

# Parody: The Amazing Potions Assistant

by *Southern\_Witch\_69*

When Snape needs help with a potion, who does he turn to? Why, Hermione the amazing Potions assistant, of course.

## Chapter 1

*Chapter 1 of 6*

When Snape needs help with a potion, who does he turn to? Why, Hermione the amazing Potions assistant, of course.

Disclaimer: I've snatched some of JKR's characters and put them into a right cheesy situation, but I've snickered while doing so, and I hope that you will, too.

As I've done before, I've taken a "popular theme" and poked fun at it. This is a parody (satirical imitation) where I use funky clichés and exaggerate them a bit. Hope you have fun with it and recognize things.

*And a big thanks to amsev for agreeing to beta this! Haha!*

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Severus Snape looked out at his class in fury! How dare Dumbledore come to him with such a preposterous idea! He looked at each student directly and gave them all a sneer. The Slytherins just put their heads down or looked away, but the damn Gryffindors, those who didn't look half afraid, looked at him with defiance. Then his eyes settled on his latest 'problem!' Thanks to Dumbledore, that was. But how could he deny the old man anything?

"Miss Granger!" he snarled. "Ten points from Gryffindor! You are not to chop anything for your housemates!" He smirked at her look of shock. Served her right. Damn know-it-all!

"But, Professor Snape, I was instructed to help him with all his work by Madam Pomfrey!" Hermione said indignantly *Greasy old Git!* How dare he take house points for *nothing!* Neville's fingers on both hands were still healing from his last Potions class experiment gone wrong.

"You dare speak out against me? Detention tonight at 8 o'clock!" he raged. He didn't have time for this today. The day was bad enough already knowing he had to work more closely with the Potter brat!

"That's unfair, that is!" Weasley piped up.

Too late. Snape turned his piercing black eyes in his direction.

Ron gulped when he saw the cold look on his face.

"Mr. Weasley... detention with Filch tonight. I think you will quite enjoy what he's having his pupils do." Snape chuckled evilly and turned quickly. His robes billowing out in his wake making him look all the more menacing.

Ron didn't like that sound of that. No telling what Filch would have him do.

Hermione gasped. Professor Snape was a git. She couldn't stand him. He was so unfair. He hadn't been this nasty in weeks. Something must have happened. She wondered if it had something to do with Voldemort. Lord, the man must be so lonely. Always down in his cold, drafty dungeon! No one to talk to! Liked to spend his time picking on Gryffindors, he did. She vowed to find out what was wrong with him.

"I want three feet of parchment on what goes wrong if you chop your sinswood either too small or too large for your hair growing potions. By next class period. Dismissed!" Snape raved at the class. Damn students. Only a choice few would ever amount to anything. His eyes met those of Potter's. Snape cocked his head sideways. Was that a challenge? He tried to tap into Potter's mind with Legilimens, but Potter pushed him out quickly. He smirked. Very good. At least the fool had learned something from him. He took note of Potter's smirk and almost felt pride swell in his chest. Pride! Bigger all! Granger's eyes didn't miss a thing. She was looking at him now. *What was she thinking?* he wondered.

"Granger! Come here. Potter, Weasley, out!" Weasley jumped to leave, though Potter took his time. Potter had grown into a formidable foe these last two years, thanks to all of Dumbledore and Snape's hard work. Snape hoped somewhere deep inside of him that it would save his life. If Potter walked away from the final battle with his life, then so would the rest of the world. Those who didn't die before, that was. He watched Granger walk timidly to his desk and saw fear in her eyes. Good!

Potter was still slowly gathering his things. He had no time for this, but provoking Potter would only take longer. "Follow me, Miss Granger," he said, giving her a nasty smirk.

Hermione followed him closely to his office. She sat down in a chair in front of his desk while he closed the door. He looked tired and angry. What had she done now? Suddenly, he stopped and began to sway. She ran to him and threw an arm around his waist. "Professor? Are you all right?"

She felt him straighten under her hold. He looked down to her arms encircling his waist, and then he looked back at her raising an eyebrow.

"Sorry! I was just"

"Yes, yes," he said impatiently. "Just being a bloody, valiant Gryffindor! Sit!" he barked.

She sat quickly. What was he on about? He was staring at her oddly. This was not good. She nervously waited for him to speak. He probably wanted to discuss the terms of her detention. "I want you to know that this has not been my decision," he began coldly. "I am to request that you join me in making an elixir...making it work better actually. I will not discuss the type until you have agreed."

She blinked. "Why me, sir?"

He smirked. Little know-it-all! "Because you are, unfortunately for me, the best Potions student at Hogwarts. Thanks to Dumbledore, I have to get something done and little time to do it." He didn't need to divulge that last bit of information to her. "If you accept this, you can tell no one what we are doing. This will take up a lot of your time over the next couple of weeks. Can you handle it?"

That was a challenge! He watched the emotions that passed through her face. He knew she would accept. She'd never turn down a chance to participate in anything important no matter how she felt about him.

She eyed him curiously. Surely there was another professor or student just as competent as she. Though it was a huge compliment coming from Snape. "Professor, I accept."

"Ten points to Gryffindor," he said suddenly. *What the hell? Where did that come from?* He watched her face brighten immensely. He had just given her back the points he had taken. *Unreal!* He had never done that. He chalked up his actions to relief that she had accepted.

The room swayed just a bit, and he brought a hand to his right temple. *Damn, bloody elixir!* He couldn't get it right and now needed help. He should never have tested it on himself.

He smelled gardenia suddenly. Why? He peeked open an eye. She was gone. Little chit had left! No, she didn't leave. She was right there next to him, smelling delicious. *Down boy! Stop thinking that way. Damn elixir!* He felt odd really.

"Professor," she said softly. "Where is your bed?"

*What?* he wanted to yell, but he knew she did not mean it in a sexual way. He could hear the concern dripping off her tongue. He simply pointed a thumb behind him to a door. To his horror, she put an arm around his waist and placed one of his over her shoulders to help him up. He needed the help. He couldn't just shrug her off. If he could just sleep for a little while, he'd be all right. *Damn, the door is warded.* He'd have to speak the password in front of her. Perhaps she would not figure it out.

"Lily," he said as quickly as possible. A sideways glance told him that she knew exactly who Lily was. Her eyes had widened. "Not a word, Granger," he said coldly. She nodded her agreement. *Damn know-it-all!*

She grinned to herself. Lily, was it? Harry's mum's name! So her guess had been right. Hermione always wondered exactly why Snape hated Harry's dad so much and then extended that hate to Harry as well. As soon as they came through the door, it closed behind them. They were shrouded in darkness. He was really weak and was leaning more heavily on her. What had he done to himself?

"*Lumos,*" she whispered. Light flared from her wand. She saw the fireplace and pointed her wand to it. *Incendio.* Fire sprang to life. She could see the room more clearly now. It seemed so depressing. No wonder Snape was always miserable. He surrounded himself with misery.

She steered him to the bed. Each passing minute, she could feel him lose more of himself. He was very unsteady. Obviously he had taken something. But what? She didn't know if she should go to Madam Pomfrey or to Professor Dumbledore. She couldn't just leave him this way. Not hard, calculating Professor Snape. He had never been weak in front of her, and she knew she would pay for witnessing this. He would hold it against her, even though it was not her fault.

"Granger..." he tried to speak.

"Shhh. Just lie down." She helped him sit on the bed. "Professor, I need to know what is wrong so that I can help you."

He snorted. "You can't possibly..." A hitch in his side stopped his words. He looked into her face. She was concerned about him. Deeply. He'd done nothing but be nasty to her for the last seven years, yet here she was trying to help him. She was brushing his hair out of his face. Just like Lily used to. He closed his eyes and thought of Lily. Lily before she'd jilted him for that damn Potter! Lily who'd snuck off with him and helped him with potions. Lily that had kissed him so softly.

"Professor!" He opened his eyes and saw fear in hers. *Damn!* His hand was on her cheek. He let it fall roughly to the bed. "Tell me, Professor. What did you take? Who do I go to?"

"Dumbledore," he said. With the last bit of energy he could muster, he pointed to his fireplace in hope that she would know how to use Floo powder. She nodded her understanding, and he closed his eyes.

Hermione looked down into Snape's face. What had he been thinking of when he'd put his hand on her face? She knew it wasn't her. His eyes had been closed, and he had smiled softly. That smile had made him look... cute. Almost. For a snarky professor anyway. Then she thought of his password: Lily. He had loved Harry's mum. She'd

think of that later. For now, she needed Dumbledore. She grabbed some powder and threw it into the fire. "Dumbledore's office," she said. It turned green, and she stepped through. Immediately, she sprang out of Dumbledore's fireplace, coughing. The smoke had gotten to her.

"Hermione!" It was Harry. He was sitting across from the headmaster. How'd he get there so fast?

"Sorry!" she said, coughing.

Dumbledore looked at her oddly. "Did you come from Severus' chambers?" She nodded vigorously. "Is he all right?" She shook her head, still trying to cough up some inhaled smoke.

"Harry, you and she need to follow me." He went to the fireplace and flooed to Snape's chambers again.

Hermione was finally able to breathe easily. "Harry, something is wrong with him."

"He brought you to his chambers?" Harry seemed dumbstruck.

"Come on! He needs us!" She hurried forward with Harry right behind her. They were each in Snape's chambers a moment later. "Professor?"

"What's he doing here?" Snape spat when he saw Harry. But Hermione thought he looked... relieved.

"Harry is here at my request, Severus. Did you explain to Miss Granger what we needed her help for?" Snape shook his head weakly. "I was just telling Harry. I'll explain it to her then."

"Will he be all right?" Hermione asked, her voice full of concern. Snape's dark eyes met hers. After a moment, his eyes narrowed, and she forced herself to look to the headmaster. Dumbledore's eyes were twinkling as he took in the exchange between the two of them.

"Don't worry, Hermione. He will be fine. He just needed this." He produced a vial. "He must have forgotten to take it this morning. Severus has been trying to make a potion for Harry here." Her eyes met Harry's, and he smiled sheepishly. "It's a magic enhancer. It would enable Harry to only speak a command and have it done. It doesn't last long though. But when the time comes, his wand may be useless in a duel with Voldemort. He will need this. We have come across an ancient formula for an elixir. It does just this. But, alas, it is incomplete. There are two steps missing."

Hermione looked at Snape. His eyes were closed. Dumbledore began speaking again. "Severus has been trying to make it, but the missing steps are giving him trouble. He's been testing it on himself. It seems that with the wrong ingredients, it works as a magic depleter instead. See how weak he is?" She nodded. "We've made a potion to restore strength, but this depletion has to run its course. It lasts approximately one day. He has to sip from the restoring potion every three hours, or he will become too weak."

"He needs my help with the missing steps," Hermione summed up the situation. It would explain why he could hardly move. It touched her that he was doing this for Harry. Had a soft spot for Harry after all, did he?

