

# Resurgam

*by countrymouse*

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## Chapter 1

*Chapter 1 of 1*

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As his last swimming vision...of intense green eyes, staring in shock and dismay...faded into blackness, his only thought had been hope that the blackness would yield to the renewed sight of those eyes...and that he might never again have to give up gazing into their depths.

Yet, when sight and sense returned, it was not forest-green eyes which greeted him, nor the soft sound of a beloved voice, but the antiseptic smells and harsh glare of sunlight through the windows of Hogwarts' Infirmary.

With consciousness fading in and out through the subsequent days, he gathered that, somehow, he had survived Nagini's attack, had been found (barely) alive, and had been borne in honour back to Hogwarts where the remorseful staff had outdone themselves in solicitous attention to the newly-revealed hero.

Poppy had spared no effort in marshalling all possible resources toward his recovery, calling in St. Mungo's highest-level Healers to consult on his treatment, and ensuring that someone sat by his bedside at all hours during the first critical weeks. Among the staff, Minerva, Flitwick, and Slughorn took turns sitting with him, each in their own way expressing their sorrow at having so grossly misjudged him for so many years. He would have preferred they kept their silence. What did it matter, now? There was only one person for whose good will he longed, and he had been denied her, again...

Through their monologues, however (for he was still too weak to reply), he learned the details of the Last Battle, as it was being called: how Potter had, apparently, seen and understood the memories that he had left him, for he had gone unresistingly to Voldemort, and to his own death. But...he had not died. How was that possible?...For she had not been here, this time, to save him?

From Narcissa and Lucius (and why were they here, at Hogwarts, he wondered?) he learned that Harry, though struck down, had lived, and of the final confrontation in the Great Hall between The Boy Who Lived and the Dark Lord. It seemed Harry had declared to the entire assembly what he had passed on to him in the memories: of his true loyalties, his plotting with Dumbledore, his doe Patronus...his love for Lily. Then Potter had spoken of possessing a greater magic than the Dark Lord's, of the Elder Wand's being his, not Voldemort's, and with a simple Disarming Spell had disarmed Death itself, sending it rebounding upon the one who had styled himself, "Wielder of Death".

Even from among the remaining students, it seemed, Poppy had impressed into service those she saw as fit to watch over his bed, and of course among them was The Boy Who Lived. Having returned his memories to him as soon as Poppy had deemed it wise, Potter was uncharacteristically silent the first few times he took the watch; but



In this as well, he found the presence of the Granger girl far less irritating than he had expected. Her photographic memory served her well in remembering the precise layout of his Potions storeroom, and her work in cleaning and cataloguing was competent and thorough. He often found himself surprised by how she seemed to anticipate his needs and intentions, discovering he felt more relaxed in her presence than he had been previously in anyone else's, except for Minerva...and Dumbledore.

*Nearly all.*

"I regret that I could not be more... open ... with my true motives, nor with any means of aiding you... "

She blushed. "That was an accident, actually...I hadn't meant for him to hear. I'd left my bag open by accident."

She promised to bring it to him after dinner, and he hid his satisfaction as he gravely thanked her.

*"In the Forest"\*\*\*\*...obviously the Forbidden Forest, since that is where he went to meet the Dark Lord. It should not be too hard to find, perhaps even a simple Accio...*

[illegible]

Apparently her red-headed would-be paramour had not accepted his "hero"-status as readily as had Mr. Potter and took issue with Hermione's choice to spend so much

""We'...Watching?"

"Oh, yes. We are aware of what is happening to those we love. I have been watching over Harry ever since I left him, and I have seen all you have done for him."

He gulped convulsively at that. If she had seen all...then she had seen the spitefulness, the pettiness, the injustice with which he had treated her son. How could she look upon him now with anything but revulsion?

He thought he would die under the weight of her smile, both from joy and from pain that she ~~ever~~*could* smile upon him, after all he had done.

"Lily..." his voice broke with emotion, "Lily...can you ever forgive me for betraying you? For causing your death?"

She pursed her lips at that, and her face grew more solemn, but still her eyes were kind. "Severus, it was Voldemort who killed me, not you, and Peter who betrayed us."

"But none of it would have happened if I had not...had not given him the prophecy."

She grew more serious still and nodded her head. "Yes," she said thoughtfully. "Perhaps. Many of our friends who were fighting him had already lost their lives...and that without a prophecy. Perhaps, without it, he would have overlooked us. Perhaps not. Who knows? But, one thing is certain." Her eyes met his directly, and he could not look away.

