

A Witch's Birthday

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Chapter 1 of 1

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Her presents were all unwrapped. The cake was all gone. Headmistress McGonagall was slightly tipsy, and Professors Sprout and Trelawney were singing cheesy love songs on top of the Astronomy Tower.

It had been a lovely party. There were no doubts about that, and everyone had been merry. But as she descended to the dungeons, every trace of birthday cheer had vanished from her face and her blue eyes peered sadly into the shadows. Her dearest birthday wish would not come true. The one she hoped to see had forever gone.

On her first birthday at Hogwarts, he had not even dignified her invitation to cake with an answer. He had just sneered and billowed away. Naturally, she had felt insulted. But the other members of staff had explained to her that the Potions master had a tendency to come across as slightly rude at times. He never attended any birthday party.

Nevertheless, she had asked him once more, one year later, on her second birthday at Hogwarts. That time, Dumbledore had stood right behind him and had told him he had to come. He had spent the whole evening looking sour. The cake, he had not even touched.

On her third birthday at Hogwarts, she had not asked him to join the party. She had not wanted him to spoil everyone's evening. But still, she had hoped to see him, every time the door to the staff room had opened. Of course, he had not come. Severus Snape never showed up uninvited. But the next morning, at the breakfast table, he had asked her if she disliked him. She had blushed, and he had smirked.

On her fourth birthday at Hogwarts, he had shown up, having once more been invited. He had eaten cake and even made small talk. And everyone had been surprised, not to say shocked. Of course, nobody knew what happened in the dungeons at night. No one knew about passionate kisses, bodies that entwined and tongues and fingers that elicited moans of pleasure.

Good thing they didn't know. Because what would the Carrows have done had they known about the headmaster's mistress? Would they have let her celebrate her fifth birthday at Hogwarts in peace? Or would they have torn him from her arms in the middle of the night? Or worse?

And now he was gone, and the dungeons were more inhospitable than ever. The new Potions master preferred an airier office, and Snape's old one stood empty. So did his classroom and his private chambers.

All empty. Like her heart.

'I miss you, Severus,' she whispered, well aware that he was not there to hear. But she had to tell him and thus admit it to herself.

The darkness crept in on her, and she shivered. What was she doing down there anyway? There was nothing for her in the dungeons. Only heartache and sorrow and a longing so great it threatened to tear her soul apart.

She had to forget him. She had to let go. And tonight, the night of her birthday, was as good a night as any.

Blinking back the tears, she turned and left, closing the heavy oak door firmly behind her. She would not return. Never again. She had to move on.

She never saw the ghost that was hiding in the shadows and never heard him whisper 'Happy Birthday'. And he did not approach her. Because he, too, knew that she had to forget him. And if he wanted her to be happy again, he had to let her go.