

Christmas' Never Realized

by sevibaby

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Chapter 1 of 1

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Not mine. Never will be. Everything in this universe belongs to JK. She is kind enough to let us play.

"Severus."

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"Sev, please wake up."

Severus Snape opened his eyes and looked up into the most beautiful sight he had ever seen, the face of Lily Potter.

"Hello, Severus," Lily gently whispered to him. She looked down on him with love and understanding shining in her eyes. She held out a warm and firm hand to help him up. He looked at her with wonder and incomprehension. "Have I died and gone beyond the veil?"

"No, Sev, we are still in the Shrieking Shack. I have come to give you a choice. Your place in heaven has been assured with all of the good you have done. But the Ancient Ones have commissioned me to grant you a boon. A second chance, if you will, at one possible future you might have. A future I will be showing you only small glimpses of. But, they will only be on Christmas. I will show you the woman you will fall in love with, but you will not be able to see her face. She will be a woman who will become your best friend and lover, and she will be your match in every way. Do you wish to see what might be in store for you? "

"Yes, but will I still be able to choose life or heaven?"

"You will always have a choice."

"Then show me what my life may be like if I choose life."

Lily grasped Severus' hand firmly and took him to the first Christmas after the war.

When they entered the first picture Severus was standing in a corner and looking down on a man propped up in bed. The man in bed was gaunt and fragile looking. This could not be him. He looked to Lily and she nodded her assent. He looked around the room and noticed that they were in St. Mungo's. As he continued his inspection of the room, he noticed on the bedside table stood a small, brightly lit Christmas tree. He could hear arguing and saw a petite woman speaking in a raised voice. He could see her body, but her face was blurred. Her voice sounded very familiar to him.

"Damn it, Severus, you need to get out of that bed and stop feeling sorry for yourself. No one is going to do it for you." As she continued her ranting, she sighed. "I

understand that there is still lingering pain, but if you just lie there then you will never walk again." The woman was standing over his bed, with one hand on her hip and the other pointing a finger at him. "I am so tired of hearing you whine about not being able to walk. It's Christmas for Merlin's sake. Have a little hope that you are recovering."

"Why should I? All you do is harp, scream, rant and rave at me. Why should I give a harridan like you the pleasure of seeing me fail? We both know what happened the last time I tried to walk. I landed flat on my face. No, thank you. I will not repeat that again."

The woman threw her hands in the air and gave a disgusted snort. "Fine, then I won't come back. I will not be party to your self-deprecation. Good bye, Severus. I have been the only one you haven't chased away, but I am at my wits' end. Have a nice life here in St. Mungo's." With those words she turned and headed for the door.

Severus could see the sheer hopelessness on the other man's face. He watched as the bedridden Snape contemplated the woman's words. When she reached the door and started to exit, she turned and gave him one last look.

"Happy Christmas, Severus, I hope you have many more. But I am done."

As she was walking through the door Severus saw himself throw the bed covers off and try to stand crying out. "Wait, don't leave me. You promised me you would never leave." Snape was clinging to the bed rail as he tried to go after the woman.

She turned around to say something, and noticing that Snape was trying to stand, she was speechless.

"I will try," Snape pleaded. "Please, don't leave me."

The woman walked back into the room with tears streaming down her cheeks. "I won't leave you, but you have to promise me that you won't give up. I will be here every day, by your side. I have not nor will I ever laugh at you. If you fail then I fail with you. We are in this together. I promise you this."

"I promise too," Snape whispered to her as he slowly sank back down to the bed.

Severus turned to Lily and started to ask who the woman was, but all she did was motion with her hand to be quiet.

"That was your first Christmas together. I will show you another one."

The next scene they witnessed was at Spinner's End, but it was vastly different. It was light and airy and was decorated for Christmas.

"I never decorate for the holidays." Severus sneered as he mentioned this to Lily.

"I know, but you are falling in love this year, and you are willing to do anything for your lady love." Lily pointed to the scene in front of the fireplace. "Look."

Severus turned and saw himself under the mistletoe, holding the same woman from the Christmas before. Only he wasn't just holding her, he was kissing her. And what a kiss it was. The woman was on her tiptoes, and Snape had his arms wrapped around her so tightly that Severus thought he might break her in two. When the two parted, they were both breathing very heavily.

"Wow. If I had known that you were going to give me kisses like that, I would have put mistletoe up a whole lot sooner," she replied with a very satisfied smirk.

"I always strive to help a lady out. And if that means making sure the mistletoe is at the right potency, then who am I to halt the decorating? I think we need to proceed to the couch and continue this discussion," Snape softly whispered in her ear as he led her to a couch. Severus noticed that Snape walked with a limp and saw out of the corner of his eye a cane propped up against the fireplace.

