

How Argus Filch Got Wild, Got Laid, and Got His Magic

by dracontia

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How Argus Filch Got Wild, Got Laid, and Got His Magic

Chapter 1 of 1

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Disclaimer: If I had made up Filch, I sure wouldn't admit it in public. As it is, I only borrow him with the aid of ten-foot calipers and a haz-mat suit. This is in response to the 'Filch's Firepower Challenge' at Potter Place, which I'm sure would never have been issued if anyone had suspected this could be one of the results.

Lavender Brown was in deep trouble. Without resorting to any form of Divination, she could see that expulsion from Hogwarts loomed large in her future. She wouldn't have minded failing to graduate because the school closed; it wouldn't adversely affect her ability to become a Charms Esthetician (with a view to eventually operating her own spa). However, being chucked out for rule breaking just might. Not to mention that 'throwing a benny' wouldn't even begin to describe her parents' reaction.

The only person who might be able to help her hated her guts for an entire laundry list of reasons. And now, she had essentially signed a blank contract, in the wild hope that said person would actually be able to deliver her salvation...at any price.

One week ago...

"Ha! Caught you dead to rights, Missy," Argus Filch, sadistic Squib and Hogwarts caretaker, gloated. He had just discovered Lavender outside of her dorm after hours... trying to brew a Love Potion. With Dumbledore gone, any student making any substance or practicing any spell that might constitute a form or mind control or interference with one's free will was subject to an expulsion hearing. Love potions, always illegal, definitely qualified as interference with free will...and under the rules, grounds for expulsion.

Quick thinking was not Lavender Brown's forte. She might have gotten out of this bind if it were. All she could do was stand mute, blanching in the face of Filch's filthy leer and silently bemoaning how, in the aftermath of Dumbledore's death, all communications in and out of Hogwarts were so tightly restricted that scarcely a postcard could pass. Certainly no one would get anything that had to be delivered in a bottle.

Filch's thoughts ran along very different lines as he gathered the evidence and prepared to march Miss Brown to the Headmistress' office. "One less miserable little witch

underfoot," he muttered, gleefully rubbing his filthy, gnarled hands together until the knuckles cracked.

Suddenly, the thought dimly flickered across her mind that he wasn't using magic to bottle the evidence against her and that he never made any move to use a wand to clean up the mess. Come to think of it, he hadn't been any help controlling the Whiz-bangs a few years ago, either. Could it be...?

"You're a Squib!" she accused.

"I don't need magic to get your empty little head tossed out of here," he spat nastily.

Lavender's brain may not have been the fastest or best, but she had fair survival instincts. There must be something she could use here. Stalling for time, she asked, "Have you ever tried to get magic to work?"

"My entire life, you miserable slag! Do you think **like** cleaning up after stupid little wizards and witches in training all my life? I could have been somebody! I could have been a Conjuror, instead of a glorified janitor! I've tried Kwikspell, potions, shockspell therapy..." He trailed off, his craggy face twisted into even uglier folds and ridges than usual.

Lavender was desperately making things up as she went along. What could she say that would distract him...hopefully, permanently...from getting her expelled?

"I mean, you must have it in you somewhere since Mrs. Norris is your familiar...right?"

"Yes, I guess," he said thoughtfully. The mention of Mrs. Norris smoothed out the angry scowl, making his features almost bearable. Almost.

He really loves that cat, she thought. Wait...love potion... Filch in love... disgusting, but probably effective... Could that be an idea? Let's see... get expelled, or ask the question? Tough choice....

"Have you ever, um, been in love?"

"WHAT?"

"Um, love, is supposed to be able to...fix blocked magic. I've heard of Squibs being able to do magic after losing their virginity to a witch or wizard who loved them." Phew. She had managed to bring up the subject of virginity without asking him directly. She sure as hell didn't want to know if he ever had...blech, it didn't bear thinking about.

Filch hadn't heard of that. But it made a sudden, horrid sense. It certainly fit his circumstances.

Lavender really couldn't decide if it was reassuring to see the look of comprehension on Filch's face, or just plain nauseating to look at him.

"Listen...that potion I was making... you can have it! I mean, it couldn't hurt to try..."

"What if you didn't make it correctly, girl? I want some assurance that this is going to work."

