

Household Accidents

by chivalric

A quiet night at Spinner's End turns to the worse when two policemen try to save Hermione from her abusive husband...

One-shot Story

Chapter 1 of 1

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Many thanks to my betas, IceAngl105 and Amor Eternal, for corrections.

Special hugs for Dreamy_Dragon for the last checkup, although she was dying to go on holiday!

Dingdong

It was quite unusual that the doorbell rang at Spinner's End. The couple that lived there had no close neighbours, and besides, the Snapes were very rarely at home. Thus, not many bothered to come by. But it was summer, and he was not at Hogwarts for a change, so she had taken the opportunity to spend a few quiet evenings at home with her husband.

Earlier on, they had been to the village. Maybe someone had seen them and was curious after all. Plus, she had insisted in making their house a bit more welcoming by allowing the lights to be seen in the windows. "You're not spying anymore, love," she had pointed out. "Let people at least know when we are home."

It appeared that someone had seen the lights and knew they were home.

Bugger.

She considered ignoring the bell.

Dingdong!

All right, it was impossible to ignore it. But who could that be? Their few friends knew better than to just come round.

Sighing, she stood up, reluctantly leaving behind the book she had been reading, the warmth of the fire and the more than comfortable chair. She was aching, and the movement didn't do her bruised bones any good, but she had the vague feeling that whoever had made the effort to come all the way out to their house wouldn't just leave like that. The someone outside would ring again and again until she opened the door.

Hopefully, it was just a neighbour who wanted to borrow a cup of sugar.

The two uniformed men in front of the door quite obviously had no interest in sugar. And whatever they were here for, it seemed they were determined to sort the problem

out quickly they shuffled and shifted and didn't look too happy. Hermione could nearly see what they were thinking: that the man who lived here had a terrible temper, that it was late, and that they wished they were elsewhere.

"Good evening, officers. How may I help you?" Making an effort to sound polite, if not friendly, Hermione dearly hoped that none of her more dangerous books would choose that precise moment to hop out of the living room.

"Good evening, Mrs. Snape," the taller of the two policemen said.

"Sorry to bother you on such a fine evening," the other one went on. "But we would like to talk to you alone. In case your husband is at home, we would prefer to keep you separated for the time being. And don't worry we can handle him."

Well, these two don't fuss about, that much is certain, Hermione thought, bewildered. Not having a clue what they were talking about, she nevertheless decided that she wouldn't let them in. Handling Severus was no easy task even under the best of circumstances, and, with the slight hint of an accusation hanging in the air, the circumstances weren't ideal at all. And the two officers obviously didn't have the slightest idea what they would be facing if Severus was forced to leave his study in order to check on his stray wife chatting idly with Muggles.

Snappishly, she said, "I don't know what this is all about, but you are surely stretching my patience. I have dinner on the stove!" Blocking the entrance with her relatively small figure, she even pulled the door closed as she stepped out into the warm evening breeze.

The taller of the two officers shifted uncomfortably. "Mrs. Snape, someone called us up about an hour ago, reporting that you were being... well, abused. The caller described in detail what he had seen whilst you were shopping in the village. The bruises, the scratches. They are visible now as well. And... it is our duty to look into such incidents." The policeman was a bit round in the middle and sounded very concerned. Hermione saw a wedding ring on his finger.

Sighing, she looked up at him. Carefully, she ran her hands through her unruly hair, fully revealing her face to the two men.

They just managed to suppress a gasp. Both stared at her with gritted teeth. Obviously, the caller had told the truth.

One of her eyes was covered in shades of blue, green, and yellow. Her cheekbone was swollen, and down her neck several long scratches could be seen. The way she held herself made it clear that she was at least slightly in pain.

The two officers frowned at her, then a glance passed between them that spoke volumes. She looked so young and sweet, they thought. How could some bastard find it necessary to beat her up so severely? Much more important how could she be so stupid as to stay with such a monster?

She smiled apologetically and started to explain.

"Who was it?" asked the man sitting at the desk in his small study. He didn't even look up as his wife quietly sneaked in. His long black hair covered his face and touched the smooth surface of the wood.

"Police," she answered with a tiny tremble in her voice.

Still concentrating on his book rather than her, he pressed, "What did they want? That's certainly the first time that they bothered to pay us a visit." Taking a quill, he started to scribble on a parchment, eager not to lose the thought that had just crossed his mind.

Hermione seemed both embarrassed and a bit uneasy she knew only too well that it was never a good idea to disturb him when he was working on a new potion. "They... they had to follow up on a report. I think it was Mr Milkan. He saw me at the grocery store this afternoon. He said... he told the police that I was being abused. By you."

Finally, he put the quill down and looked at her. His pitch black eyes swept over her disapprovingly. Leaning forward, he growled, "I clearly recall having told you to heal those scratches and bruises!" Obviously annoyed, he slumped back in his chair.

"And I told you that it was too late for that. I had been seen already if I had healed myself, it would have only caused more questions. I have to wait until the bruises fade naturally."

Slowly, she came a few steps closer. "Can you forgive me, Severus? Please? I know how much you hate drawing attention..."

"Just tell me what story you have told them," he snapped, his eyes already drawn back to his parchment.

Slightly blushing, she mumbled something.

"Again, Hermione, and louder this time," he rasped, sounding so much like the teacher he was the better part of the year.

"I said it was a household accident. That I slipped off the ladder whilst cleaning the bookshelf."

That conjured a genuine smile upon his thin lips. "You call falling off the broom a household accident?" Chuckling, he steepled his fingers in front of him, offering her his full concentration. She rarely lied, but when she did, she was magnificent. He had no doubts that the policemen wouldn't bother them again. "Slipping off the ladder and they believed that?"

Blushing slightly, she only shrugged her shoulders. Taking a few steps to stand behind him and slipping her arm round his neck, she said, "Flying on a broom is just not my cup of tea, Severus. I much prefer the plane."

He could hear amusement in her voice now, but at the time, the morning after her failed training session, she had been so embarrassed having to limp home. She had abandoned the broom in the farthest corner of his study. But then, she insisted in learning how to fly properly. Her own fault that she fell.

Pecking her cheek with a quick kiss, he murmured, "Let me finish this, love," already picking up his quill. But she just rummaged through her trouser pockets.

"One of them sort of... forgot something," she dropped casually.

Concentrating on the parchment, he added a formula to the half finished recipe he had been brooding over for days now. "Whatever it is, you can return it tomorrow," he said absentmindedly.

She reached across his shoulder and something was dangling from her fingertips. She swung it teasingly in front of his eyes. It glittered in the candlelight.

His eyes narrowed. "You stole from a policeman?"

"Of course not. I might have borrowed this, though. As you said, I can give it back tomorrow. You've been working hard; I thought you could do with... a break."

"Ah," he said, not absentminded anymore. The recipe was forgotten. Getting up, he reached out and offered her his hands.

The handcuffs closed promisingly round his wrists, and Severus Snape followed his cheekily grinning wife willingly into their bedroom.