

Molly's Sister

by Southern_Witch_69

Hermione is given the task of escorting Molly's sister to Hogsmeade and ends up discussing a row she's had with Severus. This is a birthday gift to the lovely mollyssister, a New Year's Eve baby! :)

Only Chapter

Chapter 1 of 1

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Disclaimer: I've borrowed some of JKR's characters for a bit of fun.

This has been written as a birthday (December 31st) gift to the lovely MollysSister (last year), who always hosts those cool SS/HG quizzes on live journal! What a gem and asset to the Granger/Snape community. Cheers, doll. Hope you like this.

Thanks go to beawasley2 for the beta read.

Hermione's mouth gaped open. "Hang on. You mean to say that Molly Weasley really has a sister? I thought she only had two brothers who were killed?"

Harry shrugged. "Apparently they've not been on speaking terms for a long time, Molly's sister moving across the pond with that Muggle bloke and all. Ron's only ever mentioned her once...said she's right moody."

"Well, Molly can be irritable at times, too. I expect it might be a family trait."

"I gather she's nothing like her sister." Harry snickered. "Bad luck, that."

"I don't mind going to meet her in town, but it seems like Mrs. Weasley would want to go herself." She smirked. "I know Mr. Weasley loves venturing into Muggle London when he can."

"Yeah, but they're busy with Victoire still. Bill and Fleur's not back from France, and besides, Mr. Weasley has a bigger workload now that he's moved up in the Ministry again."

Hermione looked down at the instructions again and scoffed. "What a particular witch! She won't use Portkeys, brooms are not her forte, and she refuses to use Apparition. Good grief."

"Too bad she won't just let you drive her down to the Burrow."

"Why does she want to go to Hogsmeade?"

"Don't know." Harry stood. "Look, I've got to get back to the Aurory. I've some things to finish up on for my meeting tomorrow. Are you going to be all right?"

"Yeah, I'm sure I will," she said, though her voice lacked enthusiasm.

"Want I should ask Ron to go?"

"No, he's looking over the shop on his own while George is on holiday. I don't want to bother him." She brightened. "Where's Ginny?"

"The Harpies are down on the continent getting ready for a game."

"Damn." She shrugged. "Right then. Nothing for it. I'll just bring a book to read on the train ride. If she's a rude old crone, I'll just read and ignore her."

"That's the ticket," Harry said, kissing her on the cheek. "Thanks, Hermione."

"No problem."

After he left, Hermione looked at her parchment again. Of all the rotten luck...to be stuck with Molly's sister! If the family had never mentioned her before, she couldn't be a pleasant woman. Harry had seemed quite shiftily when he'd asked her to do this. As she pushed the parchment into the inside pocket of her robes, her shimmering gold chain caught the light and shined brightly.

With shaky fingers, she took it out where she could look at it properly. Severus had given it to her as a gift for Christmas...just before they'd argued... before he'd left her. She'd hoped that he'd planned on giving her a ring. They'd been together as a couple for over a year and were getting along so well. She thought it would be the logical next step...wanted to be Mrs. Severus Snape.

She'd tried to hide the disappointment on her face when she'd pulled the chain and heart-shaped locket from the small, square jewelry box, but he'd seen it of course, prompting him to ask questions and to learn what she truly wanted. Hermione sighed. She hadn't meant to pressure him at all and wouldn't have said anything if he hadn't asked. For him to say such things...

"Why do you not seem pleased? I can assure you it's made of fine gold spun by goblins."

"It's beautiful. Of course I love it." She quickly fastened it and lovingly placed it against her chest. "I will treasure it always."

"But it's not what you wished for." His voice was clipped.

"Severus, why are you trying to start a fight?"

"What did you want?"

His eyes pierced hers, and the vision of opening the small box to find an engagement ring flitted through her mind. He'd invaded her privacy via Legilimency.

"How dare you!" she yelled. "You've no right!"

"Why couldn't you simply be honest?" He snorted. "A ring? You want to be my wife?"

"What's so wrong with that? I love you. I know I want to spend my life with you. That would just make things official."

"I don't need a marriage binding to prove anything to anyone. Are you not secure in our relationship?"

