

# Alphabet Getrunken

by dm1984

Four witches celebrate summer with an "alphabetical drinking game."

## A Summer Game

Chapter 1 of 1

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***A Harry Potter story (AU) and gift-fic in honor of the First Anniversary Gift Exchange at Charming Roots. Anything that you recognize from the extensive "RaM-verse" of stories was used with permission; this gift-fic was written for MMADfan.***

***Technically speaking, alcohol is a "drug," and so I checked "drug use/abuse" as a warning. There will be some mild out-of-character behavior as well.***

"Wait, wait!" came the enthusiastic cry from behind the couch, high up in a room in Gryffindor Tower. "What letter are we on? Is it S yet?"

Rolanda Hooch, the Flying teacher and Quidditch referee at Hogwarts School of Witchcraft and Wizardry, had dropped her list and was peering curiously at the green tartan upholstery in Deputy Headmistress McGonagall's private sitting room, unsure if she really was seeing tiny phoenixes fluttering about on it. Her golden hawk-like eyes were as sharp as ever, and she was rapidly becoming intoxicated; an unavoidable consequence of her small frame. A slight build, lithe and efficient, was ideal for her one-time position as a professional Quidditch seeker, but less so for the consumption of alcoholic beverages.

"We just finished D for 'dragon breath,' C for 'cherry bomb,' B for 'banana nut bread' and A for 'Alabama slammer,'" replied Minerva, winking at Poppy Pomfrey and Pomona Sprout, who were busy stifling their giggles. "And, according to the official list, E is your shout, dear heart."

Hooch grinned at her friends and quickly conjured four martini glasses on the low table before them. "My second offering, *mes amies*, since you enjoyed the 'Alabama slammer' so very much, is an 'espresso martini.' Guaranteed to cure what ails you!" She swished her wand, and the mixture of vanilla vodka, frangelico, crème de cacao and espresso appeared in the waiting glasses. A light Cooling charm finished the preparation. "Professor McGonagall, if you would do the honors?"

Minerva nodded and cast a wordless *Reducto*, shrinking the fragrant drinks by about two-thirds, before the others selected from the serving tray.

"Thank you, and cheers," said Hooch as she sipped her martini. "Well?"

Pomona Sprout gave a happy sigh, removing her pointy witch's hat and settling her tired stocking-covered feet up on the ottoman. "Nicely done; I like the vanilla flavor you've added."

"I *really* like the idea of shrinking each one, I have to say!" Poppy commented with a chuckle. "We only made it to what, M, last year? Hopeless and legless..."

McGonagall snickered. "Aye, the glasses were too bloody big for something like this particular project, weren't they?"

The four friends had initiated an after-school year tradition the summer before, to work their way through the alphabet of alcoholic drinks, each one preparing a list ahead of time of all twenty-six letters, so that they could alternate concocting and sharing cocktails. It turned out that the first weekend of July was a perfect time for the occasion: Hogwarts students had all departed, and most of the faculty and staff were finishing up various chores or research items, before leaving on their own holiday excursions.

"M for 'mind-eraser,' indeed," Poppy added drily, shaking her head. "I honestly don't remember much of that weekend."

"Danced on the table, you did, Poppy, completely schnoekered," Pomona said softly, patting her hand. "Murdoch had to come to tuck you in, saying something about an Anti-Hangover Potion being in its experimental stages."

"I did not!" exclaimed the school Matron, protesting and pretending to be horrified. Poppy was barely able to conceal a rather satisfied smirk. "He didn't, did he?"

She looked from face to face, letting the joke play itself out. Minerva, Rolanda and Pomona were all casting side-long glances at each other, trying to hide their teasing smiles. Finally, Poppy just shrugged nonchalantly and took another sip of her pale coffee-colored drink.

"That does explain the rest, then." She said nothing further, raising a somewhat coy eyebrow and looking off into the distance. The others were surprised to see a faint pink flush on cheeks, but didn't press for additional details.

