

Chronicles of Fate

by ladiesofthesouth

Hermione finds a journal to write in, but unbeknownst to her, it's been placed in her path purposely. For what end?

Chapter 1

Chapter 1 of 10

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Beta thanks will be held until the reveal of the challenge.

As per your request, I've placed the book in an inconspicuous place. She'll find it easily enough without being too suspicious, and I've made certain to cast an extra charm so that only she notices it. I will know when she has it and alert you to anything that might come about.

I have to make my appearances at Hogwarts to make ready for the new school year within the day, as you are aware. However, if you've need of something else before that, let me know.

S

Will it ever stop? It's not enough that I've been spending the last twenty years bowing to the old fool, but no, he uses me as a bloody house-elf whenever he feels like it. I have work to do. There are potions to be brewed for Poppy, and there is an entire curriculum to prepare for each year, but instead of doing that in the last few days, I had the displeasure of being sent about the island because Albus needed a book placed innocently somewhere the Granger girl would find it. And how the hell would I know the girl's habits? How should I know where she's most likely to find a book?

I'm tired of Disillusionment Charms, and I'm even more tired of spying on a barely eighteen-year-old girl on school holidays. Seeing her being snogged by the youngest Weasley boy incurred the need to wash my brain out with Firewhisky, and I won't even go into her whinging to Potter how he needs to grow up. Although she has a point; he does. He should concentrate on defeating the Dark Lord instead of pining for the Weasley girl. All in all, it's been an awful couple of days, but at long last, I succeeded in finding a place innocuous enough. It took some effort to lure her out of her room in the end—she'd been spending most of the day in there, probably sulking with the other two. In the end, I had to go sneak into her parents' home—who thankfully weren't home—and copy her mother's handwriting so I could send an owl telling the girl to phone her parents. She seems to be the obedient sort, went straight downstairs and dragged Tonks to the nearest phone booth. It gave me just enough time to sneak into her room, place the diary, and ward it for her eyes only.

Not that I have the faintest idea what the old fool is up to. He sounded all secretive and wouldn't budge an inch when I tried questioning him. Oh, well, I guess I'll find out or not. Do I care?

Severus,

I thank you for what you've done, though I feel you think it unpleasant. It's of the utmost importance and shall play nicely into the grand scheme of things. Harry will need all the help he can get this final year of school... especially since Voldemort's forces are strengthening and we fear there will likely be enemies inside the castle. I shall say more on this when I feel the time is right.

As for anything else, take this last night to yourself. We've time to plan things further once you're back here at Hogwarts.

Albus

AN: This story will be told through letters and journal entries for all characters. I hope you enjoy. Reviews are welcome.

Prompt # 49. AU from whatever book: A good ol' fashioned Snape/Hermione bond fic. Not marriage law (Please! Not that!), more like "based on the position of the planets and because Beltane begins on a Thursday, these two have to bond or the Dark Lord will prevail." Or something. Creativity in crazy fandom magic, and bastard!Snape or tortured!Snape. Parody or melodrama.

Chapter 2

Chapter 2 of 10

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Professor Dumbledore,

I know that you are likely busy, what with school starting tonight, among other things, but while perusing the shelves of Grimmauld Place again, I saw a book that I'd never noticed before. It seems to be some sort of journal. After the experience the last time a diary showed up, I'd rather have this checked out thoroughly. I've used all spells that I know and find nothing dark about it. However, I don't assume to know as much as I'd like on the subject.

Harry says that I'm welcome to it, and I do think a magical journal is appealing, so when you have time, would you make certain the Blacks don't have any enchantments that might harm the journal's user? There's no need to send a reply right away, sir. I do appreciate that you've had to take a moment out of your schedule for this in this first place.

