

We Don't Say Goodbye

by Lorraine Bluestar

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Chapter 1 of 1

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Disclaimer: All characters and concepts of Harry Potter's universe belong to J.K. Rowling; I just borrowed them for a little while.

The poem included belongs to Lord Byron. This story was posted before on Ashwinder, so maybe some of you have already read it.

It was a warm summer evening in Hogwarts but Hermione was feeling an indescribable cold inside her very own soul, the cold of loss, the cold of an empty heart once so full of life. The feeling was overwhelming, and the headache was unbearable but also a kind of blessing that kept her mind incapable of thinking about what had just happened. She had just witnessed the most terrible battle ever: there were corpses everywhere and she had believed that any one of them would die at any moment. Then, somehow, she didn't know how, Harry had killed Voldemort with a curse that came from his own body... They'd have to ask Dumbledore what exactly had happened.

They had lost so much in the battle. Ron was ill in the hospital and his condition was critical. Harry was physically fine, but he'd never be the same. Many of their friends were lost forever. It was hard to think about the loss of Percy, Lavender, Lee, Colin... so many were doomed to be reduced to mere memories. It was so painful, so unreal.

But there was someone for whom she was feeling more sorrow... Severus Snape.

He had died saving her from Voldemort himself. "Why did he do that?" she thought to herself. The shock that had had complete control of her was receding, and she succumbed to the pain for the first time and started crying. She had always respected him as a pupil, despite how cruel he had been to her. When she had returned to Hogwarts to teach Arithmancy four years after her graduation, there had been something else. He had changed his attitude to her: he wasn't all sunshine, but he had been quite nice to her. She had even enjoyed spending time talking to him; he was such an intelligent man who seemed to know something about everything, even Muggles. She was sure that she was mad, but she felt so good when they were together, as if no one could ever understand her mind and the way it worked as he did. He too had that thirst for knowledge so well known to her. She had developed feelings for him, although she knew that was crazy. He had always kept a distance between them. She was sure she was nothing to him but an ex-student and a colleague; there was no chance that he felt the same way.

It took some time before she regained control over her emotions. She wiped away her tears, wondering whether she should go to the dungeons, where his private chambers were. He didn't have anyone in the world, and someone had to sort through his things. The moment she entered his chambers a cold chill ran through her; he had been there just two nights before. Hermione walked toward his bookshelves. She had always admired and envied his vast book collection. She knew how proud he was of it. She opened his wardrobe and pulled one of his black robes to her. It still smelled like him: that unmistakable essence of ingredients used in potions brewing. She dropped the robe as she noticed a silvery light coming from a stone basin in the bottom of the wardrobe. It was a Pensieve, and in its interior a silvery white substance, like liquid glass, swirled. She couldn't help wondering about its content, and took the basin over to a nearby table.

She bent closer to watch and she gasped when she saw her own image...

She turned back to face him and wiped away her tears. "I don't understand it. Why?"

"Hermione, he loved you with all his being. He wasn't a man who could do things by halves, but he knew that in his position that was a danger for you. At any moment the Dark Lord could have found out his feelings for you and used them to ensure his loyalty above everything."

Suddenly realisation came to her, sinking in her soul. She could understand everything and the pain was bigger now than she could bear. "That's why he kept all those memories in the Pensieve?"

"Exactly. He had to keep you safe at any cost, even above his own feelings and his own despair. He was determined to tell you everything once, but he didn't do it hoping he'd have a second chance once the war was over and the world was safe for you two to start a new life with each other."

Hermione was in shock. He loved her so much and she hadn't noticed it; how blind she had been. He wouldn't have had anything to fear; she would have loved him back. She would have accepted his love and would have been the happiest woman in the world, but that chance would never come. He was lost forever, and with him a part of her soul.

"I loved him; he taught me the greatest lesson, without realising it. He taught me to love above everything, and I didn't even have a chance to say it to him, to tell him how much I care for him, how much I love him... I wasn't able to say goodbye."

Dumbledore placed a hand on her shoulder. "I'm sure he knew all that deep in his heart, but are you certain this is a goodbye?"

The grief was overwhelming but Hermione looked at him, trying to stay calm, and then she knew. "He didn't say goodbye at all; he'll live forever in my memory. It's not necessary to remember when you can't forget... I just hope he never forgets about me."

Dumbledore smiled at her in agreement. "He won't Hermione; I'm sure about it. He loved you that much."

She smiled at him and then looked at Severus' Pensieve. As long as she kept it and the memories she had of him, he'd be with her after death, although they had never had the chance to be together in life.

"We don't say goodbye. I'll find my way to you; just wait for me..."

Lorraine's Notes: I wrote this fic almost two years ago and it was meant to be an entry for the Pensieve challenge on WIKTT in 2004. It's my favourite fic, so it was ridiculous it wasn't posted here, in this beautiful site Theresa created for us and that means a lot to me.

Many thanks to Shiv5468, who beta read this fic long time ago. Also, thanks go to NotSoSaintly for her helpful advice.

Melanie (Usagistu) created a beautiful picture for my story, you can see it here: <http://www.deviantart.com/view/17927487/> This marked the beginning of our friendship, so this pic means a lot to me.