

These Small Hours

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One Shot

Chapter 1 of 1

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These Small Hours

Harry took a deep breath. He needed to do this. He had to do this. He drew in another shaky breath.

Harry Potter stood outside of Severus Snape's door at St. Mungo's. Somehow, with the help of magic, Snape had survived the battle and Nagini's bite. It had taken some time, but he was finally recovering.

Harry wanted to see him so he could apologize. However, the butterflies swirling around his stomach were making him feel sick.

He had spent his entire life hating the surly, dark wizard only to find out that he had been so wrong about him. Thinking back, he felt so ashamed of his thoughts and actions. All those years, he had been so wrong about Snape. He had always said how evil Snape was, and now he felt terrible.

Hermione was right about Snape. She had always been right about Snape, but he had never listened. He was so steadfast in his hatred for the man that he couldn't see the truth.

Harry didn't trust Snape. He still didn't know if he could trust Snape fully, but he needed to talk to him about what he had viewed in his memories. Now, this man was the only link Harry had to his parents. He had to suck up and apologize, even if it was just to gain information.

Taking another deep breath, he knocked on the door.

"Come in," a scratchy voice responded.

Pushing the door open, Harry tentatively stepped inside. Looking towards the bed, he saw his ex-professor lying there. Harry's eyes automatically moved towards Snape's neck, relieved to see it was bandaged.

"Potter," Snape said, a sneer appearing on his face when he saw who entered the room.

Harry bit his lip in his nervousness. "I know you're tired, Snape, so I'll make this quick."

"Please do," Snape replied, a wary expression appearing on his face. *No doubt the boy viewed my memories and now wants to discuss them.*

Harry closed his eyes and summoned his courage. He needed to do this. He had to.

"I think you're a bastard, Snape. A downright bastard. I hate you more than I could possibly put into words. You were so cruel, harsh, and downright nasty. You wanted to help me in a way, but if you had really meant it, you would have treated me better. I understand why you didn't, but that doesn't lessen the pain. You went out of your way to make my life suck, and I hate you for that."

Snape stared at him, his obsidian eyes wide. He wasn't expecting that.

"However," Harry continued, "As much as I hate you, I can't help but feel guilty. You did so much for me, and everyone else in the wizarding world, and I will always be grateful. I owe you my life, Snape, so thank you."

There was a silence. Harry looked at Snape, who had closed his eyes. "However, just because I'm grateful for you saving my life, doesn't mean I don't hate you anymore. You're still a bastard, and I still hate you. However, if it's all right with you, I'd like to come back and visit." He looked to Snape, waiting to see how he would respond.

Snape gave a curt nod. "We do have a lot to discuss, Potter."

Harry nodded. "I'll stop by tomorrow." He turned and left the room.

Harry sat down in the chair, pulling out a jam filled croissant from his pocket. He handed it to Snape, who mumbled a polite thank you in response. He had been visiting Snape every day for the past five weeks, and during these visits, he had learned about his parents and Snape. These meetings had even helped him learn a little about himself too.

He enjoyed the time spent at the hospital with his professor. The visits provided the escape he needed from the outside world, and Snape offered him a small amount of comfort.

Much had changed between them during these weeks. Harry no longer hated his professor but held him in the utmost respect. They had shared things they didn't dare to share with others. Snape gave Harry a sense of home.

Snape quickly became a role model in Harry's life. He began to give Harry advice, and it was nice for him to be able to speak with someone who didn't want something in return.

Although Snape denied it, Harry knew the surly wizard cared for him. It was obvious in the way Snape acted, especially when he would ask if Harry would return the next day. Harry always promised he'd come, but still, Snape always asked.

Harry had suspected Snape's asking was a sign of the older wizard's insecurity. He suspected Snape was afraid he would leave. That thought scared Harry. Did it mean that Snape thought he was going to leave? Or was Harry afraid the two of them were becoming too dependent on each other? Harry didn't know, but he gave it little thought. Or at least he tried not to.

"So, Potter, what shall we talk about today?" Snape prompted after finishing his croissant.

Harry bit his lip. "Well, Ginny has been driving me insane lately."

Snape resisted the urge to roll his eyes. "Really? You want to talk about your women problems?"

Harry nodded, his face turning red.

"Fine," Snape said with a wave of his hand. "Continue."

"She won't leave me alone," Harry complained. "Ginny's constantly Flooing me, sending me letters, showing up unannounced, and it's driving me insane!"

"Did you try telling her that?"

"Of course I did! I'm not as stupid as you think I am, Snape." Snape let out a soft chuckle. "But all she bloody cares about is us getting back together. She keeps asking when! When, when, but never once did she mention if! She just assumes we'll get back together." Harry became quiet for a moment. "Everyone assumes that we'll get back together."

"But you don't want to?" Snape asked, carefully studying the boy in front of him. Potter had grown in maturity over the years, although he'd never admit that out loud.

Harry's eyes darted around nervously. "Ginny is a very nice girl. Any guy would be lucky to have her."

"Ah, you're evading my question, Potter."

Harry was quiet.

Snape let out a sigh. "Harry, you obviously brought this up for a reason. You want to talk about this, fine, but you need to contribute to the conversation."

Harry stayed quiet, refusing to look Snape in the eye. All of his feelings were just so confusing. He hadn't meant to bring them up with Snape when he didn't even know what they meant himself.

"Talk to me, Harry," Snape said softly.

And just like that, the words tumbled from his lips before he could stop them. "I'm gay."

Snape froze, not expecting that. Letting out a small cough, he collected himself. "And that's keeping you from returning Miss Weasley's affections?"

Harry nodded. "It's a rather new development. I hadn't even realized it until..."

"Until?" Snape pressed.

Harry's cheeks became red, clearly embarrassed about where the conversation was going. He didn't want to admit his feelings, but he knew that the wizard deserved to know. It didn't feel right keeping it as a secret.

"Until I started spending time with you," he said softly.

Black obsidian eyes met green ones. "Surely you don't mean..." he trailed off.

Harry nodded. "I know it isn't right, trust me, I've tried to talk myself out of it, but I just can't help it. Being with you, Snape, it makes me feel safe and loved. At first, I thought I just cared for you as a friend, but it's progressed past that." Harry looked downward, unable to meet Snape's eyes. "I've come to care for you deeply," he whispered. Tears were pouring down his cheeks because he knew it would be unrequited. The man loved his mother for Merlin's sake!

Harry jumped slightly when he felt fingertips wiping away his tears.

"Did you just say you care for me?" Snape asked quietly.

Harry nodded. "I did."

He felt Snape's hands cup his face. "Harry, you're a brilliant person, but surely, isn't there someone else?"

"No," he whispered. "It's you."

"I don't deserve your affection," Snape said, looking at Harry with sad eyes.

"Probably not," Harry retorted, causing Snape to smirk. "But I can't help the way that I feel." It was quiet for a moment, and Harry thought for sure he had ruined the friendship the two of them had created.

"I care for you as well," Snape said, breaking the silence.

Harry's green eyes met Snape's. "Really?"

"I do, Harry. I'm a sadistic bastard, but if you can find it in your heart to love me, then maybe I'm worth saving after all." Snape became quiet, allowing Harry to reach over and grab his hand.

"It's funny to think that a month ago I hated you with every fiber of my being, and now I'm sitting here declaring my affections for you," Harry said, a smirk appearing on his face.

"Yes, it is. However, the universe works in strange ways."

"Yeah, it does," Harry replied.

Snape smiled softly as Harry leaned over and pressed a kiss to his forehead.