Thank you,

Hermione Granger

Today has been a very strange day. This morning, I didn't feel like spending time with Harry or Ron, so instead, I decided to spend the day here in my room at Grimmauld Place. Not that I'm that fond of it, but the idea sounded more attractive than trying to convince Ron that there is more to life than snogging. I love him dearly, but somehow I doubt that we'll make a great couple. Of course, it would disappoint Mrs Weasley no end. I can imagine she's already making wedding plans for us. That thought makes me shudder, and not with joy either.

In the afternoon, an owl tapped on my window to deliver a letter from Mum, telling me to phone her. I didn't know if it was urgent or not, so I asked Tonks, who was in the kitchen, to accompany me to the phone booth. The Order would have had my head if I'd gone out all by myself. But when I phoned, Mum didn't know anything about having arranged to send an owl. It was really strange. Was nice to talk to her, though. Dad was still at work so I couldn't talk to him.

When I came back—and thank goodness neither Ron nor Harry were around—I discovered a book that I could've sworn hadn't been there before. It's a notebook for keeping a journal, but I was really afraid that it might contain Dark magic. Silly, I know. After all, Grimmauld Place must be the best-protected home in England. But I couldn't help myself, so I went to find Harry to check it, and then I owed Professor Dumbledore, since Harry couldn't find anything Dark.

He sent an owl back straight away and said all was well. He also suggested keeping a journal might help me focus. What an excellent idea. Sometimes, my mind seems to be so incredibly busy that I can't calm down at all and end up being awake most of the night. Not conducive, considering we have an evil wizard to defeat, and there is studying to do. So I'm giving it a try.

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For details of prompt, please see chapter 1.

Chapter 3

Chapter 3 of 10

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Dunderheads, the lot of them. It seems as though first years get worse each year. Classes have only been resumed for a few days, and I am already wishing for a holiday. At least my Advanced Potions students are all able and ready to learn. That reminds me. The Granger girl had the journal I planted at Grimmauld Place in her bookbag today. The headmaster should be pleased that she's bringing it about with her other things, as that should mean she's using it.

He told me that she'd owed him straightaway to have it checked for Dark magic; ever wanting to do the right thing, that one. I expect the headmaster has a plan for her and the journal takes part in it, but I am uncertain as to what he's playing at. Why won't he explain things to me? What exactly does he have it charmed for? I know he placed some spells on it, though I couldn't deduce what they were.

Wouldn't it be interesting if he'd spelled it so that he could read her words? But would he? Hmmm. Terrifying thought, that, as he is the one who gave this journal to me years back. Spying on your spy, Albus? What was that nonsense about believing that writing one's feelings out enabled a person to vent frustration and focus on important things? Perhaps I should have been more suspicious.

Here's something I shall divulge for you then.

I find your manipulations annoying and sometimes unacceptable. I also don't appreciate being asked to do something and then not receiving an explanation as to why. How would you feel if the tables were turned, old man?

Ah, an owl from Lucius. Finally. I shall finish this later.

Lucius,

For crying out loud, have you recently joined the League of Dunderheads? I'm shaking my head here. In your next owl, simply let me know what day/time is good for you so I can open the Floo connection.

SS

Sometimes I cannot believe how careless Lucius is. He sent an owl telling me how Bella told Cissy something about the Dark Lord wishing to explore the possibility of the ancient bonding that used to rid our world of wizards who became too power-hungry. As if anyone could defeat our Lord.

Sometimes, I forget this journal is just about the only place where I can be unconditionally honest. Even if Dumbledore can read it.

Severus,

You should know that my letters are warded. Should anyone but you procure it, the words would read something else entirely. I've not lost my touch, I assure you. On that note, expect me this Saturday morning before breakfast.

Lucius

AN: More up tomorrow. I know these chapters are short, but I will update as quickly as I can because I feel one chapter should be for Snape and one for Hermione to keep it easier to follow.

Chapter 4

Chapter 4 of 10

Hermione finds a journal to write in, but unbeknownst to her, it's been placed in her path purposely. For what end?