"That's correct, Miss Granger. I asked Severus who the best Potions student would be. He said it was you. He said you rival all other professors and would trust no one but... how did he say it? Oh, yes... would trust no one but that know-it-all Granger." Dumbledore smiled.

Harry sniggered.

She made a rude face at Snape, but his eyes were closed.

Dumbledore's eyes twinkled. "Miss Granger, this is something we will keep between us four only. I know you will do this for Harry. I need you to wait here until Severus comes around. It shouldn't be long. You'll be able to get instruction then. Harry and I have other matters to get back to."

"All right, Hermione?" Harry asked, his green eyes locking with hers.

"Yes. Go on, Harry," she urged. As soon as they left, she made her way to Snape's bed. She looked down at his relaxed, sleeping face. Know-it-all, was she? She smiled in spite of herself though. This only meant that he respected her on some level no matter how he treated her. Having no chair to sit on, she sat on his bed next to him. She reached out and brushed back some dark hair that had plastered itself to his face. "Why do you have to be such a git?" she asked his sleeping form.

She froze. He'd opened his eyes, and her hand was still in his hair.

"Because, Miss Granger, it's in my nature to be one," he drawled. She felt her face heat up and pulled her hand away. "I feel better. You may go now, but meet me again tonight for your detention, shall we call it?"

She didn't move. "Do you need something before I go? Water?" She knew he was still weak.

"Water is fine," he relented. He watched her walk to his bathroom to fetch some water for him. He could still smell her perfume on the air. *Lovely* *What the hell?* She was only eighteen! A student! Potter's friend. Perhaps, his girlfriend! He had to learn to be at least a little nice to her though. He needed her. No, he needed her help with the ruddy potion he'd come across and had the idiot notion to let Dumbledore know about it. See where his loyalty got him? He heard her chanting a cooling spell on the water as she carried it to him.

She set the glass on the nightstand before sitting back next to him. He was about to ask her what she was playing at when she moved forward and pulled him up against her. One hand held him against her chest while the other was fluffing his pillows. Did she not realize that his mouth was only an inch away from one of her breasts? *Silly, girl!* He was a man. She should not tease him so. Even if he was evil Professor Snape.

"That should be better. Try to just inch up just a bit there." Her voice was soothing. With her help, he moved up just a tad. She laid him back on his pillows and reached for the water. He made to snatch the glass from her when she said, "Let me help you." He decided to play along. He was not as weak as he had been earlier. He could hold his own glass, but he let her nurse him. She cupped the back of his head while she brought the glass to his lips. He took a long drink. A slight bit ran down his chin. She set the glass aside and softly wiped the water away with a finger. Her eyes met his and locked. He broke into her mind easily, and she never knew it.

He saw flashes of things that had happened to her. Malfoy in front of her calling her a name. Snape saw her pull a wand, but lower it. Then she slapped him. Another flash. Harry moving close for a kiss, she put her finger on his lips to tell him no. Another flash. Himself making a comment about her teeth and then her crying. Another flash. Harry kissing her hand. Another flash. Harry kissing Ginny and then smiling apologetically at Hermione. He broke away from her thoughts.

She had a soft look in her eyes. "Do you want me to stay?"

Yes. "No, Miss Granger, that will be all," he was able to say in his normal voice.

"All right. I'll see you tonight then," she said quickly. He watched as she made her way to his closed door. "Er?" She looked at him. He said nothing. "Lily." The door opened for her and closed after she walked through it.

He'd have to change that damn password now.

He thought about the memories that he'd seen flashing through her mind. She had slapped Malfoy, and he had sped away afraid. He chuckled. There was fire in her, that was for sure. How many times had he caught her glaring at him? He thought about what he'd seen between her and Harry. Harry had made a go for her, but she'd turned

him down. Why? Didn't every girl want some of the hero? Harry with that young Weasley. The way he'd looked to Hermione as he kissed the other girl. It was as if he didn't really want to kiss Weasley because he knew it bothered Hermione. But why? She had refused him. Then he thought of her memory regarding him. His face was horrible as he told her he saw no difference in her teeth. Which he had. Malfoy had hit her with a hex that had made them grow profusely. He felt guilty suddenly as he realized he had made her cry the way she had after.

Guilt fled. He had to be this way. It was the only way he knew. And he would be damned if anyone would get close to him the way Lily had. He would be sure to be cautious around her. There was an attraction there, yes, but it was nothing that he couldn't handle.

----- Whoot! Chapter End -----

A/N: Hahaha... The bad part is that this was actually part of an actual story I'd planned to write long ago. I just cheesed it up a little more. Anyway, I'm so glad I've lived and learned since then, but what fun to poke fun at it now, eh? More to come shortly.

## Chapter 2

*Chapter 2 of 6*

When Snape needs help with a potion, who does he turn to? Why, Hermione the amazing Potions assistant, of course.

Disclaimer: Hmm... I am not Steve Vander Arse. I am not trying to make money from JKR's hard work. I'm just having fun for free.

Remember, this is... a parody of sorts. Enjoy and be amused.

*Thanks go to ladyinthecloak for letting me know what funkies she sees! Good gal, that.*

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Hermione was doing her Arithmancy homework at a table in the common room when she looked over to the chair by the fire. Ginny had fallen asleep with her head on Harry's lap. Harry, though, was staring at Hermione. She knew that he loved her. And boy did she love him, too. They could never be though. Ron couldn't handle it, and Ginny would be crushed. And who were they to hurt the Weasleys like that? The whole family had done nothing but support them for all their years knowing them. Ron had been in love with her, but she loved Harry. She'd told Harry no. She told him she would never date either of them, as both their friendships meant more to her than anything no matter what she felt on a personal level. As she had told those words to Ron, too, when he'd finally plucked up the courage to ask her out, she'd noticed Harry's relief and sadness.

It was not long after that he'd told her that he really loved her still, and he had suggested that they keep it a secret until later. But she could not live a lie. Would not. Ginny was always saying how she loved Harry. It would have hurt her too badly. So, Hermione had had to suck it up. She told Harry why, and he understood, but he vowed she would always have a place in his heart. She told him he would always be in hers. They did snog occasionally, accidental like, but then one would realize what was happening and put a stop to it. Just to be safe, they had taken to always having someone with them. There was no chance they would do anything rash that way. Times like these, though, her alone doing homework, people around doing their own thing, and him in his chair with Ginny, it seemed they were the only ones in the world. Their eyes saying all that needed to be said. Ron broke their silent conversation...as he usually did.

"Oy! Just getting back in from the infirmary! Transfigured a finger into a knife. Quite painful, that was!" Ron said excitedly, laughing at himself.

Hermione began to giggle, and Harry's laughter chimed in. It was moments like these that she knew she had made the best decision for them all. Ron had gone on to date Luna and had never looked back. Harry was with Ginny. He was happy whether he would admit it to her or not. Ginny was happy. She was happy. Wait. Was she though? She hadn't really had any romantic interests in anyone except Harry since Victor Krum. The Bulgarian Bon Bon!!

No one seemed to be able to keep up with her intellectual discussions. Anyone she spoke with, she would have to explain exactly what she was talking about before actually saying what she set out to. Sometimes being so smart and having such different views on things could be rough...people didn't rave about her being the brightest witch of the whole bloody age for nothing. No boy at Hogwarts struck her as an intellectual equal...except Malfoy, of course, but she'd never be with that Slytherin! No way!!

Slytherin! That made her think of Slytherin's head of house: Severus Snape. She wondered how he was feeling and then remembered her impending detention *Dh no!* It was nearly eight already!! *Blast!* Hastily, she gathered her things and told Harry to have Ginny bring them over to her personal Head Girl dorm for her when she could. Ginny was the only one besides Harry that had her password. She'd never even given it to Ron. As quickly as she could, she went to Snape's class. It was cold, dark, and empty. Where was he? "Professor?" she called. She made her way to this office. There was a crack in the door. She knocked. Nothing. Should she just go in?

"Professor? It's HermGranger," she said. She shivered. She had an odd feeling that someone was watching her. She turned slowly. It was the ghost of the Bloody Baron. Yikes!

He leered at her wickedly. His silvery blood splashes on his ghostly robes shined in the dim light. Where had he got that? Butchering someone? A student in the dungeons perhaps? He was a silent ghost as far as she knew, speaking only with his gestures and expressions, but she would have to try anyway.

"Is Professor Snape in there?"

He came close to her, and she almost screamed. He gave off such ill feelings. "Go in," he rasped. She backed in through the door, opening it as she went. Thank goodness the door was open. She didn't know if she could have managed the knob. The ghost was following her, giving her the creeps! *What the hell?* He was normally antisocial. "My head of house is in his chambers. Go to him." That said, he went back through the door and into the dungeons.

Her heart began beating wildly. She couldn't just barge in on his personal chambers, could she? That would be really inappropriate. As an afterthought, she closed and locked his office door for good measure, even though she knew ghosts could pass through anyway. Snape might need her, so she had a decision to make. She ran to the door to his chambers. "Lily!" The door opened right away. He hadn't changed it even though she knew it. She saw him kneeling next to his chair by the fire. "Professor!"

The door closed behind her. His cloak and robes were off. He was in black trousers and a crisp button up black shirt. He looked up at her, his face deathly white. "What have you done?" she shrieked. Then she realized what he was after. The vial was on the stand next to the chair. As quickly as possible, she swiped it and knelt down with him. She didn't know how much to give him, so she handed it to him. Awkwardly, she pulled some of his weight onto her body so that he could use what strength he had to administer the elixir to himself. She noted that he took half the vial. She filed that information away for later use.

"You tried some more of Harry's potion??!?" she asked. He nodded once. "Oh, you idiot. You shouldn't have had any more of that today! Why didn't you wait for me?"

He didn't reply, and his eyes took on a dazed look.

"Can you make it to the bed?" He shook his head once, eyes drooping even more. She summoned pillows and a blanket to her. It was hard arranging the pillows with one hand while the other was helping to hold up a grown man, a thickly muscled grown man at that. *Boy, that robe and frock coat sure did hide all this great body from me. I never would have known. Sometimes he looks pregnant with all that puffing and billowing, and other times, he looks scrawny. Hmmm... Interesting indeed.*

She couldn't let him go. He would fall flat on his face. So, she began to lie back and pulled him with her. His eyes were half open still, piercing hers. "Don't worry, Professor, I won't take advantage of you," she said wryly and could have sworn that the corner of his lips twitched as if to smile. She positioned a pillow and guided his body as slowly as she could, but...uh oh!...he ended up lying partially over her, pinning her there. It was the only way she could get him down. His head was on a pillow now, although his forehead was touching the side of her face. Half of his bulk was over her; instead of feeling trapped as she truly was, she felt oddly comfortable. Just a twitch of her wand had the blanket pulled up over them.