When they had all finished their martinis, Pomona consulted the official list, smiling at the fact that letter F was her turn. "You'll enjoy this next one... but go on, Minerva, you were telling us about Professor Birnbaum, one of my Herbology predecessors."

While Sprout prepared the next round of cocktails, and then cast the recommended Shrinking charm, Minerva took up the thread of her story: "Johannes Felix Birnbaum, he taught here at Hogwarts from 1942-58, and was even Head of Ravenclaw for a good while. He attended Durmstrang. I was told that Albus, as Deputy Headmaster, held a Sorting for him and everything."

Professor Sprout laughed, delighted at the thought of a Sorting Hat ceremony for a full-grown wizard. "Here you are, my dears: F for 'Fuzzy navel.' Filius enjoys this one as a belly-button shot, believe it or not!"

Rolanda snorted noisily into her glass, scarcely managing not to spill it. "His, or yours, Pomona?"

Poppy choked a laugh at the sudden *sotto voce* comment, expecting to hear some sort of remonstrance from the usually shy Head of Hufflepuff; Pomona Sprout had attended Hogwarts from 1934-1941 while Poppy, also a Hufflepuff witch, overlapped her by a few years, from 1938-1945.

Pomona easily overheard her petite Ravenclaw friend and grinned wickedly. "Yes."

Soon the four witches were wiping tears from their eyes, they were laughing so hard at the mental images they were unable to avoid. Pomona Sprout and Filius Flitwick had been quietly, and lovingly, married for more than thirty years. Their friends agreed that the couple made a perfect match, despite any of the obvious physical differences between the Herbology mistress and her devoted Charms master.

"I like the peach flavor in this one," said Minerva, when she finally caught her breath. "Yes, Johannes was sorted properly the year or two after my NEWTs, I believe, much to Slughorn's vehement statements to the contrary, and became the Head of Ravenclaw. Your Filius became Head of house in '58, Pomona. He arrived the summer before, in 1957, right after I'd finished my first term of teaching, in fact. It was an eventful year!" The Head of Gryffindor shook her head fondly, smiling as she remembered the summer that she and Albus had finally realized, and declared, their love for each other during those few weeks.

"I always remember Johannes Birnbaum as tall, blonde, and *absolutely* gorgeous," Poppy said, a pink flush coming to her cheeks. "Such a gentle soul. Oh goodness me, I nearly fainted on most days in Herbology if he but spoke to me! It's a wonder I even made it through my OWLs and NEWTs with him." She blushed harder at the admission of her schoolgirl crush on the handsome Herbology master.

"Such a gentleman, good friend, and a very good teacher too; he helped me with some brief research on wand materials... oh yes, tall as well," Minerva continued, winking at Poppy. "Taller even than Albus. *Über alles*, except for Hagrid, of course."

"Didn't he return to Germany?" asked Hooch, finishing her drink and returning the empty glass to the table. "I only know his name from some of the awards in the Ravenclaw common-room, but I don't think I ever actually met him."

"I believe so, yes, after a year of consulting throughout Britain first. David Miller, the Scottish fellow from Drumnadrochit, taught Herbology from 1958 until you arrived here, Pomona... and still we gather, nearly fifty years later." McGonagall always smiled when she said the name of the quaint little touristy town near Loch Ness.

Pomona sighed. "It's incredible how quickly the time passes." She carefully Levitated her empty glass to the silver tray in the center of the low cocktail table. Of the four women, Sprout showed the least influence from the alcohol they had consumed. A subtle wave of her wand, and the tray and its contents were banished without a sound.

Poppy leaned forward to check the official list, peering at it over the rims of her spectacles that she had only recently begun to wear. "Excellent, I'm next!"

Rolanda stood and stretched unsteadily, her right shoulder popping loudly from an old Quidditch injury that had never healed properly. "Take your time; I'm going to visit the little witch's room."

Minerva stood, taking the same opportunity to stretch, although hers was somewhat more cat-like. "Snack, anyone? Some of the soda bread that Tophers made for us might be nice."

