

She Towers Above All

by Amita

A bad boy notices a good girl who is more amenable than either believed possible.

Chapter 1 of 1

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Draco first noticed her in Potions. Later he would wonder what happened. He had seen her many times the past five years, but this was the first time he had noticed her. He decided it was watching her trying to keep her hair out of the cauldron.

He tried to catch her eye to nod and smile at her, but her attention was wholly upon the dumb potion, which she could have got perfect with half the effort she was putting into it. *Misplaced priorities*, he thought. *I suppose she thinks Ron or Harry might have feelings for her because they paid a bit of attention to her at the Yule Ball.*

He tried for the next two Potions classes to catch her eye or say, "Hello," to her in the hall just before class, but in class, she was absorbed with ingredients and, on the way to class, she was surrounded by friends. *Damn, they always travel in packs.* Except that she was alone in Potions instead of having a partner. Well, he was too, but he thought that might be because he had snarled at the other Slytherins for being such dunderheads. He was proud of his perfect record in the subject and didn't need any leeches on his back. But he didn't think she would be a burden at all. He supposed her skill and her severe demeanor discouraged potential partners.

He gave up attempts at being subtle. *Smart women aren't that smart.* It wasn't hard to find her alone in the library. Heart pounding, he approached her and stumbled out, "I've noticed you're alone ... in Potions, I mean. You'd make a great partner ... I mean in Potions. I was wondering if you would consider it ... being partners in Potions, I mean."

Dang, I mean that was smooth, he thought. He noticed she was glaring at him.

"I wouldn't be your partner in Potions if you were the last wizard on the face of the earth, Malfoy."

"Well, I mean that's a definite answer," he said. He turned and walked away.

The next Potions class, she kept looking at him quizzically. *I'm not a specimen, lady*, he thought. *Give it a rest. I'm really, really sorry I bothered you.* He entertained himself by imagining those unruly locks dropping into her potion and ruining both.

Several days later he was standing in the hallway and looking out the window at the lake. He was thinking it was as chill and grim as a girl's heart. He was thinking that nature had a lot to teach him if he would only learn. He saw her walking toward him. He decided he would be polite, nod at her, and let the chill grimness flow into the unfathomable sea.

She stopped in front of him. "You caught me by surprise the other day, Draco."

He was thinking that that day in the library he had walked away before she could spit out all her venom. Now, he was about to receive all that and everything she had brewed in the meantime. He was thinking a real gentleman would let her vent before her acid came out wrong and ate holes in her knickers.

"Out of the blue, you make this considerate offer, but you didn't give me a chance to adjust or time to recover and think," she said.

He was thinking he had given her plenty of time for a rude refusal, and she seemed to think everything was his fault. He thought about the lake and kept himself centered.

"Well, I think you'd be a marvelous lab partner, I mean, if you're still interested," she said.

"Sure," he said, too stunned to say anything else.

The next morning he was yawning in Arithmancy. It was too early for a thinking class. The clot who made out the schedule should be sacked. He noticed a shadow over his desk, which was in the back row.

"May I?" she asked.

He made room for her. Of course, he now remembered she was in Arithmancy. He could have approached her by asking for help on some problems. On the other hand, appearing incompetent might not have been the best approach either. During the lecture, he noticed she took meticulous notes. He wondered why. All the material was in the textbook. He concluded she was an overachiever in everything.

As they sat together, her aroma wafted his way. "Nice perfume," he said. She grunted and continued with her note taking. He noticed her jewelry. "I like your ring," he said. Another grunt as she concentrated on pen and parchment. He noticed the patrician lines of her face, her twinkling eyes, her lovely hair. At the end of the lecture, instead of remembering almost everything as usual, he couldn't remember anything. He was thinking he should end whatever relationship they had: this girl was hard on his academic life.

She looked at him and said, "I used a new soap this morning. Do you like it? The ring belonged to my great aunt. Do you have time for a coffee? I need one."

Okay, so maybe he wouldn't end whatever relationship they had just yet.

During coffee, he mentioned that neither of their houses was playing in this Saturday's game.

"Okay," she said.

"Okay?" he asked.

Okay, I'll go with you to the game, I mean, if that's okay. You were going to ask, weren't you?" she said.

"Yes, that's what I was asking," he said, making a quick recovery.

That Saturday morning, her roommates were looking at her strangely. She had risen early, soaked in the tub, spent an hour messing with her hair, and now, half her clothes were strewn over her bed as she decided what to wear. She finally went casual, put on jeans, turned in front of the mirror, thought they made her hips look big, decided she would be wearing a coat anyway, and dashed down to meet Draco at the front gate.

After the game, he was showing her the Slytherin equipment room, and she was admiring the impressive brooms.

"Would you like to ride one?" he asked.

"I don't like to fly," she began, but she saw the look of disappointment on his face and said, "I can try if you take it easy. Is it okay if we use the Slytherin brooms?"

"Sure," he said.

If the team captain finds out about this, my ass is grass, he thought.

They flew along the lakeshore.

"Oh, it's cold over the water."

They headed toward the castle.

"Look out for that boulder."

They flew around a tower.

"We're too high."

They dropped lower and wound through the passages.

"Left. Left. No, right."

They cruised along the edge of the forest.

"Watch out for the trees. Don't hit that bird."

They headed back.

"We're flying too low."

They returned to the Slytherin broom shack.

"That was fun."

By the next Friday, they were conducting prefect patrols together. They decided they should check the astronomy tower. It was empty and cold, but the stars were out, and Draco was watching their breaths and thinking she was breathtaking.

"It's cold up here," she said.

"Did you want to go back to the Great Hall to get warm?" he asked.

She stepped closer: her intelligent eyes shiny; her lovely hair lustrous. "No, ninny, I do not want to go back to the Great Hall 'to get warm,'" said Padma.

Author's Note: The prompt is from SeverlyLupin – a tryst on the astronomy tower involving one person/being we would least expect. There is not much explicit trysting, but in return, the story is available to all.