

Boisson de Vie

by sara_jacqueline

Fighter. Hermione Granger has always been one. Now as her will and life wanes she will need the help of an old professor to keep her alive. Yet, everything comes down to a price. His price may just a bit steeper than others. Does she still have enough to fight in her to survive?

Only Love.

Chapter 1 of 2

Fighter. Hermione Granger has always been one. Now as her will and life wanes she will need the help of an old professor to keep her alive. Yet, everything comes down to a price. His price may just a bit steeper than others. Does she still have enough to fight in her to survive?

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Author's Notes: Hope you enjoy my first HG/SS fanfic! I thrive off ratings and reviews, so please leave plenty of both. H/D will also be a couple in this story, but there will be no sexual slash scenes.

Dedications: To my lovely betas, Joy and Nicole! I could never do it without either of you! You're both angels!

.dream as you'll forever, live as you'll die today.

Hermione Granger and Severus Snape fan fiction.

"There are four questions of value in life...

What is sacred?

Of what is the spirit made?

What is worth living for, and what is worth dying for?

The answer to each is the same.

Only love." Don Juan deMarco, 1995

The towering brick building stood behind her, and volumes of dust emphasized its protection from the Muggles. The large windows had obscenities written in the dust upon them, and she wondered why the wizards didn't spell them away or at least clean them. A rickety sign hung halfway above the boarded door: "Purge and Dowse, Ltd." A dummy dressed in unfashionable clothing stood behind the front window and acted as the gate keeper. She watched a wizard walk past her and speak to the dummy. In a

moment he had walked through the window and was gone.

The wind blew loose newspaper against the streets of London, and Hermione Granger shook off a sheet as it curled around her russet leather boot. Her tamed curls were beginning to turn into their bushy rat's nest again, and she tucked a few stray locks back into their French twist. She didn't know why she bothered when the weather in London never seemed to cooperate. Wasn't there a spell somewhere that could make her hair resist the blistering winds?

At thirty years old she wasn't married, but still dating the same Ronald Weasley she had been when she left Hogwarts. Grey hairs had begun to highlight her chestnut mane, and her large circular eyes no longer shone with such warmth. It had been a long time since they had reflected a warm honey color, and now they were just a dull, dark brown. She kept spectacles reserved for reading, and her youth had long gone. She was still quite young, blossoming in wizard years, but still her body felt empty. Hermione chewed on her lower lip and tried to forget why it felt this way. There was a perfectly clear reason why she was so morbid all of a sudden, and she refused to acknowledge it at this moment.

The small gold locket burst with color as a ray of sunshine illuminated it; Hermione smiled fondly at the pendant. A design was carved upon the front, and she remembered when Ron had thrust the locket into her hands. They had been so young then. They had been so in love. She pressed her lips to the locket and whispered a quiet incantation. She felt a familiar tug at her navel, and then in a flash of white light she was gone.

A dry heave escaped her parted lips, and she clutched at her chest as she gasped. No air seemed to fill her lungs; instead, it felt like acid. Slowly, a burning filled her lungs, and she coughed loudly as one of her hands soothed her throat as she rubbed it absently. She hated this! It shouldn't have to be this way! Was this her punishment for turning him away? Hermione felt a fresh batch of tears form in her eyes, and she willed them away. Whatever might happen, she would not cry. She was stronger than that. She would not weep for lost life! The heaving slowly subsided and she grasped the edge of the black iron fence to enter her brownstone. It was such an odd name for her home, since it was made of grey and white bricks. There was a bit of brown, but that was really only for decoration.

Slowly, she walked up the steps to her small home and paused at the top. She leaned against the white door and sighed heavily. Her chest had begun to fill again in soft sighs, and she felt her lungs begin to close once more. She would need the emergency breathing potion the moment she stepped across the threshold. With a slow flick of her wand, the white door opened, and Hermione stepped upon the dark cherry wood flooring of her corridor.

A low growl formed deep in her throat as she noticed the scattered clothing upon the floor. She refused to pick it up! It wasn't her mess, and Ronald could take care of it later. Hermione had begun to walk past the discarded garments when she bit her bottom lip. What if company came over? They would have to walk through the entry, and they would surely notice the mess. With a heavy sigh, Hermione turned around and began to pick up the pieces of clothing upon the floor. She deposited them in the dirty hamper on her way toward their bedroom.