"I'm sorry, Professor," she whispered. "This will have to do."

~~~~~Sevvie and Mione sitting in a tree... k l s l n g~~~~~

Severus was propped up on one elbow, looking at the sleeping girl next to him, her face shadowed by the dying fire. His arm was still around her as it had been when he'd awakened. The only reason he hadn't moved it was because she was holding it to her. One of his legs had somehow become snaked between hers. He could feel her heat burning into his upper thigh. Her back pressed against his chest. Why didn't he move really? Why didn't he wake her? It just felt too good. He'd not lain so intimately with a woman in years. Yes, he'd bedded women. Many in fact. But, after the deed was done, he'd left them quickly. He hated intimacy. It reminded him of Lily. And of, ultimately, rejection.

She began stirring in his arms. He didn't pull away. She was mumbling. He could just make out a few things. "Harry.... no... hurt Ron... stop." That sent his mind reeling. She was dreaming of Harry, who was obviously trying to kiss her or worse. She didn't want to hurt Weasley. It made sense. That had to be why she'd turned Harry down. Weasley. So, she, like him, had let the one she loved go to be with another because of circumstances. Weasley. That imbecile wouldn't have been able to cope with his two best mates being an item. It was obvious that Harry loved her. He'd seen it on his face in her mind's flashes. But the insolent prat hadn't fought for her. Just as he hadn't fought for Lily. Instead he opted for Weasley's sister while pining for Hermione. Just as he himself opted for the Dark Arts while pining for Lily.

There was more to Miss Granger than he'd given her credit for. He knew how it felt to watch the one who belonged to your heart hold another. Yet, she was always of good temperament. Never letting her more dark thoughts seep through. Interesting. Oh, she'd get angry occasionally, but was otherwise pleasant. Which unnerved him. He was always hateful to her, and she had twice cared for him until he was stronger. He remembered her words when she'd found him earlier. She said he should have waited for her. Yes, he should have, but he thought he had finally broken one of the steps and couldn't wait to try it. This was a mistake. It gave him an immediate weakening side effect. Good thing he hadn't changed his password. But how she dared to come into his personal chambers on her own was beyond thinking! He'd have to see about taking points away for that. And hadn't she called him an idiot? More points! Hell, detention! A real one.

It was nearly midnight. They had been like this for four hours. Reluctantly, he pulled his leg away and removed his arm from her person. He didn't get up quickly enough. She turned over, put her head on his chest, one arm over his stomach, and one leg over both of his. He froze. What could he do now? If he moved, it would surely wake her up, and that would embarrass them both. Yes, he'd have to take more points now. He tightened his hold on her and placed a hand on her back. What would it hurt to just lay here for a bit? Couldn't he just let himself feel something for once? Her bushy hair was tickling his chin; he allowed his other hand to come up and smooth it down. Gardenia. Her scent. Hermione. His fingers traced her cheek and her bottom lip. He pulled his hand away. He had no right to take such liberties. She stirred again. This time he knew she was awake. He heard her gasp, and he smirked.

Ever so slowly she lifted herself away from him. Finally, she turned her eyes to his. They were watching her.

"Sorry?" she said, but it sounded more like a question.

He raised an eyebrow.

"Detention tomorrow night then?"

This caused him to smirk. He sat up quickly and smoothed out his shirt.

"Be here after dinner," he snapped.

She scampered away as quickly as she could. Before she made it to the door, though, he stopped her. "Miss Granger?" He saw her grow rigid. "What possessed you to come into my personal chambers uninvited tonight?" He made sure to give her a cold stare for good measure.

"The... the Bloody Baron told me to," she said softly, as if unsure of herself.

"Did he?" His tone was unbelieving.

"Yes."

"You may go now," he said, dismissing her. *Bloody Baron?! Highly unlikely. He rarely spoke and would never talk to a Mudblood. Oops, Muggle-born* He would summon him right away. Strength fully restored, he got up and made his way to his office. The Slytherin ghost was just coming in through a wall.

"Feeling better?" it rasped.

"Yes. Did you tell her to come in there?" Snape asked immediately.

"I did."

"May I ask why you would reveal your voice to one such as that?" he asked the ghost. How dare he send students into his chamber? Though he was glad... deep down. She had saved him from draining away completely.

"I knew you needed her. She will birth you two Slytherins."

"What?" Snape said incredulously, snapping his head in a double take.

"If you would mate, that is," the ghost said in his normal eerie tone.

"Rubbish! She is a student!"

"She is of age. Her cleverness mixed with yours would do your progeny well. Slytherin would surely prevail at all it does with such a genetic mixture. Powerful Snake. Powerful Lioness. Indeed."

"Good night, Baron," Snape said, dismissing the ghost this time. It said nothing, just merely floated through another wall. The audacity of a ghost giving him advice *On mating at that!* He shrugged it off. He needed to review those notes to see where he had gone wrong. More than once his thoughts strayed to Hermione. When he'd been holding her, his erection had been painfully stiff. No woman had ever just lain in his arms and provoked such a reaction from him. Maybe it was time to visit one of his old friends. It had been a while. Yes, that was the problem. Nothing more.

~~~~~Sevvie and Mione sitting in a tree... k l s s l n g~~~~~

Hermione would never be able to look into Snape's eyes again. She had been all over him when she'd woken up. It was obvious that it'd displeased him, though he restrained from being too cold toward her somehow. How had she allowed herself to fall asleep? Blimey! He would think her some chit out for a shag with a professor! "Oh, no..." she murmured with a sigh.

"Detention went all right?" It was Harry. Alone. Waiting for her outside her dorm. He had been under his trusty Invisibility Cloak.

She flung her arms around him and let him hold her as she told him everything. He was staring at her in awe. He didn't curse or call Snape names, but she knew he was thinking it. "He probably knows you fell asleep while waiting for him to come around. I doubt that he will hold it against you. It will be all right." His voice had gone low, and he was moving towards her lips.

"Harry..." She tried to stop him, but his lips touched hers. The kiss was soft and warm. She opened her mouth to him, and he pushed her against a wall as if trying to melt into her. As quickly as the kiss started, it stopped. Harry pulled away, holding his lips as if she had burned them.

"Hermione, I am sorry. I don't know why I can't keep off of you!" he blurted, apparently angry at his lack of self-control. "And... hang on! You let me!" His voice was accusing, but his eyes understood.

"I'm no better than you. I still feel for you, I suppose, but we can't," she said softly.

"I know." He was thinking for a moment. "Hermione, maybe if you would date someone and not be alone. Maybe it would give us both a restraint, you know?"

"Don't tell me I have not thought of it. No one interests me except you. No one is compatible with me. They all look at me as if I am a talking textbook." Harry sniggered, and she eyed him wearily. "If I could, I would, Harry. We just have to try harder."

"I'm sorry to put you through this, Mione. I should never have told you how I felt about you."

"Harry, I am glad that you did. Do you know how it makes me feel that someone could actually love me? Someone like you? I know Ron did, but it was just because I was always around. You loved me for me." She sighed. "Go get some sleep. Why are you out anyway?"

"I just wanted to check on you. Night, Mione."

"Night, Harry." She watched as he put his cloak back on and listened as his footsteps retreated down the corridor. Maybe in another time or place things could have been different for both of them, but it would never come to pass. Not unless Ginny ever had a sudden change of heart. That would likely be never. She would have to follow his advice. She needed to find someone to get her mind off of Harry. It would be better for them both. Her thoughts traveled to dark piercing eyes, ones that seemed to study her. Oh, no! She could not be attracted to Snape! That would never happen.

She gave her portrait the password and climbed through into the common room she shared with Draco in the Head Boy and Girl dorm. Draco was sprawled out by the fire, but he was not alone. He was half dressed, clad only in silk boxers. She could just make out Susan Bones' form under him when he saw her. He tried to shield the girl from her view. "Damn it, Granger! I thought you were out for a while."

She yawned and walked slowly to her room. "Why don't you learn to use your bed, Draco?" she asked in a bored voice.

He made a face at her. "I don't want someone in my bed!" That earned him a slap on the shoulder from his 'friend' there. "Er, that is to say, I have too much clutter in there. Good night!" She grinned at him, and he winked at her.

After washing up, she put on her nightclothes and crept into bed. Where could she find someone at Hogwarts who would and could actually hold a conversation with her? Who would find her attractive? She always gave more care for learning than for primping. She felt she shouldn't have to impress anyone. Maybe it was time though. That Zach Smith was fairly intelligent, but he was a pompous idiot! Maybe she should rethink her position with Draco. That brought a giggle to her lips. No way!