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Well, being back at school for our last year is going smoother than I'd expected. For some reason, nothing's happened. I guess I thought that after the horrid summer we'd had, what with Death Eaters trying to attack us in Hogsmeade when helping Fred and George get their new shop ready, things would be a bit rough. Even Malfoy and his cronies seem to be leaving us alone.

But why?

Do they have some sort of plan? Maybe since his father has finally been freed from Azkaban—again—he's learned to keep to himself. Perhaps he doesn't want to follow in Daddy Dear's footsteps after all. Or maybe he's biding his time. Either way, we shall be ready for him. I'm going to talk to Harry about getting the DA back together. There are other reasons to reinstate the group. Especially now.

Why does it feel like the end is near? Like Voldemort is looming even closer in the future? I know I shouldn't worry much, not with Dumbledore here with us, but I can't help feeling as if something is about to happen. Foreboding doesn't even cover it. I have faith in Harry... in all of us, but I'm still afraid.

Is that so bad? To be afraid? To fear failure? That scares me more than death, you know. Am I mad for feeling this way?

It feels as though I'll never learn enough to help. What if there's something Harry could have on his side, some jinx or spell, and I've just not discovered it yet? He's counting on me, and yet, I feel as if I'm not pulling my weight. Books and spells, that's my thing. Hmmm, now that I have unlimited access to the Restricted Section, I'm going to go there each morning before breakfast to see what I can find. Surely there's something there.

Wow, writing all of this down is cathartic, isn't it? I feel better already. I'll just make a list of things that I need to do and simply do them. First, I need to start on Professor Snape's essay. I have Double Potions first thing in the morning. Speaking of him, he looks a little rough around the edges—more so than usual. He even took three points from Slytherin today! I wonder if his work for us is running him haggard, or is it something else? I'm sure it is, the spying he does for the Order I mean. Poor man. How would it be to live such a life? I expect I'll never know.

I don't think I'd want to know.

To all DA members:

After speaking with Harry today, we've both concluded it is time we start training again with anyone who is still interested. V. has been extremely quiet, and we both find that highly worrying. If there'd been the occasional attack, at least I'd think it's business as usual, but this eerie silence must mean they're planning and probably planning in great detail. We really need to be prepared better than we currently are.

As Hogsmeade weekends are cancelled, let's meet in the Room of Requirement on Saturday afternoon. Will that work for everyone?

Hermione

Some of the tension I've been feeling lately has left me, more than likely because the DA finally met again, and we had a good training session. Everyone can now cast their Patronus, and about half have managed to fight the Imperius Curse. I think sleep will come easier to me tonight at last.

Chapter 5

Chapter 5 of 10

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Disclaimer: No money. Just borrowing.

Beta appreciation—no names until the reveal.

What a relief, Lucius hasn't quite lost it. Yet. I've been suspecting for a while now that he has started to doubt the Dark Lord's philosophy, and certainly today almost proved it. Why else would he disclose to me—whose loyalty he is not exactly sure of, no matter how our Lord proclaims his trust in me—the ancient spell which appears to have been activated for the sole purpose of defeating the dark?

I do believe him when he says he has no idea who activated it. Judging by the old tomes I procured this afternoon, the spell might even have been activated by intelligent creatures; it is certainly not impossible according to history. Of course, I would not put it beyond Dumbledore to do just that and not tell anyone.

Potter doesn't seem to be quite as useless as I was afraid. He reactivated Dumbledore's Army, and according to my loyal portraits, there has been an increase in membership. They've been training nearly every day, and I hold hope that the children will be somewhat more prepared for what undoubtedly is to come. So far, I am not privy to the Dark Lord's plans. Which leads me to suspect that he has not quite figured out exactly how to defeat Potter. I am so looking forward to the day I'll be free. Either I'll be dead or the Light will win. Either result is preferable to this in-limbo situation.

