

Five Disappointments... and a Coincidence

by *Rose of the West*

Various people have planned birthday parties for Severus Snape.

One Shot

Chapter 1 of 1

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Tobias went home eagerly, carrying a clean, new football. His boy was smart as a whip and the pride of any father. This Snape would go to university and a rich career, taking Tobias with him. Severus would probably want to bring the witch too, but that would be all right. In the bright future he imagined, it wouldn't matter if Eileen were there. In kind light, she was still a bit of a catch.

Everything was fine as long as she hadn't infected the boy.

"Daddee!" came from a little face through an open window. "I'm three today!"

"Yes, lad, and look at your present!" Tobias held up the ball, then frowned in consternation as something grabbed the ball and pulled it through the window into the boy's excited hands.

She had won. The boy was one of *them*.

"Why, you little freak..."

Tobias's last thought, as his face turned red and he stomped through the door, was that he had no son.

Eileen gave the owl a bit of overlooked toast and looked around. There must be some place she could hide this priceless piece of parchment. She'd had no doubts, but to actually hold this document... It was her son's ticket to greatness and her own ticket out of the hell of her life. She slid it between a cereal box and the side of the cupboard. Tobias rarely got up for breakfast these days. It would be safe there.

If only there were some way to properly celebrate. It wasn't every day a boy turned eleven, and few enough children received an acceptance letter to Hogwarts. Unfortunately, there was no way of even having a special dinner. Tobias's pay generally went to gin and beer while the bits of money Eileen brought in had to be used on rent and necessary staples.

The door opened and shut with a slam, shaking the house. Tobias was home first and in a temper. There would be no celebration tonight.

Lily Potter smiled again. Really, the world was a lovely place, even if one must hide. She had the best family in the world and her best childhood friend had been returned to her. Just the other day Dumbledore had told them Severus had brought the vital information, that Voldemort wanted to kill poor little Harry. They owed him their very lives,

proving Lily was right to be his friend.

Her eyes had glistened even as James had muttered, "Probably the fool who overheard the prophecy to begin with." Dumbledore's eyes had said much and nothing at all.

She didn't care about that. Sev had come back to her side. She had to do something to thank him... A birthday party would be the very thing! His was in a couple of months. There must be people they could invite, some way to celebrate. She settled in to plan as there was a knock on the door. James rose to get it.

"Take your wand?"

"It can only be Peter or Sirius. It would be shameful to doubt my friends..."

Minerva smiled as the elves brought the cake out at dinner. She and Dumbledore had thought hard about what to do with the boy-man who suffered daily in their midst. Celebrating his birthday would surely turn the corner. The staff exchanged smiling glances around the table. This would draw the taciturn professor out of his shell.

No one expected the black rage on his face. He stood and glared at each member of the staff in turn. Then he stalked out of the Great Hall, his robes billowing around his too-skinny frame. Twenty-two birthday candles flickered and guttered out.

Luna Lovegood sat back in her seat on the Hogwarts Express, contemplating the Headmaster. He probably didn't know that she was onto his secret. She had watched very carefully; Snape was definitely helping the DA. As one of those Carrows would start punishing someone, Snape would recall that same student had detention with him. There must be some way to thank him...

"Hey, Ginny, how do you throw a birthday party?"

"Are you daft? Who wants a birthday party these days?"

"Just—someone." Luna looked thoughtful. "I've never created a birthday party. I wondered how it is done."

Ginny sighed, "Well, the important thing is to find out what they like—"

She was silenced as the train came to a lurching halt.

Tricia looked up from the commissary cashier and sighed. It was tradition at the Wizarding Institute of Science and Health to sit at the next available seat, even if that meant sitting at a table with someone you didn't know. It was supposed to encourage collegiality or something like that. The next available seat was at a table with Master Snape.

She didn't suppose he was so bad, but he scared her to death, from his lank hair to his snake skin boots. He had been with the Institute for a year and a half or so, since the troubles in Britain ended, and he was famous for being brilliant and difficult. Once, when she couldn't get a Potions-related Arithmancy solution to come out, someone suggested she take it to him. He stared at it for a full minute and silently adjusted a few terms. He looked at her with an eyebrow raised and a twisted lip. She stammered her thanks and left as quickly as possible.

Tricia sat down. Her companion was staring at a day old cranberry-cream cheese muffin and fingering a cup of coffee. "I'm sorry to interrupt on today of all days, but you know..." She drifted off. He looked at her, puzzled, and she stammered on. "It's just that—I'm thirty-five, today, and I haven't any family—"

"January ninth is your birthday?" She was shocked that he spoke to her. She nodded. "How very serendipitous," he said, this time with a look that was almost friendly.

A/N: Thanks, Tricie Woo, for looking this over.

This was written for the Severus's Shorts LJ Community Birthday Celebration.