Once again, her thoughts drifted back to Professor Snape. He had it all: dark, shoulder length hair; black eyes that could penetrate into a girl's soul; a tall frame; a thick body; and was a strong man in character and in body. If he weren't such an arse, he would be a great man for a woman. She thought about Harry's mum. Did she once feel something for him? It was apparent that he had once loved her. How did a woman get to know Severus Snape? He couldn't have always been so unapproachable, right? Had Lily somehow made him turn hateful? She wanted to find out. She wanted to know him. Though she wasn't going to come out and say it out loud. Maybe if she had a kinship with him, it would take her mind off of Harry. Just a friendly relationship. It just might work, but the only problem was the man himself. He could barely stand to be in her company. Or so it seemed to her.

~~~~~ Whoot! Chapter End ~~~~~

AN: Hahaha... I know. Why Harry? Ah, the great ship Harmony...one of my weaknesses. Really.

## Chapter 3

*Chapter 3 of 6*

When Snape needs help with a potion, who does he turn to? Why, Hermione the amazing Potions assistant, of course.

Disclaimer: Still not Steve Vander Arse, so please don't sue me for using JKR's stuff. I'm not trying to make money off of this.

*Thanks go to ladyinthecloak for being kind enough to let me know what needs fixing after she snickers through this.*

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"Headmaster, I must implore you to change your mind. I can try harder. I don't want to be around Granger," Snape pleaded once again to Dumbledore and his deaf ears.

"Severus, you said it yourself. She is the only one smart enough to help you. Why can't you stand to be in the same room as her? I've never noticed any unpleasant body odor. And besides, you've taught her for seven years running and know how to work with her," Dumbledore said softly, though his eyes twinkled merrily.

*Damn him!* He knew why. He just wanted him to say it. "Because I am attracted to her in a less than professorly way! Happy now I've said it? I don't want to be put in a position where I want to..."

"Feel something?" the headmaster inquired, knowing the answer already.

"Yes! I don't want to become emotionally attached to anyone, much less one of Potter's followers!" Severus sounded harsher than he'd meant to. This wasn't Dumbledore's fault. He should keep his tone neutral. Well, actually it was the blighter's fault, wasn't it?

"I thought you had worked out your feelings where Harry was concerned?" The old man had the audacity to smile! How dare he?

"I have. I know I have to work with him. I accept his role in our mission. However, that doesn't mean I have to be all that fond of him, now does it?" Snape said bitterly.

"Afraid you will lose a woman to a Potter for a second time?"

"Damn it!" Snape raged. "Don't bring her up!"

"Severus, I can assure you that Harry is in a relationship with Ginny Weasley. Though he and Hermione are very close indeed, their time to become a couple has passed. I would say that makes her available." Dumbledore dug into a candy dish and popped some candy into his mouth and regarded Severus thoughtfully.

"Headmaster! She is a student! I cannot!" What was the old fool playing at?

"She is of age, Severus. The year is almost out. She'll be leaving Hogwarts soon. Get to know her. Maybe she is what you need to complete yourself. Times of living in the past are over."

"I'm not still living in the past. I am just doing my duty to you and this establishment. I can't go about seducing students if I am to do my job here," he said, trying to make his mentor understand.

"Since when is falling in love seducing someone?" Dumbledore countered.

"I can never love anyone!" Snape bit out.

"You can. And you will. I think you should rethink things. Look into her mind, Severus. Let it tell you what she will not," Dumbledore suggested. "Care for a lemon drop?"

"No, thanks," Snape said, turning on his heel to leave, flinging his robes out dramatically. The old fool! Imagine him trying to put this into his head. Of all people! Even if he would be with Hermione, he would ruin her. He was too demanding, too dark, too jealous. He would drain away all that was good in her. And it was nearly time to see her once again, for they had work to do.

When he walked into his empty class, she was there sitting in her normal chair, waiting patiently for him. He saw that she bit her lip and her cheeks turned pink when she saw him, but her gaze did not waver. Good. Wouldn't do for her to be skittish, would it? He smirked and beckoned for her to follow him. Maybe he should take a look into her mind for just a bit. She was smart though. She would catch on if he looked into her eyes for too long. Perhaps. He'd have to trick her. It wouldn't be a slip in like the other time.

"Miss Granger? Are you sure you will not speak of this to anyone?" He cocked an eyebrow in her direction expectantly.

"Of course not," she said. "I would never betray you... or Harry."

Or Harry indeed! "I'll be the judge of that. Sit here," he said roughly, pointing to a chair. He summoned a chair and sat across from her. "I am going to hold your wrists in my palms. I am going to ask you questions. Do not break eye contact with me. I will feel it in your pulse and see it in your eyes if you lie."

She gulped nervously. This man trusted no one, did he? She hoped that he would not interrogate her too personally, but she would answer anything truthfully. She held out her hands for him to take. He placed his thumbs just over her more prominent veins in each wrist. "I'm going to look into your eyes now. I need to get a feel of you before I start questioning. Do not break eye contact. Blinking is okay."

Her light brown eyes met his openly. She would hide nothing from him. He could see that already without the need to ask her. Flashes broke through. He saw Draco lying on top of a naked girl, yet he winked at Hermione. That had to have been recent. His hair had just been styled that way. Granger probably walked in on him and some tart. Harry's face. Close. Then he saw and heard the entire conversation. He was saying he couldn't keep off of her, and she'd let him do those things. This darkened his mood. When was this? Bloody hell! It was after she'd left his place the night before. He'd just had a flash of him asking about detention. She was holding him tightly telling him how embarrassed she was to have been caught touching him... twice. What's this? Potter telling her she needed to find someone so that they could both move on. Her saying that nobody could possibly feel anything for her nor could anyone keep up with her intellectually. Indeed someone could! He could do that!

He had just about seen enough when another flash came to him. It was his sleeping face nestled close to hers. She kissed his cheek tenderly and told him to please feel better. That touched him. He didn't remember that! Either this was some dream she'd had, or she had actually done it. This warmed him. He composed himself and found his cold demeanor again.

"I'm ready, Miss Granger." She nodded. "I will ask a series of questions. You will give me an answer. Do not elaborate." She nodded again.

"Are you loyal to Harry Potter?"

"Yes."

"Are you in love with him?"

"Not anymore."

"But, you do still harbor feelings for him?"

"Yes."

"No one could make you betray his secrets?"

"Never."

"Is there nobody else you are so fiercely loyal to?"

"Ron Weasley."

"Are you in love with him?"

"Never."

"Do you have feelings for Draco Malfoy?"

"Certainly not."

"Does Mr. Malfoy have feelings for you?"

"We are only friends."

"Do you trust Mr. Malfoy to be loyal to Potter?"

"Yes."

"Do you trust me?"

"Yes."

"Why do you not have a relationship with Potter?"

"It would have hurt Ron and his sister. We should be friends. All of us."

"Do you desire a relationship with anyone?"

"Yes, but no one in particular."

"So, if you did find someone, you would still be loyal to our cause?"

"Yes. Above all else."

"All right, Miss Granger. You answered them all honestly, though I did sense a hesitation on the question about me. Do you not trust me?" he asked sourly.

"Yes, of course, I do, Professor. I just... Do you trust me?" She turned the question back on him. He seemed shocked for a moment. That would show him! What was he playing at? Asking all those questions about Harry and Ron!

"No, I do not," he said coldly. He watched as she bit her lip; her eyes watered.

"Whwhat?" She was shocked. She was more trustworthy than anyone.

He leaned forward and said in a hard voice, "I trust precious few."

She pulled her hands from his. "Should I leave then? Maybe you can get someone you actually do trust in here!" She was angry.

He was taken aback only for a moment. "You will stay and earn my trust, Miss Granger," he said, sneering at her.

Why did she take this? This man said she had to earn his trust! That was unreal. He should have known that she would never betray Harry and that meant not betraying him since he was helping Harry. "Just how am I supposed to do that?" she said hotly, wanting to point out that she'd saved his ungrateful arse twice already.

"Tell me about yourself. What do you plan to do after this year? What do you lack? What do you need?" he asked all at once.

She leaned back in her chair and started talking. "I don't know what I could say about myself that you don't already know."

"Talk, girl," he demanded.

"All right. I love to read and learn new things. Anything. You never know what you will need or when. It's why most people call me clever. I plan to help Harry in any way that I can, and if I have to, I will die for him when the time comes. If I live through that, then I would like to teach or write. Give something back to the community. Use what I know to help others." She smiled to herself. He was watching her, fascinated. He could see her sincerity. She was very loyal indeed, but she was also intelligent. She wanted to give something back to the community. How decent.

She began talking again. "What I am lacking... I guess that would be a real social life. I have always had Harry and Ron since I started school...well, after a few months anyway. I used to mope about alone before that. Ginny and I became very close as well. I helped to get her and Harry together. I tend to be more interested in my studies. I would like to have as many N.E.W.T.s as possible. I'm not complaining. I get enough adventure through Ron and Harry. I don't care if I am popular or not. It is enough for me."

He smiled softly. She put all else before herself. She didn't worry about things the way most girls her age did. She was mature...so much more mature than he'd realized or imagined. That had happened recently, hadn't it? She knew what she needed for the future, and she strived to achieve it. Though her two mates tended to bring her along with them no matter where they went, she didn't mind. She probably went along to be sure they were kept in line.

She spoke once more. "What do I need? I don't know that I need much. My parents are well off money-wise... for Muggles, that is. I need a bigger bedroom! I have loads of books, and if I get any more, I won't have a place to put them. I need someone to share my life with one day, though I don't know that I will find anyone to match me. Anyone who likes to discuss things that I enjoy are usually pompous pricks!" Her hand flew to her mouth. "Sorry!"

He laughed for the first time in her company. He hadn't laughed in years it seemed. Especially not the last few. Before long, she was giggling with him. "Hermione, you are something else. I do trust you." He gauged her reaction that he had treated her as an equal and called her by her first name.

Her eyes widened a bit, but she seemed pleased. "Thank you, Professor. That makes me feel better. Speaking of feeling better, how are you?"

He didn't mind that she saw him as a friend now, but she needed to not be so formal. Not if maybe... "I think that when we are alone as we are now, you can call me Severus. And I have not tried any strange potions yet today, so I am feeling fine." He gave her one of his more charming smiles, or at least he hoped it was charming, as it had been a while since he'd lifted his lips so far up. Dumbledore was right. She would not go after Harry for a relationship. And he knew she wanted someone. Someone that oddly enough fit his description. They were more alike than he had thought. He might try this.

"S-Severus. All right," she agreed, saying his name for the first time in his presence. Her insides tingled when she'd said it. She would bet that no other student had been allowed to address him by his given name. That made her feel special. Could it be that he was tired of being down here alone? That he needed a friend? Her?

"Now, let's go over my notes so far. I will show you the parts that are missing, the things I have tried since, and the consequences." He got up and went to his desk. She followed and summoned a chair close to his. He felt comfortable with her so close to him. He hated when people invaded his space, but it was okay for her to do it. That alone should prove something to him. He loved her fragrance and had spent most of the night before inhaling the scent of the pillow she had used. It was one of the main reasons he had gone to Dumbledore. He shouldn't be acting like a schoolboy over some seventh-year girl. Woman, he corrected. She was definitely a woman now, wasn't she?

Possibly soon to be his.

~~~~~ Whoot! Chapter End ~~~~~

AN: Wow, falling so quickly and easily... and what Slytherin tactics, Severus. Oh my. ~snigger~ Those supercool Dumbledores always shocked me in the past. "Here, Severus, get some." No way. Hmm. I think I've used that already. Whoops. Ah well... live and learn

# Chapter 4

Chapter 4 of 6

When Snape needs help with a potion, who does he turn to? Why, Hermione the amazing Potions assistant, of course.

Disclaimer: I am Steve Vander Arse. I am plotting to take over JKR's world. Psyche! Or is that Sike!? Anyway, have fun with this tragedy, I mean, parody.

*Thanks go to poor ladyinthecloak who valiantly offered to snicker at beta this for me.*

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A week later, Hermione was sitting in Snape's chair looking over their notes while he went up to get something from the infirmary. Collin Creevey came in. "Hello, Hermione."

"Howdy, Collin, what's up?" she asked cautiously. What was this little bloke doing here?

"Well, I just wanted to show you something, and oddly enough I thought you might be here."

Hermione blinked. "I have er... detention. Yeah, that's it."

"Yes, he does give you detention often, doesn't he?" Collin grinned. "I think the old bat has a crush on you. Look at this."

He pulled out a still portrait from a folder and handed it to Hermione. It was a picture of her sitting in the Great Hall. Snape was about five feet behind her, looking at her. He had the softest expression that she had ever seen on his face. Her stomach tingled. Could he really look at her like that? And, if so, why didn't he do it where she could see it? She cleared her throat.

"Collin, I think you are mistaken. Either he was looking at something else or smiling about something he'd recently heard. Surely this hasn't anything to do with me!"

"Or smiling because he knew he would be seeing you later on that evening in detention. I just wanted you to be on the look out, that's all. Don't need no old professor trying to get his hooks into you," Collin said sweetly, obviously worried. "You want that picture?"

She nodded. "Yes. I'd like to keep it."

"Thought you might," he said with a smirk and turned to leave.