"Um, okay... I guess you could keep the evidence as, um, security... while I help you find a woman you can fall in love with and help you get her to love you. Then you can just...sort of conveniently lose the potion," Lavender offered nervously. "That way we both get what we want."

Filch couldn't stand the little brats... but what if this one was right?

To be able to do magic, at long last! To walk through the corridors with his head held high, so all those miserable whelps couldn't look down on him anymore! It was too much to toss aside for the sake of one piddling victory over one stupid little chit. "All right then," he growled. "You'll have a week."

"A week?" she quavered, aghast. *It would take a month just to free him of the stench of fish.*

"That's all you get, and be glad of it!" he shouted threateningly, turning several shades of uglier. Lavender fled, frantically grasping at a way to perform the miracle of getting Filch a woman without resorting to Imperio.

Six days ago...

"Mr. Filch, I can't conjure a witch for you out of thin air! But I can help you attract one."

"Well, now that's brilliant. All you bloody little witches and wizards are just alike; so clever-seeming outside, so useless at the core of it. If I had magic to work with, I'd figure out how to conjure what was needed 'out of thin air'."

Lavender was thinking that coming up with an entirely new person was an excellent idea right now. She didn't think she could do much to fix the one in front of her. He was a human grapefruit...bulbous, bitter, and possessing obscenely large, visible pores.

"Okay, sir, uh, this is the plan. I will provide you with all the charms and potions you need to look properly dashing for an evening in Hogsmeade. We'll work on some manners, go over a few..."

"There's nothing wrong with my manners!" he barked. "I know enough to offer a lady my arm, to hold a door for her, and pull out her chair. Do you think I was raised by werewolves? I can dance a fair bit, too."

"Really, sir?" Lavender didn't bother to disguise her shock.

Filch snarled something under his breath about hoity-toity witches. "I don't need you for etiquette lessons. What else have you got?"

"Well, I brought an entire range of potions for whitening teeth, improving skin tone, banishing dandruff, and a variety of other h-cosmetic uses." She decided 'hygienic' wouldn't have gone over well, under the circumstances.

"What's wrong with a bit of dandruff? Some of those flakes are right interesting."

"You actually look at them?" she asked. Her voice dwindled to a horrified whisper.

"Sometimes I save some of the more unique ones."

Filch hadn't thought that terrified, ghastly look could come over a student's face without the threat of horsewhipping.

"Mr. Filch, I suggest you not mention that on a date." She finally found the voice to continue. "And I have many very useful Charms, though I'll have to cast them for you just before you leave. Let me tend to your clothes, and I'll come back before supper, so you can be ready to leave the castle in time."

Minerva McGonagall may have been able to make a silk purse out of a sow's ear, but the best Lavender Brown could manage was a cleaner, less threadbare-looking suit with a much diminished odor.

Still, Filch, who'd been unable to manage results even a quarter as good using non-magical means, was secretly impressed. Perhaps he'd give the potions a try.

Lavender was hardly blown away by the caretaker's appearance when she stopped by his office to provide him with charms for his evening in Hogsmeade. But she was pleasantly surprised that he smelled less objectionably than usual.

"Get on with it!" he snapped, as she hesitated in the corridor. Lavender gave a little jump and darted into the office, commencing to cast a litany of charms. She had just about swished and flicked her wrist off before she considered the job done.

"There, Mr. Filch!" she pronounced with false brightness. The man was still ugly, but maybe only as ugly as sin's first cousin, now. At least he looked a bit polished up.

Filch regarded his appearance in the mirror she'd conjured suspiciously. Hmm. He looked rather distinguished, he thought. At least the whingy little bint hadn't been putting one over on him with those charms.

"It might do," he conceded.

With that, Lavender sent Filch out for his night on the town. And hoped.

Three days ago...

Filch's adventures on three successive nights in Hogsmeade had been less than fortuitous. Lavender's knees were still knocking from the promise she'd made him in order to stop him relaying, at full reedy, berating, shout, the litany of humiliating experiences. In agonies of guilt, she reflected on the painful memory while trying to listen to Professor Trelawney natter on about the latest in scrying devices.

