

**Chapter 1 : Alaina Hawthorne and All Pseudonyms**

*My Dearly Beloved (Silhouette Romance, No ) by Alaina Hawthorne, Alaina W. Richardson, February 1, , silhouette edition, Paperback in English.*

Using her as a model, however, makes him realize how beautiful she really is. Hermione was mad at him. Over a stupid potions textbook of all things. He figured he should be used to having anger directed towards him by now though. It sort of came with the fame, whether it was Ron blowing up at him for some misunderstanding, the Dursleys spitting on him just for breathing, Snape sneering at him because he was a Potter, or even the Daily Prophet and, by extension, the entire wizarding public whenever a scapegoat was needed for some disaster no one wanted to be responsible for. But this was different. Sure she had gotten angry with him in the past, but, for some reason, it never got easier. With Ron, it was always just unreasonable Ron being unreasonable, so it was always easy to just let him sod off to cool his head. Same with the Dursleys or Snape or anyone else for that matter. They never had a real reason to be angry with him, he never deserved their anger. Everyone else only got angry with him for something completely irrational and most likely completely untrue and unjustified. It was different with Hermione. She only got angry with him when he deserved it, when he was being a git, a prat, a prick, whatever. He blinked for a moment as that comprehension dawned on him. Then he groaned, realizing that he was in fact being a total git to Hermione. He plopped backwards and stretched out on the grass by the lake shore, staring up at the clouds lazily drift by as he contemplated on how to toss his pride aside long enough to apologize to her. He looked up and saw Hermione standing over him with a nervous and apologetic look on her face, so he blurted it out, "Sorry for being a git. She then gave him a shy and affectionate smile that was warmed by the light of the setting sun. It was a perfect scene, with the pink sunset-burnt clouds behind her, the way she gingerly tucked her hair behind her ear to keep it from swaying in the breeze, and the way she looked at him with those eyes. He scowled for a moment at the possibility that the shot might be ruined. That must have been the last shot on the roll of film. This old piece of junk? Even now, those things probably sell for more than six hundred pounds. Photography, A History," she replied with a sheepish shrug, causing him to laugh a little. Colin Creevey generally used a magical camera these days, but he was still a muggleborn wizard and had a photography hobby before he had come to Hogwarts, so Harry had asked him to use the room of requirement as a darkroom to develop the photos for him. I have to manually set the aperture, shutter speed, and focus before every single shot She figured that maybe it was merely because it was a connection with his mother, but she wanted to hear it from him. Harry tended to be a fairly guarded person when it came to his parents, and she wanted him to open up to her a little instead of bottling it all away like that. His answer, however, surprised her. I was actually thinking about you. Could it be that Harry Potter was finally noticing her? Could he finally be interested in her? Did he think that she was pretty enough to take photos of? She felt a flutter of hope in her chest. Hermione then started feeling flustered when she remembered that she had kissed Harry on the cheek at the station after the Triwizard Tournament fiasco. His eyes then grew wide at the realization and blushed a little. I meant the last school year She shook her head into his chest. Everything he had said was true. It had hit a sensitive spot that she had tried to avoid dealing with. As a muggleborn witch, she hated the Statute of Secrecy. Despite her reverence for the rules and authority, despite the fact she understood the necessity of the Statute, despite all logic, her emotional side hated it. She hated having to live in a completely different world from her parents. Choosing a magical career would mean that the divide between her and her parents would only grow that much larger. But they were now starting their NEWT-level classes, and the possibility of that magical career was looming over her shoulders. The decision to chase her career into a world that shunned her parents or to give up a magical career to be closer to her family was a suffocating burden. She had worked far too hard to give up a career in the wizarding world but, at the same time, the thought of leaving her family completely destroyed her. Sure she could always visit them, but just the fact that they could never be a part of her world

was heartbreaking. Feelings were just irrational like that. But there was also a third reason. If he was destined to defeat Voldemort or die trying, he wanted to at least leave behind some proof that Harry Potter existed. Sure there were plenty of photographs of him circulating in the media such as the Daily Prophet, but those were all of The Boy Who Lived. He wanted to leave behind some photos of Harry Potter. It was then that he noticed that the sky had darkened into night. Had they really just spent the last hour holding each other? The first photo in the stack, however, shocked him so much that his hands began to tremble, almost to the point of dropping all of the photos. The film had been old though, long expired, causing the contrast to diminish and the color balance to skew, and the background was out of focus as well, all of which gave the photo a glowingly surreal and dreamlike atmosphere. He could almost feel her laughter, her happiness, through the photograph. He then flipped to the next photo and chuckled. It was completely black. It was his first test shot with the camera and he had horribly underexposed it, not letting enough light in through the lens. A vast majority of them were generic landscape shots from around the castle, and a lot of them were either too dark from underexposure or too bright and washed out from overexposure. Some were even shaky and terribly blurred from too slow a shutter speed. And, due to the fact that the film had been sitting in the camera for more than a decade, the photo shared the same glowing and dreamlike atmosphere as the photo of Lily. It was oddly fitting. But it was the fact that he wanted a copy for himself that made her feel more beautiful than she ever had before. It was usually Colin who approached Harry, not the other way around, so Colin was looking especially ecstatic that the Harry Potter had wanted to talk to him, especially since, she guessed, that the topic of conversation was probably their now shared interest in photography. Harry grinned as he pulled out his camera and snapped a goofy photo of a puzzled-looking Ron Weasley, with his hamster-pouch cheeks stuffed full of food, sitting next to a disgusted-looking Hermione. Harry laughed as he took his time with getting the focus, aperture, shutter speed, and composition just right this time before taking the shot. There are too many people around! Heard you got a muggle camera! Wanna to do some nude shots of me? She had to laugh at the candid shot from a couple days ago of Ron with his mouth full of food and her giving him a look of disgust. Then she blushed a little when she remembered the reply letter that she had gotten from her mother. Her mother had teased her that she had never seen Hermione look as pretty as she had in that photo, and that nothing could make a girl prettier than being in love. The only reason she had mentioned that her parents had framed the photo was because she had hoped to coax him to mention whether he had as well, so she was a little disappointed that he had just let it topic hang in the air like that. She was actually really hoping that he had framed that photo of her and placed it on his nightstand next to his bed or something. Can I have a copy? Harry ran his hand through his hair and grimaced slightly. You really should give it some thought now before you regret it. But, then again, it all seemed kind of trivial considering that he might die fighting Voldemort. What would be the point of preparing for a future that might not be there? Watching him play quidditch was bad enough as it is. If he became an auror, she would be constantly worrying about him, fretfully wondering every single day whether he would come back home alive. But once he did come home safe and sound, her relief from all of that pent up nerve-racking tension would lead to amazing sex. What am I thinking? I won my first match back in first year and became a hot shot quidditch star even though I barely knew the rules at the time. He was just simply good at everything. Well, everything aside from occlumency anyway. She even remembered sometimes thinking that it was unfair that Harry could just slack off with Ron while she slaved away in the library, and his results still managed to nip at her heels. That was why Hermione could never resent Harry. Maybe the fact that I can pick up stuff so easily had made me averse to actually working hard to improve further. Or maybe the fact that I can so easily just move onto something else, like photography, and be equally as good at it spreads me out too thin, like I have too many hobbies and not enough time to devote to really mastering any one thing. I dunno, but whatever it is, I hit that wall. And then usually the true geniuses of hard work overtake me. Thinking quite a lot in fact. And quite deeply too. It was kind of sexy, honestly. Plus, for once, it was him that had rambled on for quite a while instead of how it usually was, with him being a good listener to her endless rambles.

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