

The Sorting Hat

by sigh

My take on how the Sorting Hat came into being. Told from Salazar's perspective.

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Chapter 1 of 1

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Disclaimer: None of what you recognise belongs to me, nor am I making any money from it, trust me, I'm still broke!!

Huge thanks to April for betaing this for me and for putting up with all my grammar issues.

And so, the brilliant Godric started the first staff meeting of Hogwarts. Smug bastard. I was about to do that. Typical of Gryffindor to steal my thunder. He probably had this planned for months.

The first item on the agenda, it seemed, was student admissions. More specifically, who to include on the admission list. Godric wanted only the children with enough courage to admit to their abilities in the climate of today. Really bad idea when you think about it. The smart course of action isn't to admit to what you are and take what's thrown at you. No, the smartest way to deal with it is to cunningly use your powers to achieve your own ambitions without letting anyone throw anything at you. Those are the types of sentiments that can get a wizard labeled as sly, sneaky, and underhanded. Obviously, they would all prefer to be the hunted, but personally I LIKE being the... well, not hunter, exactly, so much as watcher. Of course, knowing Godric's history, I don't blame him for wanting no more subterfuge than necessary involved in this school. He is a proud man, and we had all put a lot of effort into making this school perfect. The children should be grateful for what they've earned, not hide their uniqueness.

Rowena's idea painted an infinitely more bleak future than Godric's. Gods, she wanted to admit only those brainy little swots who did nothing but study. No sense of fun between them. I really don't want to spend the rest of my life teaching a bunch of know-it-alls with no sense of humor. No way.

So dear, sweet, naïve little Helga had to drop her idea into this strange mix. Inviting any child who showed any amount of ability, no matter how small, surely seemed like signing our own death warrant. All that effort we put into building this place, wasted on ignorant children who have next to no ability. I shudder at the thought. Luckily, the others seemed to find this idea just as revolting as I.

These arguments continued in a circular pattern, getting nastier and more personal as they progressed. Finally, Helga couldn't handle it anymore and called for a compromise.

"Maybe we could each just teach who we want. Almost like four schools in the one building."

"How much Potions knowledge have you acquired recently that I'm unaware of Helga? I'm the only Potions expert in this castle, and no one else at this table could teach it half as well as I."

"Rowena's right, but Helga has a good idea. How about one school, but four houses within? We will each look after our own house, but we will teach all houses in our respective areas of expertise."

Godric must have been born with this annoying habit. He just waits for the idea to be hinted at in other people's conversations, and then claims it as his own.

"How, my dear Gryffindor, do you propose to sort these children between the houses? Give them a dragon, a book, a bed to hide under and a pet snake, and watch which one they pick first?"

"Ah, I'm glad you asked, Salazar, as it's one of my better ideas."

With these words he whipped his ugly old hat off his head and placed it on the centre of the table as if it contained the solution.

"We shall enchant the hat to see into the wearer's minds and determine which of us shall take care of them."

"Well, I'm in agreement with that! It sounds perfect!"

Gods, Helga could be so irritatingly NICE sometimes. Unluckily, Rowena was nodding her head in perfect agreement, so it was all down to me. Mind you, with three against one, nothing was really up to me.

"Oh, by all means, go ahead. I wouldn't want to rain on anyone's parade."

So Godric said his enchantment and the hat split open to reveal a mouth. It seemed to have cognitive functions and high intelligence, so the last step was for the input of our choice in characteristics.

"Well, Gryffindor's students should be brave to the point of stupidity. Sorry Godric, but Salazar and I both saw that event with the Squid last summer."

Oh yes, I'd almost forgotten seeing that with Rowena. One of the best moments in my life was the look on Godric's face during that whole event.

"If that's the case, then Hufflepuff's children will be loyal to a fault, and will consist entirely of the rejects from the other three houses."

"Godric, I don't know why you feel you must offend me so! Slytherin is the sly one who only cares about pedigree!"

I rolled my eyes at yet another comment of mine being taken out of context. I only say things like that to annoy Gryffindor. It's so easy to irritate him with a seemingly careless remark here or there. Pity Helga was as gullible as he was. Rowena, at least, understood I was only joking. That or she was too busy reading to really notice anything. Hmm, good point.

"Ravenclaw's will be fabulously dull with no desire to be found in them for anything other than hard work."

The bickering was almost at its peak when we noticed the hat repeating our lines under its breath. Godric, the moron, had given it the ability to understand everything, and it had paid attention to all of our exaggeratedly bad characteristics. Brilliant, just brilliant. This hat was to be our legacy. The only way future generations would know what we most admired in students.

Gods help the next generations of Hogwarts inhabitants.