"It is true you did wrong, to tell him the prophecy. But don't you see, Severus, how that wrong was made to work out for good? Had you not told Voldemort the prophecy, he would not have chosen Harry. Had I not stepped into the gap to shield Harry's life with my own, he would never have been given the blood-protection.

"And, without you...Severus, you could have, at that point, accepted my fate...and Harry's...and continued in Voldemort's service, as did many others.

"Instead, you chose from that moment to recant your allegiance to him and dedicated yourself to bringing him down. You protected my son. Without you, he would not have been able to defeat Voldemort...and for that, I cannot thank you enough, my dearest friend!" she finished, her green eyes flashing with a fierce joy.

He did not realize tears were running unchecked down his cheeks, as he stared up into the beloved eyes, which held no hint of reproach, but only acceptance and...love?

Finding his voice, he croaked, "*Dearest* friend?" as if he could not believe what he was hearing.

She knelt down beside him in the leaves on the forest floor, as they had once sat side by side on a riverbank, and her smile was gentle as she spread her hands in explanation.

"Oh yes, I think so. Remus and Sirius are dear to me, but none of my friends has suffered as you have, nor taken on the burdens you have done, on behalf of me and mine."

"Lily," his voice choked with tears, but for once he was utterly unashamed of his emotions, "I have missed you...so much."

She tilted her head to one side, regarding him with an almost amused air. "But Severus, I'm always right here. I'm always with you."

He stared at her, "What...what do you mean?"

"Remember I told you, we know what is happening with those we love? I can see you, I'm just right here, on the other side." Seeing his confusion, she added, "The other side of the Veil."

"But we can't be together."

She nodded again and bit her lip, deep in thought. He was suddenly reminded of seeing the same mannerism in Hermione.

"Severus, what if, when Voldemort threatened us, James and I, instead of going into hiding in England, had left the country? Say, had gone abroad...to live in France, for instance? Or even further away...to Australia, or to the States? What if we were living there now? You would not be able to talk to me daily then, either. We would be apart. But would you grieve, as you have done?"

"No," he replied. "No, because I would know there is a possibility of seeing you again."

"But you see me *now*, silly! And you *will* see me again, on this side of the Veil, when it is your time to come and join us."

"It is so long."

"Because you have made another wrong choice."

He looked quickly at her, but saw no blame, only a deep sadness.

"You have chosen to stop...to stop living, stop loving. Severus, it's wrong, it's not natural...you are alive, you shouldn't be burying yourself away as if you were dead, too."

"Lily, when you..." he closed his eyes in pain, "my life ended, too."

"Now that's just silly!"

His head snapped up in surprise, to see her shaking her head, her cheeks dimpling as if she were highly amused at him. He was quite taken aback that she wasn't taking his pain seriously enough and began to feel the old irritation he had sometimes felt with her in their youth.

"Severus," she said softly, sensing his mood, "I know how you always wanted it to be, for us. And I tried, truly I did. But you know I never could. I just couldn't love you the way you wanted me to. I saw you as a friend, as my *dearest* friend, as the brother I never had, but..." she sighed. "Even if there had never been a Voldemort, Severus, it would never have worked out that way for us. You know it wouldn't have done...we're too different. Don't you remember how we always used to argue?"

"But I loved you anyway, Lily. I still do. I shall love you always," he murmured passionately.

"For Merlin's sake, Severus! I love you, too, and I always have...why do you think I got so angry when you went over to the Death Eaters? If I hadn't loved you, would I have even cared? But ...only...not *that* way." She paused. "Surely you're not saying, we can only love one another, if it's only *one certain kind of love*?"

Again he was taken up short. He had not considered this, in all the long years he had mourned her. He had seen her only as the lover he had lost to another. That "love" itself could be separate from a specific type of relationship, that love could transcend time and space and natural limits, was a new concept to him. He pulled himself together to hear what she was saying.

"It hurts me, Severus, when I see you in pain. Especially when I know it is so needless. There is a rich, full life for you out there. I *want* you to have that. It would bring me such joy, to see you happy, to see you living the life you *deserve* to have, after all you have suffered and done for me."

She suddenly stood up. Severus stared at her uncomprehendingly, a sudden fear stabbing him.

"Don't leave me, Lily!"

