

Intentions

by Somigliana

One possible prequel to Obsession.

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Chapter 1 of 1

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Severus Snape's customarily smooth and controlled voice was hesitant after he'd cleared his throat nervously. "Professor Granger... Hermione?"

Hermione glanced up from a sheaf of marking and smiled at him. "Yes, Severus?" The gently crackling fire in the staffroom's fireplace danced in myriad shifting, golden tones across her flawless skin. He swallowed. She was perfect. He wanted her, and each answering smile from her had him convinced that his feelings were reciprocated. After all those miserable years, he deserved her.

"Would you... like to have dinner this Saturday evening? I know of a new Italian restaurant on Diagon Alley." His heart hung suspended, exposed, and his breath caught—waiting for his perfect reward.

"Oh, Severus—" He could hear the stunned realisation in her tone and began to smirk inwardly. He'd cultivated a firm friendship—of course it would be impossible to resist his keen intellect and stimulating conversation.

His smirk withered when a slight frown creased her forehead. "I'm so sorry, Severus. I'd love to have dinner with you, my friend, but Viktor's visiting this weekend."

That bright, jubilant smile should have been for him, not at the thought of some brainless Quidditch dunderhead! She'd never mentioned him before, and he had always watched Hermione with surreptitious glances and the dogged determination of the obsessed.

She twirled her quill between her fingers and tilted her head to the side, giving him a querying look. "Do you think he'll finally propose?"

Severus was grateful that the sleeves of his teaching robes hid the reflexive tightening of his fingers into angry fists. His long fall of hair hid the tension in his jawline and the anguished bobbing of his Adam's apple as he struggled to regain control over the wave of white rage that roared through his senses.

"I wouldn't claim to know," he said, striving to keep the clipped, forced edge to his voice from filtering through the acid that surely flooded his mouth. "It is late—I should get to bed. It's Slytherin-Gryffindor third-years in the morning."

She glanced up with worry written in amber eyes. "Okay, then. Goodnight, Severus."

The sulphurous glow radiating from the cauldron lent a jaundiced cast to his pallid complexion. He worked quietly, working with deft fingers and smooth movements, a slight smile pulling at the corner of his mouth.

One last sprinkling onto the pearlescent liquid surface from between yellowed, calloused fingers, and the potion was finally ready. Before the brew turned translucent, there was a momentary flash of scarlet, which gleamed and danced eerily across his black pupils.

He picked up a delicate tea cup, and he dipped the paintbrush into the potion carefully. His smile was slightly broader as he coated the inner surface of the porcelain and blew gently across his handiwork.

He pulled a piece of parchment closer after setting the cup down gently...

Dear Hermione,

I apologise for my abrupt departure last night. Allow me to make it up to you over afternoon tea.

Your friend,

Severus Snape.

Author's note: Written for a challenge at romancingwizard. Thank you to gelsey for proof-reading.

This is intended as a companion piece to Obsession, which was my very first drabble in the fandom.