I found the Granger girl lurking in the corridor near the door to my personal stores. I wonder what, if anything, she was after. I do not believe that she just happened to be standing there when I approached, tying her shoe no less. Had she not heard my approach, I might have caught her in the act. As it is, I've given her detention with me tomorrow evening. From the book she was carrying, she could have been after one of many ingredients not readily available to students. I have the book on my desk and shall try to discern what pages she touched most.

The book might be important and enable her to help Potter somehow. Why else would the little do-gooder break the rules? If I can't find out what she was up to, I shall return the book and utilize my spying ability to find out the old-fashioned way. One way or another, I will know what they are up to.

Severus,

It seems my personal business will keep me away from Hogwarts for the entire day. I shall meet with you in your quarters tonight upon my return. I've much to discuss and to disclose with you. It appears that things might finally be falling into place.

Albus

I surely am relieved that Albus, for once in his life, does not appear to implicate me in his mad scheming. Although, I can't be certain, since the Granger girl rudely interrupted our discussion mid-way in her never-wavering enthusiasm to help Potter. Her harebrained idea to magically bond with the youngest Weasley instead of allowing Potter and the Weasley girl to do it is simply preposterous. How can she so willingly throw her entire future away and all because she is of the opinion that her precious Potter has enough on his plate? When she made the suggestion, I thought, 'She has no idea what a bonding means for wizards.' It is as far from those Muggle "bonding" ceremonies as another planet! Simply preposterous! But she is indeed well aware of the implications, as I learned during her detention. Which wasn't much of a detention,

but alas. She for one knows whose side I'm on, so there is not always need for pretence.

If I'm completely honest, she isn't quite as nerve grating as I thought she was. And she can certainly stand her ground in an argument without becoming rude. Interesting, that.

Another day over and still no idea what the future holds. The Dark Lord's attack is looming over the school. Everyone seems to feel it, and everyone seems on edge. No wonder. I hope it'll be over sooner rather than later.

AN: I know some people complained because the chapters are short, but I just don't think people write very lengthy journal entries. There may be many chapters, but at least they should come out more quickly. Hope that's okay and that you enjoy anyway.

Chapter 6

Chapter 6 of 10

Hermione finds a journal to write in, but unbeknownst to her, it's been placed in her path purposely. For what end?

Disclaimer: No money cometh my way from this!

I will hold my beta recognition until the reveal. I do appreciate her though!

The most amazing thing happened tonight!

I had detention with Professor Snape and—that's definitely not what was amazing, but what happened while there is! Professor Dumbledore came in just after I'd got there. I hadn't even been issued what to do yet when he came in.

Anyway, he told me hello and asked the professor to step into the class storeroom. I could hear them speaking as clearly as if they were both right next to me. Can you imagine them forgetting to charm the room? It was quite fortuitous indeed. Headmaster Dumbledore learned something that can actually help Harry. He said he'd come across it about a century ago, and he'd nearly considered using it for Grindelwald, but hadn't needed it in the end.

He admitted that he'd forgot it for a while, but a secret source had informed him that the Dark Lord's found out about it (old magic—evoked by magical binding, for one, among other things). He wanted Professor Snape's opinion on if they should do it. And guess what? Professor Snape had just received word about this from someone as well!

They figured it was urgent to use after all and worth a try, especially if You-Know-Who worried about it and set out to kill any couple magically bound on the next blue moon (or any after). The next one is only three weeks away!

The headmaster feels that Harry and Ginny should do this, but I know it would be risky. Ginny's younger than Harry, and her parents wouldn't likely approve. Ron and I, though, we could do it. I'm of age, and he's nearly there. Besides, he'd rather do something this risky instead of his sister.

Can you imagine how much more pressure this would put on Harry? To know that Ginny would be on Voldemort's list? Ron and I are already on that list, I'm sure, so it wouldn't be anything more. And if what I heard them saying is true...

Wow! To experience such magic and wield the knowledge of it all!

Professor Snape didn't seem to agree that it should be anyone other than Harry, but I think Headmaster Dumbledore approved of my idea. He seemed a little reluctant to agree straightaway, saying he'd think about it. I expect I'll hear from him soon, and he told me to keep quiet about this for now while he ponders this and formulates a plan.

