

Brandy

by shefa

What does a duck have to do with it? Not crack!fic. No. Really.

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Chapter 1 of 1

What does a duck have to do with it? Not crack!fic. No. Really.

Disclaimer: Not mine.

Warnings: No alcohol was consumed in the writing of this story. But really, there should have been.

The bottle of brandy was empty.

Pity.

She wasn't completely blotto yet. If she'd had her druthers, though, blotto was where she'd be instead of at this Ministerial *excuse* for social climbers to curry favour and get their photos taken hanging on the arm of putative war heroes.

She peered with one squinty eye into the bottle of brandy.

Still empty.

The last good reason to linger—gone.

But him?

She glared at Snape through her drunken haze. By the looks of it, *he* was determined to close the place.

The git.

Mr Morose, suddenly developing enough charm to captivate a gaggle of sleazy witches who *clearly* only wanted one thing.

Publicity.

Harumph. At least the photographer from *The Daily Prophet* was long gone. Or had he been from *Witch Weekly*?

Never mind.

Deep breathing was the thing, she reminded herself. And her mantra.

But first, she thought, wiping the lipstick smear from her glass, one more sip, for fortitude.

Besides, blast-ended skrewts could sing before she would leave without ensuring that *he'd* gone home.

Alone.

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"Are you *hyperventilating*, Granger?"

She let out the deep, cleansing breath she'd been holding and attempted to pin him with what she hoped was a flinty glare.

"It's called breathing, Snape. You should try it sometime." She looked pointedly at the pair of witches loitering by the door. "Seems you could use a bit of oxygen to the brain yourself, now I think of it."

"Now, now, Miss Granger. Jealousy hardly becomes you."

"Jealousy? You wish," she hissed. "I don't give a flying flobberworm who you..." She blushed deeply. "It's..."

"It's what, Granger?" He leaned towards her, his hands on the table in front of her, a hairsbreadth away from her own. She crossed her arms to keep from...

"Never mind."

"Tell me. Now." How had he got closer with the table still between them? If she leaned forward just so, she could...

"Granger." His voice was dangerous. Merlin, she loved it when he used his *dangerous* voice.

"It's a Muggle expression. You wouldn't understand," she mumbled.

"My father was a Muggle. Out with it, Granger."

"Out with it?" She pulled out her wand. "Out with it? Fine." She flourished her wand and tried to concentrate. If she could just...

QUACK

She'd hoped for yellow feathers, but the white ones *were* rather pretty. Maybe if she just..

"A duck?" He interrupted her contemplation. "What are you going to do with *a* duck Granger?"

"I'm not going to do *anything* with a duck, Snape. He is merely here for demonstration purposes." She advanced on him. "Your insults, your flagrant fl-flirting with every witch in the room apart from..." She glared at him again as if it was his fault her mouth had stopped cooperating with her brain. "Your determination to completely *ignore* me. It's all *water*..." She took the glass holding the last finger's width of amber fluid. "Or brandy, as the case may be..." She tilted the glass over the feathers of the brilliant white duck—and poured the liquid out. "Off the back of a duck."

The duck, to its credit, allowed itself to be used for demonstration purposes. Though the look of blatant surprise on its ducky face may have had more to do with its failure to squawk in protest.

Snape, true to form, allowed no amount of surprise to render *him* immobile. Instead, he moved swiftly, circling the table in a flash.

"Brandy off the back of a duck?" He grabbed her around the waist and pulled her against him. "What does it mean, then, Granger, when the brandy adheres to the feathers of the aforementioned duck?" She followed his gaze to the animal that had begun to ruffle its feathers in annoyance.

She couldn't believe her eyes. Just as he said, the brandy had spread, but rather than rolling off the slick plumage, had stuck to the crystalline feathers of the rather bewildered looking waterfowl.

"I don't know what it means," she murmured. "I..."

"What you did, Granger," he murmured, physical proximity coupled with his dangerous voice rendering her already unsteady legs even more wobbly, "was to conjure a duck that would exhibit precisely the same characteristics as you do."

"I did?"

"You did."

"Oh." She couldn't tell anymore whether it was the brandy making her fuzzy or the fact that he'd started nuzzling her neck. The murderous looks the witches across the room were shooting her assured her that this wasn't part of some alcoholic stupor. That worked. "What characteristics, precisely?"

"Apart from a propensity to stick your nose where it doesn't belong and wade into deep water?" He was still nuzzling, so he mustn't mind those things, she thought. "It would appear that the water—or brandy, doesn't roll. It sticks to you like glue. Every. Single. Drop."

All she remembered after that was the press of Apparation around her just as he lowered his mouth to hers.

And that he tasted like brandy.

Beta Thanks to Annie Talbot.

Written for anonymous_plume for LJ's HPcon_envy. Prompt: liquor, a lipstick smear, and a duck. :)