

It Just Fell in my Lap

by blue artemis

The story of Rita's lifetime falls in her lap.

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Chapter 1 of 1

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Rita tapped her foot impatiently, waiting for her next horrid assignment. She couldn't believe what she was hearing.

"... Do you understand?" asked her boss.

*Yes, I understand. I **understand**. Hermione Granger is off limits. Who would have thought that horrid little witch would be powerful enough to attract Lucius Malfoy?* "Fine! I repent. Give me something better than hagwatch, would you?"

"Sorry, Rita. Unless you find some real news that won't upset the newest Mrs. Malfoy, you have to lay low."

Rita stormed out of the office. Her contract kept her from being fired, but the Malfoys still had enough money and power to make her miserable.

She headed over to the Hogwarts Quidditch pitch. Harry Potter was the current DADA instructor, having left the Aurors when his engagement to Ginny Weasley fell through. She had gotten an anonymous note informing her that there was a pick-up Quidditch game. Maybe something good would happen.

"Ooof!" Rita stared at the rather large wizard who had just knocked her off her seat onto the grass, after landing in her lap.

"I'm so sorry! Oh, it's you."

"Thank you so much, Mr. Weasley. I'm not even good enough to be a good landing mat?"

"I think this is all your fault. So, no, you aren't good enough to be a good landing mat. Too bad I didn't fall from even higher."

"It is my job to report the news, Mr. Weasley. If your behavior resulted in you losing your girlfriend, well, it isn't really my fault. Now, back to you. Is your broom faulty?"

"My magic is faulty. It disappears at the most horrible times."

"I thought your family was pureblood, Mr. Weasley."

"You know they are, Skeeter."

"Did no one tell you what would happen if you took a witch's virginity without her consent?"

"That is an old wives tale, Rita."

"Is it, Ronnie? Who is the witch?"

"You know, I know this has to be Hermione or that Death Eater she married. It is nothing else."

"As you say, Ronniekins. As you say."

Rita did her homework—it was more than one witch. It turned out Ron liked to drug his young groupies with something called Liquid Obliviate--LO for short. It was a highly illegal date rape drug. She named names and repeated the "old wives tale" in her article, as well as the cold, hard facts. Two days after the article came out, Ronald Weasley was in Azkaban, suffering all the more, because of his wonky magic: six months after that, he lost his magic entirely and was suffocated by the wards.

One year after the article, Rita was on top of the world. She had won every Wizarding journalistic award there was in the past year. Her investigative skills were being sought by most of the big name papers.

There was just one last thing to do.

"Hello, Miss Skeeter."

"Hello, Mrs. Malfoy."

"Why did you ask for a meeting?"

"I wanted to thank you."

"For what?"

"That nice little note that pointed me to the Hogwarts Quidditch Pitch last year."

"I have no idea what you are talking about, Miss Skeeter."

"Well, then, enjoy your ice cream in any case, Mrs. Malfoy. And congratulations on your baby."

Hermione smiled. She would never admit to sending the note informing Rita of the game. Rita smiled as well. She did her homework, and she had tracked down the parchment the note was written on, but she *had* learned: you did not upset Mrs. Malfoy.

Many thanks to juniperus for her awesome beta skills.

2. Rita Skeeter is being punished, so she's sent on the crappiest assignments the Prophet editorial staff can find. She's furious and on the verge of quitting when the story of a lifetime drops into her lap.