in her lap, the rough cotton of her skirt rubbing against her skin.

"Picking at it will only make it worse," he said by way of explanation. From the corner of her she could see the smirk that told a different story. Clearly, he was rather pleased with himself. She supposed she should feel a little indignant about being taken for a fool, but couldn't quite bring herself to scold him for it. It had been so long since someone had touched her simply because they wanted to.

She sighed gently, wondering how desperate for human contact she must be to seek out comfort from a stranger. Well, an almost stranger.

They sat in silence for a while, their hands clasped gently, neither one quite able to meet the eye of the other. Hermione wondered how long it would be before he took his hand back, and whether she would miss it when it was gone. She stared at the window, unseeing, unable to concentrate on anything save the feel of his skin on her own: the calluses on his palm, the soft pads of his fingers, and the heat of his pale flesh. It was electrifying and intense and new.

It was new.

"You know, we really should get a guard to look at that light," she said when the silence became too much, her eyes flicking up to the dull lampshade hanging from the ceiling. "You can't keep using your wand. It would be dreadfully draining."

He gave her hand a squeeze and she felt the hairs on the back of her neck stand on end. She felt as though her body was on fire, though she knew it was ridiculous. She couldn't be attracted to him. She barely knew him, and Hermione Granger did not fall for men she hardly knew.

"It doesn't matter. I expect the train will be stopping soon."

She bit her lips and he gave her a sly look, the edge of his mouth curving into a lopsided smirk.

"Don't tell me you're afraid of the dark," he said in a teasing manner.

"I am not!" she said in a tone that wasn't quite convincing enough.

"Then you won't mind if I do this."

He extinguished his wand and the cabin fell into darkness. Hermione took a deep breath, ready to scream, when she felt a pair of lips brush gently across her own. They were soft and warm. She leant forward, pressing her lips harder against his, deepening the kiss. A sharp pang of desire flashed in her stomach and she felt as though it had been filled with butterflies. The feeling intensified as she felt his tongue sweep across her lower lip and begin to duel with her own.

It was heaven.

With regret she pulled away as she felt the train draw to a halt beneath her. The compartment door swung open and light shone through from the corridor beyond. The man made to stand and she followed suit, their hands still entwined. She grabbed her bag and they made their way off the train.

Standing on the platform, she watched as the train pulled away, the decorations in the compartments swinging in time with the pulse of the steam engine. She smiled as something caught her eye.

Mistletoe.

"You sly old thing," she said with a smile, watching as he flushed slightly under the oil lamps of the station.

"It would have been foolish not to take the chance. A kiss from a beautiful woman is well worth the risk of a slap."

Hermione placed a chaste kiss on his lips before pulling away. As much as she hated to leave, she had somewhere to be. Her hand felt cold without his, and she tucked it into her robe as she walked down the platform to the exit.

"Promise you'll visit," he called after her. "My door will always be open."

"How can I if I don't know your name?" she said, turning back to face him.

He smiled.

"You know it."

She did. Somehow, she'd known it all along.