

Kittens and Snakes

by carley9

It starts with a kitten and ends with a snake.

One-shot

Chapter 1 of 1

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I would like to thank my beta *Ashley* for helping clean this up! Don't know what I would do without you. :)

Hermione looked down at her list and felt the small hand interlaced with hers tighten. She returned with a small squeeze of her own. She looked down at the curly-haired child and idly stroked a curl while saying, "We only have one last stop to make before we meet up with your father and sister."

"I don't see why we're getting school supplies so early. Sylvan didn't have to get supplies this early," the child pouted.

Hermione smiled. "That's because your elder brother is a procrastinator." She stopped in front of a shop called 'Magical Menagerie' and pulled her child inside. "We're going to pick out your familiar here." Hermione looked back at her list and added, "It seems that snakes have been added to the list along with the usual cats, owls, and toads."

The child wrinkled her nose and let go of her mother's hand, walking away and slowly looking at the animals. She had already dismissed the snakes and toads; that was her sister's cup of tea. She slowly walked down the aisles, stopping in front of a little, bow-legged, black kitten. She reached out to stroke the fur and found it soft. "Mum?"

Hermione came up behind her and asked, "This one?" When the child nodded her head—sending a mass of curls shaking—Hermione reached out to pet the kitten and felt it nudge her hand. "What will you name it, Rowena?"

Rowena petted the kitten again and answered, "Phoebe." She looked up at her mother and stated, "She looks like a Phoebe."

Hermione tucked a strand of hair behind her daughter's ear and said, "Let's finish up here and go meet your father and sister."

Severus was in the middle of a pet store in the middle of Muggle London with the child most dear to his heart. At the moment, said child was standing on tip-toes with her nose pressed against the glass of a tank containing reptiles and amphibians.

"Papa? Can I have this one? You said that snakes were now on the list." The child practically hopped up and down. "Plus Mum said that if we found a non-poisonous one, I could have it. So can I?"

Severus looked down at the Muggle wristwatch his wife had given him last Christmas and noted the time. "If we check with the owner—and if he re-assures us that it is non-poisonous—you may have it." As the child smiled at him, he added, "Besides, it is almost time to meet your mother and sister for lunch."

"Are we going to the Three Broomsticks?" As her father nodded, she punched a fist into the air and went to search for a sales clerk.

Severus almost smiled as he waited for his youngest child to come back. She was always asking what was in this jar or that jar—always questioning and questioning some more. He was glad that this one seemed to be headed for Ravenclaw or Hufflepuff—it would be difficult to have her in any other House.

“Papa! He says it’s not poisonous! Can we get it now?”

This time Severus did smile as he said, “Yes, we may.” He turned to the clerk and asked, “Do you happen to have a box to put it in?” The clerk nodded and left to get a box. As Severus watched him walk away, he asked, “So, what will your new pet’s name be, Freya?”

“Nagendra.”

Severus pinched the bridge of his nose and asked, “Do I even want to know where you found it?”

Freya smiled at him—allowing a twinkle to reach her eyes—and said, “Probably not.”

“Let’s pay and meet you mother and sister. I’m famished.”

Hermione smiled and reached for her husband. After planting a chaste kiss on his thin lips, she asked, “What took so long?” Without waiting for him to answer, she said, “Rowena and I have been waiting for ten minutes now. We were for certain that you would beat us here.”

Severus pulled out a chair for Freya and said, “You were in Diagon Alley, whereas I was in Muggle London. One cannot very well apparate in a crowd of Muggles.”

Hermione smiled at him and then turned her attention to Freya. “So, did you end up getting a snake or a toad?”

Freya patted the brown box on her lap and said, “I got a snake. I named him Nagendra.”

Hermione snickered. “Lord of the Snakes? Hoping that your snake will keep your brother in line?”

Freya smiled. “Nope, just the Slytherins who try to interrupt my study time.”

Severus asked Rowena, “What did you get, my dear?”

She shyly smiled and tucked a strand of hair behind her ear. “A little black kitten. I named her Phoebe.” She chewed on her bottom lip and said, “I hope that she’ll be okay. We had to get kibble and a litter box for her.”

Hermione and Severus watched as their two youngest children talked about their shopping expeditions. Hermione grabbed for Severus’ hand under the table and asked, “How did we end up with twins with such different personalities?”

“My dear, we are as different as the snake and kitten bought today. Why should our children be any different?”

Based off Prompt # 55. It begins with kittens. It ends with snakes. (There’s an obvious SS/HG reference in there, but it really can be anything! As long as there are kittens. And snakes. I’d like for the kittens not to be fed to the snakes.)