

The Clearing

by Pearle

Severus and Hermione have been colleagues for many years, long enough to have become friends, but how much do they really know about each other?

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Chapter 1 of 1

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Challenge: Unicorn Challenge

Summary: Severus and Hermione have been colleagues for many years, long enough to have become friends, but how much do they really know about each other?

Disclaimer: The characters, settings, etc., of the Harry Potter series are not mine; they belong to J.K. Rowling and Co. I promise to return them when I am through. Well, most of them anyway.

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The Clearing

They were in a clearing, deep in the Forbidden Forest, deeper than she'd ever been before. Hermione suspected even Harry and Ron might not have traveled this deep when they'd come across Aragog.

"Granger, pay attention. There's much to do. I would rather not have to leave you here if you sprain your ankle." Severus moved forward, examining plants as he went. "I believe there is some knotgrass under that bush."

Both turned, wands drawn, as the sound of hooves reached their ears.

"Centaur?"

Severus moved forward, placing himself between Hermione and the possible danger that was approaching the clearing.

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A beam of moonlight broke through the treetops, illuminating the herd of unicorns that had stampeded into the clearing. "They're beautiful. Look, the foals are gold! And there are silver unicorns," Hermione whispered.

Severus lowered his wand. "She means you no harm," he said quietly.

A large male, snowy white, walked towards them, stopping a few feet away. The rest of the herd stood still watching the interaction between the wizard and their leader. The unicorn seemed to bow. He pawed the ground, head bobbing as he faced Severus.

The dour man nodded, returning the greeting. "I bid thee welcome."

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Hermione watched the two. Surely Severus was not...a virgin? He was forty-five and an ex-Death Eater. How could he get that close to the unicorn? A small golden unicorn walked hesitantly toward them. The leader snorted, rearing up on its hind legs, but the yearling ignored him.

Severus smiled, remaining still as the leader pushed the young unicorn back to the heard. The unicorn met Severus' eye, vigorously he shook his head creating a shower of hair that fell to the forest floor. With a last snort the unicorn returned to his heard and led them out of the clearing.

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"Help me pick up the hair. The mane has enhanced properties, much more useful than tail hair." Severus bent to carefully pick up the snow-white hair.

"You can't be...?"

Severus turned to look at Hermione. "Are you going to stand there all night or are you going to help me?"

"The unicorn walked up to you. Both of them did."

"The young ones are more trusting."

"And the adult?"

Severus eyed the witch. "Are you waiting for me to tell you I'm a virgin? Since they did not approach you, may I assume the obvious?"

"Are you?"

"Am I what?"

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Hermione glared at him. "Are. You. A. Virgin?"

"No. Now will you help me pick up the hair?"

Hermione bent to gather a few strands that had drifted by her foot. "Why did they come to you?"

"As I said, the young ones are trusting, more so than the adults."

"But they came up to you."

"Years ago I saved a unicorn from being attacked by Greyback. They consider me...safe."

"They've adopted you."

"Enough, are you going to help me collect ingredients or not?"

Hermione smiled, images of my little pony, a black-Severus-unicorn-my little pony came to mind. "Of course."

-Fini-

A/N: Still not mine, not beta'd.. According to Harry Potter Wiki, unicorn foals are born gold. Around two they turn silver but their hooves stay gold. They grow horns around four years old and turn pure white at seven. And for those requesting their own black Severus Unicorn My Little Pony-

