

To Another's Garden

by janus

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Chapter 1 of 1

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Severus knelt in the soft dirt. He could spell his robes clean afterwards. It was the little garden Rabastan had kept. He had come back to teach and now realised there were so many small things he had missed - familiar things. This was his home, in so many ways, and the reminders of his Slytherin brothers - the *lost* brothers - eased him here. He was dry with mourning, and the growing shoots were hope and comfort. Rabastan had planted them, and they lived on. The little bay tree had grown. He cleared away the grass and weeds. He watered it with a soft, reverent spell. It was as if something of his brother *was* the tree. It was as if caring for it, he was caring for his brother.

He sat back on his heels and looked at his work.

There was a rustling of starched cotton behind him and a smell of peaches. He turned his head, not quite startled, but beginning to resent the end to his quiet communion.

"I've brought you some pie from the kitchens. You've been working out here for hours. I can't help but admire your dear, little garden."

"Madame Pomfrey." He rose.

"Now that you are a teacher here, you must call me Poppy."

"Yes, ma'am.... Yes, Poppy. You may... you may call me Severus. Thank you for the pie." No one here called him Severus.

"Do you know, watching you working here in this garden, I noticed you smiling as you never did in your student days."