

Love Letter

by chivalric

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One-shot story

Chapter 1 of 1

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Many thanks to my wonderful beta, Dreamy_Dragon. She not only does the corrections, but nags me as well about the little inconsistencies. Dreamy, you make my stories better what more could I wish for?

In a man's letters his soul lies naked

- Samuel Johnson -

Miss Granger,

I am well aware of the fact that this letter is inappropriate; still, I find it impossible not to write it.

I do apologise. You must be shocked that I put words to paper, words that will scandalise you, words I can't say aloud. I do not wish to scandalise you, but if I don't write down what I feel, the words will break me. My emotions will break me. And yes, I am well aware of how ridiculous that must sound to you as I know that you like most people consider me unable to have emotions at all.

To make this short: it seems I have developed certain feelings for you, despite the fact that you are engaged to Mr Weasley. I assure you that I fought against them with all my might. I tried to put them out of my mind. But I failed.

Since you have started to teach at Hogwarts, my life has changed. Your appearance has changed it. You sit next to me at meals, and I can feel your physical presence like I feel the heat that, at the moment, emerges from my fireplace. I am drawn to this heat, drawn to you, like the moth is drawn to the flame. And I don't care that I would burn myself if I ever tried to touch you, like the moth is burnt inevitably to ash by the flames. I know you are not made for me; I know you are unreachable. But I long for you. I can't help it.

Most times when you see me, you greet me with a friendly 'Good morning' or a 'Hello, Severus'. You even talk to me now and then well, you try to and I hate myself that I am not even able to respond with anything else but a sneer. You must think I dislike you. Be assured that this is not the case. But there are only two possible reactions for me in your presence: to confront you with biting sarcasm or to get reduced to a stammering idiot simply by your sweet appearance. I confess that, if given the choice, I prefer to be sarcastic rather than to seem stupid.

Most times I ignore you. It is the easiest way, but that doesn't mean I don't observe your doings, peek at you out of the corner of my eye, and listen to you. I hear you laugh, but not at remarks I make as I am incapable of making anyone laugh. I would love to, though. I would love to make you laugh as you look beautiful when you do.

You always look beautiful. The way your hair caresses your face, the texture of your skin, the way you walk. Your voice when you tell dreadful Trelawney about your students' mischief is following me into my dreams. I see the colour of your eyes when I brew my potions, when I look into my tea, when I watch the sunset. When did I start to go down to the lake, thinking about you, dreaming about you? When did I become aware of the beauty of a sunset again? I don't know. But I do know that I wish you would be there with me.

I need to inform you that I spy on you. Again, I apologise, and again I must confess that I am incapable of stopping myself. I know you are not aware of my acts. I would be ashamed if you knew. After all, I am perfect when it comes to spying. But you need to know that I follow you when you patrol the corridors in the evening. I trace your every step, not knowing if I should let you know that I am there, and at a loss what I would do if you ever saw me.

When it is my turn to patrol, I find myself more often than not in front of your private rooms. Until now, I have not broken in, but I can not guarantee that I will not do so in the near future. It takes all my self-control to just stare at your doormat instead of breaking down your door. I long to be near you, to see and touch the books you own, to find out how you decorated the rooms you live in. I fear I would get into your bedroom I might even touch your pillow.

My hands are shaking whilst I write this. I didn't know how perverted I am, using my skills against an innocent woman. Poppy should have let me die in the Shrieking Shack.

I strongly recommend you strengthen your wards.

When you have classes and I have not, I usually find a task that brings me close to your classroom. I linger outside, always anxious that someone might see me. Occasionally, I feel like a student being out after curfew: I begin to understand how they feel when they see a teacher coming round the corner. It is most embarrassing, but I take the risk that McGonagall catches me only to listen to your voice through the closed door.

I favour Gryffindors lately. It is impossible for me to give detention to any of those little brats as I know that my reasons are usually the wrong ones. You are a Gryffindor. I cannot stop thinking about that fact and that you would never sentence a student wrongly. I, on the other hand, have done so all my adult life, and believe it or not, I feel bad about it. I don't even take house points as often as I used to. The students have already realised it and look at me oddly whenever I fail to act unjustly. If I continue like that, someone will get suspicious. But then, I don't care anymore. If I were cast out, I wouldn't be a threat to you anymore.

I would beg you to take that spell off me, that spell that claims my heart and my soul, but I know it was not your doing; there is no spell to be lifted. I am well aware that you don't even bother to look at me if you can help it, least to bewitch me in such a way on purpose.

I have abandoned both my worthless soul and my black, cruel heart many long years ago, being certain that I am better off without them. Therefore, it is surprisingly painful to realise that now, when it is far too late, I could do with a little heart and at least a small piece of my soul. I would give both to you. That you don't want either is a fact that seems to elude me whenever I think of you, which is nearly always, since you are my colleague and not my student any more.

When did this start? I wonder. When you first arrived to take on Vector's post? She was useless at the job anyway, and you have been always brilliant at Arithmancy. Actually, you have been brilliant in all subjects. I wish I had told you that at least once whilst you were still my student.