I want to know more about this particular type of bonding and the magical powers it and the spells used will invoke. Interestingly enough, I found a book in the Restricted Section that had instructions for a potion that would make its drinker have bad luck. I'd finally gathered the courage to go down to the dungeons to ask Professor Snape to explain the last line of directions to me when he happened upon me, thinking me up to no good.

By then my courage wavered, and I simply accepted my detention with him, hoping I'd have a chance to talk to him about it during that time. After all this, he gave me the tome back, and I asked him about the potion! He said that he would explain it to me at a different time. I think he just wanted to be alone after the conversation. He'd got quite worked up at one point, arguing about allowing me to "stick my little nose" into their discussion. Thankfully, the headmaster wasn't angry about it.

The way I see it is if they'd not wanted me to hear, they'd have used a charm to see that I couldn't. Right? I'm about to burst with excitement. I wish I could share this with Ron and Harry.

Oh Merlin's y-fronts!

What if Ron doesn't want to bind with me? We're not official, but I know he fancies me. We've been tiptoeing around starting a relationship, but I expect something will give soon. This might just be the push we need.

Well, that idea has gone right down the drain. Crookshanks acted really strangely this afternoon. He came up to me and circled my legs, then ran to the door, turned around, and looked at me. After he'd done it a few times, I figured he wanted to show me something, so I opened the door, he walked out, and I followed him.

I didn't even have far to go when I saw Ron and Lavender snogging. I'm not sure how I feel about that. I thought he'd fancied me, but I guess I'm wrong about that. I guess my pride is hurt more than my feelings, really. Coming to think about it in detail, I can't imagine Ron being happy with me. I don't want children in the next few years, and I think he does. He kind of expects a future partner to be like his mother, and I couldn't be more different. Oh, well. We'll see what the future holds.

AN: Thanks for the reviews and the kind words. I'm so happy that this story is liked. I will post more soon.

Chapter 7

Chapter 7 of 10

Hermione finds a journal to write in, but unbeknownst to her, it's been placed in her path purposely. For what end?

Disclaimer: Not making money or anything.

Beta thanks and name are private until the reveal!

Good grief! If Sybill becomes any more delusional, I will not be able to resist the urge to AK her. I overheard, entirely involuntarily, I might add, her conversation with the headmaster today. The hag makes me shudder when she has the best of days and appears as normal as she'll ever appear, which, unfortunately, is increasingly rare these days. But today evidently wasn't her best day. Not that Albus disgusted me any less. The only difference was that her whiff of whatever the alcohol of her choice is strong whereas the headmaster sticks to his trusted, fucking Muggle sweets. If I ever manage to get out of here alive, I NEVER want to smell lemon sherbets again!

The conversation went like, "H—, H—, Headmaster, this must be it! I saw them on Halloween, as I told you before! By the lake! She faced east, he faced north, it has to be a sign!" And I don't remember what else she was drivelling. And Albus, ratbag that he is, completely humoured her. "Yes, Sybill, I can entirely see your point, and I've taken steps to ensure that *if* you're right, there will be the right course of action." Whatever the hell that means.

The meeting with Lucius wasn't much better, although the exquisite firewhisky was highly enjoyable. Lately, he's been far too obsessed with all different holidays. He thinks the Dark Lord might strike on Beltane. That, together with his ramblings about the ancient magic activated to defeat the Dark Lord made me positively weary. I sent him home, recommending a night of sex with Narcissa, and he had the audacity to laugh at me.

I'm only relieved Hogsmeade weekends are cancelled, or else I'd be looking forward to spending this Saturday chaperoning dunderheads.

