

Someone Like Me

by Lady Whitehart

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Chapter 1 of 1

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Disclaimer: I do not own the Harry Potter series, characters, or plots. However, I really enjoy playing with them and promise to put them neatly away once I'm finished. Portions of the dialogue were borrowed from *Harry Potter and the Deathly Hallows* pages 663-665, but Severus Snape's internal thoughts are mine.

Author's Notes: This fic was written for the Live Journal community LE/SS For You anonymous exchange as a gift to hermionejean7. She wanted a fic about a pre-Hogwart Severus, and I was more than happy to write it. Enjoy!

Someone Like Me

July 25, 1970

"Maybe I'll be back!" SLAM!

D'you hafta? Severus rolled over to stare at the ceiling, trying to remember exactly why his parents had married in the first place. Oh yeah, they loved each other. They had really stupid ways of showing it too: arguing, name-calling, shouting, and he didn't even want to think about what those sounds were about when they closed their bedroom door at night. Love was something he wanted to fall in about as much a mud puddle or a doggie mess. Maybe even less so.

"Severus!" his mam shouted from the bottom of the stairs. "Time to get up!"

"Comin'!" The skinny boy shoved the covers back, jumped out of bed, and quickly pulled on an ugly shirt his mother had made and a pair of faded jeans. Combing his sleep-matted hair with his fingers, he snatched up his father's old trench coat and scurried down the steps.

His mother was standing in the kitchen, greeting him with her usual sour expression. Eileen Snape unceremoniously shoved some buttered toast across the table to her son before storming out. Severus tucked into the meager meal, chewing and swallowing as slowly as his stomach would allow him. When he was finished, he carefully scraped the crumbs from the plate and licked his fingers before placing the plate in the sink. He waited to see if his mother was coming back anytime soon. Satisfied that she wasn't, he slipped out the backdoor, crossed the bare back garden, and hurried into the alley behind the house.

It was a perfect day to go to the play park. Severus kicked at a stone on the road. It wasn't a truly perfect day because he hadn't anyone to play with. His mother had always discouraged him from playing with the other youngsters in the neighborhood, and after an incident last summer, he was inclined to agree. There weren't any wizarding children near by, and his mother said some of them would likely poke their noses up at him anyway.

"Doesn't matter," he mumbled to himself, wanting desperately to believe the statement. "I'm a wizard, and someday I'll be with other witches and wizards and have tons and tons of friends."

Picking up a stick, he waved it about. In his mind, he was an amazingly gifted and powerful wizard, the stick was a wand that trailed sparks, and the old coat was a magnificent green robe with silver stitching. No longer was he just little Severus Snape of Spinner's End. Oh no! He was Severus the Great... Severus the Invincible... Severus the Stupendous!

At the bend in the road leading to the park, Severus slipped out of his vivid daydream and paused to make sure it was empty. It wouldn't do to have someone see him playing wizard. For now at least, he had the park all to himself. He rushed to the swings and slowly pulled and pushed, going higher and higher feeling the wind whistling through his hair, pretending that he was flying on a broom.

After a time, he was hot from rising sun and the exercise. Relaxing on the swing, he allowed it to slow as he envisioned himself making a perfectly landing. A sigh escaped him as he wistfully looked at the empty slide, barren sandbox, and uninhabited climbing fort. Jumping up, Severus brandished his stick and shouted, "I want a friend!"

"Lily wait for me!" a voice called from just outside the park entrance.

"Catch me if you can, Toney!"

Eyes wide with surprise, Severus stared at the stick for a moment before he dropped it and fled to the safety of the bushes. If he'd actually done magic, he was going to surely be in trouble when his mother found out.

Shrieks of laughter filled the air as two girls about his age rushed through the park. The first girl had thick, red hair and easily jumped over seesaw on the higher side of the center before claiming the swing he had just vacated.

Pretty good for a girl, Severus thought, watching the girl with longing, wondering if he *had* actually conjured a friend.

"Lily, Mummy said we're to stick together!" snapped the other girl, shoving her blond hair out her face.

Her sister laughed, working the swing higher and higher. "I wasn't that far ahead of you, Toney. Come on! Swing with me."

Reluctantly, Toney took the other swing and joined Lily. Severus watched them, debating whether or not he should make his presence known. With his heart aching from the desire for companionship, Severus wished to do nothing more than to run over to them and show them -- especially the red-haired girl -- just how high he could make the swing go.