She slipped the photo into a notebook and went back to reading. Or trying to anyway. That photo had done something to her. Could her professor actually have a 'crush' on her? It wasn't possible. They had become great friends. He had even slacked off on everyone in class. Well, mostly. Neville still seemed to irk him beyond reason. She did realize that she found him more appealing than ever before. He was just so cute in a brooding, older man sort of way.

"I have it," he said, walking into the class.

And she noticed she loved the way he walked. It was as if each step was filled with purpose, power, and dares for anyone to challenge him. And his robes. Oh how they billowed out behind him! Sweet Nimue's cousin's uncle! It was as if he was some dark angel come to take over the world.

"All right, but I was reading this. Something just doesn't seem right. It's like if we add that, it will react adversely with this, its counterpart." She pointed to the notes. He didn't say anything. She looked up into his face. He had a blank expression. "What?"

"I hadn't thought of that," he said simply, apparently in awe of her brilliance.

She smiled, pleased with herself.

"I think though if we reduced the amount of the first one and added this amount, it could work."

"But the first one is stated exactly in the step process. If we alter that, we alter everything. There's just something else," she said, more to herself than anything.

"I have an idea," he said and walked into his office. While he was in his office, he took a large sip of scotch from his bottle. That was the third time she'd pointed out something that should have been rather obvious to him. He didn't mind though. They worked well together. She was quite pleasant company. If he was in a sour mood, she would keep quiet. If he felt like talking, she would talk. He'd caught her staring at him often. He could only imagine what she thought when she saw him. Could she possibly be interested? He found the small vial that he had come in for. "Let's try this," he said.

"Awareness. Clever," she agreed. "Maybe just a few drops, and then I will test it."

"You will not be testing anything here. Only I will be," he told her sharply.

"Prof... Severus, you always test everything. I think it is time to give your body a break. I trust you will take good care of me if this doesn't work. Just lay me on your couch until I wake up," she said, waving her hand as if the answer had been there the whole while.

*She wants to give my body a break, does she? Wants me to lay her on the couch, eh?* He thought wickedly. He'd love to be the caretaker for once. That much was true. But would he be able to stop himself from kissing her as she had kissed him that once (though he was not supposed to know she had done it)?

"We'll see."

They added a few drops to the already bubbling potion. "Now, one drop of this," he instructed her as he stirred. She did as he asked. He stirred it once more and turned down the fire. "It needs to simmer for five minutes."

"Will you let me try?" she asked. She hoped that he would. She hated seeing him in his weakened state. He was too strong and too vital to be knocked down so much. She wouldn't mind being a tester.

"Hermione... is there any possibility that you could be pregnant?" he asked suddenly. He saw her cheeks redden. He hoped this discussion would lead to something else.

"No, I am not," she said positively.

"Precautions don't always work though. Do you want me to do a scan on you just to be sure before you take the elixir?" He had to keep a smirk in check as she turned an even deeper shade of red.

"Trust me. I'm not," she said and then shrunk back a little as he leaned in closer.

"How can you be so sure? Tested yourself lately, have you?" He raised an eyebrow.

She bit her lip. He loved that. It made him want to bite it for her.

She looked down. "I've never... I haven't done anything of the sort... to, you know... get that way."

"I find that hard to believe, Hermione. Someone as pretty as yourself, you must have a beau or two," he pressed.

"No, really. I've told you before. There was only Harry, and we never... never did that." She brought her eyes up to meet his. *What's he really asking me this for?* she wondered. He should know better than that. She never went around school with anyone. And had he called her pretty? She must have misunderstood.

"What about Mr. Creevey who was just in here with you moments before I came back?" He smirked at her shocked expression.

"He was just here to..." She couldn't tell him.

"To what?" He shook his head as if in disgust, though he wasn't. "Was he asking you on a date then?" He wanted to laugh at her outraged expression.

"Certainly not! He was here to give me a photo. Thought I might have wanted it, that's all," she said heatedly.

He loved to get these little rises out of her. Photo, eh?

"I see no photo, Hermione. Are you being truthful? You can talk to me, you know," he said in an unbelieving tone.

He saw her face turn red as she opened up her notebook and handed him a photo. He had to force back a shocked sound. It was of her... and him. Was that how he looked at her when he thought nobody was watching? He'd have to remember to have a talk with Creevey, the little bugger! "Why did he think you would want this?"

"He didn't say, sir. Just said he thought I might." She looked away.

He must have said something else. He'd find out exactly what it was one way or the other.

"Really? Is that all? I might just ask him where he gets off coming into my class after hours to deliver photos of me to my assistant," he threatened.

"He doesn't know I am assisting you. He, like everyone else, thinks that I have detention. Again. So, he thinks... he thinks that you like me," she said softly, not looking at him.

"Why would I give detention to someone that I liked? And, by the word liked... does he mean, romantically interested?" He knew he was pushing it a bit far, but this was working out better than he had thought. Maybe he would give Creevey points for this.

"Well, everyone feels that my detentions are unfair. For no reason. So, yes, I think he believes that you... would like to know me better in... a romantic way," she said in a tight voice and seemed to tense as if waiting for a verbal assault. When none came, she spoke again. "Then he saw this photo, and he said that you were like looking at me like... you liked me."

He handed the photo back to her and went to check the elixir. "It's done simmering, and now we will let it sit for five minutes," he announced needlessly. When he turned around, she was gaping at him. "What is it?"

"Well, aren't you going to tell me to get out?" She seemed shocked.

"Why would I do that? Are you not going to test my... our elixir?" he asked in mock innocence.

"But I told you the rubbish he said. You aren't angry at me?" She looked afraid to hear his answer, but she also looked like she wanted to hear it.

"Hermione, I don't care what little children say about me. No, I don't like that he or anyone would speculate about my personal feelings toward anyone, much less a student, but I have other matters at hand." He pointed to the elixir behind him. "It is not your fault. And, trust me, I will deal with him later."

"Please don't get him into trouble. He was just..."

"I say, Hermione, do you want what he said to be true?" he asked suddenly.

She blinked. How could she answer that directly? He was more or less a human lie detector, what with all his knowledgeable ways to detecting falsehoods. He even did it in ways thought to be incorrect--at least to Muggles! She went with the best and near honest answer that she could muster. "I don't know."

This time he blinked. *She must.* Victory. He had thought so, but he chalked it up to wishful thinking. "Hermione, don't you find me a bit old and dark for your taste?"

"No. Wizards live long lives. You are still young, just not as young as I am. I am a bit mature for my age anyway. And besides, I used that Time-Turner back in my third year, so it totally added a whole year to my age. As far as dark, I rather like it. I feel... safe here. And you like the things that I like, but I know it's what you said. I'm just a... child. Just don't stop letting me come here, I rather like it," she said softly.

Now that he had heard what he wanted to hear, he didn't know what to say. She seemed confused about it. He didn't want to push her. What could he say? She looked as if she felt rejected already just by his silence. He knew what to say.

"Hermione, if ever I were to choose anyone, it would be you. I find you irresistibly attractive. Not just your looks. Your brains. Your courage. Your loyalty. I commend all of those things." He tipped her face up, and he saw fear in her eyes. "I'll never stop you from coming here. I like you here."

She smiled softly, and he could have kissed her. Could have, but didn't. "Thanks, ProfSeverus."

"Are you ready?" he asked, nodding at the elixir.

"Yes, let's do this."

"Hermione, I don't like the idea of you taking something like this. Let me take it."

"No, please, let me contribute something more here." Her eyes were pleading with him.

He didn't say anything. He simply poured a small amount of it in a glass, and then he handed it to her. She took it in one gulp. He sat down and looked at her for any signs. His quill was ready to record her stages.

"I feel like I know what everything is around me. That's the awareness, isn't it?" He nodded. "I can feel my skin as if it is alive."

He wrote down the things she was saying and the way she looked. She looked at the candle next to her. *Nox*," she said. The candle flickered. *Nox*." This was said more firmly. It went out. She jumped for joy! "Did you see it?"

He smiled. They were definitely getting closer. "I think we may be on to something here," he allowed, though he knew the potion wasn't through yet. They had been let down too many times before.

"*Wingardium Leviosa*," she said. His inkbottle rose a few feet into the air. She smiled broadly. *Finite Incantatem*." The ink dropped down to the desk and spilled. "Sorry, Professor," she said sheepishly. "*Scourgify*." The mess cleaned itself up.

"You are doing very well with your verbal commands. Tell me how you feel right now," he said.

"I feel like I could rule the world. I feel... I feel tired. I would like to sleep, I think," she said, suddenly drowsy. He got up and put his arms on her to steady her.

"We just need to get you a bit from my vial to strengthen you, but make no mistake. We are close. We just need to figure out precise amounts to add in," he said softly. "We'll be done soon."

She leaned into him fully. "I am glad, but sad."

"Why?"

"I don't want to have to stop coming here," she whispered, closing her eyes. He just held her to him for a moment. Her head seemed to belong on his chest. How could this girl... this know-it-all... this slip of a chit... have come to touch him as she did? He scooped down to pick her up. She barely weighed a thing, though he knew she ate. He saw her every day at meals. Usually, she ate quickly and scurried off to the library.

He brought her to his office and laid her on the couch. She looked so lovely when she slept. He knelt down before her and moved strands of hair away from her face. On impulse, he pressed his lips to hers. Soft lips. He pulled away quickly to go search for his vial of strengthening potion. He brought it back to his couch and noticed the way her robes had crept up. He could see her bare legs. *Nice. Ooh, and look at those sexy ankles. Mmmm.* He shook his head. Now was not the time.

"Hermione, I need you to drink this." She didn't move. He lifted her head a little and brought the vial to her mouth. With a finger he pried her mouth open and let a small portion go in. She choked just a little, but it went down. Her tongue swiped at his finger, and he felt a jolt all the way down to his manhood. He felt desire pulse through him. He wanted her. This girl: Hermione Granger. But what was it he felt exactly? Lust? Love, dare he say? No, it wasn't that. It was lust, yes, but also kinship. He cared for her, but love? Not yet, if ever. But maybe.

"Severus..." she whispered, just to say it. She savored the way it sounded on her tongue.

"I am here," he said softly.

"We almost did it," she said, not opening her eyes.

"Yes, almost. You just rest a little while," he commanded softly.

"Can you stay with me?"

"I will."

She slept on the couch for a while as he dozed sitting on the floor next to her. That was how Harry found them. Severus heard someone clear his throat. He opened his eyes.

"I would like to talk to you," Harry said.

"Potter, what are you doing out at this time of night?" Snape asked, irritated.

"I want to talk about Hermione." Potter looked vicious.

Snape looked to where Hermione was lying behind him. Still sleeping. He got up and walked to the door. They went into his classroom. Severus closed the door so that Hermione could not hear them.

"What's wrong?" Snape asked innocently.

"Why is she still here? Sleeping on your couch?"