Severus,

If you felt the need to leave the castle, you should have simply said so. That said, I don't appreciate you leaving so abruptly after I made my suggestion. I thought that we might speak calmly about my idea. I've not mentioned anything to Miss Granger of course. I was mainly thinking out loud so to speak. I suppose I was just following the most logical route. She has agreed to help us, and her argument that Harry has too much to worry about at the moment is a valid one.

While she was hoping Ronald would be chosen to bond with her, I can't see that happening. Not now. The boy is... how shall I say this delicately, temperamental at best. And as you so kindly pointed out, he is serving detention with Filch for being caught in a compromising situation with another young lady, not Miss Granger. Therefore, he is the wrong choice.

You are all that I have. Who else can I trust if not you, Severus?

Think on this and come back to the castle. I don't mind covering your rounds tonight, but I must say that I don't feel up to dealing with your classes tomorrow. We can discuss this in further detail later. In fact, I've decided to share with you something Sybill has brought to my attention, though I do know you heard us speaking about it earlier. Quite interesting, that.

Tell my brother hello for me and have a pint on me.

Albus

Naturally, arse that Dumbledore is, he summoned me back to the castle last night. I would have so enjoyed spending the night at the Hog's Head, if only to have some peace and quiet. But no, I evidently do not deserve that.

I couldn't help but roll my eyes at his description of the Weasley boy. Good riddance, Miss Granger, I'll say! Although I shudder at the idea of Miss Brown and Weasley breeding. I shall have to look for a new job if it happens, for I shan't be able to cope with that level of dunderheadedness.

It seems the Granger girl is more relieved than heartbroken, and I cannot blame her. Her mind would be utterly wasted on Weasley. Alas, I must go meet the old man to hear his latest hare-brained idea. I sincerely hope it doesn't include Yule celebrations and the like, requesting me to be "cheerful."

Chapter 8

Chapter 8 of 10

Hermione finds a journal to write in, but unbeknownst to her, it's been placed in her path purposely. For what end?

Disclaimer: Just having fun.

I was called into a meeting tonight with Professor Snape and Headmaster Dumbledore. The first thing I noticed when I went in was Professor Snape's expression. He seemed terribly angry, and his hair was disheveled badly. I knew it didn't bode well. And besides, I didn't expect Dumbledore to contact me that quickly.

He agreed that I should be the one to do the bonding because Harry has so much going on. Snape said he agreed as well, but I could see he was reluctant. To my shame, they already knew that Ron wouldn't be a match for me, but that's when I found out why Snape seemed in such a bad mood. Professor Dumbledore thought that he and I, that is to say Snape, should bond together.

My heart has never pounded so fast in my life. I was horrified at first. Not because I think ill of the professor, but I just couldn't see myself bonded to him. What sort of relationship would that be? I'd like some bit of happiness, you know? It's a lot to think about. As the conversation went on, I had to agree that Dumbledore's logic was nearly inarguable. Snape even seemed to think so, but he never could look me in the eyes. Not that I wanted him to.

Harry always said that he felt Snape could read his thoughts, and I wouldn't want him to use any Legilimency on me and be offended by what he might find. What to do? What to say? I'm so confused. I know that I need to do this. It's for the greater good. I should make this sacrifice, and I suppose I will do it. But is it wrong for me to want a future with the man I'd bond with? It was so much easier when I thought it would be Ron, but now... Severus Snape.

Hermione Snape.

Hermione Granger-Snape.

No, I like Snape. It has a ring to it, doesn't it?

I am to let Dumbledore know my decision in the morning.

What I need now is a good night's rest. Then I'll tell him that I will bond with Severus Snape and become the man's wife...

Merlin that looks strange!

Dear Mum and Dad,

I know this will come as a surprise for you, and to be honest, it was for me as well, but I am about to bond with a wizard. It means basically that I won't be able to take an interest in dating anyone. And you can imagine that I'm not doing it out of love, but rather for the war effort. And once that blasted war is over, we can reverse it, and I'll be free again. I just thought I should let you know in case the Prophet finds out and runs an article. I hope they won't, of course, but you never know; Skeeter is back with the paper, and I think I told you that cow hates me. Well, not cow. Beetle.

