

# Champion

*by blue artemis*

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*Chapter 1 of 1*

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Rolanda was worried. It wasn't like Severus to keep something that drastic from her. Ever since she had found the boy crying by the Quidditch pitch his fifth year after the Evans chit had refused his apologies, she'd had a soft spot for him. She had watched him, especially those times when he would take his broom and fly. She'd seen that he found a freedom in the air the same way she did. She had done her best to befriend him, offering him pointers and offering him tea and a sympathetic ear. His seventh year, when he could not decide what to do, other than follow those lesser children who claimed to be his friends, she'd offered him more. She rarely took a man to her bed, much less one that young, but she'd seen the hurt in his eyes and could not do any less. He later told her that she'd made his life bearable in a year where he'd lost his parents and his way.

When Dumbledore had died and Severus had run, Rolanda had sent him a letter to a secret place that he had told her about. His response had chilled her, but there'd been a bit of hope as well. She knew that she would have a role to play that next year.

The faculty not appointed by Voldemort behaved as though Severus was a leper, a villain of the worst sort, but Rolanda realized that had they just *seen*, they would have realized that he was doing the best he could to protect the children without compromising his position. She'd again offered her bed, a comfort he took rarely, telling her that he could not endanger her no matter how much it meant that she still believed in him.

When he fell in the Shrieking Shack, when Harry and Hermione and Ron had said he was dead, she'd run to see what she could do, knowing deep in her heart that the man she had grown to love would have not given up without telling her good-bye. She'd found him there, barely breathing, the anti-venin doing its work. And she'd seen the Portkey they had created in his hand. She'd held him close and activated it, taking them to their sanctuary, a small cottage they had retired to in the summers when they had some time.

The Wizarding world believed him dead, and took her at her word that she could not bear Hogwarts since the battle. It had taken a while, but Severus had recovered. He'd asked her once, why she would spend her life with someone so unworthy of her.

"I don't know how you believe that, my love. Your heart was greater than any Gryffindor because you knew how to apologize and to forgive. You were more loyal than any Hufflepuff, doing what you had to without any recognition. You are more intelligent than any Ravenclaw I've ever met, and without a doubt you are a true Slytherin. Hogwarts could not have asked for a better champion than you, and I could not love anyone any better. For that matter, why do you wish to be saddled with a woman more than double your age?"

Overcome with emotion at the blunt statement of love, Severus had responded, "You have always loved me. You championed me, you succored me, you did what you could to make my life easier. I may have been Hogwarts' champion, but you were always mine."

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Many thanks to Southern\_Witch\_69 for the beta. She is a doll.

This was written for rubyanjel who asked for this rare pair. I hope I did her request justice.