

Contretemps

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Chapter 1 of 1

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Ginny and Luna sat at the coffee table in the hotel suite with Molly's Ouija board trying to determine who had dosed Hermione with Dreamless Sleep potion the previous night at her hen party. The bride-to-be had keeled over after the latest copy of the *Daily Prophet* had been pushed under the door. The headline had screamed, in Rita Skeeter's florid style, *Krum seduces teacher his first year at Durmstrang*.

The party had dispersed rapidly after Hermione had passed out. Molly brought the Ouija board when she came to check on the three girls when Ginny had owled her.

The sun was just peeking over the horizon when Luna exclaimed, "We keep getting an R. It has to be Romilda. Or, oh, no, Ginny, could it be Ron behind the headline and Lavender dosing Hermione?"

"Luna, you're brilliant. Ron did go round the twist when Herms told him and Harry she was marrying Vik. Oh, it is so in character to get others to do his nastiness for him. You stay here with Herms; I'm going to go find Vik. I'll drag my husband with me. He will not be happy with Ron about this. Back soon, I promise."

While Ginny was gone, Luna sent a Patronus to Neville to do some digging into the Durmstrang school files since he was teaching a seminar there on Herbology. She included the teacher's name and the year the supposed seduction had taken place. He had replied at once.

Not to worry, love. The new Headmistress is appalled at the headlines, too. She is married to Viktor's uncle. Will send again when I know more. Don't distress yourself. It isn't good for the baby.

"Well, that certainly will help. My Neville will find out what this all about."

In another hotel, across town, Harry and Ginny were sitting in Viktor's suite, hearing about the teacher who had tried to seduce him his first year at Durmstrang.

"She was our Potions instructor. She hated Karkaroff and talked behind his back continuously. I was good student, but she kept putting me into detention with her. I did not understand what she wanted with me. I was too into training for Quidditch to think about girls at eleven. I talked to my parents about it and they talked to Karkaroff. He had asked former Headmaster to keep watch from painting in Potions classroom. She was trying to make me put my hands on her when Karkaroff burst in door. She ripped her own clothes and then screamed that I had raped her."

"That's why Karkaroff guarded you so closely when you came for the tournament, isn't it?" Harry asked.

"He felt that he had failed to protect me sufficiently. He wasn't a good man, but he cared about his students. I was celebrity, so he was more concerned with how the scandal would affect Durmstrang. The woman was put on trial and subjected to Veritaserum. She admitted the whole scheme. She wanted to have something to blackmail me with in later years. The Ministry sentenced her to Siberia for twenty years. Her name was Marika Chomsky. I think she died in Siberia."

Viktor was worried about what this would do to his relationship with Hermione.

Ginny gasped. The girl Ron had been seeing behind Lavender's back was Anitchka Chomsky.

"Harry, Ron must have gotten that story from the girl he has been cheating on Lavender with. Her name is Chomsky. She must be related to that teacher."

"Right. Now, Vik, get your things together. You're coming to the house with us. No one will be able to talk to you until we suss this out. Luna is with Herms. I'm sure she has asked Nev to find out if there are any records of this to-do at Durmstrang."

Viktor packed his things and followed the Potters to their house. Meanwhile, Neville had sent word that a packet was being sent through the Floo to the Bulgarian Magical Embassy within an hour.

Luna love, it will explain everything. Tell Harry we found proof positive here at Durmstrang that the story is a lie. See you soon.

Just as Neville's Patronus had dissipated, Hermione staggered into the room.

"What happened last night? I know I didn't drink anything."

"Ginny and I think Lavender dosed you with Dreamless Sleep just after this was shoved under the door." Luna held up the paper with the awful headline. "But Nev says the story is a lie. Ginny and Harry are talking to Vik right now. You just take a shower and we'll wait for news."

"Thank, Luna. I know that story can't be the truth. I'll be back out in a minute."

Luna's Patronus to Ginny said only one thing. *Neville sending package with details and exonerating evidence to Bulgarian Magical Embassy. Tell Harry to retrieve.*

Harry sent his Auror partner, Draco Malfoy, to pick up the girl named Anitchka Chomsky from her place of employment in Knockturn Alley. She was wanted for questioning in a case of libel.

Draco sent a message back by the time Harry had retrieved the package from the Bulgarians.

Female in custody. She claims the story is true and her cohort appears to be one Ronald Bilius Weasley. Will pick him up as well.

Harry and Viktor went into the Ministry to interrogate the prisoners. Ginny went to get Luna and Hermione.

The package contained a crystal ball structure like the ones in the Department of Mysteries that had held prophecies, but this one contained the Veritaserum confession of one Marika Chomsky, who admitted to falsely accusing Viktor because she wanted to be able to blackmail him when he was an adult. She said that she had been Karkaroff's lover and he had dumped her because she was abusing students.

The girl, Anitchka Chomsky, was her youngest sister who had been duped into telling Ron Weasley the story to make trouble before Hermione and Viktor's wedding.

Weasley tried to plead innocent, but both Miss Chomsky and Lavender Brown tied him to the article in the paper and the dosing of Hermione at the party.

Two days later, the *Daily Prophet* printed a retraction of their previous story, apologised to the engaged couple and fired Rita Skeeter for the final time.

Beltane morning saw the wedding of the century take place; Hermione Granger married Viktor Krum in a private ceremony at Hogwarts.

The end.*****

Muse's prompts from 9/03 were:

- 1. Hermione wakes up the morning after her hen party with no memory of the event.*
- 2. The character(s) of your choice, a hotel room, an Ouija board*
- 3. A particularly embarrassing moment from Viktor's youth comes back to haunt him at the worst possible time. Who is responsible and what do they hope to gain?*