"Oh, of course, Miss Brown! I never thought you had betrayed me by taking classes with that...that beast," Trelawney cooed warmly. She was delighted to have her star pupil over for a little visit in the office adjacent to her living space...a room even more pouf-and-incense-replete than her classroom, if such a thing were possible.

Lavender managed a weak smile over the rim of her cup. *Forgive me, Professor Trelawney*, she thought miserably, but I can always Obliviate you afterwards. She tipped the potion into Trelawney's tea while the reedy woman was busy scrabbling about her many pouches and pockets for the new scrying mirror she'd wanted to show off.

Hurry up, Filch! she fretted internally. Why had she not waited until the man reached the office before slipping the potion to her professor? Now she'd have to make herself scarce to avoid being the first person Trelawney saw through the 'eyes of love'.

To her horror, it was not Filch's bandy-legged gait, but a crisp clop-clop that stopped at the door of the suite before being followed by a polite tap of the knocker. "Oh, whatever can that useless nag want?" Trelawney fretted...and took a gulp of tea before answering the door.

Fortunately for Firenze, he could manage a sufficiently brisk canter to escape the embraces of a suddenly lovesick Trelawney, even within the castle corridors. Unfortunately, he could not move fast enough to escape the high-pitched endearments she trilled at him, and would continue to trill at him, for the next fifteen minutes.

In the ensuing confusion, Lavender was able to Banish the remaining tea and make good her escape. As Filch hobbled his way down the corridor (late) to the now-ruined rendezvous, she realized that the bandy-legged bane of her existence would now know her potion was just effective enough to be identifiable without actually working as it should. She had both confirmed his blackmail over her and rendered the substance useless as a bargaining agent of last resort.

Before he could berate her again, she cut in quickly, "There's one more person I can go to, Mr. Filch! I'll renew all the charms for you on Friday. Please, be at the entrance to the castle this Saturday night...I promise, I can get her there by then!"

Filch narrowed his eyes at her, his hands clutching menacingly. Lavender, hearing the clink of manacles in her mind, shivered.

One day ago...

Lavender was just desperate enough to ask someone else for help. So she went to the only person her age who had the power to do...well, whatever it was that would make her plan work...and spilled the whole sordid story.

"I figured that the only living thing that likes Filch is Mrs. Norris," Lavender babbled frantically, "so I thought that, if you could Transfigure her into a woman, maybe we could convince... her and Filch..."

Hermione's shoulders seemed to deflate as her eyes inflated. She was beginning to resemble Luna, at least in terms of relative proportions of body width versus ocular diameter. "Let me see if I understand you correctly. You created an illegal substance, for which you might be expelled or even face criminal charges. Mr. Filch caught you. You made a bargain with him, to whit, in exchange for becoming his...procurer...he would 'forget' the whole incident. Now, barring servicing him yourself, your only hope is to make me a party to facilitating bestiality?" Her voice had been rising steadily throughout the recital, until the last bit was said in an incredulous squeak. "Why, in the name of Seven Heavens, Nine Hells, and any number of levels of Purgatory, would you imagine for a minute that I would help you do something so...so *obscene*?"

"What's Purgatory?" Lavender asked, puzzled.

"Forget it. You probably think Dante Alighieri is a big Slytherin fifth year," Hermione moaned, cradling her head in her hands.

"No, that's Damien Algernon," Lavender replied, now even more confused. "Please, please, PLEASE, Hermione, I'll do anything! I'll be in here bright and early every morning to do your hair and makeup for the rest of the term, I'll revamp your entire wardrobe, I'll give you free access for life to all my patented Beauty Charms..."

"You have patents?" Hermione asked in disbelief.

"On a Hair Detangling Charm, a Lip Enhancing Enchantment, and a Pore Shrinking Charm," Lavender replied, proudly. "Professor Flitwick helped me apply after I submitted them as N.E.W.T.s projects."

"Oh, God," Hermione said despairingly. "Short of hitting you with '*Petrificus Totalus*' and chucking you out of my room, there'll be no getting rid of you, will there? At least, not until you're tossed out on your ear by a fiendishly chuckling Filch. Don't you realize that's inevitable at this point...considering the 'cure' you invented is so much Minotaur dung?"