The sound of running water and more discarded clothing throughout the room greeted her. She rolled her eyes and took a good look at her bedroom. It could use a good cleaning. The ivy green duvets were thrown back and revealed tousled white sheets. The pillows were also rumpled, and some were tossed on the floor. She moved around the bed, and threw them onto random chairs. Pillows should not be on the floor. The brown and white patterned curtains were long and appeared as if they hadn't been dusted in years, and Hermione

wondered if Ronald ever did any cleaning. The colors in her room were modern, and she had hand-selected the furnishings from a Muggle store. Ron had insisted their price was ridiculous, but she disagreed. She had to sleep here, and she wanted the place to be presentable.

A womanly giggle, followed by a quiet moan, made Hermione's head spin toward the cracked bathroom door. The quiet giggle and followed moan had been enough--she didn't need to go and see if her ears were correct. Standing up, she walked to the closet and bent down to pick up the suitcases. She didn't have to exert herself physically if she chose not. With a flick of her wand, the suitcases unzipped themselves and floated toward the bed. She cast a silencing spell around the bedroom and began to pack hurriedly.

She snapped her wrist, and her luggage turned small enough to fit into her palm. Hermione placed it into her grey slacks and glanced once more back to the bathroom. A soft yellow light was still shining through the crack beneath the door, and she could hear a soft moan escape from whomever hid behind it. She would have no doubts about this. Without a goodbye, Hermione turned and escaped her past. She decided she would go to the only place she had actually ever belonged to in the Wizarding world...Hogwarts.

Running a hand through his lank ebony hair, Professor Severus Tobias Snape, Potions master and Hogwarts Potions professor of too many years to count, allowed a soft groan to escape him. At forty-nine years old, he was weary and undeniably tired of his idiotic students believing they could pass his class with such ridiculous answers. It truly made his stomach roll to think these children listened to nothing he said and simply wrote whatever they could remember that their peers repeated to them. Not to mention the fact that most of their answers were composed of random pieces of his lectures and whatever assorted bits they could glean from books or something of the like.

Did their parents teach them nothing? If not teach them, did they at least not warn their ghastly children that he would simply not accept this sort of shoddy scholarship? Their work was unacceptable. How could parents be so careless about their children? Were they all raised by nannies and various governesses? He shook his head and decided he couldn't grade anymore. They were simply too abysmal to look at today. Perhaps he'd hand the papers all back and force his students to do the work over. Of course, they'd all receive failing grades for not getting it right the first time, but they'd be required to do it again, along with another three feet of parchment as to why they were incapable of writing quality essays.

Suddenly, a surge of power flitted through the room, and Severus glanced up from his parchment and dropped the quill. He had tugged his wand out from inside his sleeve when suddenly he caught a glimpse of bright blond hair. A soft chuckle escaped him, and all his woes over idiotic children left him. Etienne Malfoy bounced through the Potions classroom as he ran down the aisle. He was hidden by the high black slate tables, and only a brush of his blond hair could be seen. Severus waited patiently until he saw a pair of large emerald eyes appear at the front of his desk.

Etienne Malfoy dug his nails into the mahogany wood of the Potion master's desk and stood on the very tip of his toes. He was born very small and had yet to grow into his height. He was so slight that he could barely see over the edge of the desk, and there was something fawn-like in his appearance. A small smile touched his lips. Only the rise in his cheeks could be seen over the high desk. His blond hair was growing long and had been pulled back into a clasp. The clasp had been a present from Narcissa upon his last birthday. It held a snake with emerald scales, and reminded Severus of Etienne's eyes.

"Pépé!" Etienne squeaked, and he attempted to launch himself higher so Severus could see him.

With a slight mumble, Etienne was floating in the air and hovering right above the desk. It was their daily routine. Etienne laughed joyously and ran a hand over his small black robes. He pressed out all the invisible creases and then turned to Severus, beaming a smile.

"Hello, Etienne. Did you escape your father again?" Severus asked as a small smile tugged at his lips. He leaned back in his chair and allowed himself to relish these moments with his godson. He might not have a true family of his own, but it was times like this when he could just be happy with the smiling face of Etienne.

