

Sorting Night

by Keppiehed

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Chapter 1 of 1

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Disclaimer: This all belongs to J.K. Rowling.

Warnings: Purple prose, dead ahead!

Prompt: feast, food

A/N: Written for week #2 at Snarry LDWS.

He knew very well what year it was. He could count as well as the next wizard, and he was no simpleton. He had been dreading this year more with each passing graduation.

He'd had to bear the rising excitement of his fellow teachers in the days leading up to the beginning of term. They had started talking, the buzz of their gossip heralding the arrival of the day and making him sicker as the moments ticked by. But he'd sat there, stone-faced as usual, and they'd suspected nothing of his inner turmoil.

Everyone had been talking about their savior. He even had his hero's moniker already bestowed upon him: The Boy Who Lived. All he needed was a cape, Severus thought sourly. Didn't they see they were all fools to pile their hopes on such narrow shoulders? He was a boy.

As Severus watched his peers with a hooded gaze, he had to admit that it wasn't the youth of the person in question that bothered him. His presence was required at the welcoming feast tonight, and it was only the first of many times he would have to hide his trepidation. How could he look at the child of his tormentor and find it in his heart to protect? How could he see the boy who had taken his mother's life from her and find forgiveness? His meal would be one of bitterness, as he tasted the wine of regret and the food of sorrow. Was Severus man enough to forget the past? Did he want to? When Severus imagined seeing the great Harry Potter for the first time, watching him being Sorted and laughing so carelessly with his friends, he was afraid of what he might feel. He envied him his life—the life that Lily had never lived to see. The life that Severus should have had, if fate had fallen differently. Would Severus see James' eyes looking back at him, or Lily's? Which would be worse?

As the time drew near to retire to their individual quarters and dress for the students' arrival, Severus only knew that whatever was to come, he had to find the strength to bear it. For all their sakes. *For hers.*