Please don't worry about me. I'm safe within Hogwarts and even safer now with a strong wizard by my side.

Love,

Hermione

I wrote Mum and Dad this morning. It's only fair they find out from me rather than reading it in the paper. I do hope we'll manage to keep it secret, though. It would be horrible if anyone finds out.

Not that I mind so much. Snape isn't handsome, but then I'm no beauty either. He is fiercely intelligent, and I think that might work in my favour. That is if he gets over his 'bond-with-a-little-schoolgirl' guilt. Good Lord, that man is a travel agent. For guilt trips, that is. Professor Dumbledore called me to his office this afternoon and invited me to ask questions about the man I'm about to bond with. I didn't know what to ask, so unexpected was his offer. In the end, he just told me bits and pieces of Snape's everus's ast. And yeah, guilt trip galore. I hope he'll lighten up a bit. I don't like to envisage my future as one gloomy day after another.

My journal looks like it has more pages suddenly. Oh, well, I'll check tomorrow. It's getting late, and tomorrow will be another long day.

So sorry for the long delay. Life has been so busy!

Chapter 9

Chapter 9 of 10

Hermione finds a journal to write in, but unbeknownst to her, it's been placed in her path purposely. For what end?

Disclaimer: Not making money.

Super thanks to my super secret beta!

Miss Granger,

I do believe you are supposed to be in the headmaster's quarters with me right now. Have you decided against wedded bliss? I assure you I would not be offended in the least if you have changed your mind. In fact, I'd find that to be the best news I've had all year. However, I don't appreciate having my time wasted.

S. Snape

What an impertinent girl! How dare she make me wait like some fool while she... I don't even know what to call it. Primped? There was no reason for her to show up late, and there was certainly no reason to have her face painted up like some Geisha or to have her hair straightened and silky. And why did she have to insist on those dress robes? I simply went as I was and wore my teaching robes. I hope she doesn't have any delusions about what's between us. This is a job. Nothing more.

Dumbledore found it amusing of course, and he had the nerve to take a photo of us together. I am certain he intends to blackmail me with it one day. I shall destroy it at first opportunity. And I'm now waiting again for my bride—said she had something to retrieve before... Merlin, where's my Ogden's? Did I just say bride? How the fuck do I let Dumbledore talk me into these things? And those twinkling eyes of his. Bastard.

Well, what do you know. She's knocking on my door now. I think I shall make her wait for a change. I want to get this over with quickly, so perhaps I should invite her in. It should be fun to see that determined air faltered as she realizes what being my bride means.

Well, that was a surprise. I had no idea what exactly to expect, of course, but my nature dictated to expect the worst, and anything better than the worst would end up being a pleasant surprise. Only, not in my wildest dreams would I have expected to actually enjoy—*Enjoy*—myself. Oh, I knew she is a highly spirited being; I knew she is intelligent; two traits I find admirable in any human being, even more so in such a young one. But I also thought I knew she talks to much by default; thought her brand of intelligence is entirely book-driven; thought she only shows it off because of her need to *belong*, to be recognised. I learned she knows when to keep her mouth shut. I learned she is compassionate. And I learned she is actually, genuinely intelligent. What a revelation. I find I no longer absolutely dread the time I'm forced to spend with her.

Naturally, the prospect of giving my right hand some relief and have the real thing instead whenever I want it sounds rather appealing, too. She's inexperienced—considering her age, any other status would have rather shocked me—but it seems to be a subject she is very keen on learning more. And who am I to deny her this knowledge?

Before she left this morning—appearances must be upheld if we are to defeat the Dark Lord—for her own dormitory, she even came up with an ingenious idea. Dumbledore opened a Floo connection between my chambers and a disused classroom so she can come here without arousing suspicion amongst her House mates. It wasn't sufficient for her: she pointed out how it might be necessary for us to contact each other for whatever reason. So she charmed the copyright page of our Potions books for seventh year Advanced Potions so we can write each other messages. As she rightly stated, "Nobody ever reads *that* page, even if I do leave it out for anyone to see." Clever girl, that one.