By the time the foursome had returned to the table, Poppy Pomfrey was putting tiny mint sprigs on each of four garishly green cocktails. Minerva and Pomona had organized a snack of bread, assorted cheeses and leftover vegetable panang curry for them to nibble on as they worked through a few more letters of the alphabet.

"G for 'grasshopper,'" the school Head Matron said cheerfully, presenting the tray with a graceful flourish.

"Oh, bloody hell, Poppy," Hooch growled as she selected her highball glass. "S'not a real one, is it?"

"Don't be ridiculous, you silly bird," returned Poppy, still smiling pleasantly. "We decided, unanimously mind you, that things like F for 'firewhisky' and G for 'gillywater' were dull and boring, Rolanda. Drink up!"

McGonagall saluted and then touched her glass gently with Sprout, and Pomfrey, in turn. "Hear, hear. Dull and boring is simply not allowed at these functions."

"Ooh, minty!" Pomona noted quietly, savoring the unique flavors. "I like your selection, Poppy. I had G marked down for 'gin fizz,' on my list, but this is much better."

"Thank you." Poppy reached for a small wedge of Havarti cheese to go with her bread, nibbling delicately as she finished her drink. "Minerva, it's your turn with H, I believe."

The Transfiguration mistress nodded with a slight smile quirked her lips as she conjured four fresh glasses on the table and, following another swish of her wand, added ice to each one. Poppy and Pomona watched curiously as seven ingredients (the most of any beverages so far) were added from the tip of Minerva's wand; Rolanda busied herself with a small bowl of the warmed curry, hoping to absorb at least some of the alcohol from her system.

"I went with something more whimsical for my letter H choice this year," she told them after reducing the finished cocktails and carefully centering the tray. "May I present the American cocktail known as 'hop-skip-and-go-naked'?"

Minerva reddened with pleasure at the splutters of laughter that erupted from Poppy and Pomona. The best Rolanda could manage just then was a cynical rolling of her eyes.

"Some of your husband's ruddy sense of humor has rubbed off on you, my dear," said Hooch, shaking her head and trying not to laugh. "That is not the real name!"

"*Ach, haud yer wheesht*, fine," Minerva countered, her emerald eyes twinkling. "I apologize then: it should be 'hop-skip-and-jump-naked'." It was several minutes before any of them could even speak again, each being struck down by an attack of the silly-giggles.

"Right-o, if Min...erva's going to leap into that incomprehensible dialect of hers, then it's time for Snap," announced Poppy, ignoring McGonagall's mock-glare and taking a deck of cards from a pocket of her robes. She followed this by wiping her eyes with one corner of the overlaying red and white pinny. "I think I'm just tipsy enough to enjoy it now!"

Pomona nodded agreement, and Minerva Summoned three more decks of Exploding Snap cards from the sideboard, handing one to each of the others. Traditionally, McGonagall would play green plaid; Poppy would play blue; Pomona Sprout, green; and, Rolanda Hooch, the yellow deck. Their rules were simple: build a house of cards until the addition of just one more colored card demolished the whole thing. Of the four witches, Poppy Pomfrey was actually very good at the game, having had years of practice while visiting with her young charges in the school's Hospital ward. She came across to some as strict and clinical, but most students remembered her fondly for years after their NEWTs and leaving school; a fair number of them even credited her with their Wizarding-career choice in some branch of Healing. The "Snap" cards were just one of her "bedside manner" secret weapons.

Rolanda Hooch was still shaking her head, chuckling to herself as she prepared their selection for the letter I (Irish coffee). Her movements were becoming more careful and deliberate; Pomona shared a glance with Minerva to be on guard against spills, and other issues, when the Ravenclaw witch was in charge of the drinks.

"That smells lovely," commented Poppy in a cheeky tone. "Good timing, Rolanda." She winked at the Quidditch teacher, knowing full well that her friend wasn't far from being "drunk as a skunk."