Demanding little snot, wasn't he? "Potter, as you well know, we are working on your elixir. Tonight, she insisted that she try it. I must admit we have come closer than before," Snape drawled. "Is there some particular reason you are so worried about her?"

"I'm afraid for her, Snape," he said quickly.

"That's Professor Snape, Potter," he sneered. Severus narrowed his eyes real dangerous like. "And why on earth would you be afraid for her?"

"Because... because I think she loves you. I don't want you to hurt her," Harry said, watching him closely. Could Snape, of all people, care about Mione? His Mione?

"I would never hurt someone I care for," Snape said quickly.

"That's not good enough. How do I know you care about her?" Harry demanded. "I love her. I want her to be happy. If you can guarantee that you can make her happy, I will support any relationship between the two of you."

Severus wanted to swat the brat. As if he needed his approval to become involved with Hermione. Of course, some sort of truce on a personal level with Potter would be to an advantage. The Slytherin smiled. "I do care for her, Harry." He watched Harry step back at hearing his first name. "Right now we are just testing the waters. Being friends. If it develops, it develops."

"It's important to me. She needs something stable. Of all the men here, I do think that could be you. It may as well be you if anyone. You both like the same things. I think you would give her what she needs," Harry said softly. "I am just afraid you'll be killed and leave her alone. I don't know if she could handle that."

"We all take that risk," Snape pointed out.

"Not like you do," Harry said simply.

An emotion swelled in Severus' chest. It meant a lot to hear Harry Potter say that, almost as if he was appreciated for what he did. Yes, he did put his neck on the line every time he went off to meet with the Dark Lord, didn't he? Any time that he went could be the last time.

"Just... just love her. She's beautiful, smart, emotional, caring... She's everything I ever wanted."

"Harry, thank you for... thank you for this. Though I don't know why I am being nice, as I have been accosted in my own dungeons!" Snape smirked. "I can't say that I love her, but I can say I care for her, and it's the first time I have felt anything on an emotional level since your..."

"Since what?" Harry said. "Sorry, didn't catch that?"

"Since before you were born. I just mean to say it's been a long time is all," Severus said cautiously. He'd almost let his relationship with Lily slip out. He could never do that. "And, Harry, just how did you know exactly where we were?"

"A spare bit of parchment," Harry replied with his own smirk. He was trying to get into Snape's mind. Severus could feel it. He always had his blocked though, so no illegal entry for him.

"Don't trust me, Harry?" He raised an eyebrow.

"Just checking," he said. "Please don't tell her I told you this. She would kill me. I know she'll never tell you. But I wanted you to know. That way if you didn't feel something, I could maybe dissuade her somehow."

"I'll not tell her," Severus agreed. Harry threw his cloak over himself and disappeared. Snape watched his classroom door open and close *Damn!* He could have taken points for that! He must be getting soft. He turned back to his office.

It felt though as if something had lifted from his heart. Harry approved. Harry. The Boy Who Lived. Lily's son. All these years he had looked at Harry and saw James. James who'd married Lily. But he was Lily's son as well. He'd never thought of it that way. Though he would never tell Harry anything, he did feel better now that they had made a personal truce of sorts. They worked well together on Order of Phoenix issues, but that was it. Thanks to Hermione, he could finally make peace with that part of himself. The part that never forgave James for taking Lily. The part that never forgave Lily for choosing James.

Severus knew he'd have to stop referring to the boy as Hairy Pooter, which normally gave him mental joy. If they were to have a truce... that would be uncalled for.

Hermione was just sitting up when he came back in. "Are you all right?"

She stretched like a cat. "Yes, I felt so weak though after that. Is that how you felt?"

"Something like that," he admitted. He looked at her slightly tousled hair and sleepy expression. The things he could do to her...

She tried to stand, but fell back onto the couch. "Oh, my..." She giggled. "Can I just stay here then?"

He gulped. How could he sleep soundly with her in here? *No.* "Yes." *Damn.* "But you can have my bed." *Eh??* He saw her eyes grow big and her lip being bit again. "Not comfortable there?"

"Well..." she stammered. "I mean to say..."

"Hermione," he smiled softly. "I would be staying on the floor."

"No, I will just go back to my own room then," she said quickly. She looked afraid. He could see her shaking. He'd not push her though.

"I'll bring you," he offered. She just nodded. He stood up quickly and picked her up.

"Oh!" she gasped. "I can... I can try to walk."

"Nonsense," he drawled and headed for her dorm. He made it there quickly. Her slight weight didn't worry him in the least. It seemed all those hours of working out had paid off. Once at the portrait, he tried to put her down, but she was too shaky to stand. He looked into her eyes. She was more nervous because he was holding her. That was the cause of this. He smirked. "Want to say your password?"

"Mudblood," she said. He raised an eyebrow and looked at her questioningly.

"Draco and I thought it would be safe to say nobody would guess that, as I would not stand for it. Sometimes we use ferret and the like." She grinned sheepishly.

He simply chuckled and went through the hole. Once again, Draco was sprawled out near the fire with a girl. "Ten points from Slytherin!" Snape said wickedly. Draco shot up, eyes wide, trying to cover his crotch with his hands. He was too shocked to say anything.

*Snape in our dorm! Holding Hermione.*

His mate sat up, and Snape grinned evilly. "Thirty points from Hufflepuff!" She began scrambling to get her clothes together. Severus made his way to Hermione's room. The door was open already, and he could see dreadful Gryffindor colors. He kicked the door closed behind him. Instead of bringing her to the bed, he brought her to the bathroom and set her down. "Do what you have to do. I will be right outside this door if you need me."

Hermione watched the door close and nearly fainted. Severus Snape! A gentleman! Poor Malfoy and Susan though! Well, it would serve Draco right. He might want to use the bed now. How unfair, though, that he'd taken more points from Hufflepuff than from Slytherin. Quickly, she brushed her teeth, washed her face, used the loo, and dressed in her spare pajamas that she had in there. She always kept an extra set of clothes for just in case. Unfortunately, they were a tad skimpy. Small, dark green, silky sleep shorts and a matching silky halter-top.

She pulled her hair up in a ponytail and walked to the door. She paused. He was interested in her. It was all over his face, but he was holding back. School rules and all. And she had as much as told him that she was interested. He had said she was irresistibly attractive. Then he went on to name her qualities. So, he didn't think she was a raving beauty, but neither did she. But at least he had the maturity to see past outside appearances or bloodlines. He was still attracted to her. She smiled.

Just as she turned the knob, the door opened, and she almost fell on him. He said, "Did you call for me?"

"No," she replied. Had she said his name out loud?

"I am sorry, but at least I see you are... dressed." He was taking in her sleep attire and her pulled up hair. She reddened just a bit. "I approve of the color. It would match nicely in my own rooms."

She smiled shyly. Did he mean for her to be in his rooms wearing this? "I like my house colors, sir, but I've always had a thing for dark green."

He smirked and picked her up. She still seemed so unsteady. Pulling back the blanket and sheets, he placed her on the bed gently. His eyes never left hers as he placed his lips against hers for just a moment. Then he pulled the bedding up over her. "Good night, Hermione Granger."

She was stunned. He had kissed her! It was only a chaste kiss on the lips! But it had surprised her just the same! His lips were soft and warm and felt much thicker than they looked! She wanted to feel them again, but said nothing. She stifled a yawn. "Good night, Severus Snape."

He nodded and left her bedroom. As he closed the door to her room, he grinned wickedly. This courting was playing nicely. Courting, was it? Hmm. He would have to go back and dissect everything he and Potter had talked about. He looked toward Draco's room. There was a crack in the door. Snape figured he was watching to see how long he'd stayed in Granger's room. Hoping to catch him in the midst of a dirty deed, was he? Snape sneered at the partially open door, and it promptly closed. Draco must

have thought he had seen him. Snape chuckled and made his way back to the dungeons. Unfortunately, he'd not be able to sleep for a while. Just thinking of her in that bed, in those sexy clothes. His colors. The way she looked as he put her down. *Hubba hubba*. Her eyes half closed in a dreamy state. He would like to see that again. In his own chambers.