Damn, an owl from Lucius.

Severus,

The Dark Lord is distressed. I have no idea what it's about, but keep your senses together, should he Summon you. Expect me after dinner. We need to talk.

Lucius

Merlin, it can't already be the effect of our bonding, can it? I better let Hermione know not to come here until Lucius is gone. And I better remember to close the Floo the moment Lucius arrives, too.

Chapter 10

Chapter 10 of 10

Hermione finds a journal to write in, but unbeknownst to her, it's been placed in her path purposely. For what end?

AN: Sorry for the wait! Hope you enjoy this installment!

God, I can't believe this. I'm married, and I've shagged Severus Snape.

It was more than I could have expected. I know that sounds strange, Diary, but even though I was trying to pretend our bonding was normal and a real choice on my part, I still thought he'd be horrid—as usual. But he wasn't. Not that he didn't try of course. He even sent a nasty note because I was running late. I didn't care. I wanted to look nice on my wedding day, even this farce.

But when I went to him and we began to make love, something changed in him. Or maybe something changed in me. I've seen a different side to him, and I want to know more. That scares me a little. What if I fall for him? Would he really want to stay bonded after Voldemort's defeated? Well, I guess it's too soon to think about this, isn't it?

All right. I vow to carry on and do my duty. He and I will do our part in bringing down Voldemort, and if we find a little happiness along the way, so be it.

Hmmm. Those pages that I noticed earlier? The whole back section of this diary is filled with someone else's writing. It's spiky just like Severus's.

Oh my God! I just thought of him as Severus. Already things are changing. See?

Anyway, I can't make out the letters or the words. I wonder what that's doing there? Why can't I read what he's written? Something isn't right. I'm going to ask him. Oh, what's this? A house-elf with a letter for me.

Hermione,

Don't come back to my quarters until you get the all-clear from me. Lucius will be around after dinner, and he is just about the last person I want to have to explain what

you're doing in my quarters.

S.S.

What the heck does Malfoy want from Severus? Ah, well, at least I know for certain that Severus has my safety in mind. I surely have no wish to come face to face with ~~that~~ man! And maybe Severus will share with me what Malfoy wants... Well, I can hope, can't I?

Oh, finally! An owl. That can only be from Mum or Dad. I take that as a good sign. At least they aren't pretending I don't exist after my last owl to them.

Dear Hermione,

Well, that letter rather came as a shock, I must admit! To say I'm pleased would be a lie, but no doubt you can imagine that. My little girl getting married. How preposterous.

But, you know what? On some level, I understand your motifs, and I'm very relieved that you can reverse this once that evil person is out of the way.

Love always,

Mum

P.S. Tell that man if he as much as bends a hair of yours, he'll have me to deal with, wizard or not. Love, Dad.

Knowing that Mum and Dad aren't angry takes a load from my shoulders. I'm so happy.

What's on my mind now, though, is Severus. He Flooed in a few minutes ago and saw this diary. He stared at it for a moment and said he needed to speak with Dumbledore.

I said, "You have one, too, don't you?"

He nodded. I knew something was off when I saw those extra entries. Dumbledore is behind this, but what is this exactly? I'm going to go down to the dungeons shortly.

He asked if I'd like to pack a few things to leave in his wardrobe and in his bath--purely to save time of course. I think it's a good idea, and oddly enough, I can't wait to see what my toothbrush looks like next to his.

Blast! What a berk I've turned out to be.

And I shouldn't feel so giddy when there's work to be done. I still haven't heard what Lucius wanted. Severus only said that things had become more complicated for us and that he'd tell me more later.

Hmmm. I'd better go now and gather some things.

AN: After the voting is over, I promise to have more timely updates. Really. Thanks!