

# Have Yourself a Snapey Little Christmas

*by Titania Snape*

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*Chapter 1 of 1*

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A/N: I posted this last Christmas. I have polished it up to remove some of the tarnish, but, it's still very fluffy. If you are Diabetic, I suggest getting the insulin ready, just in case!

Merry Christmas every one!

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"Romantic gesture, Potter?" he growled.

"Uh-huh," he responded with a nod. "Come on, Snape! Buck up! It won't be all that bad, and Hermione would be bowled over. As it is now, she says, that she is unsure about how you really feel about her."

Severus huffed indignantly. "Unsure?" he muttered darkly. "How can that insufferable girl be unsure of my feelings for her?"

Harry rolled his eyes at his former teacher, amazed at the apparent stupidity the otherwise brilliant man was showing.

"Look, Snape. Hermione loves books, concocting potions, and all of that other apprentice stuff that you make her do. She never shuts up about it, and it's very tiresome at parties, but a girl can't live on academia alone. In spite of the mind blowing sex, so she says."

Harry flinched at the glare leveled in his direction. "Well, she has only talked about it once, and it wasn't about technique or anything gross like that, thank Merlin. Ron would have puked. No, it was a passing comment, made under the influence of too much firewhiskey. Lately though, we've had to listen to her bitch, and moan about how unromantic you are, and to be quite honest Snape, we're sick of it!"

Severus looked at the younger wizard, the Boy Who Lived to Defeat Lord Thingy, as he was called at the High Table, and raised a speculative eyebrow.

"So you are here, under the guise of offering me advice on Hermione and her need for romance, to save yourself and your friends from her constant complaining?"

"Well, erm, yea," he said. "That and we really do care about her and want her happy. While at one time, I didn't think that you were the man for the job, my opinion has changed... somewhat. You haven't hexed or killed her at least, so that must mean something."

"Indeed," the Potions master muttered, as he began to pace. Harry watched him for a time trying, without much success, to hide the knowing smirk he had unconsciously picked up from his former enemy. They weren't the best of friends now, but the final battle had begun a détente, of a sort. When Hermione had announced to Harry and Ron, that she was seeing Severus Snape outside of the world of academia, the three men learned to tolerate each other for her sake. Eventually things had calmed down. Now, they treated the other gruffly, but the affection was there nonetheless.

Finally, the former Death Eater stopped his pacing.

"Stop smirking, Potter; you'll never do it as well as I do. Am I to assume that you will be attending Albus' infernal Christmas affair tomorrow evening?"

"I wouldn't miss it for the world," he replied a bit flatly. Both men exchanged knowing glances.

"Good. You make sure that Hermione attends as well, understand?"

Harry grinned as he stood up and made his way to the fireplace. "Got it, Professor. See you tomorrow!"

In a rush of green flames he was gone, leaving Severus to ponder a certain little Know-It-All, for the rest of the evening.

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"I DO NOT look mousy!" Hermione Granger yelled, causing the redheads to flinch.

While Harry had been visiting his gruff friend, Ron had been working on Hermione. He had brought Ginny along, due to the fact that for all of his good natured charm, Ronald Weasley, wasn't the most romantic of young men himself. Add that to the fact that he still had a bit of a hard time, when it came to Snape and Hermione's relationship, he eagerly accepted the task of tackling the Hermione end of Harry's plan. If it worked, she would be happy, and the complaining would stop. If she were happy, he'd never, ever, have to hear Severus and sex, in the same sentence again.

"Ron didn't really mean it that way, Hermione," Ginny soothed. "My brother merely meant that if you want to attract extra attention from Snape then maybe you should, erm, well, dress a little more-- uh-- sexy."

"I work in a potions lab, Ginny," she chided. "Around dangerous things, and it's not appropriate to dress, 'more--uh--sexy!'"

Ron rolled his eyes, and Ginny clucked her tongue. "Mione, I'm not saying that you have to go round the lab with your breasts exposed or anything like that!" she exclaimed. "But you could do something with your hair besides wear it in that awful clippie thing, or you could put a bit of makeup on or something."

Hermione folded her arms and stomped her foot impatiently, "Ginny, I--"

"Come on, Mione!" Ron interrupted, screwing up his face. "You say that you think that he's only interested in you for-- ew, sex, and that he has only said that he loved you on a few occasions..."

"--and never does anything romantic or gives you any presents or anything," Ginny cut in.

"No candle lit dinners..."

"No flowers or..."

"Candy..."

"You don't go out in public even..."

