

# The Clock Chimed Again - Are You Talking To Me?

*by Pearle*

Snape has an agonizing problem, a strange force returns to annoy him. One-shot. HG/SS. Second in "The Clock" series. Can be read with its companion pieces or as a stand alone.

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*Chapter 1 of 1*

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Summary: Snape has an agonizing problem, a strange force returns to annoy him. This is a companion piece to For Whom the Clock Chimes, It Chimes For You. One-shot. HG/SS

Disclaimer: The characters, settings, etc. of the Harry Potter series are not mine they belong to J.K. Rowling and Co. I promise to return them when I am through. Well, most of them anyway.

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They were coming up on their one-year anniversary. Hermione had planned a small dinner party to mark the occasion. Severus thought he must have really lost his mind to agree to have dinner willingly with Potter. Only for her, he thought.

Three days. He had three days to get her something nice. Severus was agonizing over what to get her. They had a bit of a rough go at first. Severus Snape was not known for being warm and cuddly but he was trying. He loved Hermione with all his heart. The problem was, he didn't know how to show it. Hermione was out with Ginny Weasley. They were having.....what did she call it? A hen party?

Severus was sitting in his private office contemplating the weight of the world. He had a snifter of brandy next to him. "What do I buy her?" he asked the empty room.

He looked up as his office clock chimed. The hand with his picture said, "Congratulations on your marriage. How about jewelry?" Oh bloody hell, the clock was doing it again.

"What! Are you cursed? Once a year you come alive and butt into my life?" Snape snarled at the clock.

The clock chimed. The hand moved to, "Okay."

"A clock is just a clock. This cannot be happening." Severus ran his hand distractedly through his hair.

The hand moved to, "A clock is just a clock, and a toaster is just a toaster until it starts giving you the stock reports."

Severus groaned. Wonderful, now all the appliances will be giving him advice. He could not wait to hear what his razor said! On second thought, he might never go in the loo again. Should he warn Hermione?

"So,.....um... Oh hell this is absolutely ridiculous."

The hand with Hermione's picture moved to, "Frederick's of Hogsmeade. Va va va voom!"

The hand with his picture moved to, "Better buy something nice. Soon."

"May I remind you that is my wife you are talking about?" Severus realized he was arguing with a clock. He must be more tired than he thought.

"Fine, whatever." He snapped at the clock. "Actually, you were bang on last time. Jewelry? What kind?" He really could not believe he was asking the clock. What was worse, was he was waiting for the clock to answer.

The clock chimed, the hand with Hermione's picture moved to, "The Leaky Cauldron."

The hand with his picture moved to, "Diamonds are always nice."

"Diamonds," Severus snorted as he drank his brandy. "I suppose you get a commission too?"

The hand moved to, "Only from the florist."

Severus laughed. Dear Merlin, a clock with a sense of humor. "Is that a hint to buy flowers too?"

The clock chimed. The hand moved to, "Congratulations."

"I could do without the sarcasm you know." Well, if he lost his mind so be it. He must have turned the corner some time ago so he might as well go with it. "Listen, I'll buy her flowers, a diamond bracelet, I'll even throw in some chocolates for good measure. Will you go away?" Severus stood watching the clock.

The hand moved to, "Good Plan. Happy Anniversary. Until next year!"

Severus groaned and shook his head. He felt the wards being taken down at the entrance to their quarters.

The clock chimed. The hand with his picture on it and the hand with Hermione's picture on it both pointed to, "Snape quarters." Severus stood looking at the clock.

He heard Hermione call out, "Severus. I'm home love."

As he left the room, Snape looked back at the clock, "Next year," he whispered.

Saturday night saw the Snape's hosting a small dinner party for their anniversary. Severus had restrained himself from hexing both Potter and Weasley during the course of the evening. Hermione's present to Severus, the one the guests were allowed to see, was a rare platinum lined bottle to store unstable potions ingredients. Severus's present to Hermione, a diamond tennis bracelet, had produced the obligatory ooh's and aah's. The flowers were in a crystal vase on the table and the chocolates were on the sideboard. Severus was engaged in a lively discussion about the new Quidditch season with the other males at the table. All was right with the world.

Hermione pulled Albus to the side. "Albus, I want to thank you."

"Thank me, for what? I have done nothing, my dear." But the twinkle in his eyes told another story.

Before turning back to the table, Hermione gave Albus a kiss on the cheek and said, "Next year, please tell him to buy rubies."

The End???

A/N: Several people expressed an interest in hearing from the clock again. Until I started writing, I didn't know that Hermione knew it's secret. I suspect you may hear from the clock again if the pitter-patter of little feet is heard. Hoped you enjoyed. As always thoughts, comments, reviews, whatever are always welcome.

Regards, Pearle