

The Clock Chimed Anew – What A Difference A Day Makes

by Pearle

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Chapter 1 of 1

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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.

~~~~ The Clock Chimed Anew What A Difference A Day Makes ~~~~~

Severus stood in his study eyeing the clock on the wall. Sometime in the last twenty-four hours two new hands had appeared on the face of the clock. There were no pictures on the new hands, just two new hands. The other hands on the clock had his picture and Hermione's picture on them. The hand with Hermione's picture was pointing to, "Teaching Charms, classroom." The hand with his picture was pointing to, "Snape quarters."

It was a week until his second anniversary. The clock had 'talked' to him about the same time of year, the last two years. Severus addressed the clock with a wary eye, "Don't you have anything to say?" He knew why the new hands had appeared, or rather a rationale for their appearance. Hermione was pregnant with twins and she was due any day.

"Is this your way of telling me something is going to happen?" He arched one brow questioningly, "How soon?"

Oh bloody hell! How is it, he thought, that a man of his intelligence stoops to talk to a clock? He shook his head. He felt a headache coming on. "Divination from a clock. I must be in a padded room in St. Mungo's." Still, the clock had 'spoken' to him twice before.

The clock chimed, startling Severus. The hand with his picture moved to, "Congratulations on expecting two new additions!"

Severus glared at the clock. "Great, great." All right, in for a penny in for a pound, he thought. "Aren't you going to tell me what sex the twins are?"

The clock chimed as the hand with his picture moved to, "Do you really want to know?"

Severus stared at the clock. This was ridiculous; it could not know what sex the twins were. Hermione had said she did not want to know until they were born. He thought it would make the task of picking out names easier if they knew now. Then they would only have to pick out two names instead of four. Severus was curious, "Why not? What are they?" Severus unconsciously leaned forward waiting for the clock to answer.

The clock chimed. The hand moved. He thought the hand seemed to be moving slower than usual. The hand pointed to, "Two new Snapes."

"I suppose you think that's funny? Ruddy clock." Severus scowled. He really should just go to his office and grade essays. God forbid the little imbeciles did not get their papers back on time. "So what great words of wisdom do you have to impart to me this time? Well?"

The hand moved to, "Get her something nice."

Severus snorted. "That's your great advice? Get her something nice? Even I could have figured that out on my own." Fine, he was sure this particular hallucination was the result of not sleeping well for the last week. Hermione was not resting comfortably. He chuckled as he remembered her saying she felt like an over stuffed elephant and twice as ugly. Didn't she know he thought she was beautiful? He found it hard to believe she had ever agreed to marry him, let alone love him. And now, a baby, no, two babies. He sat down abruptly, two babies. He put his head in his hands. Merlin's robes, children.

The clock chimed, the hand moved to, "Put your head between your knees and breath deeply."

Severus looked up at the clock. "Bugger off! You put your head between your..... ." He definitely needed some sleep.

The hand with his picture moved to, "Emeralds and rubies. You have an anniversary and two new little ones coming up."

"Emeralds and rubies what?" Severus was eyeing the clock suspiciously. Hermione had been thrilled with the last gift the clock had suggested.

The clock chimed as the hand moved to, "A nice ruby and emerald heart, set in half platinum and half gold. Representing the two of you."

Severus chuckled. "I thought you only get commission from the florist? Fine. Anything else?"

The hand moved to, "Now that you ask, roses, when the babes are born."

Severus shook his head, annoyed with himself. Was he really having this 'conversation'? More importantly, was he going to take the advice the clock gave him? The answer to both questions seemed to be yes. "Fine. I will order the heart tomorrow and a dozen red roses. Are we through?"

The hand moved to, "Chocolate."

Poppy had said Hermione would need plenty of chocolate to help balance her hormones, both during and after the pregnancy. "Got it. A ruby and emerald heart, set in platinum and gold, a dozen roses, and lots of chocolate. May I assume we are done?"

The clock chimed. The hand with Hermione's picture moved to, "Hospital wing. It's time." The clock with his picture moved to, "Get a move on it, you are about to become a father!"

Severus jumped up and took off at a mad run for the hospital. He would take care of the flowers and gifts later. Hermione needed him.

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Albus put his charmed typewriter away. He would be needed in the hospital wing, if only to calm Severus. His godchildren were about to come into the world. He had been deeply honored when both Hermione and Severus had asked if he would be godfather to their children. Poppy had sent him word just a few minutes ago that Hermione was in labor. It would not be long now. Albus's eyes twinkled. He was pleased there would be babies in the castle. Children were the hope of the future. The castle needed new life to keep it young. He hurried off to the infirmary.

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Severus stood looking at the silent clock in his study. Things had finally settled down. His son and daughter had been born two days earlier and were now firmly ensconced in the new nursery off the main bedchamber. He could hear Hermione giving last minute instructions to the house elves in the sitting room. The twins naming would take place within the hour. They had asked Albus and Minerva, as well as Harry Potter and Ginny Weasley to be the godparents. He could not believe he agreed to Potter. Albus and Minerva were his first choice, granted Albus was over 150 years old. He grudgingly agreed that naming two younger people, in addition to Albus and Minerva, might not be a bad idea. But Potter! He hoped she realized just how much he loved her to agree to such a ludicrous idea.

Severus eyed the clock as he said, "I realized we were interrupted the other day, were you finished talking?" All four hands on the clock pointed to, "Snape quarters." Severus fully expected the clock to chime and see the hand with his picture move to a new spot, but nothing happened.

Hermione walked quietly into the study. She put her arms around her husband's waist, hugging him to her. The afternoon light caught the ruby and emerald heart she was wearing. "Who are you talking to?" she asked.

Severus glanced at the clock before turning to his wife. "No one, love. Just mumbling to myself."

Hermione laughed. "You must be more tired than you've let on. Hopefully, the twins will learn to sleep at the same time. Severus, have I told you how happy I am? Sore, but happy." She gently kissed him. "I love you. I can't believe it, twins!"

Severus gazed into her eyes. She was all he ever wanted. "I love you too. I find it hard to believe myself. You. The twins." If anyone had predicted marriage and a family in his future he would have committed them to St. Mungo's. But the last few years had brought him more joy and happiness than he could have ever imagined.

A signal indicated their guests had arrived. Hermione turned to Severus as she paused in the doorway, "Coming?"

"Yes, I will be right there, love." He heard voices and laughter coming from the other room. The sound of a baby's cry could be heard in the din. His son or his daughter was making their presence known. As he left the room, Severus looked back at the clock. "Next year," he whispered.

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A/N: There's there damn clock again! The story is third in "The Clock" series. It can be read with the companion pieces, For Whom the Clock Chimes, It Chimes For You and The Clock Chimed Again - Are You Talking To Me? Or it can be read as a stand alone. I deliberately did not name the twins. Naming any children Hermione and Severus have always causes a flurry of responses ranging from "I love (fill-in-name)" to "I hate (fill-in-name)." I will have to cross that bridge if a bunny attacks me to write about the twin's first birthday party, but I will wait until then. As always thoughts, comments, reviews, whatever are always welcome. I hope you enjoyed the story. I love hearing from you, please review.

Regards, Pearle