Soon.

~~~~~ Whoot! Chapter End ~~~~~

AN: Protector Harry at your service.

## Chapter 5

*Chapter 5 of 6*

When Snape needs help with a potion, who does he turn to? Why, Hermione the amazing Potions assistant, of course.

Disclaimer: I can haz fun with JKR's stuff since I'm not making any Galleons from it!

*Thanks go to ladyinthecloak for the snickering beta job.*

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Three weeks later, Hermione and Severus were once again in his office. This time they were toasting each other with a glass of scotch. Their work had finally been completed. They had produced an elixir for Harry to use against Voldemort. Harry would be able to just shout his magical commands, and they would happen. The elixir would last two hours only. They had to hope that Potter would take it at the right time. He would feel considerably weak after...that was simply an affect they couldn't change.

Hermione was eyeing Severus in adoration. She decided that she was infatuated with the man. He was so mysterious, never giving away more than he had to. She loved his eyes. It was as if they could see into her soul, as if they touched her mind. Her time in the dungeons with him had come to an end. This unsettled her. She didn't want to stop seeing him. They had become quite close over the last several weeks. Though he still treated her formally in the company of others, he seemed taken with her as well. He had not kissed her again since that simple kiss to her lips the night she had been weakened by the potion, but she knew he wanted to. Would he kiss her tonight?

"Professor... er... Severus, when will Harry test the potion?" she asked, trying to find something to say. She was putting off leaving. If she could engage him in a discussion, maybe he wouldn't notice the time, and she could stay longer.

"Tomorrow night," he said shortly.

It was over. She wouldn't be back here in the evenings. This unsettled her. Had he taken things too slowly? She had never said anything to him about that night, though she was shy for a few days. Maybe she was still too afraid. Too young. She seemed disappointed. "Are you all right?"

"Yes."

"Well, why do you seem so upset?" He knew what it was. She had told him a few weeks ago in her weakened state that she didn't want to stop coming here. But she would have to. What could he possibly come up with that would enable her to continue coming here? He couldn't ask her to give up all her free time just to chat with him at night. She would have to start preparing for her N.E.W.T.s soon.

"I'll miss you." There she'd said it. *Make of it what you will.*

He smiled softly. "I will miss you as well."

She was disappointed. He'd not asked her to come to visit him anyway. Maybe she had mistaken that her feelings were mutual. Suddenly, his face scrunched up in pain. "What's wrong?" she asked worriedly.

He grabbed his arm. She knew what was there. His totally evil Dark Mark. Voldemort was calling him! Fear gripped her.

"I have to go," he said through pain.

She knew that when the marks were used to call them, they burned into their skin. "Oh no!"

"Go to Dumbledore. Tell him that I have been summoned at an odd meeting time. If I do not come back, Hermione, please see that Harry takes that elixir. You know enough to prepare all that he needs." He was moving to his chambers and wasn't looking back at her.

Fear gripped her! What if Voldemort knew? What if he was summoned to be killed? He must have been thinking that as well. He'd as much as said it. She couldn't just let him leave. *Damn! His door's already closed!* She wanted to see him. She ran to his door. "Lily," she breathed. It opened, and she ran into the room. He was not in there. "Severus?"

Suddenly, he came out of the bathroom. He was in his Death Eater garb. Er, that was him, right?

"Shit!" she exclaimed and backed up quickly. The sight was just so darn scary. She tripped over a footstool and fell onto the floor. He walked over to her in a menacing manner. Yet, he held out a hand to her. It was him. She took it and let herself be pulled up. He turned toward his fireplace.

"Wait," she breathed. He stopped but didn't turn around. "Why do you have to go?"

That made him turn. "Because I have to," he said, voice sounding odd through his mask. "It's for Harry. For Dumbledore. For all of you. It's my job."

"Please just stay. I don't want... I am afraid for you, Severus." She swallowed. "We can do this without you having to put yourself on the line any more than you have to."

"Hermione, don't be afraid for me. I chose this role. I know the risks. Please tell Dumbledore what I said." He started to walk toward his fire again.

"Wait!" she screamed again.

He paused and turned to her, waiting to see what she had to say.

She walked boldly to him and put her hands on his mask. He didn't try to stop her. She lifted it up. It was the face she had grown to love. "I can't let you go without... without ever kissing you. Really kissing you." When had she become this brave? This blunt. But just the thought that he might not come back safe gave her the courage, and so she didn't care. She threw her pride to the dungeon draft. "Just give me this if nothing else ever."

His eyes pierced hers. "You would kiss me? Though you see what I really am?"

There was something in his voice that touched her. He wanted acceptance as he was, needed to hear it. She would give it to him. Gladly.

"I love you. All of you," she said simply. It must have been exactly what he needed to hear.

He pulled her to him roughly and bent down slightly. Tipping her face up, his lips met hers. He was testing her lips softly. Then she opened her lips, inviting him in. He complied by kissing her until she thought she would fall to the floor. Wait! She was on the floor. He had been kissing her so intently and passionately that she hadn't noticed that he had laid her down, still kissing her.

He finally pulled away, and smiled wistfully, and then he traced her face with his hand. Without a word, he went to the fireplace, put his mask back over his face, and flooded to some place she had never heard of. He had kissed her! He cared for her. It was in his eyes. He wanted her. When she said that she loved him, all of him, he seemed so relieved. So happy. So needing. She jumped up. She had to let Dumbledore know. She flooded to his office.

"Miss Granger, hello," the headmaster said immediately. "Another late night with Severus?"

"He's gone!" she said suddenly. "Voldemort called him. He had to go. He said this was unplanned. Not a normal time. He's not sure if he will be back."

She nearly panicked as Dumbledore jumped up and moved to his shelf behind his desk. He pulled out something and sat it on his desk. She had never seen it before. A sort of mist formed over it. "Severus," he whispered. Hermione watched anxiously. Emotions flowed through her. She had finally found someone she was drawn to besides Harry, and she may have lost him already. Harry. She hadn't thought of Harry in that way for the past couple of weeks. "Miss Granger, he is all right still. I can sense him. He has no fear. He must not be in danger of losing his life... yet. Please go back to your dormitory. I will let you know if anything else should come up."

She nodded and went to his door to walk back to her room. Dumbledore walked her out and told her to try to sleep well. She was only slightly comforted. He was worried. She could see it. She was near tears as she finally walked in to her dorm. She loved him, Severus Snape. He was gone. She should have told him sooner, but she hadn't realized the full extent of her feelings. All this time had been wasted! They could have... been together if he would have had her. And she knew that he would have. Gods, Jesus, Circe, Merlin... all of them, oh how she loved him. Still crying, she was glad about one thing. He would die knowing that there was a woman that thought the world of him. A woman that wanted him as he was... mysterious Professor Snape, sweet Professor Snape, dark Professor Snape, cute Professor Snape, and even Death Eater Snape.

"Mione, what's wrong?" Draco asked, putting a book aside.

"I love him," she said softly.

"Snape?" he asked, making a face.

"Yes."

He was at her side in moment, and he pulled her into his arms. "Shhh... Cry all you need to. I'll be here for you." She sobbed in Draco's arms. She might never see Severus again. Draco was talking and she was barely listening. "He's too old for you anyway, the sod. You'll find someone else." He must be assuming that Snape had refused her. She would tell him no different. He didn't need to know anything. Her tears left eventually. "All right?" he asked.

"Yes, thank you, Draco," she said softly. She hugged him once more. "I needed a shoulder to cry on. I'll never forget this." She squeezed his hand and went to her room. What would she do without him? What would she do if he never came back?

~~~~~Uh oh! Oh no!~~~~~

Hermione walked with Ron and Harry down to the dungeons the next morning. Everyone was standing outside still when they got there.

"Sup?" Ron asked Neville.

"Snape's not here yet. Class is empty. And his office door is locked. We're just waiting," he replied.

Draco moved to Hermione. "I need to talk to you," he said softly.

"Oy! Get back there, Malfoy! You could have talked to her in your dorm!" Ron said. He still did not like Malfoy, even though he had changed.

"She was gone when I got up, Weasel," Draco replied coolly.

"Ron, it's all right," Hermione said, allowing Draco to pull her to the side.

"Hermione... I don't know how to tell you this, but... Crabbe... his dad sent him an owl at breakfast. Told him that Snape... told him that he was tortured last night and left for dead. He was wondering how Snape had been a spy this whole time and none of us had noticed. I took the letter and gave it to Dumbledore. It's all I know," he said. "I'm sorry, Mione."

She just looked down blankly. He was gone. She felt a few tears trickle down her cheeks. Draco pulled her close. "I don't know what to feel, Draco. I'm empty I think."

"What have you done to her, you git!" Ron bellowed at Draco when he noticed Hermione was crying and that Draco was the one holding her. "Did you get her pregnant or something? Have a shag and then tried to dump her?"

Harry pulled Ron back.

Suddenly, Fawkes appeared above Harry and a note dropped down to his hand. With a burst of flames, Fawkes left again. Harry read the note and began running. "Harry!" Hermione called. He stopped and looked back.

"Voldemort is coming!" he said. Everyone scattered. Including Ron.

"Harry, wait!" Hermione ran to him. "The elixir!!!"

"It's ready?!!" he asked.

"Yes, you were to test it tonight. He tested it as well. It lasts roughly two hours. I'll just get it," she said, pulling him to Snape's class. She made her way to his office. It was locked. Damn! Harry was with her! Sod it all.

"We don't have the password," he said. "Damn!"

"I have it," she said faintly. "Lily!" The door opened. Harry paused, looking startled.

"I'll explain later," she said. She ran to his desk, found his secret key, and opened the bottom drawer of his chest. She took out two vials. One was labeled Harry. The other was labeled Voldemort. They ran to Snape's chambers, and she again shouted, "Lily." The doors opened. She paused only a moment to look at the spot she had lain in his arms the night before before grabbing powder and throwing it into the fireplace. "Dumbledore's office."

The next instant she and Harry were in the headmaster's office. "Professor!" Hermione said loudly. Dumbledore came around the corner.

"Harry, are you ready?" he asked.

"Definitely," Harry replied confidently.

"Professor Dumbledore..." Hermione began. He held up a hand.

"He is alive. He is getting checked over by Madam Pomfrey now. It seems that the last vial you two tested last night had still been in his system. Though he felt the pain, he was able to channel it out of him. He was able to voice his commands and Apparate just outside the gates. They have likely not told their master that he got away." Dumbledore smiled. "Go to him."

She looked to Harry. Her face full of joy. "He's alive, Harry!" Harry grinned and pulled her close. At that moment Ron burst through the doors. They all stared at him, open-mouthed.

"I'm ready!" he shouted triumphantly. He had on what appeared to be Muggle military clothes and boots.

"Er?" Harry said.

"Oh, am I not dressed right? I saw that program on Mione's television and thought this is how you dressed in battle," he said, face turning as red as his hair. They all had a laugh even though their situation was far from funny. Draco came through the doors. "Great, what's he doing here?" Ron's voice was less than pleased.

"Now's not the time, Ron," Harry said. He turned to Draco. "Get all the Slytherins together that are on our side. Seal the rest inside the dungeons. They'll not be out to help their parents this day." Harry clapped Draco on the shoulder. "You are in charge of them. Meet me in the Great Hall as soon as you are done. Tell Susan to do the same with Hufflepuff."

"You got it, Potter," Draco said, leaving quickly.

Ron's mouth was gaped open this time. "Harry?"

"I trust Draco. He's been doing a bit of spying for me," Harry said simply. "Ron, you know what to do. Go get with Luna and gather all the Ravenclaws that are ready. Lock the rest in their dorms for safety." Harry turned to Hermione after Ron saluted and stormed off. "Mione, you go see if that feisty boyfriend of yours is ready to fight alongside me."

She looked at him in shock. Then she looked at Dumbledore. They were both grinning. They both approved. She made her way to the infirmary, vaguely realizing that Harry was in charge here. He and Dumbledore were Flooing Aurors now. Severus was alive. He was alive. What if he didn't want to see her? She was half crying and half laughing as she reached the infirmary. Opening the doors a bit noisily, she ran in.

There he was. He was sitting while Madam Pomfrey was holding her wand over him, his robes all tattered and torn. His eyes met hers. He smiled. Crying and laughing hysterically, she ran to him where he pushed aside the mediwitch and scooped her up into his arms. "I came back," he stated.

"I see," she said. "I thought... I was afraid."

"As was I, Hermione. We have to make ready. Voldemort will be here shortly. I found out last night. You have Harry's potion?" he asked.

"Yes, I have them both. In my robes," she said, realizing that he still had her off her feet in the air, holding her to him. He must have noticed she was looking at her feet off of the ground. He let her slide down slowly. She could wait no longer and cared not who was here to witness it. She cupped his face in her hands and kissed him. He kissed her back, full of joy, full of the will to live, and full of hope... Hell, full of lots of things.

"Why, Severus!" Madam Pomfrey exclaimed. He pulled away from Hermione and cocked an eyebrow at her. Hermione giggled. The witch turned to look at Hermione then. "And, you, Miss Granger!"

Before she knew it, she was being pulled to the Great Hall. It was time. Everyone was gathering. Those who would fight. Aurors and parents alike were Portkeying or Flooing in to join in the battle. Harry seemed to be giving directions to everyone as Dumbledore followed in his wake, smiling proudly.

"Boss Potter," Snape said sarcastically. Hermione swatted his arm.