They sat down, and Snape pulled the woman into his arms. He lowered his head and started to nip at her lower lip. When she parted them, Snape started to plunder them. Severus was watching the scene with growing fascination. He had never kissed a woman before with so much passion. Who was this woman to make a man like himself to lose control?

The next Christmas had Lily gasping and Severus blushing. "I think we arrived sooner than I planned."

Lily turned her back on the scene in front of the fireplace, but Severus was entranced by the tableau in front of him. It was the most erotic sight he had ever seen. Snape and the petite woman were in the throes of passion under a huge, brightly lit Christmas tree. He could see himself buried deep inside of the small woman below him. As Severus watched, Snape thrust hard into the woman, making her groan in pleasure. Snape kept thrusting and grabbed the woman's leg, bending it at the knee so he would be able to thrust deeper and bottom out. Severus could hear Snape moan of pleasure.

"Say it," Snape demanded. "Tell me your answer."

All the woman could do was groan and throw her head back. Snape latched on to her neck and started sucking as he continued to push his way through her. Severus was growing hard at the sight. No woman had ever wanted him in this fashion, and this woman was moaning with pleasure. He heard Snape command her to answer him.

"Say it. Say 'yes.' Be mine forever." He punctuated each word with a thrust and a twist of his hips, causing the woman to scream out.

"Yes, yes I will be yours." Then she screamed his name in such a way that Severus almost came. He noticed that his counterpart was not far from his own climax. He continued thrusting and with a final shout came with a shudder.

After a few minutes Snape rolled off the woman. Cradling her in his arms, he softly asked her again. "Say it. Say you will marry me."

"Yes, Severus, I will marry you and live my life with you forever."

Severus could see tears in the other man's eyes. He never cried, but this slip of a woman seemed to be doing things to him that he thought were impossible.

The tableau changed again; this time they were standing in a bedroom. Severus saw that the woman from before was alone in bed. He watched her rise and put on a dressing gown. Lily pulled at him to follow the woman. They descended the stairs and entered another brightly decorated room. As he looked around the room, he noticed that everything was different and he realized that he no longer lived at Spinner's End. The sight greeting his eyes this time was the man sitting by a brightly lit Christmas tree rocking a tiny bundle. He looked down into Snape's arms and saw that the other man was cradling a newborn baby. He never went near babies. He hadn't even held Draco when he was little.

The woman softly asked, "Severus, what are you doing up? Is everything all right?" As she was looking down into Snape's arms, she gently brushed her fingers over the baby's hand. "I didn't hear him cry out."

"I'm sorry I woke you, love." Snape was looking down at the bundle in his arms. "I just can't believe the gift that you have given me. He is so perfect. I can't seem to stop looking at him or holding him, I am so afraid that I might drop him or break him. He is so little, and I am in awe of this small creature. With everything that I have done in my

life, what did I do to deserve you and this little miracle?"

"Severus, we have been given a gift this Christmas. This little tiny piece of heaven will show the whole world how much we love each other. Come, let's put this little guy back to bed and get some sleep. We will have a houseful in the morning, and I would like to get a little more sleep." She stepped back to let Snape rise from the rocking chair.

They walked back up the stairs and entered a room that was across from the other bedroom. This was definitely a child's room. Severus watched as Snape gently laid the baby into his crib, bent over and brushed a kiss across the baby's head. "Good night, little man. Tomorrow is a big day, and lots of people are waiting to meet you." Snape whispered. He stepped back and allowed his wife to kiss the baby also. They turned and walked out the door. In the hall Snape paused, pulled the woman in his arms and said into her ear. "Have I told you how much you amaze me? You just gave birth to our son a few days ago, and in the morning you will be cooking for a houseful. I love you, Mrs. Snape." He gently pressed his lips to hers and pulled her into their room.

The next scene had Lily laughing. They were standing in the same bedroom, only this time there was daylight streaming through the windows and Snape was alone in bed. Severus and Lily could hear giggling coming from the hall. They turned to see a tiny little girl coming into the room. Severus had never seen a child that looked so perfect. She had little black ringlets covering her head. And her dark eyes sparkled with mischief. She was wearing footed nightclothes, and he could hear her feet pad across the floor towards the bed.

Severus could also hear several boys telling the little girl to get closer to the bed. "Go on, Ellie. He won't get mad at you. You're his favorite." The small child climbed up the bench at the foot of the bed, and when her feet touched the bed, Snape leaped up. Grabbing the child, he laid her upon the bed and started to tickle the wiggling, giggling little girl. Through her laughter, Severus could hear her say, "Papa, Mama says it time to open presents."