The little boy flashed Severus a coy smile and then smiled brighter. "Maybes," he said and then began to bounce in mid-air. "Oh, Pépé, will you join us at dinner tonight? Please!" A pleading look passed his face, and his large green eyes tended to open wide on their own accord.

Severus Snape found himself wondering how he had ever fallen for those large eyes. They were Lily's eyes, and he knew that, of course. It sometimes still pained him to look into the beautiful emerald of Etienne's eyes, but he had found it easier as time went on. It was so easy to find Etienne lovable. It was nearly impossible to deny the little scamp anything. "Of course, môme."

The little blond smiled brilliantly, and then his eyes flashed with something. Mischief. Oh, no, the Great Hall was in for it now. Etienne Malfoy may have been a brilliant little boy, but he was a protégé of Fred and George Weasley. He was the worst kind of prankster because he had a Potions master at his expense. Not to mention a pair of large convincing eyes. He would never be convicted for any wrongdoing. "And you'll bring me a little present?" Etienne asked coyly. The Malfoy smirk played across his face.

A deep, barking laugh left Severus as he gazed at his floating blond godson. He had a look of sheer innocence, but Severus knew whoever would be the victim of his game today would be in deep trouble. Shaking his head, Severus decided he wouldn't deny the child his fun, but he would not get the potion for him. If Etienne could manage to open the correct cabinet and retrieve the potion from his stores, it was his. Snape waved his hand at his storeroom door, and it opened immediately.

His laughter subsided, and he just smirked at the child. The little one looked a picture of pure innocence. Snape placed Etienne upon his lap, and the boy quickly pecked his cold cheek.

"Thank you," Etienne whispered and jumped off his lap, then ducked into the storeroom. Severus turned back to his grading with a smile upon his lips. He would pretend he didn't know a little thief roamed his cabinets.

As he read over the parchment, Severus could not help but glance over into his storeroom. He could hear quiet grunts and groans. Etienne's frustration with not having the capability to access any of the cabinets yet was evident. Suddenly there was a small yelp, and Severus stood up in his chair. The scream was followed by giggles, and Severus sat back down. Etienne had found the potion apparently.

A low, dull ache in his chest pained him, and Severus knew why. It had been there ever since the Second War had ended. He ran a hand through his limp hair and refused to glance at the foot of yellowing parchment before him. He was all alone in this world save for the Malfoy family. He had Draco, Narcissa, Harry, and Etienne. It used to be enough, but now it just seemed too far away.

Draco had hinted lately that he'd been feeling ill again. They both knew what that meant, but Draco refused to admit to it. He always would wait until the morning sickness was bad. He was stubborn that way. Draco would wait until the morning sickness made him so weak he could only Floo to the infirmary. He'd deny being able to get pregnant, of course. Draco would rant how unnatural it would be for a man to be pregnant, and then he would catch Potter's hurt gaze. That would be the end of it, and the whole staff knew it. It would take three months. That's how things went in the Potter-Malfoy family. Severus sighed heavily in sorrow; too soon Etienne would have a sibling, and Severus would be a distant memory. Children always needed a playmate until they found someone better.

Yes, there had been flocks of women who had wanted him. They had all wanted to taste, touch, and have a piece of the hero and spy. Now he was nothing more than the Potions master of Hogwarts. He was back to what he had been before the end of the war. The greasy bat of the dungeons. Rumored vampire and walls painted in gore! He had been a spy and possibly a hero, but that was a lifetime ago. It felt like a lifetime ago. He hadn't wanted the fame. He didn't want a witch to marry him for the fame, and then when she found out he had some money, that, too. In the end, Severus Tobias Snape craved the one thing he'd only ever seen a shimmer of in his life...love, whether it be the love of his own child or that of a woman.

"I didn't find it," Etienne said with a convincing frown as he stepped out of the stores. Severus could see the bulge in his tiny pockets and just smirked. Dinner would surely be interesting tonight.

I'm eternally grateful for all reviews, comments, e-mails, and ratings. Sincerely, Sara

Some Kinda Wonderful.

Chapter 2 of 2

Fighter. Hermione Granger has always been one. Now as her will and life wanes she will need the help of an old professor to keep her alive. Yet, everything comes down to a price. His price may just a bit steeper than others. Does she still have enough to fight in her to survive?

