

Oh, Bloody Hell

by OSUSprinks

Prompted by friends, Pomona begins dating again. She wants to be ready, but is she?

Oh, Bloody Hell

Chapter 1 of 1

Prompted by friends, Pomona begins dating again. She wants to be ready, but is she?

"Oh, bloody hell." The curse fell halfheartedly from Pomona's lips as she stubbed her toes on an end table. Her feet were already sore from her heels, and stubbing them had not helped. With a tired sigh, she collapsed into her favorite chair and slipped out of the shoes. On her way home, she had decided she deserved a few moments of wallowing in self-pity, if only just a few, and if at all possible, a very large drink. As if reading her mind, Tinksy, her favorite house-elf, appeared. With only a nod in Pomona's direction, the tiny elf placed a martini glass of something pink and bubbly on the offending end table and disappeared. The matching pink umbrella in the drink was enough to release the tears Pomona had spent the last hour trying desperately to conceal.

At dinner it had been the song, their song of course. Rodney, her date for the evening, had been a sweet man. A widower, he had seemed to understand when she had gone pale at the first line and led her away from the dance floor and to their table as the band put their own spin on *Just Once in My Life*. She had tried to recover, but the evening had gone down hill from there. She doubted he would be owling her again, the poor man.

She had actually been looking forward to the evening. After putting her friends off for quite some time, Pomona had finally decided she was ready to make good on her promise to Filius. What followed was a series of horrendous dates that had almost put her off the idea in general. Then Poppy had mentioned Rodney. Pomona vaguely remembered meeting him at one of Poppy's gatherings and an interesting conversation about planting rotations in Muggle farming, interesting to her at least. Rodney was a herbologist, though he used his degree to run a large farm. It had been one of the reasons Pomona had been interested in going on a date with him. Add their mutual interest to his broad shoulders and tanned, handsome face, sense of humor and gentle personality and Pomona had, for once, been looking forward to a second date. It had been going very well, she thought, until... Well, until.

Let me get what I want; Girl, don't let me down.

Pomona placed her drink in front of her favorite photograph of Filius as the line ran through her mind. She watched through her tears as he winked at the camera. She was letting him down. She had promised him she would move on, had promised him she would be happy and here she was, home early on a Saturday night, drinking alone. Filius had been gone for nearly five years, but there were days it felt like they had met just yesterday.

It had been her first year on staff at Hogwarts. She had been desperate to make a good impression and hopefully make a few friends as well. Filius had been so welcoming, putting her instantly at ease. He made her feel special and she had responded in kind. That year, the annual staff Christmas party at the Three Broomsticks had led to the first one, then many stolen kisses beneath the mistletoe. They had married that summer and lived their happily ever after for almost forty years. The large age difference between them had never bothered Pomona in the slightest until she realized it would mean spending the latter half of her life without him. Filius, as usual, had thought things through well in advance and one - somewhat drunken - night early on in their marriage had made her promise him to find love again. It was a promise she had renewed, though not without some argument, at his deathbed. She was beginning to feel it was a promise she would never fulfill.

As she drained her third of the fruity cocktails and watched the glass begin to refill itself, there was a knock at the door. Stumbling over her shoes and nearly falling into the

end table as she hurried to the door, another more adamant, "Bloody hell," let loose from Pomona's lips. With bleary eyes, red from a mixture of alcohol and tears, she blinked once, then twice, wondering if she was more drunk than she realized. "Rodney?"

He stood before her, his shoulders hunched and cheeks red from embarrassment, twisting his tweed hat nearly in two. "I just wanted to check on you. I firecalled Poppy but, well, she was... busy." There was a hesitation long enough for Pomona to remember their mutual friend had her own date that evening and for her to imagine what the poor man had walked into. "I decided to come myself. I hope you don't mind."

"Please come in, but really I am fine." She tried to prove her point by leading them to the chairs before her fireplace, only to stumble once more. A large, strong hand took hold of her arm. Without thinking, Pomona leaned back into his broad chest. For a moment, she felt a sense of rightness, of home, before realizing what she was doing. With a jerk, Pomona moved forward, managing to slide into her chair. "Can I get you something?"

He took a seat across from her. "No, I shouldn't stay. I just wanted to let you know... To tell you..." He leaned forward, taking one of her hands in his and looked into her eyes. "I know it's hard, but when you are ready, and I mean really ready, not just when Poppy thinks you should be, I'd like to take you out again." He kissed her hand and held it briefly before retrieving his hat from the offending table and standing.

Pomona watched him walk to her fireplace and take a handful of Floo powder from her mantle. Just before he threw it into the dying fire, she called out, "Rodney?" He turned to look at her. "Do you think I'll ever be ready?"

With an awkward smile and long look, he answered, "I hope so," and disappeared in a flash of green.

While taking a last sip of her drink, Pomona watched as the photograph of Filius winked once more. With a glance back toward the fire, she released a slight laugh and thought, *Oh, bloody hell!*

A/N: My first story for The Petulant Poetess and boy, was I nervous! It was inspired by luvsev and her prompt (stolen kisses, a memory, and a song of your choice) for the Saturday Night Drabbles on May 16th. I hope I did it justice. Thank you for reading!