

# Snape Rules!

## NT/SS

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## Drowning in Ice Water

A/N: "Dancing Queen" in dedication to Minx and her "Unexpected Performances"

### 14. Drowning in Ice Water

Some what around 8 o'clock on that Saturday (many, many hours after Hermione had woken them), Ron finally registered that he had to work out The Plan. He couldn't quite tell how it came that he had to do the strategy (his foggy mind refused to tell) but he suspected that Hermione had something to do with it. Damn her and her powers of persuasion. Now, in broad daylight, Ron couldn't go back on his word. Damn Gryffindor credo. He drowned his consternation (carelessly) in pumpkin juice, but didn't realize that he'd grown whiskers until Harry pointed it out at lunch.

Ron spent the morning at the least likely place for him: no, not Myrtle's bathroom, but the Library. The countless shelves and tons of books were intimidating, and Ron was always a bit lost without Hermione's guidance.

The redhead snatched a few books ("Clearvoyance for Beginners - I spy with my Inner Eye", "Brewing Potions in Sleep" and "Charming Charms - How to leave the best first impression") just for pretence, and settled down at a small table in the back. Armed with a fresh scroll of parchment and a sharp quill, Ron was ready - well, as ready as one could get to plan one's Potions master's sudden cold.

Nymphadora Tonks held the small bright red envelope in her hand, took a quick sniff, and then sprayed a bit more of her favourite perfume ("Palpable Passions") onto it. Putting the letter onto the already towering stack of similar envelopes, Tonks sighed contentedly. Despite the fact that her right hand ached due to endless writing, she felt better than ever before. Nobody could resist this onslaught of love letters. And even if the postage for all the mail owls ruined her, Tonks was determined; and she'd die poor but happy.

After four hours of weighing every option, Ron (now without his whiskers; though Hermione said they looked cute) had come up with the ultimate Plan. Ron was proud of himself (and said so at every opportunity); Hermione was grateful and relieved; Harry ... was neither. He wasn't too happy with his part (and said so at every

opportunity), but Hermione wouldn't let him out of his promise. There was nothing he could do (and he'd do anything, mind you). How could Ron be so cruel? Okay, it had been Harry's idea, but that didn't justify Ron's personal little revenge expedition.

"Harry, you're exaggerating," Hermione said calmly. "We don't hate you and Fortuna hasn't left you." She'd never been with him in the first place. "This is just your part in the operation, and I suggest you start with the necessary preparations."

"Nooooo," Harry wailed. "Please, don't make me do this! Anything- everything else! Merlin, I swear I'll do whatever you want; just don't make me do this!" He'd long ago broken out in a cold sweat.

"No," Hermione growled lowly, and Ron smirked. "If you want this to work out, you'll have to do your part, understood?"

"He's going to be sooo mad at me!"

"What's new there?" Ron asked. "He already hates you and us alike."

"Should this have any soothing effect?" Harry asked sarcastically. "Yes, I'm already feeling tremendously better."

"Don't worry so much," Hermione said, giving Harry one of her looks. "Snape won't remember anything after you Obliviated him. There shouldn't be any problems."

"Come on! Why can't I first Oblivate him? It'd be so much easier if he were bewildered from the charm while I ..."

"Harry," Hermione said sharply. "Pull yourself together, man!" the boys' eyes widened at Hermione's vulgar speech, "We don't know what kind of effect the Obliviation Charm has on one's immune system. We can't risk anything here! And now stop whining and take a cold bath!"

Harry nodded in defeat and headed to the bathroom. Icy shivers ran up and down his spine in silent dread of the next encounter with the Potions master.

Said Potions master currently drowned in a mountain of multi-coloured love letters. It was his idea of Hell on Earth; shortly followed by being forced to sing "Dancing Queen" with Lucius Malfoy in duet.

As the thick cloud of perfume finally cleared a bit, Severus coughed and tried to fill his lungs with much needed oxygen. Then he choked, as one of the letters suddenly leapt into the air, did a kind of dance and started to sing its message.

"Sweets for my sweet, sugar for my honey ..."

God; how he hated Muggle music.

