

# Small Talk

by JackieJLH

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Chapter 1 of 1

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Severus Snape had never been one for small talk. In fact, he detested it. The only thing worse than having to make small talk, was having to make it with someone he saw every day. Sitting across from Professor Granger—*Hermione*, he reminded himself—and trying to think of something to say, he felt more annoyed than anything else. They lived and worked in the same building, taught the same students, ate their meals sitting two seats away from each other, and attended the same Quidditch games. They couldn't exactly be said to have individual experiences anymore, even if they barely spoke to each other during their day to day life.

"So..." Hermione began to say, her voice trailing off, as she looked anxiously for the server who'd taken their order an absolute age ago before promptly disappearing.

Severus raised one eyebrow sardonically, and when she didn't go on, he rolled his eyes and looked away.

"Why did you ask me out if you're just going to roll your eyes at me?" Hermione bit out, looking surprised at herself for letting the words escape her mouth.

Snape crossed his arms over his chest and leaned back, and said very matter-of-factly, "I have extensively-documented, very well-known masochistic tendencies. Or did you somehow miss that? I'd think the fact that I continue to teach complete dunderheads day in and day out for no reason other than the pitiful wage and unlimited access to a library would have made it apparent."

She shot him an irritated glare, but the corners of her lips twitched with a suppressed smile. After a moment, unable to stop herself, she laughed. "The library is a nice bonus." Glancing up to meet his eyes for just a brief second before looking away, she continued, "Of course, it's not the only reason I'm glad to be back at Hogwarts."

"Oh?" he choked out, his voice carefully controlled into something resembling disinterest, and she glanced back up at him, a blush spreading across her cheeks. She began to open her mouth to respond, but just at that moment, the server—who Severus suspected he might end up hexing by the end of the night—appeared beside their table and began setting down food, drawing Hermione's attention away.