

One of a Kind

by Alison

The Sorting Hat is troubled. For which House should this student be put into?

Complete short story

Chapter 1 of 1

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By Alison Venugoban

The boy was small, pale and weedy. He wore second-hand robes and stared wide-eyed at the Sorting Hat as he approached the stool. The Sorting Hat sat quietly on the stool and observed him back.

One of the older students in Slytherin snickered. "Half-blood rubbish," he muttered, and there was a general round of sniggers.

The Transfiguration teacher shot a quelling glance at the green and silver-draped table, and then smiled reassuringly as the thin boy sat down on the stool. He put on the Sorting Hat, which promptly fell right down over his eyes.

The first House the Sorting Hat thought of putting him in was Slytherin. This boy's mind was quick, with the sort of cunning logic that would have made him perfect for that House. The Sorting Hat even opened its mouth to announce the decision, then stopped uncertainly.

For unlike the others in Slytherin, there was no overwhelming ambition, no overriding need to prove himself. Oh, there was pride in there, certainly, but it was a quiet and calm sort of emotion, one that was at peace with the world and his place in it. It was a strange emotion to find in an eleven year old boy, one that was rare enough in adults.

Well, the Sorting Hat thought, what about Ravenclaw? Certainly this mind was intelligent enough to deal with that studiously elite House, and there was a definite love of learning shining through.

But again, the Sorting Hat stopped before announcing it. For there was more to this lad's complicated mind than a simple wish to learn for learning's sake. It was decidedly odd. The learning had to be for something, to mean more than just working out difficult spells.

The Sorting Hat was in a quandary. What about Gryffindor? That House's reputation of bravery and nerve would probably suit this boy well. The Hat could see a lot of courage in the mind, plus a raw sort of talent that would be well developed in Gryffindor.

Again, the Sorting Hat opened its mouth; again it shut it before the making the definitive announcement. For the lad's mind was not just to do with courage and love of adulation. No, once more there was something there that could hardly be defined, but which made it impossible to simply assign the boy to Gryffindor.

The Sorting Hat was aware that it had now spent more time than it ever had previously over a new student, but it was still no closer to making a final decision. It felt immensely frustrated; there were always biases in a child's mind which made the decision easy. But this boy had an intelligence which just did not fit so simply into one category or another. The Sorting Hat had never seen his like before. He was truly one of a kind.

The Hat was aware of the restless mutterings beginning in the Hall as students wondered at the inordinate length of time this decision was taking; even the Headmaster leaned forward in his seat with a curious expression. The Sorting Hat felt its seams grow hot with the effort of its cogitation. Not Slytherin, not Ravenclaw, not Gryffindor!

Then, with huge sense of relief, it decided to put the boy in that catch-all House, Hufflepuff. After all, the Hat could see that he was a hard worker and loyal to his friends and ideals. Yes, of course!

"HUFFLEPUFF!" it shouted out.

The table on the right cheered, and the boy took off the hat and went to join the class of the Year of Our Lord 1892.

"I think I'm going to like it here," thought Albus Dumbledore, as he seated himself with his fellow Hufflepuffs.

The End

Author's note: If you liked this story, please have a read of my original story "Love Inhuman" at this link:

<http://www.thepetulantpoetess.com/viewstory.php?sid=11932>

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