He looked down at her. This amazing girl. She had seen him at his worst, well not his worst, but near it. He had done so many cruel things to her and her friends over the years. Yet, here she was at his side. His rock. The night before had been horrible for him. When they took his wand, he thought his life had ended just as he'd found a reason to enjoy it. Then, he realized he was still very aware. The potion was still within him. He was able to escape. He was very drained after, though, as he had explained all he had learned to Dumbledore, but it didn't last long at all. He sipped on strengthening potion and was fine. All he could think of was Hermione's words and her kiss. She loved him. She had finally said it. He was unsure about it right before she had come in. He was thinking maybe she said it because she'd feared he would die, but when she burst in full of tears of happiness, he knew. She loved him. She belonged to him.

"Severus, I have to go see what Harry wants me to do," she said softly. They were still holding hands and half of the students were now ogling them.

A knife stabbing him in his side would have hurt less. She was soon going to be in danger. "Hermione... you might be hurt," he said softly. "Can't you just...?" He knew her answer though. Potter until the end. She had already told him she would die for Harry if she had to. He squeezed her hand and brought it to his lips. "I think that I am falling in love with you." It was the best he could do.

"That's the most beautiful thing I have ever heard," she whispered. "I love you enough for both of us... for now." She kissed his cheek softly. "Please be careful today, Severus."

"You too, Hermione." He watched as she flounced off toward Harry. Weasley caught his eye though. He had done a double take and was standing there with a horrified expression on his face. Severus chuckled. "Good luck today, Ron." Weasley again did a double take. He had never called him anything other than Weasley.

McGonagall walked up to him. "Severus, glad to see you are all right. Care to come and go over our plans with us?" He nodded and followed her.

~~~~~ Whoot! Chapter End~~~~~

AN: I'm not sure what to comment on. HaHaHa! There's only one chapter left.

# Chapter 6

Chapter 6 of 6

When Snape needs help with a potion, who does he turn to? Why, Hermione the amazing Potions assistant, of course.

Disclaimer: I'm using some of JKR's characters for a bit of silly fun. No money is being made, damn it!

*Thanks to my mate, ladyinthecloak, for reading this and not hexing me.*

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Severus was taking a shower, letting the water roll over him, as he was thinking about the day's events. They had won. Today would be known throughout the world as another Harry Potter day for wizards. Voldemort had burst through the gates with all of his followers. Hogwarts, though, was flanked on all sides, facing him defiantly.

Draco had led a group. That made Severus proud. He had always hoped the boy would prove to be better than his father. Luna had a group. Neville, of all people, had commanded a group as well. Little Susan Bones had a group, too. They were no longer seventh years to him. They were adults, willing to give their lives for the fight, just to ensure that Harry had a chance to be the one to fulfill the prophecy.

Hagrid had his half-brother giant there, who was more than willing to take out Death Eaters. Aurors, Ministry workers, parents, and staff stood behind Harry firmly. He was in charge. Dumbledore had completely passed over the reigns to this boy. And the boy had accepted it willingly, though not arrogantly. He did what needed to be done. Hermione, Ron, Dumbledore, McGonagall, and himself flanked Harry in a tight group, which made its way to Voldemort.

The battle began, but it didn't last long. Everyone from Hogwarts charged forward and began the fight. Harry had taken his potion the moment Voldemort came through. Severus smirked remembering Voldemort's arrogant, old snakey face. He thought Potter to be a child. He was not prepared. The group around Harry deflected stray hexes and made sure Harry would remain safe to face down Voldemort. Voldemort called for his Death Eaters to stop. Harry did the same for our side. Severus would never forget what happened.

"Little Harry Potter thinks he is ready to face me again, does he?" Harry had just smirked at him. Voldemort had then announced that he and Harry would duel against each other for the world to see. Hermione'd lunged forward and splashed an elixir mixture in his face. Out of reflex, he'd tried to Stun her, but Harry had simply said, "Protego!" That had protected her. It was the first time that Snape had ever seen Voldemort afraid of someone other than Dumbledore.

"You didn't use your wand!" Voldemort pointed out, frightened and surprised.

"That's right," Harry said in an eerie tone. "Didn't figure our wands would work well in a duel, so I learned to use magic without it."

Voldemort had been openly horrified, but he'd pointed his wand to Harry anyway. Then it began. Harry toyed with him for a few moments, thwarting everything that Voldemort had thrown his way. Fawkes appeared with Godric Gryffindor's sword, and Harry took it.

"You're the heir of Gryffindor!" Voldemort had screamed suddenly. "I should have known!" Then he'd yelled for his Death Eaters to fight, to kill Harry. A fight then broke out around them. Dumbledore and McGonagall had chanted something, and a protective covering flowed around Harry and Voldemort. No stray hexes could have got inside. Even if Harry had lost, Voldemort would not have got out of that circle unless Dumbledore had let him out.

Severus had been shocked to find out that Harry was the heir of Gryffindor. Dumbledore had never told him. He'd watched as Harry and Voldemort battled. Harry had remained strong while Voldemort had become weak. Harry had ended it when he plunged the Sword of Gryffindor into Voldemort. Then, something strange had happened: Voldemort fell, a light flew out of his body and hit Harry, making him fall, too.

Once everyone had seen that their hero had fallen after he'd killed Voldemort, the fighting stopped. Those Death Eaters who were left, which were not many, had quickly surrendered. Their master had been defeated. Severus had seen Hermione and Ron pitifully beating on the protective wall where Harry lay, trying to get to their mate, wailing in sorrow. Even Draco had run over to try to help to get to Harry.

Dumbledore and McGonagall had released the walls, each chanting while Hermione and Ron held Harry's lifeless body. A silvery shadow appeared. There'd been no color... except it had sparkling green eyes tinged with ruby red coloring. It'd loomed over Hermione and Ron. Severus had had to restrain himself from removing Hermione from its path. Lupin had run to Dumbledore and had given him a vial. Dumbledore had opened it while McGonagall and he still remained chanting, and he'd then taken a dab of Voldemort's blood and some of his own. He'd added them to the vial, shook it, and put it in Harry's body's mouth. An injured Flitwick had limped up and joined in the chanting. The silvery shadow slowly melded into Harry's body. Moments later, Harry had opened his eyes and grinned. His scar was still there, he was unscathed, and he appeared the same as before. Except for his eyes. Harry's eyes were still those of Lily's, but the centers had a red circle in them. Everyone went wild! Cheering to Potter the hero. The Boy Who Lived... Again.

Later, Dumbledore had explained that since they were tied by fate, one could not live while the other survived, so they had feared Harry would fall as well when Voldemort did. They'd learned and prepared their own chant to call a soul back to his body. The only problem was that remnants of Voldemort now lived in Harry. No one would ever be able to do anything to Harry ever. If he wanted to rule the world, he could. He would be invincible. He had died at full height of his elixir, and when he'd come back, it had stayed strong within him. He could master non-wand magic. According to Dumbledore, the world need never fear that any part of Voldemort could take over Harry. Harry had too much love and good emotions, and that would keep Voldemort in misery for eternity. He would never resurface again.

Severus turned off his shower and got out. He was exhausted. Clad in only a towel, he walked out of his bathroom to find Hermione sitting on his bed. "I though I changed my password, yet here I have an intruder!" he said in a joking voice. "Why aren't you out celebrating?"

"I'm tired, and I wanted to come to see you," she said, smiling shyly. "And I like your new password. Hermione seems perfect."

"Indeed. I, too, am exhausted. I had just enough time to shower before I came to seek my bed," he said. Why was she looking guilty?

"Can I stay here?"

He blinked. "In my chambers?"

"Yes." She boldly stood up and walked to him. "I know you are tired. I am not asking for anything except to be near you. Would you give me that?"

"You can stay, but I must warn you: I sleep with nothing on." He smirked when she gasped. Then he opened his mouth in shock.

She unzipped her robes to reveal that she was completely naked. "Most nights I do as well."

He felt his body immediately react. He wanted her. Wanted to be in her. "It appears that I am not as tired as I previously thought."

She giggled. "I love you."

He smiled. "I love you as well."

She stepped forward and placed herself against him. "Kiss me." It was a command. He complied. She slid her hands down his chest, and he groaned. She pulled at this towel and let it drop to the floor. Though she did not look down, she said, "I am ready for bed."

Severus crushed her to him. Her warm body was plastered to his. She belonged to him. She was his. "You won't try to keep me weak and begging after you by putting potion in my face, the way you did Voldemort today, will you?" he joked.

"He deserved to have that weakening stuff thrown in his face," she said softly. "You deserve to choose on your own how you will react to me."

"Everyone knows that you are my... girlfriend now," he said, testing the word, checking her reaction. "I think I will no longer have many choices. Such as, many angry parents and Ministry officials alike will force me to resign or marry you," he said softly, kissing her cheek.

"Well, don't resign. Marry me."

"Do you love me that much?" he asked incredulously.

"Yes. I want you always. Forever."

He sighed. What had he done to be given such a chance at redemption? "I will do anything you want, Hermione. Anything."

"Make love to me, Severus. It's what I want," she said.

Oh, he could and would easily comply to this request. He lifted her up effortlessly in his arms and placed her gently on the bed. "As you wish, my love."

And so, they began to do some touching and kissing and holding and feeling on each other. This made them so hot and horny! Every time he inspected her quim, perineum, and clitoris with his expert long-fingered digits, she moaned and groaned. To her shock, he even drew rings around her anus. He was excited to notice that she was totally soaked with womanly juices. Hell, even some of it was going down her legs. Perhaps he might lap that up later. But first, he had a cherry to pop.

Snape's hard love-rod slid into her snatch deftly, firmly. She cried out, so he stilled until she moved against him to signal that she was ready to be ravished some more. He plunged and she writhed. Together they found rhythm that no one else could dare copy. Within a minute, both were panting and reaching the big O together.

It was beautiful.

~~~~~ Epilogue Time!! ~~~~~

Hermione sniffled as Severus and she waved to their children as the last of their brood boarded the Hogwarts Express.

"There, there, wife," he said soothingly. "It's not like we won't see them at school, what with us being the headmaster and deputy headmistress now."

"It's... not... that."

"Yes, all of our little birdies have flown from the nest. We shall find ways to fill our time. I can think of plenty of pleasurable ways."

Their oldest set of twins would soon be leaving Hogwarts, and their youngest set of twins had only just started. Sevvie Junior and little Hermietta were halfway through. However, she had some news that would stun her husband.

"Severus... I'm pregnant yet again!!!"

"Eh??!?" He gawped at her. "Impossible. I brewed the contraceptive potion for you myself."

"I've realized something," she said. "You've been adding the wrong ingredient. It's why I have so many eggs that get fertilized when you and I have sex. It's a fertility potion, not a contraceptive!"

Both Snapes Disapparated away with incredulous expressions. But at least they lived happily ever after.

FINIS... for real

AN: Hahaha... I just had to do this epilogue. It was unplanned. And I had to add in the funky sex scene, of which I've read too many similar. ~shakes head~ Also, did you notice the nightmare way he retold what happened during the final battle? How many hads do you think I used? LOL Well, you won't catch me counting them.

Thanks so much for reading this! Bwahahaha... Perhaps I should post my Time-Turner parody next!