"Stop sneering at me, damn it! Just let me say thanks for this and be done with it. It's beautiful."

"I'm not sneering. This is my face. This is me. This is the man you claim to love. If you don't like the way I look, why would you want to be my wife? Why would you want to spend your life with me? What is it you really want? Have ulterior motives, do you? Hmmm?"

"Are you serious? I just want you."

"I don't want to get married."

"Fine."

"Ever."

"What?"

"What would you say to that?"

"But... why?"

"Personal reasons. I see no reason that we have to."

There was no reply that came to mind right away. He didn't want to be her husband...and never would. Did he not love her? Was she not worthy to be his wife?

"Don't you love me?"

Severus stood and walked to the door. "You shouldn't ask such idiotic things, Hermione. I think you and I should have some time apart...to rethink things, to decide what we truly want." The door closed behind him with a snap.

"I just want you," she whispered sadly.

That had been over two weeks before, and she'd not seen him since. He'd replied to her first owl to say that he intended to visit a friend in Germany to give them space and that he wouldn't be back for a couple of weeks. Hermione had sent him a card for his birthday, but he'd never responded, hurting her feelings terribly. Their relationship had felt so right and had seemed so solid.

For him to act in such a way made her suspicious. Had he been having doubts and simply used the first little row they had as an excuse to leave? What had she done wrong? Was it so wrong to want to marry the person she loved?

Shaking her thoughts away, she grabbed her purse and headed for the door so she could Apparate to London. She was to meet Molly's sister, Laura, at King's Cross just before eleven o'clock. "Talk about short notice," she grumbled on her way out.

Once there, she looked through the crowd expectantly. The parchment had said she'd recognize the woman when she saw her, as she looked very much like Molly Weasley. It didn't take long before she found her.

"Excuse me," she said politely. "Are you Laura?"

"That I am. Who wants to know?" she said gruffly.

Hermione's eyebrows rose. "You're her twin!" she blurted.

"So? Ain't never seen no twin afore?"

"Well, yes, but... um... I'm Hermione Granger. Hello."

"We're going to be late. The train leaves at eleven sharp."

Great. Seems right crabby! No wonder Molly never spoke of her She pasted a fake smile onto her face. "Follow me. Platform nine and three quarters is just there." She pointed to the bricked wall. "You can go first."

The woman said nothing, simply walking by with her redhead raised up in a haughty manner. The resemblance was shocking. If it weren't for the woman's poor attitude and the way she held herself, Hermione would swear it was Molly.

Wordlessly, they boarded the Hogwarts Express and found an open compartment. Laura took her shrunken trunks out of her pockets and enlarged them. "Make sure the nutter packed my things right," she muttered while digging through them, ignoring Hermione completely.

"Not many people on the train," Hermione commented. "Probably never have many taking special trips out. Most adults Apparate."

"Trying to say something?" the woman asked, glaring at her.

"Pardon?"

"You think I'm less of a witch because I don't like to Apparate, do you?"

"No! That's not what I meant. I was just trying to make conversation."

"Hmmm," the woman said suspiciously.

Feeling uncomfortable under the woman's gaze, Hermione scooted over and looked out the window, pretending interest in the countryside. There was no reason she had to keep the unpleasant woman occupied. She had enough on her mind already without letting some sour old biddy get her down. She never thought she'd be riding the Hogwarts Express again. It was nostalgic indeed.

"What're you smiling about now?"

"Just remembering times I've been on this train with my friends in the past," she answered sharply without looking at the woman.

"I don't have many good memories from this train," Laura said quietly.

"No?" Hermione turned to face her and felt a pang at the lady's expression.

"Never fit in much. Only had a handful of mates."

"Same as me then," Hermione said, warming to the lady. "When I first went to Hogwarts, I hadn't any friends at all. It took nearly two months before I finally fit in."

"Are you married?"

Hermione's smile faded. "No, I'm not."

"Got a lover, have you?"

"I do, yes."

"Where's he now? Didn't want to be bothered with escorting a lady on a train ride, eh?"

"He's... visiting a friend."

"You don't sound too convincing. Does he have another lady?"

