

Sentimental Snape

by DawnEB

Severus picking flowers and writing sonnets to his lady love?

Two blokes talk about Snape in the pub.

Conversations in the Pub

Chapter 1 of 1

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"So, what d'you think?"

The young, dark-haired man was staring at his pint as he and his companion hunched over, elbows on the slightly sticky, ring stained table in front of them as they sat on the low stools the pub provided for it's clientele. The redheaded man with him looked absently round at the Muggles surrounding them. There was no chance of them being recognised or disturbed here.

"I dunno, mate. I really don't know," his friend nodded slowly. "I mean, if you read it in a story or something, it just wouldn't be believable."

"But that's just it. This isn't a piece of fiction you can dismiss; this is real life, Ron. If we get it wrong, it affects real people, and one of those people is our best friend."

They both fell silent and took a long, slow drink. Ron winced.

"How can they call this muck cider? It's got no flavour; it's ice cold and full of fizz. Give me a glass of Mum's home brew scrumpy any day." Harry nodded with the hint of a grin.

"Yeah, and the beer's not much better," he looked serious again, "but it's not like we're here for the drink."

They both sighed heavily. Eventually Ron leaned back in his seat, his arms crossed and his long legs stretched under the table. Harry looked up at him expectantly.

"Well, mate, as you know, I wasn't happy when we found out Hermione and Snape were more than just researching together. I mean, it was difficult to swallow when we found out he hadn't really betrayed Dumbledore or the Order, but all the evidence was there."

Harry nodded in agreement.

"Yes, what with the Life Debt, Unbreakable Vow and the three Wand Oaths, Snape had no choice but to follow the plan, even if it resulted in Dumbledore's death. His only other choice would have been to die himself, which would have undermined all of Dumbledore's plans and more than likely given Voldemort the edge he needed." He took a deep breath at the idea. "But accepting he was still on our side and knowing that he... she... they were... Well, it's two different things."

Both young men suppressed a shudder at the direction their thoughts were travelling. Ron took another drink from his glass before giving voice to his thoughts.

"Mind you, he *does* seem to have changed." Harry's head jerked up, and his green eyes pierced Ron with a glare even through his glasses. "Oh, I don't mean at first; he was still the same old snarky, bad-tempered git, even after that time, well, you know."

Harry leaned back, remembering. 'That time' had been at Headquarters when the three friends had been waiting with a couple of older Order members for Snape's report. He was late, but it wasn't as if he could always get away on time, so they weren't worried until they received a message that Ministry Aurors had unexpectedly stumbled on a large group of Death Eaters. There were casualties reported on both sides, but no details. The two others had left to try and find out what was going on, leaving the three friends alone.

Harry had paced the room while Ron worked out chess move puzzles, but Hermione had just sat there watching the fire, a single tear running down her cheek the only evidence of her distress. When a battered Snape had finally appeared, tumbling inelegantly out of the Floo, they had watched as he pulled himself to his knees in front of Hermione. It was obvious that at that moment nothing existed for them but each other. The pair leaned into a kiss, touching nowhere except at their lips, but the intensity between them fairly crackling in the air. It was from that moment that the boys had realised their friend wasn't just going through a Bad Boy phase.

Harry came out of his reverie as Ron stood up.

"Fancy another?" Ron asked, raising his empty glass and indicating Harry's nearly empty one. Harry tipped the foamy dregs down his throat and passed his glass to Ron along with a fiver. Ron hesitated to take the money.

"It's okay, Ron. I'll get the drinks, and you can get the kebabs on the way home." Harry grinned at his friend, and after a moment, Ron grinned back and acknowledged the compromise with a nod. He hadn't been sure he had enough Muggle money for more than one round on him anyway.

When he came back with the drinks and a couple of packets of Smoky Bacon flavour crisps, Ron continued where he left off.

"It started after you dealt with You-I mean, Voldemort. At first, Snape was hiding out at Headquarters while we presented his case to the Aurors and Wizengamot, and he was his normal, nasty self. Do you remember the slanging matches he had with Hermione?"

Harry spluttered into his beer.