"Hmmp," replied Hooch, but she was smiling as she gingerly placed a yellow card when it was her turn again. "Any holiday plans this year? I might be able to get down to New Zealand to see my brother and his family, but that's about it."

"Filius is hoping to go over to Aix on the Continent," said Pomona. "I think I will try to join him this year. I haven't been to Provence in ages, and could even try to track down a few Herbology friends from Beauxbatons. We haven't decided yet."

"Drat!" Minerva muttered under her breath as the plaid card in her hand exploded suddenly and caused the collapse of the second- and third-story of their house of cards. "*Accio tartan green cards!*"

McGonagall sighed as she tidied up the tabletop, and Pomona checked the list; it was her turn again with the letter J. Rolanda watched, grimacing when the Herbology mistress simply conjured four cubes of orange gelatin in shot glasses.

"Jell-O shot," Sprout explained brightly. "The alcohol is already mixed in, so there's no need to shrink this one." Her dark eyes had an enthusiastic gleam just then.

Rolanda sighed heavily, taking the shot glass in her hand. "I'll be lucky to make it to M again. You know I can't drink shots."

Minerva chuckled, her eyes twinkling with mischief. "Here, use this. Poor wee hen," she said, conjuring a small silver spoon and offering it. Rolanda shook her head.

"Cheers, all the same," said Hooch, taking a deep breath and steadying herself. "Alright Pomona, let's have it. You ladies can put me under the table sooner rather than later."

Pomona held up her shot glass and waited for the others to do the same. "Good. Ready? Steady? Go!" With a flick of her well-tanned wrist, she easily downed the orange Jell-O and vodka mixture, returning her glass to the table with a satisfying thwack. The other three followed, in rapid succession.

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Half an hour later, after working through the group's rotation once more (Poppy's 'Kir royale'; Minerva's 'Lime rickey'; and, Rolanda's 'Mint julep'), the next drink offering fell to Pomona. Hooch groaned miserably when she saw the four shot glasses appear on the table, and the Herbologist began conjuring a Bailey's with Frangelico mixture into them.

"Oh no, it's a conspiracy against me, isn't it?" said Rolanda, her eyes bleary. "I do love you, Pomona, but I'm over the limit as it is! No 'Nuttie Irishman' for me." Hooch stood rather unsteadily and was caught by Poppy (who had efficiently emptied her shot glass just heartbeats before). Both giggled, but did not fall over, as the Head Matron guided Rolanda toward the guest bedroom of Minerva's suite.

"And no Irishman's nuts, either," Poppy joked. "You're not much fun right now, darling girl..."

Minerva and Pomona exchanged a questioning look, and then they shrugged and grinned at each other, watching Poppy with their very-drunk colleague. Rolanda looked as if she had already fallen asleep on her feet.

"Oh, Minerva," Pomfrey called over her shoulder, easily supporting the smaller witch in her arms. "We can trade letters if you like; I think my turn is coming up next."

McGonagall checked the official list, and sure enough, Poppy was due to present a drink beginning with the letter O. "That's fine. I'll take this round, and switch with you."

"And then, there were three," Pomona commented, watching with interest as Minerva conjured three short glasses and began adding ingredients from her wand; she had to cast the Shrinking charm a second time to get it right. Poppy returned a few minutes later, joining them in sampling Minerva's drink: an 'Orange creamsicle.'

"Mmm," said Poppy, smacking her lips. "Very sweet and citrusy; I like it."

"We could almost serve it to the students, as a frozen treat," Minerva commented with a chuckle. "Apart from the vodka, of course."

Pomona laughed, sipping slowly at the cocktail to savor it. "Is Rolanda alright? She was well on her way to a little worse for wear."

"Certainly!" Poppy replied, unable to hide a broad grin. "Headache potion, large glass of water, straight to bed... no problems." She paused for effect. "As long as she doesn't have to fly tomorrow."