That you sit beside me at meals makes it impossible for me to eat, which is the reason why I always turn my back on you. The first time you took your place I so much tried to avoid your eyes I nearly broke the glass I was holding. And when you first smiled at me, I wasn't able to do anything else but growl. I don't know how to smile anymore. How can you smile at me even out of simple courtesy? How can you bear to look at me? I can't stand my own image whenever I look into a mirror.

Did I fall for you when you first told me how unjust I am, how dreadful a teacher, how unfair a Head of House? It doesn't matter really. It happened I did fall in love with you and can't do anything about it. It hurts every bit as much as the last time, and the prospect of success is even smaller than twenty years ago.

I dream of giving you this pitiful letter. I imagine you opening it, reading it. I fantasise that you will like what you read, that you will smile at me, that your face will light up like it does when you are happy. I wish for you to come into my arms and kiss me. I wish you would... but I know you are terrified enough by my presence without me harassing you further with this confession.

You are so damn young, so innocent, so very beautiful. And more, you know what is right and what is wrong. I have always struggled with this question and still do. I always and only act in my own best interest. I have done things too bad to ever mention, and I am not proud of them, but I can't forget them either. The thought of you and me together is entrancing and disgusts me at the same time. You deserve someone much, much better than me.

Still, I wish I could touch you, hold you, and kiss you. I wish I could turn my eyes away from my past for one single moment in order to make you mine. I wish I could forget only for one heartbeat that I am a former Death Eater who has served the Dark Lord, who is the one person you must hate even more than you hated the Dark Lord himself as I have betrayed you, lied to you, hurt you, tormented you from the first moment you came into my classroom.

I scold you only to survive the day. I growl only because otherwise I would start begging. Begging for a nice word. Begging for a smile. Begging for a touch. I see that my sarcasm displeases you, but without it you would be able to break the last of my defences, break down the wall I have built around me, and if that happened I would shatter to pieces. I would be unable to stand another day of my miserable life. Forgive me for my dark and bitter comments, my sarcasm; forgive me for being rude and impolite. I do not see another way to show you how much I care.

If I weren't the man I am I would give you flowers, sweets, jewellery, even those horrible small fluffy pets women seem to like for reasons I will never understand if they would please you I would get them for you. I would court you, fight for your attention, try to lure you out of Weasley's arms. But as things are, it is impossible to do so. You are the Beauty, and I am the Beast. Obviously, I will never transform into the handsome prince; I will never become good, nice, and friendly. It is my nature to be cold and cruel; I have chosen this path and will have to follow it now to my grave. There is no happy ending for the Beast that I am; this Beast will never get the princess. I would destroy you if I ever tried. So I promise to never try and get you. I promise to continue being nasty to you. It doesn't matter that it will break me. There is nothing more I can do for you.

Unfortunately, that doesn't change the fact that I want you. I want you to be mine. I want every bit of you, your body as well as your soul. I could spend endless nights just talking to you only to be able to look into your wonderful eyes. I can barely keep myself from just carrying you down to the dungeons my dungeons and devouring you entirely.

Gods, my thoughts go adrift. The image of you lying on my bed; of you looking up at me with desire in your eyes; you reaching out for me, pulling me down beside you. Undressing you would last an eternity. I would make it a pleasure for you to be touched by nothing but my hands, and I would make you beg for more, for all, for me.

If I could, I would cast a Cruciatus Curse on myself for expressing such thoughts. That I dare to have wishes like that, although knowing you would be nothing but revolted, is unforgivable. But although I know it, I still can't keep from harbouring those dreams. The fact that you are safe within Weasley's arms makes it at least easier for me to hold myself back from just kidnapping you.

If it goes on like this, if I fail to rein in my stray thoughts, I will have to quit my job as Potions master of Hogwarts. At least there would be no chance that I would do something stupid like kneeling down and hand you this sodding letter.

Before I developed those feelings for you, I truly believed that I didn't ever want to fall in love again. But I was wrong. Feeling that exquisite pain proves that I am still alive. Loving you, even from a distance, proves that the Dark Lord has not been able to destroy me completely. He has tried; they all have tried, the Dark Lord as well as my fellow Order members and my fellow Death Eaters. Being Voldemort's spy and Dumbledore's at the same time for so many years, hated by everyone, twisted me in more ways than I can explain. Friendliness, happiness, being grateful or forgiving or understanding is not in my powers anymore. But I can love you. I do love you. And all I can do to prove this is to stay away from you.

S. Snape

He looked at the words he had written. The candles cast ghostly shadows on his face and disguised the pain and the sadness in his infinite black eyes.

Sitting at his desk, deep down in the dungeons of Hogwarts, the Potions master reached out with one steady hand, picked up the parchment, and crumpled it into a dirty ball with his strong, potion-stained fingers. Then he tossed it into the flames only to see the letter fall through the grill without catching fire. It didn't matter. He had only written it to get the words out of his mind. He would never give it to her. He had promised it.

Getting up, he turned and left his rooms without another look.