"Um, well...I was hoping that maybe he'd be so grateful to have a woman he'd forget about turning me in. Or maybe it would even...work," Lavender whimpered hopefully. "Besides, I sort of feel... almost... sorry for him. You know, after seeing him up close and all. Maybe just a little."

Hermione was about to comment on the utter impropriety of directing compassion towards Filch when she realized that, considering popular opinion of her feelings toward House-elves, even Lavender might be able to come up with the word 'hypocrite.'

"No," she muttered in dismay. It was actually an involuntary expression of shock at realizing that she could almost convince herself to be sorry for Filch. After all, it must be fairly hellish to spend one's entire life around magic...but never hope to use it.

Lavender mistook it for refusal. "If it comes to me being expelled, I'll kill myself and come back to haunt you," she swore melodramatically.

That was a chance Hermione was unwilling to take. After all, it was only the first week in October, which meant she'd be stuck with disembodied Brown as a roommate (at least) for nearly nine months. And there was always the chance that Lavender's insipid, idiotic shade would attempt to trail her for the rest of her natural life, acting as a sort

of omnipresent enchanted mirror, tsking over her wrinkles and gasping in horror at every gray hair. Considering the average duration of a witch's life, that simply didn't bear thinking about.

Finally, she removed a piece of parchment and a quill from her book bag. "I'll do what I can...under the condition that you sign this," she said, quickly writing out a contract of some sort.

Lavender grabbed the quill and signed eagerly.

"You know," Hermione said, glancing from the parchment to Lavender's hopeful face as she tucked the document away securely, "you really should read things before signing them."

And that was how Lavender Brown came to be capturing Mrs. Norris and bringing her before a still very reluctant Hermione Granger.

Yesterday...

"Hercules' arse, she's almost as ugly as Filch," Lavender complained, as she tried to do something with the Transfigured Mrs. Norris' mousy mop of hair and sharp-featured yet spongey-textured face.

"Sssffft off, nssty lissel bint," Mrs. Norris hissed.

Hermione found it profoundly eerie that Mrs. Norris could speak at all. She thought they'd need a charm to simulate speech in the Transfigured cat.

"Well, that's as good as it's going to get," Lavender sighed, stepping back to look at the still gaunt and angry-looking face. "Now, what to make of that dress?"

She was spared that dilemma when the lamppost of a woman pulled a wand from the pocket of her shabby brown shift and transfigured it into a severe-looking tweed robe.

Hermione gaped. "How in the name of..."

"Perfect!" Lavender exclaimed, putting her own wand away. "Come on, Mrs. Norris, we need to be at the front entrance of the castle in twenty minutes so you can meet Mr. Filch."

"Filllchy," she purred and began striding so quickly towards the rendezvous point that Lavender had to run to catch up.

Hermione stared after them a bit longer, then yelped as the spare wand they had obtained to serve as part of Mrs. Norris' disguise leapt from her pocket and went sailing down the hall to the Transfigured cat. Sparing the rapidly receding figures one more disbelieving stare, she hustled off to the library. There were some questions that needed answering.

Argus Filch was there, waiting. His stringy, graying hair was combed into a smooth frame for his gnarled face, slightly less stooped than usual stance, and his ancient suit... pressed, repaired, and free (for the most part) of camphor...made him resemble a butler for a family of pretentious, upper middle-class vampires.

"Mr. Filch, this is..."

Lavender never had to make up a name.

"Dorris," the tweed vision interrupted, her pale, luminous eyes locking with Filch's.

"Argus," he breathed, offering her his arm. Together, they shuffled off in the direction of the dungeons.

Well, here goes nothing, Lavender thought.

Yesterday evening, in Filch's quarters...

"You rrrremind me of someone I loved, many yearrrs ago," she purred, gazing across the table at him with her glowing yellow eyes.

Argus was in love. He had never known a woman to have such an enticing, feline voice, or who could surpass his appetite for fish and chips.

"Shall we have some music, Doris dear?" he asked. Somehow, he correctly interpreted the mewling sound from her throat as an affirmative and made his way over to the aged phonograph in the corner of his musty sitting room.

"My favorrite song," she said mistily.

Some rusty manners learned long ago asserted themselves. "May I have this dance?" Argus asked, giving a passable imitation of a courtly bow.