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Albus Dumbledore and Filius Flitwick, both wearing dressing gowns over their pajamas, crept quietly into the sitting room, hoping to locate their wives who had not been seen since dinner in the Great Hall. It was now just past two in the morning. All they could find was four brightly colored liquids in four different sized glasses, waiting on the low table. A sheet of parchment rested nearby. None of the four witches were there, but Albus had assured his Charms teacher that he was certain they were still in the castle.

The wizards turned as one when they heard a rushing gurggle of water from the loo to their left, followed by Pomona Sprout returning to the table as she dried her hands on a small white towel.

"Filius!" she greeted quietly, smiling at her husband of so many years. The plump and cheerful Herbology mistress leaned down to kiss him tenderly; he identified the faint tastes of vodka and crème de cacao on her lips. "What a surprise, you sweet wizard... I hope I didn't worry you. We went a bit later than expected, I'm afraid."

Unable to speak, but glad to see at least one of the lovely witches, both men followed her and sat; a very relieved Filius next to her on the sofa, and Albus in the high wing-

backed chair just to her right. Pomona beamed when she at last recognized the Headmaster there with them.

"Good evening to you too, Albus," she said in a cheery stage whisper. "Minerva has already taken herself off to bed, back around the letter S, actually."

"The 'letter S, actually'?" Albus repeated. He sounded quite puzzled until Flitwick handed him the parchment to read. Filius patted Pomona's hand, looking at her with concerned amusement in his eyes.

"Shouldn't we get you off to bed too, darling?"

For some reason, this made her giggle as she intertwined her fingers with his. "Nearly there my angel, nearly there." She indicated the four glasses on the table. "Only four more letters to go, and I'll have done it."

"Oh," said Albus, realization dawning, and the Potions master in him growing ever more curious. "An alphabetic drunk? Minerva said something about 'drinking the alphabet' tonight with you charming and delightful sisters-in-crime, as it were, but I didn't think she meant all the way from A to Z!"

Pomona couldn't restrain another giggle and picked up the first of the glasses. "We kept score this year; Rolanda only made it to a 'Nutty Irishman,' the poor dear." She held the glass up to the light, admiring the liquid's amber with subtle red and orange swirls. "W is for 'Whisky sour.'"

Filius raised his eyebrows helplessly, shrugging at his school Headmaster and good friend of the last five decades. As efficiently as she'd been drinking all night, Pomona flicked her wrist and consumed the beverage in one go.

"Definitely tart," she added, smiling to herself around mildly puckered lips. "Oh, we've been using the Shrinking charm as well. Last year, the glasses were far too big for something like this."

Dumbledore grinned, nodding his head. He conjured a cup of hot, lightly sweetened, herbal tea for himself and one for Filius as well. "I think that was very wise judging from these names," he told her, holding up the parchment, and reading aloud. "It looks like there were three selections at S... a 'Slippery nipple'? A mild blush started at Albus' cheeks, rising to the rims of his half-moon spectacles.

Sprout covered her mouth with her hand, laughing into her fingers briefly. "Yes! It was a delicious Sambuca and Bailey's mixture." She picked up the next glass in front of her. "X for 'Xanadu.'"

As Filius and Albus watched, sipping their tea, Pomona downed the Galliano-based shooter and returned the empty glass to the silver tray.

"That one is enchanting! Yes, anyway, Minerva said she couldn't decide on one drink that began with S, so she picked three: 'Slippery nipple,' 'Sex on the beach' and a 'Screaming orgasm'... isn't it interesting that all of those are Muggle drink names? She also said something about a 'holiday with the Headmaster' but I didn't understand the references. Do you, perhaps?" Professor Sprout looked expectantly at her boss.

Albus blushed even harder, and Filius busied himself with his teacup, trying not to laugh (he was blushing too). "Um, well... I, um," Albus began. "Perhaps that might be a better tale for another evening's entertainment, my dear." He breathed an audible sigh of relief when this reply seemed to satisfy her curiosity, and she turned her attention back to the two remaining glasses on the table.

"Two more, and I've drunk the lot," she said proudly. Pomona held up the next cocktail, a bright yellow liquid in a tall, narrow cylinder. She sniffed it appreciatively before she tasted it. "Mmm, this is made with yummy banana liqueur. Y is for 'Yellow submarine.'"