"I've been making a list of things they don't teach you at school...."

They don't teach you how to love somebody...

They don't teach you how to walk away from someone you don't love any longer...

They don't teach you how to know what's going on in someone else's mind...

They don't teach you what to say to someone's who dying...

They don't teach you anything worth knowing...." -Neil Geilman

Like a sharp eagle, Hermione flew down the marble staircase that led into the Entrance Hall. Healer Puddlewank had discouraged her from running so quickly and overextending her body, but she was in a hurry. She rushed down the stone staircase as fast as her high heels would take her and prayed to whatever Gods that listened that she wouldn't slip. The Great Hall's doors quietly slammed shut. Unbelievably large and wooden, they must have been charmed to cause little noise.

A small smile flitted across her features as Hermione was momentarily mesmerized by the girth of the Entrance Hall. She wondered if she had ever really stopped and looked at it.

As she stepped down to the last step, her foot slipped, and missed the step. She gulped and braced herself for the fall that would surely come. The floor would be hard and leave bruises, but hopefully it wouldn't be anything that Madam Pomfrey wouldn't be able to clean up. Hermione clenched her teeth and wrapped her arms around her torso. Her body slammed into something, but it was definitely not the floor.

Severus Snape glanced down at his golden Muggle wrist watch and gritted his teeth in frustration. He had fallen asleep at his desk, and was running late for dinner. It would do him no good to show up late for the feast. Young Master Etienne was up to his tricks today, and if he were gone, Draco would suspect he had helped. No, they couldn't have that. It was enough that poor Draco suspected him in many of the tricks pulled upon various staff members anyway. Severus Snape had never been much of a jester, and at first he thought the jokes would make him sick.

In school he'd always been the subject of cruel jokes from James Potter and Sirius Black. Yet, Etienne Malfoy brought light into his life and showed him the fun in jokes. Etienne was skilled and only played tricks on those who deserved them. The young boy willingly took all attempts at retribution, but was clever enough that no one dared to cross him. Thus was the beauty of Etienne Malfoy. He was not anything like James Potter or Sirius Black. He played a trick and received one in return; all with a bright smile.

Severus Snape picked up his pace and felt his calves burn with the strain of walking so quickly. Forty-nine years of life were beginning to wear on him, and now and again

his muscles would remind him of the various bouts of Cruciatius he had endured. Severus pushed away the feeling and was just about to lunge toward the antechamber when a weight smacked into his left side.

A pair of strong hands wrapped around Hermione's arms. Her blood surged and her heart pulsed. They clung to the thin fabric of her robe, and she felt legs tangle with hers. At least the fall wouldn't be so painful if she landed on top of someone else. She grabbed onto the front of a pair of thick black cotton robes and braced her body for the fall. Professor Snape and Hermione Granger tumbled onto the cold stone floor. Their bodies burned with heat and the proximity of another. They had clung to each other to brace against the evident fall. Their legs were curled around one another and robes brushed each other. The silver clasp which held Hermione's usual nest fell out, clattering to the ground and allowing her curls to slip out. They spiraled down her back and framed her heart-shaped face.

"Miss Granger!" Snape drawled in his usual sardonic tone. "If you would kindly remove your person from my own I would be most grateful." Although she could not see them, Hermione knew his coal-toned eyes narrowed momentarily to emphasize his point. They always did.

Hermione remained tight lipped, but used both hands to push herself upward and away from her old professor. It was awkward enough to fall flat on her arse, but she did not need the added humiliation of landing atop her old Potions professor. A curtain of shadows had fallen over his face and obscured the mysterious contours and coal dark eyes from view. A shiver slid down her body as the freezing stone touched her bare palm. She went to push herself up, and she felt her hands shake within her robes. Hermione chewed upon her lower lip and forced her knees to prop herself upward. Hermione hugged her arms to her chest to hide the quiver that continued through her body. She refused to be seen as weak or, worse, allow Professor Snape to figure out the truth.

With little to no effort, Severus pushed himself upright and dusted off his slacks. They had turned a dusty ash color from falling upon the castle floor. He puffed some air into his face, and the curtain of hair pushed from his view. He could now see the sickly demeanor in which Miss Granger held herself. Severus swallowed thickly as he took in her appearance. She was dying. He had seen the signs many times in Voldemort's Army and with Dumbledore himself. No one needed to confirm it.

