

The Demise of Numerius Plankton

by Pennfana

People are laughing at the Daily Prophet's coverage of the death of a wizard who fell off his broom. What's so funny about this tragic story?

The Demise of Numerius Plankton

Chapter 1 of 1

People are laughing at the Daily Prophet's coverage of the death of a wizard who fell off his broom. What's so funny about this tragic story?

Disclaimer: As always, I make no claim to the ownership of any person, place, concept or object involved in this story which I did not create myself.

From The Daily Prophet, Monday, April 10, 1995:

Exclusive to the Daily Prophet

WIZARD DIES IN BIZARRE CRASH

Numerius Plankton burns down, falls over, sinks into swamp

By RITA SKEETER, The Daily Prophet

HOGSMEADE VILLAGE, ABERDEENSHIRE—On the evening of Sunday, April 9, 1995, many residents of Hogsmeade Village were witness to a bizarre accident which claimed the life of Numerius Plankton, a resident of the village.

Plankton, 58, was known for his exceptional recklessness with his broomstick. "He always flew far too high up," recalled Madam Rosmerta, proprietress of the well-known Three Broomsticks pub. "I always told him that if he kept flying near those Muggle aero-wossnames, he'd end up flat on the ground and no mistake."

Although members of the Department of Magical Law Enforcement and the Aurory have not yet completed their investigation of the matter, an Auror who spoke with this reporter on the condition of anonymity has released some information about what the Aurors currently believe occurred to bring about Plankton's unexpected demise.

Plankton, whose tendency to fly too high was well-known to the Department of Magical Law Enforcement and to the other residents of Hogsmeade Village, apparently narrowly escaped a collision with a Muggle aeroplane. The wax on his wings melted because he flew too close to the sun, so all his feathers dropped off and he fell to the Earth like a stone.

Having avoided colliding with the aeroplane, he lost control of his broomstick and spiralled downwards, regaining control of it just in time to actually collide with a flock of Canada Geese in what is probably the first-ever instance of a wizard being goosed while in flight.

On his way down, Plankton then crashed into a Muggle who was apparently flying himself on an oversized kite, an activity which our Muggle-Related News Correspondent assures us is called "Hang Gliding". The impact unfortunately caused the Muggle craft to break, which sent Plankton and the unknown Muggle plummeting down to their eventual demise.

Witnesses have stated that Plankton's last words were apparently, "**OH, FUUUUUUU—**"

While Plankton's next-of-kin have yet to finalize the arrangements for the memorial service, condolences can be sent to the family home in Hogsmeade. Memorial contributions to the Lethally Aeronautically-Challenged Klutzy Wizards Interested in Trampolines (LACKWIT) Foundation would be greatly appreciated by the family.

From The Daily Prophet, Tuesday, April 11, 1995:

Errata

CORRECTIONS: WIZARD DIES IN BIZARRE CRASH

The editors of the Daily Prophet would like to correct a number of errors which appear to have been deliberately slipped into yesterday's article about the untimely demise of Numerius Plankton of Hogsmeade Village.

*Being a wizard, he most assuredly did not burn down, fall over and then sink into a swamp. This sub-heading originally read, "*Numerius Plankton falls off his broom from a great height*". We have no idea who changed it or why they used this particular phrasing.

*Wizards fly on brooms, not wings made of wax and feathers, and Plankton's demise did not come about because he flew too close to the sun. That, of course, is from the myth of Icarus and Daedalus.

*We have been informed that when somebody is "goosed", it means that they have been touched between the buttocks. While the forensic evidence in this case has not yet been thoroughly investigated, our Auror contact has informed us that there is no reason to believe that such an act took place.

*Finally, we are unaware of the existence of any Fund or Foundation by the name of "LACKWIT". The family had actually informed us that they would appreciate memorial donations to the Artefact Accidents Ward of St. Mungo's Hospital for Magical Maladies and Injuries.

We would also like to extend our most sincere apologies for the photograph which accompanied this article. It appears that the original image—a representation of Aurors investigating Plankton's crash—was maliciously replaced with a photograph of Professor Severus Snape doing something extremely unorthodox and irregular with what appears to be a plush Easter bunny. While we hesitate to speculate about what the meaning of this image is, we certainly did not intend to cause any undue distress to the good Professor.

We would also greatly appreciate it if Professor Snape would kindly accept our apologies in the spirit in which they were given and please remove the horns, tails and bat-wings with which he saw fit to gift us upon reading yesterday's article.

Author's Notes: MuseAmusant's prompts strike again! "The Daily Prophet reports on a tragic accident. So why are people laughing?"

Why "Numerius Plankton"? That's the first name that came to mind that I thought sounded even vaguely in-universe.

Credit is due, naturally, to Monty Python for the history of Swamp Castle.

Professor Snape's encounter with a plush Easter bunny was detailed in one of my fics from last year, "The Accident". (Somewhat coincidentally, that one also came from one of MuseAmusant's prompts.) The idea of the photo making it to the Daily Prophet, especially when it wasn't supposed to, was just too funny to resist. Poor Severus; he's *never* safe with me!