

What Makes Nundu Spots?

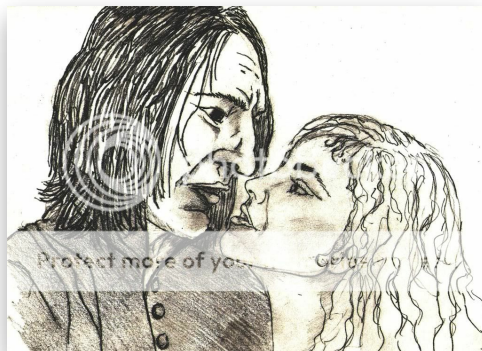
by beaweasley2

When a cauldron explodes during one of Professor Snape's N.E.W.T. level Potions classes, he is covered in the mess while trying to protect the dunderhead student who did it. Unable to determine what caused the potion to explode, and realizing he'd had a rather strange reaction he simply could not reverse, Severus rushed to St Mungo's. However, he's not at all thrilled with what Healer Granger has to say about the side effects.... What were the side effects of the potion? You'll never guess...

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Chapter 1 of 1

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A Moment Before A Kiss

~o0o~

"I realize that you don't want to be purple, but it will take a month for the color to fade from your skin and possibly forty-five to fifty days for the spots to fade."

He'd been pacing the room, listening to her prognosis. "A bloody month!" he yelled, coming to a sudden stop, facing her.

Knowing her patient as well as she did, Healer Granger tried to keep her face serene and as professional as possible, without showing any outward notion of the sympathy she held for him at his predicament. "Actually, about month and a half; the lavender color should fade within a month. However, the dark, purplish color seems to have tattooed itself into your skin, and as far as I can tell, it's penetrated down to your dermis," she tried to explain.

"My what?" Professor Snape snapped irritably.

"Through to the second layer of your skin," she explained, ignoring the tone of his voice.

"You're telling me it's like one of those Muggle tattoos?" he asked in total disbelief.

"No," Hermione said with the calm voice of reason.

He crossed his arms as if expecting a different answer and glowered at her.

"Muggle tattoos use ink and dyes. We're able to remove the tattoos by simply drawing the Muggle inks and dyes out magically. Whenever drunken wizards stumble into Muggle tattoo parlors and then want 'I love Lucy' removed, it's just a simple potion, a quick charm and an ice cold shower. This," she said with little wave of her hand, indicating his body, "is quite different."

"*I LOOK LIKE A BLOODY PURPLE NUNDU!*" he bellowed.

"It's only a few spots, Severus." Hermione leaned against the counter in the examining room, crossing her arms.

"They are all over my body! Minerva said they look like Nundu rosettes. *Bloody rosettes!*" he said with a sweep of his hand down his chest and abdomen. "I am covered head to foot in these – these – purple rosettes!" He stood up and then leaned back against the examining table. "You're telling me that I have to look like this for a month and a half?" he asked in a calm rational voice that belied the dangerously dark glare in his eyes. His eyes shifted to stare at the wall behind Hermione's head.

She knew this calm and noticed the tic in his cheek as he clenched his teeth. She took a breath before answering. "You brought me every sample of the potion you could and all the other potion samples from your seventh-year Potions class – and we have examined each one. You said the potion was fine up until the second half of class – so we do know at what stage the mistake was made. We've gone over every variable – every variation to the potion you and I can think of. Although, I do think it's admirable that you placed yourself *directly* in front of the cauldron in order to protect the dunderhead who did this."

"Rennet Goyle," he snorted in derision at her sarcastic compliment. "And I was trying to determine why the color was changing so rapidly. When it suddenly began to froth and spew, I pulled her out of the way and told everyone else to back up."

"Well, unless we can figure out what Rennet Goyle put in her potion, I'm afraid that you will just have to wait it out," she said, turning her gaze to the six cauldrons, thirty-nine glass tubes, twenty-seven small dishes and eighteen vials, none of which indicated which ingredient his student accidentally dropped into her cauldron. "We've been trying to determine this elusive ingredient for two days straight. *And* you said that nothing is remiss or missing from either the N.E.W.T. Potions cupboard, the general school cupboard, or your own private stores... I'm at a loss."

He stopped pacing, leaned against the examining table, crossed his arms and glared at her. However, in his red satin boxers, the effect wasn't quite the same as he had hoped. "So, what you mean to tell me, wife, is that I am going to stay this way?"

"Even with the Skin-Regeneration Elixir, it takes forty-five to fifty days, Severus. So, unless you *want* to peel like a snake every three to four days for the next six to seven weeks, I'm afraid the answer is yes."

He exhaled slowly, his dark eyes narrowing into a furious scowl.

"At least Christmas holiday starts the end of the week," Hermione said, hoping to console his anger. "I'm more than happy to write a dismissal from teaching for the week, and by start of term the spots should have faded enough to use a Concealment Charm – hopefully."

"Hopefully?" Professor Snape inhaled deeply and clenched his teeth, turning his head toward the potion implements on the counter. His anger radiated from him in waves, absolutely tangible from where Hermione stood across the room, watching him. "Humph," he exhaled sharply.

"Besides, husband, I rather like it."

He shot her a livid glare that, nine years ago, would have made her cower in fear.

"I like cats – especially big cats – remember? And right now you look like a big, fierce leopard to me. I can hardly wait to get you home and let you pounce," she said, her soft brown eyes alight with mischief, returned his fierce glare with confidence.

He closed the gap between them in three quick steps, grabbing Hermione by the waist, crushing her into the counter with his body. "Careful what you ask for, witch. You just might get it."

Author's Notes:

The prompt read: A cauldron explodes during one of Professor Snape's Advanced Potions classes. Snape is covered in the mess while protecting the dunderhead who did it. He is rushed to St Mungo's where Healer Granger is on duty. What are the side effects of the potion?

I want to thank my betas: Ladyinthecloak and Machshefa for helping me with this story and making it fit for sharing. You ladies were great!

This story and the picture were on of my gifts for Shadow_ks in the SS/HG gift exchange. I was thrilled that she liked them so I thought I'd share them with you.