"And quite frankly, Mione, your party conversation is lacking these days," Ron finished.

She looked at her two redheaded friends, tears shimmering in her eyes. "I'm really that boring to you guys?"

Ginny sighed and rushed to her friend. "No, not boring!" She narrowed her eyes at her brother. "Just love sick, is all. Have you told him that you aren't happy? No, you haven't. Have you asked him to take you out every once in a while? No, to that as well. Not to mention the fact that you have stopped making any sort of effort with your looks, like you did when you were trying to get his attention. He has, too, come to think of it. I think that both of you have gotten too comfortable with each other. You need to spice things up a bit!"

Hermione turned to the mirror again and looked at herself critically. Everything Ginny had said was true. She had stopped making the little efforts she used to make with her looks. She used to charm her hair a little nicer. She used to wear at least a bit of perfume or lip gloss to work, but that had eventually stopped as the newness of their relationship had worn off.

Maybe they were right.

"So what do you recommend?" she asked in a small voice. Ginny broke into a wide grin, and Ron shook his head in a mixture of disgust and wonder. This was his cue.

"Well, to begin with, you can come to Dumbledore's thing tomorrow," he said.

"Yes!" Ginny exclaimed. "And you must dress to kill as well. I am perfectly willing to help you along that score, as well as with your hair and makeup."

Hermione thought for a moment. She hadn't intended on going to the Christmas Eve feast that Dumbledore threw every year. She had intended to stay at the Burrow and catch up on her reading, and perhaps relaxing a bit. But the situation with Severus was becoming intolerable, and she had to know whether or not he still loved her.

As far as she was concerned the two years she had invested in the relationship, apprenticeship aside, made it worth the effort of her attendance. So, she turned back to her friends and smiled.

"Okay then!" she said with a bit more happiness than she had felt recently. "Ginny, where do you want to start?"

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Severus glanced around his study with a satisfied look, pleased to see that Dobby, and Winky had got the general idea as to what he wanted.

A cozy table was set for two with nice linens, and silver. The candles ready to glow with the flick of his wand, and the music was selected, as well. The House-elves had promised him a supper that would please Hermione's palate. For dessert? Well, dessert was another matter entirely. A matter that involved Astronomy Tower and a naturally enchanted sky.

It was as perfect as he could make it.

He gulped, as he stuck his hand in a pocket, and fingered the velvet box within.

Romantic and Snape didn't go well together, he thought, but for Hermione's sake he would make the effort. Even if he ended up looking foolish, or soppy, or Merlin forbid Hufflepuffish. If he could spy for Dumbledore and not be discovered and killed, he could be romantic and survive.

After Potter's departure the night before, he had made a trip to Hogsmeade to buy the items he required for his personal ablutions. The bottles and pots now sat in his bathroom awaiting use. With the thought that there was no time like the present, he began his ritual with a nice hot bath.

A couple of hours later found him walking into the Great Hall, and nearly cringing, at the over decorated room. The staff had out done themselves, especially Flitwick, but then he had a certain proclivity toward the overdone side of things.

Fairies flitted about, casting sparkling glitter around the room, some of it landing on the boughs of garland and balls of mistletoe. Wreaths adorned the walls and the torcheries, and a dozen gaily decorated trees dotted the room. A canopy of red, green, and gold velvet hung elegantly over the entirety of the hall, giving it a cozy feel.

"Happy Christmas, Severus," Albus Dumbledore said in a happy tone, as he drifted into the room behind him. "I'm happy to see you here."

"Thank you, Albus," he replied with a slight bow. Continuing in a dry tone, he said, "I wouldn't dream of missing this."

'Could the man get any odder?' Seveus thought, as he regarded the Headmaster's choice of robes for the evening. He was dressed in robes of rich red velvet with snow-white poinsettias embroidered on it. His hat was a rather pointy affair, done in red, as well. In contrast to Severus' black and silver velvet, Dumbledore looked like an eccentric. This suited Albus just fine.

Albus was about to ask Severus about Miss Granger's whereabouts when their attention was drawn to the huge doors of the hall as they swung open.

"Happy Christmas!" exclaimed Ronald Weasley, as he strode though, followed by his sister, Harry Potter and...

"Hermione!"

For the first time in his life, Severus Snape was gobsmacked.

She was amazing, dazzling, he thought, as she stood there before him attired in robes of sapphire blue. His eyes raked her form, noting that the velvet material clung to her décolletage, dipping down just enough to allow him to see the shadow of her cleavage and, showing her slim waist to perfection.