Harry's teeth still chattered with cold as he reminisced his bath earlier - then, he

sneezed. There was no one around to tell him, "Bless you!" but he didn't blame his friends. He wouldn't be there either, if he had the chance.

'No,' he thought resolutely and sneezed twice. 'I won't get into that again. I am the boy who defeated Voldemort ... nothing can stop me!' The funny thing was, he really believed it.

The hallways were cold and clammy, and Harry hurriedly made his way to the lowest ground of the dungeons. It was spooky, and Harry was forcefully reminded of Count Dracula's bloody Crypt. He shuddered (then sneezed some more) and inched closer to the cobra's den. The closer he got, the more doubts bothered Harry. What if he couldn't ... do it on command? What if his mind was willing but his body was not? Wouldn't that be embarrassing? Or what if he couldn't find Snape?

Harry heard faint footsteps. Well, that problem should be solved. The boy sniffed the air and did a double-take. Snape drew nearer, his prominent robe billowing forebodingly, and a persistent odour wafting around him. Merlin, Snape reeked as if he'd fallen head-first into a cauldron full of perfume! Were teachers really that underpaid that Snape had to start a second career as perfume brewer? Or was this all a really weird coincidence? Or-

"Potter!" snarled Snape, the scowl which accompanied this word already plastered firmly on his face. "What are you doing down in the dungeons? This close to curfew, no less?"

"I, uh ..." Merlin, what if Snape already had a girlfriend - however unlikely that may be - who had bathed Snape for the first time in unknown years? She might have overdone it a bit but it should always be the thought that counted. Harry had to blow off the whole thing immediately in that case. His conscience wouldn't allow him to interfere in Snape's possibly already established relationship. Bye-bye to their utopian fantasies. If Snape was still this cranky when being already together with someone, playing matchmaker wouldn't have changed anything, in any case. "I was just-" Harry struggled for words, looking for the nearest staircase, as the perfume stench slowly became too much. He knew it was a fight he couldn't win.

"With this swiftness you will not make it back to your dorm on time, Potter," Snape said, eyes glistening maliciously. A bit of Potter-stalling (Potter-baiting included) promised a few nice points off Gryffindor. Harry supposed that was - besides the newly acquired bathing in perfume - Snape's favourite leisure time activity.

"Achoo!" Harry knew he had won against Voldemort. That didn't mean he was invincible, though. Against his natural bodily functions, even the Boy-Who-Lived was powerless. The itch was gone. The horror, however, hadn't even begun.

"POTTER!" roared Snape, spittle flying in various directions.

Harry gulped, nervously fingering for his wand. This was exactly what he'd been dreading. Ingenious plan, indeed. Sneeze on Snape and spread your germs. The germs were spread and Harry couldn't help wondering whether Ron and Hermione cared if

he didn't make it to the final step of Plan B. His part was over, after all.

"Just let me-" Harry started, pulling his wand free.

"Don't you dare move!" snarled Snape ferociously. "200 points off Gryffindor for this insolence and detention with Filch till Christmas!"

"- Oblivate you," Harry finished quickly and hexed the Potions master. Harry frowned. Now what? Snape was gaga from the charm, his slight sniffles already in his system (Harry had still to thank Hermione for her tip with the highly contagious medical test bills - after he took his freezing bath). The added bonus of not having to attend his detentions left Harry grinning. The memory of the 200 point deduction let that grin freeze in place. However should he explain that?

"Well, Professor," Harry said hesitantly, fearing the spell hadn't worked correctly and could bring Snape back to his mind too soon. Thinking quickly, he went on, "Your girlfriend-"

"No girlfriend," Snape muttered.

Harry blinked. He hadn't known the Obliviation Spell worked as a kind of Truth Spell, as well. He quickly considered asking Snape about the overuse of perfume, but decided against it. No need to know what kind of kinks the old bat was into. Now, Harry could at least follow the plan. "You just realized you're coming down with a cold. You are heading to the Infirmary to get your potion, because Peeves destroyed your store."

As if on cue, Snape sneezed - but had at least the decency to hold a hand in front of his beaky nose. Harry really didn't want to know what would have happened otherwise.