Feeling her face turn red, Hermione said, "That's quite rude of you to say, and the answer is no. Of course he doesn't!" *D-does he? Is that where he is or why he acted that way?*

"Absolutely. Right. Shoulda'na said that. Bit defensive though, aren't you?"

"We've... had some problems lately."

"Oh?"

"Nothing that will interest you, I'm sure." She fingered the locket at her throat uncertainly.

"Seems you need an ear. Might as well kill time. Go on then."

"Well, we've been a couple for over a year, and I know that's not too long to some people, but I love him and know that I'll never want anyone else."

"And?"

"And I want to marry him one day."

"What's wrong with that?"

"He doesn't want to marry me."

"What sort of bloke is he?"

"I guess he doesn't want to be pressured into anything. He feels that we don't have to be bound together to prove anything to anyone."

"What do you say to that?"

Hermione sighed. "I suppose he's right. I just always thought that one day I'd fall in love with the man of my dreams, marry him, and have a family."

"Does he want a family?"

This caused her to laugh. "Good thing I didn't mention that. He might have moved away permanently."

"What's this? Has he left?"

"W-we," her voice cracked, "had a row on Christmas. He saw that I was disappointed with my gift, and that led to an argument...a ruddy ridiculous one, over nothing! And he more or less said that he'd not marry me and didn't plan on it. I think..."

"You think what?"

"I think maybe he's the one who's insecure about our relationship. The way he acted was so crazy, and he said things that didn't make sense." She clutched her hands into fists as she thought of it. "I mean, he should know me better than that! He looked at me so hatefully, and I told him to stop it, and then he told me to have a good look at him because that's who I loved." She shook her head. "I think he's handsome." Hermione pointed to herself. "Look at me. I'm no treasure, yet I never questioned why he loves me...or seemed to love me anyway."

"You're beautiful... too good for the likes of him."

"Oh, thank you, but please don't say that. You don't even know him."

"The rotter left you alone for just saying you wanted to share your life with him? Deserves an arse kicking if you ask me."

"I've been so lonely," Hermione said softly. "It feels like someone's died with him gone. He's not returned my last three owls. I think I've lost him."

"Maybe you'd be better for it."

"No, I don't think so. I can't imagine living like this for the rest of my life. I need him in my life. I want him to be a part of it."

"What if he still says he won't marry you?"

"He's right. We don't have to be married."

"What if he says he'll not want any children?"

"Well, I'll ask him to reconsider. I would like to have at least one, maybe two."

"What if he won't?"

"I don't know," she said honestly. "I won't let him make all of our decisions solely. He'd have to talk things over with me, and we'd have to reach a decision as a couple."

"Hmmm."

"If we disagree to the point of no return, then maybe he's right...maybe we shouldn't be together."

This surprised the witch across from her. "Are you saying you would end things?"

"What sort of life would that be? I want a partner, not a... dictator." She smiled. "We get on so well in nearly everything. I just don't know why he can't see it."

"He does see it," Laura said.

"Sorry?"

"Er... he'd be blind not to, wouldn't he?"

"I don't even know where he is right now or with whom. Maybe you're right. What if there is another woman?" Hermione sat up straighter. "Do you think I should try to find him?"

"He'd not want anyone but you. It's likely the bloke's been hiding at his house if anything...pretending to be gone."

"No, he's not there. I went by a few times."

"Oh? Maybe he was hiding or just out?"

"I doubt it."

"What did you go there for?"

"Just to feel near him. I've missed him."

"Sorry bastard. Doesn't deserve you for putting you through all this."

"Is it so much for him to ask for a little time?" She shook her head. "I was a little angry at first. I'll admit that, but then I realized that he's right. Why should I force him to do something he's not ready to do? Why shouldn't he be able to ask for time alone to think about things? He's had such a hard life, always answering to someone. I don't want to end up being someone he resents."

The witch opened her big bag and checked a timepiece. "I'm a bit hungry. You?"

"No, I've already eaten this morning."

"Nothing wrong with a light snack, is there? It's a long ride ahead of us yet."

"I'd like something to drink at least. I'm a bit parched."

Laura stood and opened the compartment door. "Ah, here comes the trolley now. Good."

"Hello, dears. Want something?"

"I'll choose," Laura said, motioning for Hermione to sit back down.

