

Testing His Firepower

by *apisa_b*

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Chapter 1 of 1

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Disclaimer: My deepest apologies to JK Rowling – for obvious reasons – and to Terry Pratchett. A few scenes of his book *Interesting Times* inspired me to write this little story.

He was roused from sleep by shouting and the sound of running feet.

"Those little devils – I'll teach them to stay in bed at night!" Argus Filch growled while swinging his legs out of bed and reaching for a set of robes to throw over his nightshirt. No way would he be foolish enough, as Snape once had been, to be seen in his sleepwear. Not that he didn't look presentable, quite the contrary. Madam Malkin had assured him that his clothing was very fashionable, and that it would be every witch's dream to share a bed with someone wearing such a tasteful nightshirt. But that wasn't for the students to see; nor for any witch, if he were honest with himself, for those were all far too proud of themselves to be associated with a Squib.

As soon as he had slipped on his robes, he headed for the door, Mrs. Norris following suit. He paused to listen for any further clues where the culprits might have run off to; there was no need to strain his ears, for shouting and screaming led the way. Anticipation of seeing students squirm under his wrath and watching them fulfil their detention chores – which would be *very* nasty, he would see to that – doubled the speed of his running feet. He slipped as he turned around one corner, skidded through a tapestry and landed in the swamp that still remained from those Weasley bastards. But Filch in full flight had catlike, even messianic, abilities. The swamp barely rippled under his feet as he bounced off the surface and headed away--only to be stopped dead in his tracks by the sight of a wizard, who obviously was drawing a lot of enjoyment from letting Madam Pince dangle upside down in midair. A Death Eater in Hogwarts! Contrary to popular belief, Filch was not sympathetic to the cause of He-Who-Must-Not-Be-Named, nor his followers; at the moment, they were only after Muggle-born witches and wizards, but who knew whether they would turn against Squibs in future? Not even his pure-blood ancestry would protect him in that case.

Almost instantly, his survival instincts kicked in and made him turn to run, but the shrieks and whimpers of Madam Pince slowed his steps again. She was the only one, aside from Dumbledore, who occasionally found a nice word for him. They sometimes sat together over a glass of Ogden's Old Firewhisky and complained to one another about those terrible students and their latest misdeeds. She was the closest he had to a friend, and he could not leave her in the clutches of a Death Eater now, could he?

"Run!" a part of him shouted, and his feet were very inclined to obey that command.

"Poor Irma!" another part said. "If you would manage to rescue her, she surely would be grateful. Very grateful--"

That did the trick; Argus Filch had long secretly admired Irma Pince, but knowing that no witch would want anything from a Squib, he tried to be content with her occasional companionship. The prospect of earning her gratitude, and envisioning how she might show him exactly how thankful she was, made him turn back again. The Death Eater was moving his wand and poor Irma started to spin, which made it impossible for her to stop her nightgown, which she had managed to somehow hold in place, from slipping down and revealing parts of her body that should be seen by no one else other than Argus Filch. His blood started to boil, and he noticed a wand lying on the ground behind the Death Eater. Without thinking, he plunged forward, grabbed it and shouted, "Leave her alone!"

The Death Eater turned slowly, and upon seeing Argus Filch, made chuckling noises.

"Whom do we have here? The Squib! What are you going to do with that wand?" he said, mockingly. "Poke out my eye?"

"You watch," Argus replied. He held out the wand at arm's length. Then he raised his other hand, grunting a little as it got past shoulder height. He wasn't as young as he wanted to be anymore.

"You watching this wand? You watching this wand?" he demanded.

"I am watching," said the Death Eater, desperately trying not to laugh.

"Good," said Argus. He kicked the man squarely in the groin and then, as the Death Eater doubled up, hit him over the head with his balled fists. "'Cos you should've been watchin' this foot."

And that would have been all there was to it, but the sounds of running feet made his anger and, together with it, his courage diminish.

"What have I done?" he said in a shaky voice, and his survival instincts yet again demanded him to "Run!"

Irma Pince was still shrieking and revolving in midair, he was still holding – supposedly – her wand, and he was still standing over the fallen Death Eater, his feet twisting in a desperate attempt to obey the contradicting orders of his instincts and his conscience, when Severus Snape rounded the corner.

With a raised eyebrow, his gaze oscillated between Filch and the Death Eater lying on the ground. He softly plucked the wand from Filch's hands, ended the hex that had Irma Pince's garments threatening to slip over her breasts, let her down to the floor, stunned the Death Eater and secured his wand.

"The corridors aren't safe tonight," Snape said. "You two better go to your rooms and stay there."

With these words, he turned and left with quick steps, yet not running, for this would hinder his black robes from billowing out appropriately behind him.

'Strange,' Filch thought and only now noticed the distant sounds of fighting coming from the direction Snape had set off to. He turned to Irma Pince and helped her up. His gaze swept across her body, lingering on parts her nightgown was not fully concealing. He decidedly enjoyed the sight of her nipples piercing the fabric and her silhouette shimmering through the gown, illuminated by moonlight. But this was not the right moment for such thoughts, he concluded and shrugged out of his robes to lay them across her shoulders, not considering the fact that without his robes, his desire couldn't stay hidden for long.

Irma was thankful for this gesture of concern and for the first time really regarded the man standing in front of her. He was her hero, and he wore a really tasteful nightshirt; her fingers itched to touch it, and she didn't restrain herself. Who cared if the man wearing this fine piece of silk was a Squib or not – with one wand he obviously wasn't lacking. And she decided to find out what firepower that one was holding.

A/N: This is my take on Potter_Place's "How Filch Found his Firepower" Challenge.

1. One-shot story only (no minimum word amount limit)
2. If Filch would find his "firepower" (magic), how would it happen?
3. Any genre, any ships, anything goes...
4. This would be set post HBP please.

I am aware that I didn't really follow the rules. But challenge rules are really more like guidelines, aren't they?

And many thanks to Larilee and Phoenix for betaing this.