

Chapter 2

Chapter Notes

Thank you all for your kind words and enthusiasm! I'm so glad that so many of you who were reading the fic the first time around have found your way back :) And welcome to the newbies, too! I'm so excited to finally share this whole thing with you all.

Harry left Gringotts with his purse weighed down with gold, and his head weighed down with thoughts. He glanced at his watch, and his eyebrows rose — he'd only been in there for a little over an hour. It felt like a lifetime, it had changed so much.

Buying the wand holster was now the last thing on his mind. Instead, Harry made straight for Flourish and Blotts. He'd already spent half a day wandering the shelves, learning the many varieties of books available inside — no longer just going straight to the shelf for Hogwarts students and never venturing further. Familiar with the shop's layout, Harry found his way to the shelves full of books on wizarding history and culture.

A smirk tugged at his lips as he thought about what Hermione might say if she saw him buying books of his own free will. That smirk faded, however, when he thought of Ron's expression at the sight of the books themselves — titles like *'The History of the Wizengamot'* and *'Inheritance Magic Explained'*.

His eyes scanned the shelves, looking at the other people in there purchasing books. Perhaps it wasn't the best idea for Harry Potter to be seen buying books about pureblood culture.

Harry was about to start putting the books away, when his gaze caught on the bright paper of the bag from Gambol and Japes — of course! He'd almost forgotten about his purchases there, he'd had so much on his mind since then. He rifled through the bag until he found what he was looking for; small, egg-like capsules that promised a cunning disguise for up to thirty minutes. Supposed to be used to avoid being caught setting a prank, but Harry had bought some for the days when he wanted to go outside without being Harry Potter, with all that entailed.

He hid behind a deserted shelf and split one of the capsules over his head, feeling the magic run down him as if he had indeed just cracked an egg in his hair. Glancing at himself in the window, he grinned; staring back was a pale boy with straw-blond hair and dark brown eyes, his square face nothing like Harry's own. A shift of his fringe made him grimace when he saw his scar was still there, but luckily the disguise's hair was long enough to cover it. It would be enough.

Now on a time limit, Harry raced through the bookshop, tossing titles into his basket whenever they appealed to him. He didn't want to look too suspicious by just getting a stack