"I'd like pumpkin juice if there is any," she said, a little annoyed.

After she closed the compartment door, Laura turned back to Hermione and handed her a wineglass. "Thought we'd celebrate a little."

"This time of day?" Hermione asked incredulously.

"Why not? You've not got plans for the next few hours, have you?"

"No, but... well, all right." She took the glass.

"Pasties. Here."

"Thanks." Laura's piercing gaze unnerved her. "Is there something wrong?"

"You're very beautiful. I don't think you're told that enough."

"Er... thanks."

"I love the way your hair cascades down your back, falling where it will, softly curling here, straightening a little there."

Hermione blushed. "Have you always had... short hair?" She hoped that would change the subject. She didn't particularly care for the way the woman seemed to be sizing her up.

"I never cared much about my personal appearance, not when there was knowledge to be learned." She grinned wickedly. "You know... you've got a lovely body. Any man would be a fool not to appreciate it. Those breasts," she held out her hands in front of her, "perfectly fill my palms."

"Excuse me, Laura, but you're making me very uncomfortable!" *What the bloody hell is the crazy slag on about? She's nearly licking her lips in anticipation of something. I'll hex her arse if she comes any closer.*

The woman shrugged and took a sip of her wine. Hermione took a deep drink of her own in an attempt to calm herself. When that didn't help, she took a bite of the raspberry pasty, chewing slowly. It was delicious. She took another bite, and her teeth met with something crunchy.

"Oi," she muttered, bringing her hand to her mouth to grab what she'd bitten. "It's a ring." She quickly placed her glass and the rest of the pasty on the side and cleaned off the raspberry-covered ring with her wand. The band was made of thick gold, and there was a large, tear-shaped diamond surrounded by a small cluster of rubies and diamonds at its center. "Someone must... this..."

"Will you marry me?" Laura asked, moving to kneel in front of Hermione.

Hermione nearly dropped the ring as she sat back in shock, mouth agape, brows furrowed. "Is this some sort of joke? Did George put you up to this?"

And then she noticed something odd happening. The woman's short, pudgy nose began to lengthen and hook slightly. Her splotchy face began to pale, and her red hair darkened and lengthened.

"I've been a fool." The voice was deeper, almost silky.

"Severus?"

"Will you marry me?" he asked again, this time in his own voice and body. "I love you, Hermione, and I've been a fool. I want to spend my life with you. I don't see why marriage should change anything."

Hermione lunged forward and embraced him tightly, tears flowing from her eyes. "I'm sorry. I've missed you so much. I was so afraid you'd say we were through."

"Never." His lips found hers for a quick kiss. "Will you be my wife? Even now after all this?"

"Yes, yes, I will."

Severus looked down and took her hand in his, bringing it to his lips for a quick kiss before taking the ring she held and placing it on her finger. "Sorry. It's a little large."

"There's a spell for that," she said, flicking her wand. Hermione held her hand up and admired the ring adorning her finger. "I'm so happy. Everything is right." She sniffed and wiped her face. "Are you sure about this?"

"More than anything."

"Harry, he knew about this, didn't he? Molly doesn't really have a sister."

Severus gave her a genuine smile. "I needed help, and Potter seemed to be the best choice. Molly eagerly assisted us with a strand of hair. Sorry for the deception, but I wanted to surprise you. I wanted to be sure."

"To be sure of what?"

"That you still loved me after I acted like such a dunderhead." He frowned. "I'd received bad news that morning, and I let it influence me."

"What bad news?"

"The deal didn't go through on my book contract."

"I'm so sorry to hear that, but there are other publishers. Rotten of them to send that on Christmas morning."

"Yes, but I wanted to have my name associated with them. That's where I've been...when I haven't been hiding out at home, sulking." He touched her face softly. "They've now reconsidered. We've finalized things."

Hermione hugged him tightly. "I'm so proud of you."

"How can I make this up to you? I ruined your Christmas and hurt you deeply."

She bit her lip. "If you'll remember what I just said I wanted a few minutes ago. Maybe one day... we could have a family."

His cheeks were suddenly splotched with red, but his eyes glinted mischievously. "Indeed."

SW69's Notes: And you can guess what happened next. LOL Hope you enjoyed it.