Doris was a shade taller than he, but it didn't stop them from dancing closer... and closer...

...Until her cheek was rubbing steadily against his temple, and she was softly purring, "Arrgus, my love."

They pulled apart just long enough to gaze into each other's eyes. Then, they leaned towards each other, lips gradually becoming close enough that each was bathed in the other's oily, fishy breath...

With one long, slow stroke, she licked his cheek. With no remaining hesitation, he returned the gesture.

It never occurred to him to wonder why she knew which of the two doors in the suite led to his bedroom.

This morning...

"Doris," Argus murmured. He reached over to the side of the bed and found...

"A wand?" he asked, in disbelief. Under the wand was a note.

'My dearest Argus,

I wish I could stay with you. But your work is too important, and I would distract you if I remained. Please keep this wand and use it as you may have need. Once the war is over, it will be safe for us to leave this castle and make our own way in the world, together. Oh, my Filchy, how I long for that day!

Yours always,

Doris'

Argus pulled the sheet around him and held the wand in his hand, almost as if he feared it would bite. Mrs. Norris had reappeared sometime in the night and was purring happily at the foot of the bed. Her warm yellow eyes fixed on him, narrowing to affectionate slits. It was almost as if she were encouraging him to try to use it.

How did they make lights go on? He focused on the candlestick on the bedside table, feeling a surge of hope. He hopefully quavered the magic word.

Never had there been such a shout of triumph over one reedy flame flickering reluctantly to life.

Lavender trembled at the note that came via a school owl.

"Report to my office, Miss Brown." ~A. Filch

That was all the crabbed writing read, but it might as well have been a death sentence for the way she slowly dragged her feet on the way to the dungeons, head drooping listlessly. As she knocked on the door, she managed to straighten up. If she was going to go down, she'd do it like a Gryffindor...head held high, no whining.

"Mr. Filch," she said a little dully, determined not to plead or show fear.

"Miss Brown," he replied. He stared pointedly at the three vials of Love potion on his desk. Then, he slowly drew his wand from his pocket and pronounced *Evanescio!*

One vial tipped over. One popped, in a fortuitously small splattering of glass shards and pink goop. But one actually disappeared.

Lavender gasped, then clapped her hands in wonder and delight like a small child viewing her first magic show. It was that appreciative response that restrained Filch's embarrassed anger at the only partially effective spell.

"Congratulations, sir," she managed with amazing sincerity. "May I?" she asked and without waiting for him to respond, quickly removed the rest of the evidence.

"You'll see...I'll have it right in no time," he said. His voice was gruff, but not nearly as venomous as usual. "Well, go on with you!" he growled. As Lavender fled the dismal office gratefully, Filch cackled gleefully at the wand in his hand. "Who needs manacles when you've got magic?"

Two days later...

"The Transfiguration just shouldn't have worked that well. It certainly shouldn't have yielded a woman with a wand of her own, ready to do magic...so I did some research. Argus Filch's father was one Eustace Filch, and according to announcements in old editions of *'The Daily Prophet'*, he married a witch named Blithe Bigglesworth. But before that, there was an announcement that he was going to marry a widowed witch...one Mrs. Doris Norris!"

Lavender looked blank. Next to beauty charms and giggling at frequencies that repelled small animals, it was what she did best.

Hermione sighed. She was going to have to connect all the dots herself if Lavender was going to get the picture. "Between the two announcements was a news article on the disappearance of Mrs. Norris. It shows a small photo of her, AND...lists a description of her Animagus form!"

Click... click... click... Ah! Somewhere in that pretty head, a gear caught. "Was she...was her Animagus form a...cat?"

If this is what it's like to teach idiots, it's a wonder Snape was the only one here to go 'round the bend. Hermione thought in exasperation. "Exactly. Since you utterly made up the bit about Squibs and virginity," they both shuddered as they tried to suppress thoughts more vile than Voldemort, "it might explain why the, ah, plan...worked."

"Right. Um, how?" Lavender was still confused.

"Well, this is just a hypothesis...an idea," Hermione clarified. *Polysyllabic utterances don't play well with this audience, remember that.* "Let's suppose Doris Norris and Blithe Bigglesworth were rivals for Eustace's affections. Blithe caught Mrs. Norris as a cat and managed to curse her so that she couldn't return to human form. Either before or after that, Mrs. Norris must have done something that caused Blithe to have only Squibs...or at least, to make it appear so. Maybe changing her back allowed her to fix the problem."

