

want me to do yours as well? I can get them done tonight.”

“It’s fine, thanks, Mrs Weasley,” Harry assured. Ceri had taken care of all his clothes before he’d left, including his robes and his new cloak.

“Mum, you’ve given me Ginny’s new dress,” Ron said, holding out the offending garment.

Mrs Weasley confirmed that they were indeed Ron’s dress robes, and Harry was torn between laughter and sympathy at the look on the redhead’s face. “I had to get them second-hand, there wasn’t a lot of choice,” she snapped, flushing.

“I’m not wearing them!” Ron insisted hotly. “I’d rather go starkers.”

“Fine. Harry, make sure you get a picture; I could do with a good laugh.” Mrs Weasley stormed out of the room, slamming the door behind her. Ron threw the dress robes at his open trunk, making an angry noise.

Harry left him to sulk, slipping out of the room and heading downstairs to see what the twins were up to. “What’s going on upstairs, then?” Fred asked as Harry shut the door behind him. Harry grimaced.

“Ron just found his new dress robes. They’re... not pretty.” He glanced over at the wardrobe, where two sets of dress robes that had to belong to the twins were hanging, ready to be packed. They were clearly second-hand, but still nicer than Ron’s. Both in similar shades of dark purple, one with silver embroidery around the cuffs and hem, the other with bronze piping around the edge. Not a scrap of lace in sight.

“Poor Ronnikins,” George mock-sighed, shaking his head. “So hard done by. He should’ve sucked up his pride and agreed to borrow Bill’s old dress robes, like Mum offered before you got here. He said they were too *girly*.”

“They had a little bit of pink on them,” Fred elaborated, rolling his eyes. “Pretty snazzy otherwise, if you ask me. I’d have worn them if Bill wasn’t so bloody tall.”

Harry snickered; maybe Mrs Weasley had bought the frilly robes on purpose, after all.

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It was pouring down with rain the morning they had to catch the Hogwarts Express. As they waited in the hallway for the taxis Mrs Weasley had arranged, Harry glanced at the fleet of enormous Hogwarts trunks stacked by the door. “Mrs Weasley,” he piped up tentatively. “Should we maybe use shrinking charms on the trunks? Muggle taxis might not have enough space for all this.” It would be bad enough travelling with Pig and Crookshanks — Hedwig was off delivering a letter to Gorrak, under the guise of Harry writing to Sirius. Mrs Weasley, already flustered from her husband’s unexpected disappearance to deal with Mad-Eye Moody, looked up with a worried expression on her face.

“Harry’s probably right,” Bill agreed, pulling his wand from his jacket pocket. In short order, he and Charlie had the trunks shrunk, and they ended up in Mrs Weasley’s enormous