The rest of the robes flowed from her waist, into a full skirt, that was trimmed with black beads in the pattern of holly leaves. His eyes followed her slender neck up to her face again, her eyes glittering with pleasure, lids dusted with blue. Her lips, which he had the sudden desire to kiss, were glossed lightly in red. The hair he loved to run his fingers through was tamed into an elegant French twist, and pearl drops dangled from her lobes.

"Happy Christmas, Severus," she murmured in a husky tone, and his heart skipped a beat.

"Happy Christmas, Hermione," he replied quietly, as he bent to kiss her hand. Behind him Albus was twinkling madly, Ron was making a gagging motion with his fingers, and Harry and Ginny were smiling.

"Go away, the lot of you," Severus growled, as he stood back up without letting go of her hand.

He watched them depart, Harry being the last to go, but not before tossing a smirk, and a wink, in the direction of the couple.

"Come with me," he whispered. "I have something for you."

He led her from the hall and down the stairs toward the dungeons, his hand never leaving hers. Neither said anything to the other; for inside, both were shaking, she with uncertainty and he with not a small bit of fear and a sudden shyness.

"Close your eyes, Hermione," he murmured when they had reached the doors to his chambers, and she did, her breath hitching in anticipation. She heard him utter the spell to lower the wards then felt him guide her into the room. Behind her the doors closed, and he raised the wards again.

"*Incendio*," he whispered, the darkness flaring into a gentle light behind her closed lids.

She felt his lips on her hand again, then he murmured in his rich voice, "Happy Christmas, dearest."

She opened her eyes and gasped.

In the fireplace, a fire flickered gently. On the walls, candles glowed, but her eyes were drawn to the wooden table draped in silk, and laden in silver, china and linen.

"Oh, Severus!" she gasped, as her eyes roamed over the setting, Dobby and Winky, dressed in velvet pillowcases, each stood behind a dining chair cushioned with a velvet pillow. With a look from Severus, they pulled out the chairs and bowed to the pair.

She let him lead her to her seat and help her into it, smiling at Winky as she settled in. Winky returned the smile with a curtsy, then placed a linen napkin in Hermione's lap.

Hermione looked at Severus, smiling shyly, as he nodded to Dobby, who snapped his fingers.

Before them appeared a tray of oysters in their shells garnished with caviar, chopped eggs and spinach. With another snap of the house-elf's fingers, their flutes were filled with champagne, and carols began to play softly in the background.

Dinner was a quiet affair, broken only by their soft words, and the clink of silver against china. Attended faithfully by their small servants, they both enjoyed their food, each captivated by the other. Finally dinner was finished, and without a word, Severus stood. He walked around to her chair and extended his hand.

She took it willingly, and followed him through the castle, up flights of stairs and down many halls until they reached the door that that would take them up to the top of Astronomy Tower.

'Well, this was new,' she thought for not the first time since she opened her eyes in his study, and she let him lead her up the spiraling staircase.

The night was crisp, cold, and smelled of new fallen snow. He quietly cast a Warming Charm upon them, and led her by the hand to the center of the tower. Had she been able to stop looking at him and had glanced at the sky above, she would have seen that the night was clear and that the stars and moon shone like jewels on a background of dark velvet. As it was, they were both too caught up in each other to notice the show that nature had provided for them.

After some moments of silence, he pulled her to him, and held her close. She sighed as his hands stroked her back, up to her neck to the back of her head, and around to her cheek. Stroking it with his thumb, he leaned down and kissed her lips.

"Hermione," he gasped as he pulled away. His body was suddenly on fire, blood thrummed through his veins, his heart pounding. His mouth felt dry, his throat felt tight, and the world had started to spin slightly.

"Yes, Severus?" she whispered, as she listened to the beating of his heart, smiling at it's galloping pace.

He broke from her embrace and held her at arms length. Looking at her kiss-swollen lips and hooded eyes, he felt a rush of something that he couldn't quite name, but was right nonetheless. Suddenly, his long buried fear fled from his heart.

"I am a taciturn man by nature, Hermione," he said. "I may not tell you that I love you every day, but know this always: I do love you. I always have, and I always will."

As tears of happiness began to fall down her cheeks, he reached into his pocket and withdrew the black velvet box that had once felt like a lead weight in his pocket. Now, it felt lighter than air. Pulling her into his arms again, he kissed her with a fervent passion until she moaned and pressed herself against him. He kissed his way across her jaw and to her ear, then whispered,

"Be my wife, Hermione Granger."