After a few moments' reflection, Lavender said, "If that's true, it's one of the weirdest things I've ever heard of. Well, thanks for all your help, Granger."

"Not so fast, Brown," Hermione said sharply, flicking her wand towards the door to lock it. "You seem to have forgotten the reason you're here this afternoon." She unfolded a slip of parchment meaningfully.

"Oh, yes, that. What was it I'm to do, again?" she asked with trepidation. It occurred to her that not reading the contract before signing it was a piss-poor idea.

"I, Lavender Brown, do solemnly swear to submit to any and all conditions Hermione Jane Granger may choose to impose upon me, in exchange for assisting her in an agreed upon act of Transfiguration. The conditions will be named upon completion of the job, and compliance will commence forthwith. The consequences for non-compliance include, but are not limited to, revelation of such information as could result in expulsion or criminal charges, and subjection to as yet irreversible disfiguring jinxes." Hermione read aloud.

"Disfiguring jinxes?" Lavender squeaked.

"Now that I have your attention," Hermione continued, neatly re-folding the parchment, "here are my conditions. First, you will never again gossip or otherwise say embarrassing or derogatory things about me with any other person. Second, you will dissuade other people from gossiping about me, should they attempt to do so in your presence. Third, you will give me unlimited access to the charms and services you originally offered, free of charge and whenever I may request them, for the rest of my life. Finally, you will stay completely clear of one Mr. Ronald Bilius Weasley, except as a friend, for the foreseeable future."

Lavender felt absolutely giddy with relief that nothing humiliating was being asked of her. She'd rather gone off Ron, anyhow, and lived to do makeovers (Filch excepted...her client had to have potential, at least). The hardest part would be restraining a word of two of idle gossip from dropping now and again.

Just remember the words, 'disfiguring jinxes,' Lavender, dear, she told herself. "Oh, yes...I can do that. But I'm curious about something," she asked hesitantly.

Hermione sighed. "Fire away."

"Why do you want Ron, anyway?"

The calculating expression on the bushy-haired Head Girl's face reminded Lavender that Hermione Granger was, indeed, female. "Oh, assorted reasons. We're friends, which makes everything else follow much more easily. He really is a decent chap, deep down. Weasleys are notorious for fidelity once they settle down; I won't have to worry about him turning up in some other witch's bed. He's rough around the edges and all, but he can be trained. I suppose that's a good bit of it. He's trainable.

"And as for intelligence... most of his academic problems stem from sheer idleness. I'd always have to be maneuvering around a man as bright as I am, assuming I could find one, and I frankly don't need the bother. He's bright enough to have the odd intelligent conversation, when we can agree to keep Quidditch and academic esoterica off the table.

"With Ron, I'll always have my space, and still have a nice warm man in my bed. Not to mention he's hung like a Hippogriff."

"Wow. That's... that's sort of mercenary. I think I might begin to like you."

"Don't put yourself out. I'll settle for you keeping your end of the bargain."

"Done. I'm not sure what we'd talk about if we were friends, anyway."

"Certainly not Dante."

"I told you, his name is Damien."

Hermione just squeezed her eyes shut and waved Lavender out of her room.

Filch still studied odd dandruff flakes now and again. But collecting them was now out of the question. After all, that was a pastime for losers. He'd be out of here by the end of the year at the latest, seeing as how the troublemaking little prat Potter finally seemed to be getting off his arse and doing some serious Death Eater exterminating. And the lovely Doris would be waiting for him, he just knew it.

"I've got my magic, my lovely," he said to Mrs. Norris in a gravelly whine that was probably meant to sound like a purr. He happily flicked his wand at the lamp in his now cleaner and brighter office, turning it on and off for the fun of it. "No one gets to call Argus Filch a loser anymore."

Mrs. Norris purred more lovingly than usual and curled around his legs.

Author's Note:

I am truly, deeply, sorry.

You want to read explicit Filch sex, feel free to write it yourself. I hereby renounce any further connection to the fishy wanker and pussikins.

The good news is, it's all over!