

A Request Honoured

by sshg316

Severus Snape chooses to honour Dumbledore's last request, and his life is forever altered. A series of 100-word drabbles.

none

Chapter 1 of 1

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Prologue

He stood in the golden field, his head bowed and his eyes closed, as he allowed the chill of the evening to seep into his weary soul. The sky was dark and ominous, befitting his melancholy. A rush of wind wafted through the desolation; the air was fragrant with the redolence of the approaching storm.

Alone.

He was utterly and completely alone. Albus had been his mentor, his friend, his surrogate father ... and he had killed him. Potter had been correct – he was a coward.

His hands curled into fists, his nails cutting through the skin. He welcomed the pain.

Reaching into his robes, he removed a piece of folded parchment. A tingle of magic indicated that only he would be able to see what had been written therein. With a shuddering breath, he began to read.

Severus,

I have asked you to make many sacrifices on behalf of the Light. Do not allow *my* sacrifice to be in vain. Allow yourself to live. This is my last request.

In my heart, you have always been my son.

Albus

The rain began to fall, masking the trail of tears that flowed down his sorrowful cheeks.

He would honour his request.

Albus had not left him entirely alone; he had given his Pensieve and journals to the Gryffindor Know-It-All.

Severus pulled the hood of his cloak to better cover his face and handed the phial of Felix Felicis to Miss Granger, his only liaison to the Order.

"Give this to Potter, Miss Granger. He will need it very soon."

Her brown eyes were filled with trust as she looked at him. He could not help but be amazed.

"Then you believe this is the end, sir?" Her face was alight with hope.

"Yes. All indications suggest that the time is now."

She smiled at him, her expressive face reflecting her relief and her concern. "That is wonderful news, Professor."

His closed his eyes briefly, hiding his pain from her knowing gaze. "Miss Granger, I believe I have asked you before not to refer to me by that title. I am no longer anyone's professor."

She reached out a hand as if to touch him before pulling back. "I'm sorry, sir! It's just – I don't know how to refer to you."

"Severus will suffice, Miss Granger."

She smiled shyly, suddenly unable to meet his eyes. "Of course. Severus. Please call me Hermione."

The battle raged around him as he swiftly made his way toward Potter and the Dark Lord. As he moved, he covertly cast hex after hex at his so-called 'brethren.'

It seemed as if an eternity had passed before he reached them. He knew what he must do; he only hoped Potter would not kill him before he could complete his final mission.

He stalked to the Dark Lord's side, ripping off the silver mask, garnering Potter's attention.

"You!" Potter spat. "Traitor!"

"My loyalties have never changed." Raising his arm, he suddenly turned, his wand directed at the Dark Lord.

He smirked as the realisation of his betrayal dawned upon the snake-like face of the man he had called 'Master' for so many years. Just as he had anticipated, Voldemort's rage, and thereby his attention, now focused on him rather than Potter. *Here is your chance, boy*, he thought. *Take it!* Potter's eyes widened in disbelief as he realised what was happening. He apparently opted to deal with his incredulity later, because he raised his wand and shouted, "*AVADA KEDAVRA!*" The Dark Lord was no more.

Severus felt a profound relief just before the hex threw him to the ground.

He awoke to the unfamiliar feeling of a woman's soft caress. He struggled to open his eyes; the midday sun was blinding. As he came to full consciousness, he heard her.

"Please," she sobbed. "Please wake up. I don't want to lose you – not now!"

Her tears fell in tiny droplets, quickly absorbed into the black wool of his robes. Dear Merlin. She was crying over *him*.

"Hermione," he gasped.

"Severus! You're alright!" She began to pepper his face with kisses, not realising someone was watching the display intently.

"Hermione!" Potter roared. "What the hell is going on here?"

Severus observed as she berated the younger man. She was gesticulating wildly, her face flushed with indignation as she defended him.

"If not for Severus, Harry, you would have never defeated Voldemort! Why can't you see that?" she pleaded.

"He killed Dumbledore!" Harry retorted. "Have *you* forgotten *that*?"

"Of course not, but you've seen the evidence! Dumbledore asked him to do it. No, it was more than that. He ordered him to do it!"

"I won't listen to you defend him, Hermione. He's a murderer, nothing more. If you continue to associate with him, your friendship with me is over!"

Severus barely heard her shocked gasp. That was it, then. He had allowed himself to entertain the idea that perhaps he could have more than a friendship with Hermione Granger. Now, that hope was dashed beneath the power of Potter's ultimatum.

He attempted to stand, wanting to leave, only to be stopped by her small hand on his arm.

"If you will wait just a moment, Severus, I will leave with you."

Only his experience at concealing emotion allowed him to hide his surprise. "Of course, Hermione."

She turned to Potter. "Are you certain, Harry? Because I will choose him."

"You obviously know Potter well, Hermione, to recognise his bluff."

"Actually, I didn't. Harry has been somewhat ... emotionally unstable for months now. He was just as likely to throw me over as to forgive me."

His eyes narrowed in suspicion. "Why? Why would you risk your friendship with Potter to defend me?"

"The headmaster believed that you are worthy of love, and," she said, lifting her chin defiantly, "so do I."

He allowed a flicker of satisfaction to cross his face just before he clasped her to him.

"If you do this, I will not let you go."

"Yes."

He stood in the golden field, his head thrown back and his eyes closed in contentment, as he allowed the warmth of the day to touch his face. The sky was clear and sunny, befitting his happiness. A gentle breeze wafted through the meadow, the air fragrant with the redolence of spring.

He was not alone.

Hermione and Selena gathered wildflowers nearby. They were his joy, his life ... and he loved them. Albus had been correct – he'd needed to live.

A tiny hand tugged at his fingers; he gathered his daughter into his arms. He welcomed her kisses.

Finite Incantatem

A/N: Thank you to Subversa for helping to polish these up. You're the best! This series of 100-word drabbles is dedicated to DeeMichelle who is feeling under the weather. Get well soon, dearest.

This story was inspired by an icon I found on Live Journal. To see it, feel free to drop by LJ. The link can be found in my profile. Unfortunately, I have been unable to determine the artist's name.