Better not, he decided, contenting himself with watching the younger girl. By now, Lily had worked the swing up to an almost impossible arc, and Severus continued to watch her in amazed fascination. *Almost as high as I was!*

"Lily, don't do it!" her sister screamed, and Lily, laughing joyfully, launched herself into the air and landed gracefully on her feet.

"Mummy told you not to!" Toney stopped the swing and jumped off, her hands on her hips as she scolded her sister. "Mummy said you weren't allowed, Lily!"

Lily giggled, as if she hadn't done anything out of the ordinary. "But I'm fine."

Severus crouched lower. No Muggle could have jumped off the swings like that. Just a few weeks ago, a much bigger boy had tried to copy Severus on the swings -- to prove to his friends how easy it was -- and had broken his arm in the process.

"Look what I can do."

Lily's voice was right in front of his hiding place. Severus watched in shock and awe as the girl held a flower in her hand, the petals opening and closing all on their own. There was only one explanation: she had magic in her, just like he did.

"Stop it!"

"It's not hurting you," Lily replied, dropping the flower.

"It not right," Toney said fearfully, before whispering, "How do you do it?"

In his excitement, Severus forgot that they didn't know he had been watching them and burst from behind the bush. "It's obvious, isn't it?"

The older girl screamed in surprise and ran to the safety of the swings, but Lily held her ground.

"What's obvious?" she demanded.

Severus was practically bursting with excitement at the discovery of another magical person. As soon as he told her, they could start being friends. "I know what you are."

"What do you mean?"

"You're... you're a witch," he whispered, shaking with anticipation.

The girl's expression changed abruptly and she was scowling at him like he called her a bad name. *That's* not a very nice thing to say to somebody."

Lily ran to join her sister at the swings. Both of them glared at him with disapproving looks, as he chased after them, wanting to say something to make everything right.

"No!" he protested, realizing that she must be a Muggle-born and didn't know that magic was *real* and witches weren't just ugly, evil women who roasted children and ate them for dinner. "You *are*! You *are* a witch! I've been watching you for a while But there's nothing wrong with that. My mum's one, and I'm a wizard."

"Wizard!" The older girl's nasty tone caused an angry buzz to fill his head, mostly blocking out the hateful words that followed.

"Why have you been spying on us?" Toney demanded, breaking through the buzzing in his head.

Embarrassed and furious, Severus instantly became defensive. "Haven't been spying. Wouldn't spy on you anyway, *you're* a Muggle."

He glared at the older girl, knowing that even though the word meant nothing to her, the way he said it hurt.

"Lily, come on, we're leaving!"

The girls both threw him fiftly looks as they marched out of the play park. All he had wanted was a friend to play with. Someone magic like him... someone who would understand what it was like to be different and special, but somehow it had all gone horribly terribly wrong. And now, that person was walking away from him. Severus stood rooted to the spot, screwing his face up trying desperately not to cry.

Severus didn't want to let her go away; he had to try to convince her that he knew exactly what he was talking about. At his feet was the flower that Lily had been

manipulating. He snatched it up and raced after them.

"Wait! Wait!" He got to the gate and looked up and down the lane. The girls were heading toward the nicer section of the town. "Wait, Lily! I'm not joking! I can prove it!"

Lily stopped and turned around, but Tuney grabbed her arm and tried to urge her on. Severus skidded to a stop in front of her, holding out the flower in his grubby hand. He stared down at the crumpled bloom and willed it to move. He glanced up at their astounded expressions as the flower petals once again opened and closed. Gazing up into the bright green eyes, Severus whispered, "See, I can do it too. It's magic; it's real."

"Lily, come with me right now, or I'm telling Mummy!"

The younger girl whirled on her sister, shouting, "Oh, you're just jealous, Tuney, because you can't do what I can do!"

Her sister's face went white with shock and then red with anger before she stomped off.

Lily turned to back to Severus, her eyes eager and shining with excitement. "Tell me everything."

"Sure. Let's go sit in the shade." Grinning, Severus handed her the flower. He just knew he had met someone like him, and he couldn't wait to tell his new friend everything she wanted to know.

A/N: I haven't written gen fic in ages, so please let me know what you think.