"Oh, yes, and their making up afterwards. I never realised that Silencing Spells only worked on doors and walls until I heard the noise of their bed moving on the floor above. I sometimes wonder if they didn't deliberately pick those fights just as an excuse to 'make up' quite so thoroughly."

Both young men looked at each other and shuddered once again. Ron brought his large fist down on the crisp packet, making it burst open with a loud pop as he smashed the contents. Tipping his head back, he shook the crisp crumbs into his mouth, giving them a cursory chew before swilling them down with a mouthful of his drink. Harry watched him with a shake of his head before opening his own packet carefully and munching one at a time.

"Yeah, but that's what I mean." Ron continued, "Once Voldemort was gone and the Wizengamot cleared or put aside most of the charges against him, Snape changed. I can't remember exactly when it started, but I suddenly noticed him joining in the conversations at the meal table and not with sarcastic comments like he used to, either. Now, he doesn't scowl as much, and he has played some great games of chess with me. He sits next to Hermione on the sofa, and they *hold hands* while they read. What's more," Ron leaned in to impart what was obviously a sensitive piece of information, "before he was bailed, he asked me to buy flowers and chocolates for him to give to Hermione, as he couldn't get out to do it himself!"

Harry gaped at Ron.

"You too?"

The two men looked at each other thoughtfully before finishing their pints and Harry going to get the next round. Neither noticed the thin flesh-coloured string as it retracted.

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"I think you can safely say that your star character witnesses are in the bag," Hermione said with a grin to the man who sat next to her in a discreet corner.

Snape looked at the young woman as she tucked away the Extendable Ear and gave her a small but relieved smile.

"I'm going to need them if I'm to escape a term in Azkaban, but if Potter and Weasley stand up for me as well as McGonagall, Shackbolt and Tonks, it might just swing it."

Severus Snape took a sip of the house red he'd bought at the bar and suppressed a shudder at the sharp chemical taste. Hermione ignored his grimace and sipped her own white wine spritzer before she replied.

"Well, to be honest, the Wizengamot dismissed far more of your actions as 'necessary for the good of wizard folk as a whole' than I thought they would. The sum of the charges left against you *could* send you to Azkaban for a maximum of ten years, but I think you're right. If Harry and Ron put on a good show, you might walk away with little more than a slapped wrist"

Hermione watched as he ran one long finger around the rim of his glass as he spoke.

"Whatever happens, once the hearing is over, I can drop this maudlin, lovey-dovey facade and go back to being myself. Keeping up appearances is killing me, but what else can I do?"

Hermione reached under the table to squeeze his thigh, causing the dark wizard to growl deep in his throat in a way that was both threat and encouragement before he raised his glass to his lips.

"Don't worry, *sweetheart*. If it looks like it's going badly, I can always beg for mercy on account of your unborn child."

Hermione watched as her snarky, sneaky lover choked on his drink, snorting it down his most prominent facial feature. She smirked in a disturbingly familiar way.

"Or maybe not."

"That's not funny, Hermione."

Snape glowered at her, but she looked back at him with hungry eyes as her fingers moved up his thigh.

"I think it is. Do you want to argue about it? We've not had a really good row in months."

Snape's eyes smouldered as he thought about their rows and what came after, but then they flicked in the direction of Harry and Ron where they sat across the pub. Hermione answered his unspoken query.

"Oh, they'll be a couple of hours yet. I made sure Harry had plenty of Muggle currency on him."

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Harry looked round when he heard what sounded like a familiar peal of laughter from the back of the pub, but all he could see was the door swinging as if someone had left

rapidly through it. He turned back to his companion.

"Another pint, Ron?"

The redhead looked into the bottom of his glass.

"Yeah, why not?" he replied, silently agreeing to make an evening of it. With any luck, Hermione wouldn't be waiting up for them when they got home.

And she wasn't.

AN: I tried to leave this little plot bunny at the safari park, but it evaded the lions, tigers and wolves and followed me home. It's the result of a comment made in the reply Anastasia sent me about my review of her story 'Debts and Debt Collection' on OWL "After reading so many fics where [Snape's] suddenly picking flowers or shopping with her, I threw up my hands and decided never. Snarky to the end."