

A Simple Cold

by Demeterschild

A series of drabble for the Common Cold challenge at GrangerSnape100.

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Chapter 1 of 1

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1: The day she found him, passed out, a lump of flesh in a dark corner of Knockturn Alley, she knew. However, she pushed it out of her mind. The altruistic Gryffindor side of her would never leave him there in the cold, so with a Levicorpus and a disillusionment charm, he was floating along in front of her while she carefully kept an eye out for any of his enemies. Her apartment was only one street over, on top of the building that housed Scrivenshaft's. Soon he was safely ensconced in her bedroom, sleeping somewhat fitfully in her queen-sized bed.

2: After several days of never leaving his bedside for more than ten minutes at a time, Hermione had nursed the man back to consciousness. When he woke up, Severus was pale, sallow and thin. He couldn't speak at first. Another 24 hours of infusing him with all of the healing she had ever learned and he was in a condition to stay awake for more than half an hour at a time. What's more, he could finally talk. When she came into his room the next morning, he was standing rather shakily at the edge of the bed.

3: Hermione stared at the half-dressed man.

"Excuse me, Professor, but what do you think you're doing?"

"It's no longer Professor, Ms. Granger, and I thank you for your hospitality, but I am leaving."

"Sir, you're sick."

"Don't be ridiculous, Ms. Granger, it's just a minor head co—" Suddenly, a fierce cough racked his body, and he was helpless to do anything but sit on the bed and let it pass. "Excuse me," he cleared his throat. "It's just a cold, Ms. Granger. I'll be quite fine." His words were weak. His breath rattled on its way through his body.

4: For her part, Hermione had dashed toward him as he began to cough and helped him to sit. Now she stood, hands on hips with a very dogged look on her face.

"Don't be ridiculous. You're not going anywhere." She looked at him for a moment to gauge how serious he was. "Besides, I have your wand. You won't get it back until I've decided that you're back at full health."

Severus, drained of energy, took one look into the face of the stubbornly philanthropic Gryffindor and resigned himself to his fate. A few more days couldn't hurt. Could they?

5: Four months later, and still he was attempting to leave at least once a week. This particular Thursday, the 22nd of February, he was resorting to the same old tactics. However, he had gained a bit of strength since that night in late October. Now he was standing forcefully above her, almost shouting at her, which was, of course, doing wonders for his respiratory system.

"For Merlin's sake, woman, if you do not give me my wand this very instant, I will—" As always, when he got too exasperated, he started to hack and cough, doubling over

with the effort.

6: Hermione, used to this sort of thing, simply walked around him and rubbed his back soothingly. She had managed to bypass some of his physical boundaries in the time since he had begun staying there. She led him to a chair, which he accepted hesitantly and helped him to sit down.

"Severus, you are sick. Quite possibly terminally ill. I hate to say it, but I have barely made any progress in the four months you have been here. You need to see a healer."

He looked down briefly and away from her. "It is simply a cold, Ms. Granger."

7: That was the proverbial straw that broke the camel's back.

"Severus Tobias Snape! This is not a cold! You practically collapse anytime you speak more than two sentences. You can't even get out of bed! For Merlin's sake, will you please take this seriously?!" She was so frustrated she was nearly in tears. It was hard to watch him repeatedly disintegrate and be incapable of doing anything.

He looked up at her defiantly.

"Fine. Call a healer if you would like. See what good it will do." He climbed shakily out of the chair and got back into bed.

8: Two days later a healer had come and gone in secrecy, telling Hermione of the diagnosis. Gingerly, the brown-haired witch now stepped into his bedroom; once again, she was nearly in tears.

"Why didn't you tell me?"

With great effort, he rolled over. "Tell you what? That I am to be an invalid for the rest of my life? That being a Death Eater finally took its toll on me? That I may never be able to use magic again? Would you be happy to hear all of those things?"

"Severus." The tears were flowing now. "What will you do?"

9: He turned his back to her.

"Just let me die."

Her response was firm and simple. "No."

Snape, however, was furious as he sat up in bed and confronted her.

"Why not?"

"Because I care about you."

"Witch, you do not care about me, you pity me. Leave me alone long enough to pass, and you will forget I ever existed."

"You're wrong, Severus. I have been taking care of you for four months now and worrying about you even longer than that. I will not let you die. We will find something to help you. I'm sure of it."

10: "I refuse to become one of your damn projects, woman!"

"Too late."

His eyes bore angrily into hers until he realized she would not give up. Resigned he muttered quietly, "Stubborn, petulant, know-it-all Gryffindors."

Hermione smiled. "We'll start researching tomorrow. Perhaps we may even be in the lab by spring."

She stood, intending to give him some space to come to terms. Before she could leave though, she heard his voice.

"Hermione?" She stopped and turned to face him. He didn't look at her, but the words were clear. "Thank you."

"You're welcome." She said and left the room.