

Chapter 68

Chapter Notes

I hope this is worth the weekend wait ;)

Despite having gotten rid of Dumbledore over the matter, Umbridge was not remotely satisfied with leaving Harry and his friends well enough alone. Every time Harry snuck past the entrance to the Room of Requirement — always under his invisibility cloak — there was at least one member of the Inquisitorial Squad waiting outside it.

She knew Harry wouldn't give up so easily, and she was determined to catch him in the act. Every day in classes and at meals and between lessons, Harry found himself on the receiving end of a dozen intent looks; all HA members wondering if this was it, if they were finally finished. Harry merely shook his head slightly, and carried on. He would find a way.

With all of them under such close scrutiny, the heirs couldn't meet either. This was mostly fine, as they had only been studying the last few times, but it was still annoying to have his social groups so limited by Umbridge's bug-eyed ever-present stare.

But Harry wouldn't let it stop him. He knew far more secrets within Hogwarts than Dolores Umbridge could *dream* of knowing.

"I won't tell anyone about the office," Harry hissed in promise — even though Salazar had admitted to speaking fluent modern English, he still insisted they converse in Parseltongue. *"But unless you know of any better ideas for a space big enough for fifty-six people to cast spells without getting caught, the Chamber is my best option."*

Salazar, to Harry's surprise, gave a hard smirk, his eyes glinting. *"Harry, lad; the four of us built Hogwarts to rebel against a form of government that wanted magic to remain secret, taught only between master and apprentice,"* he pointed out. *"Rebelling against the government is what we're all about! Of course you can bring your friends down here, as long as they do not leave the main Chamber itself. They cannot explore without you, after all."*

He was right; Harry had long ago closed the gaping mouth of the statue of Salazar Slytherin, and he knew the hissed command that would lock down every exit in the main room. There were no other Parselmouths in the school to go against him.

He beamed up at the founder. *"Brilliant."*

The next evening, after his detention with Umbridge, Harry went up to his dorm and reached into his bedside drawer for a particular inkwell. A few quiet questions had enlightened him to