

A Mutual Understanding

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Something valuable is missing from the school. Can Severus find it before it's too late?

One shot

Chapter 1 of 1

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Disclaimer: I own nothing but my imagination. These characters are not mine.

Severus Snape was disturbed. The Sorting Hat was missing, and it was almost time for the school year to begin. The students would be arriving this evening, and he needed it to Sort the new students into their Houses.

He sighed. This was the first year that Hogwarts would be open after the Final Battle. Thanks to some quick thinking by Harry, he had survived the nearly fatal snakebite from Nagini when Harry had shoved a bezoar into his throat.

Minerva had become Headmistress, as he had not wanted to be Headmaster again, but she had asked him to be Deputy Headmaster, which he had accepted. But unless the Sorting Hat was found, the Sorting would not be completed that evening.

Making his way through the castle, he stopped to peer into rooms that he thought were likely, but nothing turned up. He was about to go back to his office to take a break when he heard a sound coming from the third-floor corridor on the right hand side.

He opened the door and winced slightly as a memory of Fluffy biting his leg assailed him. But he was stopped short by what he saw there.

The Sorting Hat sat on a table in the middle of the room, and Peeves flew around it distractedly.

"Why won't you let me try you on?" Peeves asked the Sorting Hat.

Apparently this conversation had been going on for a while because the Sorting Hat replied, "You are not a wizard, Peeves. You are a poltergeist. I cannot Sort you. Only witches and wizards can be Sorted."

Peeves turned toward Snape and before he turned back again, Severus thought he saw a tear on the usually snarky and gleeful face.

"I will Sort you, Peeves," Snape said. He knew how Peeves felt, somewhat. Peeves felt out of place. He felt like he didn't belong. He wasn't a ghost and he wasn't a wizard. Snape himself had felt like he didn't belong. He was a Death Eater, but he wasn't. He was an Order member, but he wasn't. He helped both sides but didn't. He felt empathy for the poltergeist. "You can consider yourself a Slytherin. You are part of my House."

Peeves stopped flying around the Sorting Hat and turned to Severus.

"A House of my own at last!" he shouted, turning somersaults in the air. He then stopped and looked at Severus. "I won't bug the Slytherins this year. Deal?"

"Deal," Severus said, giving him a rare smile. He watched as Peeves flew happily out of the room, cackling all the way.

Picking up the Sorting Hat, Severus made his way back to his office. He knew now that he and Peeves had a mutual understanding.

Prompt from Rose otW: the ghost of your choice, an item found in the school, and one of the professors