"Oh, yes!" Pomona exclaimed suddenly when she finished the drink, as if remembering something else she wanted to share with them. "Rolanda was well and truly pissed by the time we got to N, but Poppy, Minerva and I made it through the 'Orange creamsicle,' 'Pink panther,' 'Queen Elizabeth,' and 'Rob Roy' just fine."

Dumbledore and Flitwick merely shrugged, and looked at each other, smiling but not sure what to say. Neither wizard had heard of any of these cocktail names.

"Did you really, dearest?" murmured Filius, fighting valiantly against laughter. "That's... "

"Incredible," Albus added helpfully. He finished his tea, easily banishing the pair of cups and saucers to Minerva's small kitchen.

Pomona peered happily at them through glassy eyes. "Isn't it though? Poppy made it through a 'Tequila sunrise,' but was out with an 'Up your knickers.' I insisted that she camp out in the other guest bedroom here, Albus, and then I had a 'Velvet hammer' for myself." She heaved a happy sigh at having caught them up on the story. "This last one is such a pretty color for robes, isn't it? Z for 'Zonker.'"

The glass was halfway to her lips when she paused, looking up with concern. "Oh, gracious me, I've just remembered something in the greenhouse; the new lilac bush saplings will need tending in the nursery in a few hours. Is there anyone we can send, or should I try to get to it myself? Their vitamin solution is critical at this early stage if they are to develop properly... such a lovely aroma when they are mature!"

Filius rubbed her shoulder patiently, glad that *she* was enjoying herself, and glad that *he* was sober enough to keep up with the rapid topic changes which her befuddled brain was now creating.

"You will be in need of your rest soon, my sweetest one, but I'm sure that we can get word to Hagrid in plenty of time." He smiled at her, trying not to think of the condition she would be in, later that day.

"Or, if you prefer, Mr. Rollins is still in residence, and could tend the plants as he usually does," Albus suggested, naming her young Gryffindor student-assistant; he'd just completed his first year at Hogwarts School of Witchcraft and Wizardry, and had been working with the Herbology mistress since the early autumn. At her puzzled look, he continued: "Brian's parents will come from Maine, later this month, to fetch him on their way to the Edinburgh Festival."

Pomona smiled, nodding her agreement and nearly spilling the coral-pink colored beverage. "He is such a dear boy, and he certainly knows to not go into Greenhouse three without me. The Venomous Tentacula is teething again."

Taking a deep breath, Professor Sprout raised her glass to the two wizards and then downed it in a single swallow. She made as if to put the empty on the silver tray, but missed when she abruptly stood up. A slight wave of his hand and Albus was able to catch it, banishing it safely to the kitchen. Pomona wobbled a little, giggling when Filius steadied her.

"Thank you, sweetie," she slurred. "I think I should be off to bed now. Good night, Albus."

Dumbledore smiled, giving Filius an encouraging wink as he showed them to the door. "Headache potion, and a large glass of water before tucking in, my dear." He patted the tiny Charms master's shoulder, leaned down and whispered: "Good luck, Filius."

Flitwick sighed resignedly, nodding and returning his smile. "To you, as well, Albus. We're going to need it!"

Finis

*A/N: I do not recommend trying an "alphabetical drunk" in real life... A to Z can be rather painful without the use of magic, I would assume (I've gotten as far as A to G, and regretted it immensely the next day). Thank you to stefdarlin for pointing me towards [www\(dot\)drinkswap\(dot\)com](http://www.dotdrinkswap.dotcom) (or you can try [www\(dot\)boozemixer\(dot\)com](http://www(dot)boozemixer(dot)com); the names are real, but the recipes can vary). So many wonderful drink names had to be omitted in the interest of space; I sincerely apologize if I have left out one of your favorites.*

*"Brian Rollins" is an OC in my multi-chapter fic entitled "What if?"; "Topher" is a house-elf in the same story.*