

# Haunted House

*by debjunk*

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## Oneshot

*Chapter 1 of 1*

Hermione's new house is haunted. She's tried everything. Can Severus help?

Hermione looked to Severus. He arched an eyebrow at her before gazing around the room. It was quite elegant, with lovely raised ceilings and a circular staircase near the back of the room. The place was a bit run-down, and everything had a healthy layer of dust on it. It was the perfect setting for a haunted house.

"You say the ghost yells at you to get out?" he asked Hermione.

"Yes. She comes at me and says this is her house, so I need to get out. Then she just floats off."

"Have you tried reasoning with her?" Severus drawled.

Hermione grumbled. "She won't even talk to me! I thought you might have some success with her. You're... devious."

"I'm devious?"

"You'd have to be to have accomplished all you've done in your life."

Severus grumbled. "I wouldn't call those things I did accomplishments."

"Come along, we haven't got time for your self-loathing." She led the way up the stairs and to a room far down the hallway.

"I'm sorry it's so messy. She won't let me get anything done."

Severus only nodded.

Hermione swung the door open, and Severus caught sight of a young-looking ghost in a long flowing dress, circa the 1800's. He cleared his throat. The ghost turned, her face filled with fury. Then she got a glimpse of Severus, and her furious grimace turned into a smile.

"Who might you be?" the ghost cried. She floated over to Severus excitedly.

"I am Severus Snape."

She looked from Severus to Hermione. She moved closer to Severus, her mouth almost touching his ear. "Are you with her?" she whispered.

Severus pulled back and looked at the ghost curiously. "Who else would I be with?"

"No," she corrected as her lips scrunched in disapproval. "Are you *with* her?"

Severus arched an eyebrow. Hermione chuckled. "I think she's wondering if we're involved, Severus."

The ghost turned to Hermione and scowled at her. "Nobody was talking to you!"

Hermione looked at Severus. "Well, at least you got her to say *something* to me."

"Well, are you with her or not?" the ghost demanded.

"Of course I'm not with her!" Severus growled.

The ghost threw her arms around Severus. He felt chilled to the bone immediately. Hermione gasped.

"You can't do that! You'll kill him!"

The ghost turned and gave Hermione an evil smile. "That's the idea!"

"Stop it this instant!" Severus ordered.

The ghost ignored him. His lips began to turn blue. Hermione drew her wand. "Stop it. Now!" she cried.

The ghost cackled. "What are you going to do? Kill me?" She cackled again. "I want him all to myself. If I kill him, he'll be forced to stay a ghost forever... with me!"

Hermione thought fast. "You won't like him! He's obnoxious. He calls me names all the time."

"Well, you deserve to be called names."

Severus' lips were shivering now. "Unhand me, you blue-haired harpy."

The ghost eyed Severus. "I see what you mean."

"And..." Hermione continued. "And he's grumpy in the morning, and since you never sleep it will always be morning, so he'll always be grumpy."

The ghost scoffed at Hermione's logic.

Severus was almost frozen. His hair had a layer of frost on it, and he shivered uncontrollably. He struggled to speak.

"I... I'm... g-g-g... gay."

"What?!?" the ghost shrieked.

"I... I-I-love... men." His teeth chattered so much he could barely be understood. "Ca-can't... get... enough... Ha-hate... w-w-women."

The ghost let him go, flying to the corner of the room. She gazed at him in horror.

"He's my new roommate," Hermione added. "He'll be parading men through here every night."

She looked at Hermione with huge eyes. "I don't want to see that!"

"Maybe you should find another house to haunt, then. Some home with a straight man living in it."

"But who will be as handsome as him?" the ghost said sadly.

"Do you like ginger-haired men?"

The ghost smiled. Hermione quickly gave her directions to Ronald Weasley's house. In an instant, the ghost had flown through the wall, hopefully never to be seen again.

"That'll teach him to cheat on me," Hermione muttered as she raced to Severus' side. He was slumped on the floor, curled in a ball, shivering wildly. Hermione transfigured everything she could into blankets and wrapped them around him."

"You... kn-know..." Severus chattered. "The best... best thing... for... hypo... th-thermia... is... t-t-to... t-take... all... your... c-c-clothes... off... and lie naked... with another... naked person."

"I thought you were gay."

"Not... even... c-c-close."

"Too bad for you I know a lot of warming charms."

Severus actually looked disappointed.

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A little while later, Severus sat in front of a roaring fire, covered in blankets with a mug of hot cocoa in his hand. He sipped it slowly. He was finally feeling himself again. He turned his head to look at Hermione, who was seated next to him on the floor.

"Thank you for saving me."

Hermione giggled. "I really didn't do anything. It was that crack about being gay that saved you."

"If you hadn't started to give that specter reasons to dislike me, I wouldn't have thought of it."

Hermione looked down. "I was scared to death."

"I was frozen to death."

She gave him a sideways glance, her face lit by a smile. Severus thought it was the most beautiful thing he'd ever seen.

"I still don't know why you called me to help," he asked before taking another sip of cocoa.

She blushed. "I trust you."

"I would imagine it would be hard to trust anyone after what Weasley did to you."

Avoiding his gaze again, she tried to make light of Ron's cheating. "Oh well, he just is the type that can't be satisfied with just one woman, I guess."

Severus slid a bit closer to Hermione.

"I am not that type of man."

She turned to look at him. He was mere inches from her face. Her eyes were wide and vulnerable.

"I know that," she whispered.

"He was a fool to treat you so. He'd no idea what he had. The dunderhead deserves that ghost woman."

Hermione gave Severus a curious look.

"What?" he asked sharply.

"I didn't know you felt that way."

"I do." He looked into her eyes. "If you were mine, I would never treat you so poorly."

"I know that, too."

"Of course, you could never be interested in someone like me."

"Here we go again with the self-loathing."

He arched an eyebrow at her. "Well, could you?"

"I think you would treasure any woman you loved. I wish I could be that woman for you."

"Don't you know how I feel about you?"

She shook her head.

"You mean there's something the know-it-all doesn't know? Is the world about to end?"

"Severus..."

"I love you. I've loved you for years. I've watched you waste your time with that rug-rat Weasley and have longed to show you how a real man would treat you."

"But you were appalled at that ghost implying we were a couple."

"She shocked me." His eyes softened. "Hermione, I know you've been hurt. I don't want to rush you into anything you don't want to do. I didn't think you wanted..."

She placed her finger over his lips. "I wanted," she whispered. "Oh, how I wanted."

He grinned like a little kid with his favorite candy. Pulling her close, he kissed her... finally.

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*A/N: Prompt by ladyinthecloak: Hermione buys a Muggle house and finds it is haunted. What does she do?*

*Major thanks to slytherinlaurel for betaing this at a very late hour. :)*