

# Slipshod

by quaffswinegaily

What is wrong with Snape's footwear?

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Chapter 1 of 1

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Disclaimer: They're not mine. Shame that!

Severus Snape looked down at his shoes with absolute disgust. He had never seen anything so ridiculous and just plain hideous in all his much put-upon life. Whoever was responsible would pay for this.

Striding down the long corridor in an angry swirl of robes, his toes occasionally catching on the edge of a flagstone, he nearly bowled over the ill-kempt, scrawny man who was brushing the Entrance Hall with efficient back-and-forth motions of his twig besom.

"Filch?"

"Yessir, Master Snape, sir."

"Have you seen Professor Dumbledore?"

"In the Banqueting Hall, sir."

As Snape thanked him and turned away, out of the corner of his eye he saw the malodorous man tugging a stringy forelock and dipping at the waist in a respectful gesture. Severus thought it was excessively deferential, but let it pass as his mind focused on his mission.

Throwing open the double doors, Snape marched into the huge room, his eyes scanning the faces of the crowd for the man he sought. He caught sight of the old wizard standing with his back to him, chatting to a small knot of people, his multicoloured flowing robes standing out against the others' duller colours. As Severus approached, Dumbledore turned and smiled in invitation, stretching a welcoming hand towards him.

"Severus, my dear boy, may I introduce—"

"Albus," Snape hissed in a low voice through clenched teeth, taking the old man's arm and drawing him away from the crowd as he gave a brief dismissive nod to Dumbledore's companions, "a word, if you please?"

"Certainly, certainly, young man," said Albus, turning back for a moment to speak to the small group. "Please excuse us. My esteemed colleague and Leech-Meister requires my attention. I shall return forthwith."

*Leech-Meister?* thought Severus. *Merlin, the old codger is definitely demented.*

"How may I be of assistance? Is there aught amiss? Something not completely to your liking?" Dumbledore's smile was genial, and his blue eyes twinkled with merriment.

"These." They both looked at where Severus indicated.

"Your shoes?"

"Yes, my shoes."

"I cannot see a problem with them."

"The toes are pointed!" said Severus, wagging a foot for emphasis.

"As are mine," replied Dumbledore, lifting a red and yellow clad foot and shaking it with a jingling of bells. "As are everyone else's."

Snape's gaze followed the sweep of Dumbledore's hand for a moment, then he closed his eyes, squeezing the lids tight, to clear the vision of a host of pointed, occasionally curled-toed footwear. When he opened his eyes again, the shoes were all still there, topped by stockings and puffed, slashed breeches. The women's shoes peeped from below long skirts, topped by corsets, their hair piled up under an assortment of hats and caps.

"Heaven forefend, look at them all." Severus swallowed hard and asked, "Is it... is it Halloween?"

"No, it is not. What a merry jape! You should be jester instead of me, Master Snape." Dumbledore smacked the dark-haired man gently on the arm with a stick topped with a hooded character sporting bells on its hat. Ignoring the irritated scowl on Snape's face, he beamed. "I thought you would be pleased now we have found you an apprentice."

"I'm not... you... A what?" Snape's voice rose in aggrieved inquiry.

"An apprentice. I believe you are already acquainted with the person who has been appointed. Oh, look, here she comes now."

The young woman who approached had wild tresses scarcely controlled by a cloth cap and an air of confidence beyond her years, as evidenced by the seductive way she sashayed across the room towards them, ignoring the appreciative glances of the young bucks she passed.

Severus felt light-headed, as if the air had been sucked from the room, as he tried to maintain a facade of sneering disdain.

"Welcome, my sweet girl, it is a pleasure to see you again." Dumbledore greeted the witch who approached, before continuing, "Severus, may I re-introduce you to Miss Hermione Granger, your Assistant Maggot Wrangler."

Snape thought he was going to faint and closed his eyes.

When he opened his eyes again, Severus was surprised to find he was lying in the dark in his own bed.

*Thank Circe*, he thought with profound relief. Recollection of the pointed shoes and the irritating Miss Granger sent a shudder through his lean body. What a nightmare!

He stretched luxuriantly under the covers, reminding himself to never again play mead drinking games with Minerva, especially if it was going to lead to bizarre, medieval dreams.

"Assistant Maggot Wrangler." Severus snorted a short laugh at the ridiculous job title.

Casting his mind back over the memory, Snape had to admit the Granger wench of his fantasy had, in fact, developed into a very comely lass. Comely? What an archaic description, but it suggested perfectly the smooth swell of her breasts as they pushed up over the top of her lace-tightened corset and the luscious curve outward over her hips.

Following that delicious thought, he felt his hand graze over naked skin, slide over the edge of his ribs, down over the flat planes of his stomach to the large, firm, protuberance of his...

Flinging back the covers he exposed the offensive, upstanding, vulgar item.

"A codpiece?"

His heart pounded, no longer certain it had all been a dream.

A/N: sunny33 is the Grand Chief Comma Wrangler. All hail the pointy-toed witch!