

The rest of the world fell away, the baking ingredients temporarily forgotten as the pair kissed, oblivious to the fond eyes of the house elves cooking dinner.

It was going to take them a while to get around to making those cookies, but Ernie didn't mind. The more time he got to spend with Hannah, the better.

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The bank of the lake was a popular spot for romance at Hogwarts; generations of students had taken romantic strolls along the edge of the still water, been waved at by the giant squid on their way.

It was cliché, but that made it all the more romantic in Susan's eyes, and she was glad her Slytherin was willing to indulge her on this.

It probably helped that they weren't just walking beside the lake — Susan had done one better, and set up a privacy warded blanket in a quiet spot on the grass. The best spot to watch the sunset from.

"I think the squid is a voyeur," Theo announced, eyes cast suspiciously towards the water. When Susan turned to follow his gaze, she saw the squid in question, drifting lazily across the surface of the water, its eerie unblinking eye visible.

"I don't think it's looking at us," Susan assured him wryly. "It probably can't even see us. I warded us in pretty tight." She didn't want to have to deal with lovestruck second years on their awkward first dates interrupting them. Private time at Hogwarts was a rare thing.

Theo's gaze darkened. "You did, did you?" he drawled. "Good to know."

They had a picnic basket, but Susan wasn't particularly hungry, especially not with Theo looking at her with that intense stare.

Everything about Theo was intense. She thought she'd be used to it after a year, but it still made the hairs on her arms stand on end, to have such undivided attention directed her way, from such a handsome boy.

Theodore Nott was the picture of pureblood elegance, the dark foil to Draco Malfoy's silver grace. He was tall and willow-thin, cheekbones sharp enough to cut glass, dark brown hair always effortlessly falling into his eyes. Those gorgeous, all-consuming eyes.

It still amazed Susan that a boy like that gave even a moment of attention to a girl like her, let alone the *fierce* devotion that Theo had.

"Are you mad I didn't get you flowers, like Draco did?" he asked almost carelessly, and she scoffed.

"Draco's a show-off, and I don't even like flowers." She sidled closer. "Should I have gotten *you* flowers?"