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Wearily, he trudged up the steps of the castle, entered the great doors, and began the ascent of the wide staircase leading to the Great Hall. The last rays of the setting sun were coming straight through the large front windows. As he neared the top, he sucked in a sharp breath and convulsively grasped the stone balustrade.

A young woman stood with her back to him, looking out the far window over the grounds. Her long hair, thick and wavy, falling to her waist, was colored a deep copper-red in the russet tints of the sunset.

Impossible!

At that moment, hearing his gasp, she turned, and the illusion was broken...it was Hermione Granger, and she was...crying?

For a moment, he had thought...

*For all you know, the woman that you thought I could be, the perfect woman for you, may be right there, and you're just not letting yourself see her...*

Without warning, his normally self-composed assistant broke into a run, closing the distance between them, and flung herself upon him, wrapping her arms around him in an embrace while burying her face against the wool of his frockcoat.

"Miss Granger! What is the meaning of this?"

She pulled back away from him slightly, still with her arms around him, sobbing but laughing at the same time. "Oh, sir, I'm so sorry, I know you must think I'm silly, but I can't help it, I was so worried, you were gone so long, and you're not fully well yet, and I was so afraid something had happened to you, out there in the forest, and..."

"Miss Granger!"

"...and there are all kinds of dangers in the Forest, acromantulas and centaurs, and who knows, there may even be renegade Death Eaters hiding out there, and when you didn't come back I was just so afraid..."

"MISS GRANGER!"

"Ye...yes, sir?"

She was still trembling in his arms, and through her now-radiant smile she still had shining tears hanging to her dark lashes. It suddenly occurred to him what was the most sensible way of silencing her.

He bent his dark head to hers, and after one instant of looking questioningly into her shining eyes, he gently kissed her.

Her arms reached up to entwine themselves about his neck, and she relaxed into his arms as his embrace around her tightened.

After a measureless moment, he drew back slowly from her to look down into her face. Her face was flushed, but her eyes sparkled, and in them he saw what he had never allowed himself to see before, nor ever thought he would see again in a living woman's face.

*I told you so...*

"Miss Granger. Such emotional displays are not for public exhibition. I suggest we take dinner in my chambers, whilst you compose yourself."

She didn't quite smile, but dimpled as she answered, "Of course, Professor."

He offered her his arm, and together they descended the stairway to the dungeons.

Minerva McGonagall, who had just entered the foyer on her way to the Great Hall, stepped out of the shadows as the pair vanished down the dungeon staircase.

"About time, Severus," she whispered. "And well done, Hermione."

And, with her head held high and a smile upon her lips, she swept into the Hall for dinner.

The last golden-red rays of the setting sun streamed through the windows of Hogwarts and caressed the grey stone walls with living fire.

All was well.\*\*\*

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\*Romans 12:20 (King James Version): Therefore if thine enemy hunger, feed him; if he thirst, give him drink: for in so doing thou shalt heap coals of fire on his head.

\*\*The Hiding Place, Corrie ten Boom, World Wide Publications, 1971, p. 44.

\*\*\*Quoted from Harry Potter and the Deathly Hallows, J. K. Rowling

Author's Note: This entire story is written solely from Severus' point of view, and, for good or ill, the canon Snape still worshipped Lily...with all the idolization of both a teenage romance plus the aura we tend to build around the dead (especially loved ones). Severus himself cannot see her for the (in my opinion) fair-weather-friend, two-faced little thing she actually is...so I wrote her as "he" would see her, not as I do (and as I believe many of the HP fandom does). So I didn't have Lily apologizing to Severus for her own bad behavior because I figured, for her, it was going far enough (at that point, anyway) for her to manage to just lay aside all the "love me, love my dog" prejudices of her past and be able to show him the gratitude he deserves for all the sacrifice he's undertaken for her. They've both grown, but are still in process of growing. I just didn't want anyone to think she's some saccharine-sweet ideal of perfection...in character, Lily would probably be patting herself on the back for her magnanimous attitude toward Severus. But, in the end, she has grown enough to want him to be truly free, and to be open and honest enough to encourage him in that.

Gratitude and deepest appreciation go to karelia, who helped "midwife" me through the "birth" of this, my first story, onto Petulant Poetess. Her sharp eyes and invaluable advice helped me avoid many foolish mistakes and make this a better story. Any mistakes remaining are, of course, entirely mine.