

# **And So They Rambled**

**By InvdrDana**

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*Gift fic for a friend on dA. It's the story of the century and Doug wants to get to the bottom of it. Unfortunately, his interviewees would much rather drive him insane.*

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# 1 - And So They Rambled

## And So They Rambled

By Christina Price

The reporter tapped his pen on the clipboard that was precariously perched on his knee. He rubbed his temples and sighed. In the back of his mind, he considered jumping out of the window behind him. It would be a quick death and nobody would blame him. But no, he had to carry on; he had to be the one that would get this story out...only then could he jump out of as many windows as he pleased. Of course, his interviewees hadn't the faintest idea of his inner thoughts, so he decided to finally bring his head up and look at them again.

Sarah Reed was in the center, a birthday hat strapped on her head; Harry Potter and Voldemort were sitting in a chair to the left of her, both wound together by a rope...apparently, when the authorities had un-gagged the two of them, they forgot to untie the rope; Zim sat on the right with a confused look on his face as he tried to recall another time similar events had happened to him. There were even the same number of people involved, but he just couldn't place it.

Doug frowned. "So...let's just start over since none of your stories match up...again," he groaned. The others blinked back. Doug looked at his notes as he said, "Okay, all the stories start with Sarah getting ready for her birthday and end in so many different ways that I can't remember half of them. Sarah, please tell me what you were doing the day before your birthday." Sarah smiled as if it was her first time telling it. "Well, I was-"

"Hey, how come she always gets to start??" Zim demanded, completely cutting her off. Doug turned his head slowly to Zim. "Because," he explained. "I said so." Zim growled. "That is no answer for ZIM! I wanna' start!" Harry glared at Doug. "If he gets to go first this time, then I want to next time!" He whined. Voldemort in turn glared at Harry. A vein was throbbing on his neck. "Silence boy! If I had my wand, I would 'Avada Kedavra' you so bad that you wouldn't be able to talk at all!" "Oh, I'm sooo scared!" Harry mocked him, laughing afterward. "Only ZIM can demand silence!" Then Zim and Voldemort went into a spat about who was more evil and which one would get to kill Harry first, despite the fact that he wasn't Zim's enemy.

Doug let the debate continue for another five minutes before slamming his clipboard on the table. "I've had enough of this!" He yelled, causing the arguing to cease immediately. "Now, Zim is going to start, as irrelevant as that will be, and all of you will listen. Harry, you can go after him. Seriously people, none of you were involved in any way whatsoever with Sarah the day before her birthday, so it really shouldn't matter who goes first...sheesh," He explained, his shoulders sagging in frustration. The others mumbled in agreement. Then Zim spoke.

"Yesterday was just like any other pathetic day. I was in that hideous classroom, attempting to make plans and pay attention to the Bitters Lady at the same time. Unfortunately, the Dib-beast was making

that quite difficult as he kept throwing small objects at me! I will get revenge...and sweet revenge will be mine...because I AM ZIM!" He paused to see their reactions, and was disappointed that Doug wasn't writing all this down. "Eh...so anyway, I was in my lab after school when that awful excuse for a robot came in and started bothering me. I shoed him away and eventually came up with a plan for revenge. Then I forgot what it was and got some snacks instead. That's when I realized I was forgetting something," he said.

"The revenge plan?" Doug asked dully. Zim scratched his head. "What plan?" He replied, genuinely befuddled. Doug sighed. "The one you were just-oh nevermind. Just...keep going," he said, deciding it wasn't worth it. Zim waited a few seconds before answering. "I still don't know what you're talking about, but whatever. No, I had a feeling that there was something I had to do for someone the next day, but I didn't know what."

"Me too," Harry chirped. "I mean, I just knew I had to be somewhere the next day to celebrate something with someone, but I couldn't figure out what, and Hermione thought I was being stupid, so I just forgot about it."

Voldemort looked up. It seemed as if he was waking from a nap. "So did I. Of course, I now believe that I was just feeling the thoughts that Potter was thinking," he said, sounding somewhat awkward. "I told you to stop doing that!" Harry scolded him. "Don't tell me what to do or I'll..." Voldemort trailed off. "You'll what? You still don't have your wand," Harry smirked. "Just you wait, Potter. If you're not careful, I'll make you indirectly kill your friend Sirius," he snapped, the slightest trickle of foreshadowing in his voice. "I'll never kill Sirius, you idiot! You'll have to think again!" Harry roared. "You do realize I said 'indirectly', right? So who's the idiot now?" Voldemort sneered. Harry shut his mouth.

Ignoring the nonsensical parts of it, Doug saw a faint ray of hope in the dark void. "Now we're finally getting somewhere! Okay, so all three of you felt as if you needed to do something today, but couldn't figure out what exactly. And when Harry mentioned celebrating with someone, I thought of Sarah. Did any of you know that today is her birthday?" He asked, getting excited.

Harry, Voldemort, and Zim looked at each other, then to Sarah (who was smiling), and back at Doug. "No," they all declared with blank expressions. "I didn't even know who she was before all this happened," Harry said. "I still don't know who she is," Zim responded. "I just know that that Muggle girl was insane enough to stand up to me, steal my wand, and tie me up with none other than rope...rope I say!" Voldemort exclaimed, volunteering information for the first time that day. Harry rolled his eyes. "Don't act so dramatic. She did it to me too, and I'm the Chosen One, which means that I'm destined to destroy you forever so you can never come back to life no matter what in any way possible ever so there!" Harry said all at once. Voldemort was too dignified to acknowledge that with a response. He simply shook his head and sighed.

If the three of them stopped rambling long ago, Doug would have been at his condominium by now, relaxing in the new hot tub he recently had installed. Instead, he was here, dealing with crazy people. Whether he got this story or not didn't matter anymore; he just wanted to go home, feed Whiskers and Mittens, and go to sleep on his Tempur-Pedic® bed with built-in massagers. He stood up at long last, stretched his arms, and proceeded to put on his jacket. "I think I've got all the information I need. You guys can do whatever it is that you do when I'm gone." Doug said brightly. "You can beat each other up, yell, break stuff...I don't care! Just don't come bothering me," he smiled.

“Aren’t you going to tell us what you think happened?” Zim asked. The others gazed at Doug intently, waiting for some kind of closure. Doug took his time zipping up his jacket. When he was done, he said, “Seeing as only one of you isn’t a work of fiction, I have the craziest idea that Sarah found a way to break through the fabric of time and reality so she could have some of her favorite characters come to her birthday party. And in doing that, she caused several side effects including that whole fiasco in the city to take place, which you three were blamed for. Of course, that’s only a guess, so I could be completely off my rocker, which would make sense after today’s events. Well, I’d better be going now. Good evening,” Doug said, tipping his hat in farewell. Then he promptly exited from the office and out of the building, whistling cheerfully all the way.

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When realization settled in that Doug wasn’t coming back, Harry, Voldemort, and Zim turned to look at Sarah, but were surprised to see that the center chair...was empty.

Fin

Christina Price, Age 20, 8/4/09, Tuesday, 4:30 A.M.

[Disclaimer: Sarah belongs to a friend on dA. Zim belongs to Jhonen Vasquez. Harry Potter and friends belong to J.K. Rowling. Doug belongs to me.]