With this Severus saw Snape leap out of bed, reach for the squirming child and look into her eyes. "Oh, really. Mummy says it time? Are you sure that those four trouble makers in my doorway aren't the ones who say it's time for presents?"

Severus was shocked at the ease in the other man's demeanor. If someone had leaped on him while he was still abed, he would have hexed first, then asked questions. The man in front of him was so relaxed that Severus doubted that he could fend off any attack.

Severus looked over at Lily and asked her, "How many children do I have?"

"You have four boys and one girl. The little girl was your surprise baby. You and your wife had planned on no more children and, surprise, that little heart-breaker came along."

The scene changed again, and the next Christmas they witnessed had to have been years later. Severus noticed that his counterpart no longer had black hair. It was salt and pepper in coloring with more salt than pepper. The room they were standing in was gaily decorated and the woman standing in the center had her curly chestnut hair pinned up. Severus realized that this was the first time he could see what color her hair was. He watched as Snape came up behind the woman and bent to kiss her neck.

"The room looks beautiful. You don't need to add anything else."

"Severus, this will be the first time in a long time that all of the children will be home. I want everything to be perfect." The woman turned in Snape's arms and Severus sucked in his breath. The woman throughout every scenario that he had witnessed was none other than Hermione Granger. He turned and looked at Lily in confusion.

"Hermione Granger is the woman who verbally attacked my person back in that hospital room?"

"Yes, Severus, and if I remember correctly she is also the woman who you were making vigorous love to not too long ago," Lily blushing shot back at him.

Severus groaned with that reminder. Her screaming his name in climax would forever be with him. He turned back to watch the other couple in the room.

Snape had just released Hermione when voices could be heard from the foyer. Severus turned and saw several couples come through the door. He noticed one young woman who was so beautiful she took his breath away.

"Lily, who is that?"

"Do you remember the little girl who jumped upon you in the Christmas we just witnessed?"

"That is my and Hermione's daughter?" he asked in awe. A child that beautiful could never come from him. He looked at the other couples and noticed that the men all looked alike and very similar to the young woman. Even the men were good looking. All Severus could think was the he and Hermione Granger made very beautiful babies together. But the surprises kept coming as Draco Malfoy walked in with his family followed closely by Potter and Weasley with their families. Severus watched as everyone hugged, kissed and wished each other a Happy Christmas.

After some time, they all were seated around a table, when one of the Snape boys stood up. Taking his fork, he lightly tapped it to his water goblet as he cleared his throat. "I have an announcement. But, before I tell my news I know someone who has news of their own. Eileen, stand up and we will tell the folks our news together." Severus could see the young woman stand also.

The older boy started first. "Mum, Dad, Mr. and Mrs. Weasley, Happy Christmas. You're going to be grandparents." Cheers erupted and hugs and kisses were doled out.

Then it was Eileen's turn; she reached down and grasped the hand of the young blond man next to her. He stood and spoke with respect in his voice. "Mr. and Mrs. Snape," then he turned to Draco Malfoy and his wife, "Mum and Dad, I asked Eileen to marry me this morning, and she said yes."

A cheer went up, and Snape and Hermione both gave their consent.

Severus looked on this scene and couldn't help but feel the love that was flowing around the room. He realized that if he chose this life, he would be blessed.

"Come, Severus. I have one more Christmas to show you."

They were standing in a graveyard and Severus noticed that Snape was kneeling in front of a headstone, heaving with broken sobs. He looked like he had aged a hundred years.

"You promised! You promised you would never leave me. Why, why did you go? How am I to go on? HERMIONE," Snape wailed. He collapsed and started to dig at the dirt under him.

Severus saw his children rush to their father. They surrounded him and one of his sons picked Snape up off the ground and the others were supporting them. They all wore grief-stricken expression on their faces. Their anguish was so palpable that Severus was nearly brought to his knees. He saw his children lead his counterpart off to a waiting car.

Severus turned to Lily and demanded, "Why would you show me this? I went through enough grief when I lost you, and now you show me this," he said with a sweep of his arms.

"Severus, I have given you a glimpse of one very possible future. You have to work at it to make it happen. And yes, you will have as much anguish and you do joy. That is one of the many wonderful things about living. Do you want a life full of happiness, joy, and most of all, love?"

"Lily, when I lost you, I thought I lost everything. This life that you have shown me has given me hope that I might find peace and happiness, but after seeing this last glimpse, I have made a decision. My answer is..."

A/N: Severus' answer is in the title. Please no flames. This story has been with me since the Christmas after DH came out. As I was writing this Josh Groban's version of *O, Holy Night* was going through my head. Thanks and Happy Holidays. Thanks once again to my wonderful beta, Lissa.