Her thick mane of chestnut hair was visibly thinning. A few stray curls had fallen upon her outer robe, and Severus could tell that it would fall out by the handful if she were to run her fingers through it. Her once rosy cheeks were sunken and now deathly ashen. Dark rings had formed beneath her slightly reddened eyes. Her lips were somewhat dry, and there was no womanly glow to her skin. She very much appeared as if she had escaped a five-year stint at Azkaban.

"Miss Granger," Severus asked as his eyes raked over her body. She was thinner than she had once been. He remembered clearly how shocked he had been when she had grown into a woman. She had curves just like a woman, and Severus had watched the men of Hogwarts appreciate her. "Do you require Madam Pomfrey?"

As Professor Snape asked if she were well, Hermione reached up and tucked a loose strand of hair behind her ear. She knew her rat's nest was much more presentable now, but that was the illness at work. It was thinning her hair and controlling her curls. She craved to confess to someone that she was dying. She wanted to just cry to someone about the revelation of never having children. She never knew she had wanted to be a mother until the possibility was taken away from her. Now she would never be allowed her own children. She would die, and her legacy, her extraordinary mind, would end with her. As tears formed in her eyes, Hermione blinked them away. "No, thank you, Professor. I am well," she choked out and steered herself toward the Great Hall.

Severus watched her in silence as she slipped through the doors of the Great Hall, and swallowed thickly. He had watched tears form in her eyes and had wondered why she hadn't cried. He had always thought of the Gryffindor as a know-it-all cry-baby. Yes, she was strong. She had demonstrated her strength during the war, but even strong people cry when facing death. A feeling of loneliness crept into him as he realized that he too would probably die alone. "But she isn't alone. She has Weasely, remember?" Severus chastised himself and slipped into the antechamber.

The feast had already been served by the time he entered the Hall. Severus smirked and couldn't say he was sorry that he had missed Minerva's schedule of announcements. The Scottish witch read a set of announcements every evening, and he sincerely did not need to hear yet another warning about the Forest. He knew it was forbidden, but if the students were too thick to not heed her warning, then they should be allowed to be eaten. Severus snorted at this suggestion and then sat down in his chair. He glared at the occupants of the Great Hall and then specifically at the Gryffindor table for good measure.

"You don't say 'hello' anymore. Your manners are horrible, Uncle Severus," Draco remarked as he took a sip of his tea.

Glancing to his right, Severus realized Draco was sitting next to him. Had his eyesight gone too? He hadn't even realized Draco was there when he had entered the Great Hall. He mumbled to his plate what soup he would like, and it suddenly appeared.

"Hello, Draco," Severus said and twirled his spoon between his fingers. "And I'm not your uncle, you cheeky prat," he added as an afterthought.

Draco chuckled softly and turned to speak with Severus. "Granger is here...or is it Weasley now? Do you think McGonagall is trying to turn the staff into a bunch of Gryffindors? We should just all dye our hair red for good measure, you know."

Severus turned and glanced down at the staff table. It did appear that Minerva was allowing the Gryffindors to take over. He chuckled at the thought of Draco dying his hair red. "Watch your tongue. If that dear husband of yours hears you speak like that, he'll have your arse. Oh wait..." Severus smirked at the suggestion and chuckled when he saw Draco's sour expression.

Draco muttered quietly to himself and glared at his godfather. Severus always loved to remind him he had married into Gryffindor territory. The King of Gryffindor and Boy Who Lived Again and Again! "Shut up," Draco snapped lamely and smiled. He didn't care. He loved Harry; that's what counted. "At least I'm getting shagged. When was the last time you were shagged, Uncle Sevvie?"

Severus dropped his spoon with a quiet clatter and choked in response to Draco's question. The look on Severus' face caused Draco to burst into laughter. The entire staff stopped and looked down at them, smiling slightly. They all agreed Severus' godson, Draco, was good for Severus. He handed back what Severus so deserved. Clearing his throat, Severus turned to Draco and glared. Then his eyes stopped narrowing and he turned back to his soup. "When is dear Narcissa coming back to school? I've missed her so." A large smirk crossed his face as Draco audibly choked.

