

Return to the Shrieking Shack

by *Celisnebula*

A missing scene between the end of chapter 36 "Flaw in the Plan" of Deathly Hallows and the Epilogue.

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Chapter 1 of 1

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Disclaimer(s): Not mine... not mine at all – but you can bet your ass I'd have been kinder to Snape.

"Has anyone gathered Snape's body?" Harry asked, brushing a weary hand across his forehead. The center of the Great Hall was filled with bodies – Fred, Remus, Tonks and others lying side-by-side – pale and still beneath the enchanted ceiling.

"I don't think so, at least not yet," replied Neville. "Give me a moment, and I'll head out that way."

Harry shook his head. "No," he said thickly after a moment. "I'll go." He turned away from the bodies – away from what everyone had sacrificed and for him – his stomach rolling.

"It's almost hard to believe that he's –" Neville started to say. "I guess that he was human after all."

"All too," Harry responded, walking out the door.

It was quiet as he crossed the field – funny how utterly silent everything seemed now that Voldemort lay dead – as if the battle stopped mid cycle with his fall, leaving a strange, frozen calm that could be shattered at any moment. The waxing moon peeked out from behind a cloud – and Harry felt a shiver of relief – it could have been so much worse.

"Harry!"

The sound of his name pulled him from his ominous musings, and he turned around wand at the ready.

"Harry, wait," Hermione yelled, running to catch up to him. "Neville said you were coming down here to get Snape, and I –" She let out a shuddering gasp as she tried to catch her breath.

"And you want to help," Harry finished for her.

She bit her lip and nodded. "It isn't something you should do... well... alone."

"Are you sure you want to do this?" he asked. "I mean... I know you don't *want* to do this, but... you know – they could probably use your help up at the castle."

"I want to do this, Harry – he..." She stopped, at a loss for words. "It makes you wonder – how he could've done it, for so long. I mean, God, Harry – he... he was really on

our side, and he spent his *life* doing this.”

Harry took her hand and gave it a quick squeeze. “I know... bloody mental it all is too.”

Hermione waved her wand at the Whomping Willow, its limbs stilling long enough for them to slide into the entrance. They said nothing as they wandered down the underground path towards the Shrieking Shack – words weren’t necessary.

Harry paused as they neared the end of the tunnel, the crate blocking the path visible. Hermione gave him a questioning look.

“Do... Snape...” He sighed. “Snape loved my Mum – I mean really loved her... Do – ” he brushed his hand through his hair “– what I mean is... well, they’re at Godric’s Hollow... Do you think they’d mind if... you know... if he was there too.”

“No, Harry, I don’t think they’d mind.”

“All right.”

He pulled back the crate, allowing Hermione to skirt by, and then followed her, only to run into her back when she abruptly stopped.

“Harry,” she whispered. “Are... are you sure he’s dead?”

“Pretty sure,” he replied, trying to look around her. “Why?”

Hermione moved, showing him the inside of an empty room.