A visible glare crossed Draco's features, and it only darkened when Severus didn't add he was only joking. "Sever.."

The doors to the Great Hall were flung open, and Argus Filch flew through them. His brown pants were smeared with dirt and grime. A shirt was tucked into his pants, and it appeared that years ago it may have been clean. A scarf, which dripped with a thick slime, was draped around his neck. This would have all been normal for the infamous and evil caretaker if his hair wasn't bright neon pink. He had little hair and practically none atop his head. Yet a few thick straggly strands surrounded his head, and it appeared they had been grown with a bowl atop his head.

All four tables broke out into various volumes of laughter as they watched the caretaker rush toward the Headmistress. The staff looked torn between being horrified and amused. Miss Granger had a small smile on her face, which she attempted to hide behind her cloth napkin. Severus barked out a laugh and covered it with a cough. Draco's head shot toward him and he narrowed his eyes.

The Great Hall doors creaked and for a moment everyone just thought it was the wind. A blond boy with emerald eyes walked slowly between the tables of Hufflepuff and Slytherin. The Great Hall went silent for a moment, and then Filch burst out with anger.

"He did it!" He pointed to Etienne with a grimy finger. "I knows he did it, Headmistress! To punish me for takin' his Weasley wand last week! He did it! I knows he did!"

Etienne offered the Great Hall a coy smile, and they burst out into cheers. He remained silent, but showed the Slytherin table a glimpse of his gold Weasley wand. He had gotten it back! Slowly, Etienne made his way up to the staff table and refused to look Draco in the eye. He knew he'd be in trouble later, but for now Etienne took his victory with pure unashamed joy. The Headmistress dismissed Filch as Severus conjured a chair for Etienne.

"Etienne, you are in so much trouble, young man. Wait until your Dad hears about this," Draco hissed quietly under his breath as he continued eating his dinner.

Etienne barely listened to a word his maman exclaimed. He would always fuss over his father hearing about things, but his father would always chuckle over them. Etienne

understood he had two men for parents, but Draco was his maman because he gave birth to him. Harry was his dad because, well, just because. Etienne turned toward his godfather and flashed him a smile. He flashed him a glimpse of the wand, and Severus just shook his head.

"Eat your dinner, Etienne, or your maman will shite his pants." Etienne burst out into a fit of giggles, and Draco glared at Severus over his son's head. Severus mumbled the order to Etienne's plate, and it appeared.

Hermione watched in silence at the end of the table as her old Potions professor spoke quietly with the small child. She had actually caught glimpses of a smile upon his face, and she wondered if he was actually a nice teacher now. He seemed happy with Malfoy, and their child was a beauty. A thick lump formed in her throat at the thought of Malfoy having a child, when she would never have any. It wasn't that she would deny Malfoy happiness, but well, perhaps she would. Why did someone who had done so many horrid things in the past get to live a fulfilling life when hers was forced to end?

She sniffed quietly and felt a hand squeeze over hers. "Are you alright, dear?" Minerva asked, and her smile was sincere.

Hermione had never understood why she hadn't stayed at Hogwarts. Ronald had convinced her London would be so fantastic and that a job at the Ministry would bring them closer. She had worked various jobs at the Ministry in an attempt to make a difference, but the classroom was where she should have been. She could have made a difference at Hogwarts. She should have become a professor. Hermione nodded hastily and glanced longingly down at Professor's Snape family.

"I didn't know he had a family," she quietly whispered to Minerva as she turned to face her and went back to her dinner.

"Who, dear?" Minerva asked with a glance at Hermione.

"Well, Professor Snape, of course. I never knew he and Malfoy..." She offered an odd expression at Minerva's own.

Minerva ground her teeth in attempt to stop bursting out in laughter. Hermione thought Severus gay, and Draco his lover. If Severus could only hear that! Oh, it suddenly hit her that the Golden Trio were no longer friends. She chewed on her lower lip and sighed quietly. "Professor Malfoy is Severus' godson. Etienne is Professor Malfoy and Harry's son," she said quietly and patted Hermione's hand.

A stream of brown curls swished through the air as Hermione's head snapped around. She met the gaze of a pair of large emerald eyes. They were hidden behind black rimmed spectacles, but Hermione had to admit they looked much more fashionable now. "Harry...", she breathed quietly in shock.