

“Good thing there’s only two new books,” Harry agreed, scanning his list for the coming year. Ginny huffed.

“Speak for yourself. I’m lucky I can have George’s old books — Diagon’s gonna be a nightmare.”

Harry grimaced. “Are we going to owl-order, or...?”

“Mum’s gonna pop out and grab everything, once we’ve figured out what we all need. So I guess you’ll be owl-ordering.” Her brown eyes were knowing — she was fully aware of her mother’s forays into Harry’s vault, and the security measures put in place to stop that. Harry’s stomach clenched; no one had noticed anything amiss, yet. Hopefully Gringotts could keep her out without putting suspicion on Harry.

Ginny was eyeing the envelope in his hand expectantly, and Harry peered at it — just the two pieces of parchment, as always. “What?” he asked her, baffled.

“Oh, nothing. I was just expecting— well, fifth year, innit? Prefect badges?”

“Oh yeah.” That had completely slipped Harry’s mind. “You think Nev, maybe?”

Ginny brightened, “I hope so. His gran would be dead pleased.”

Harry hoped so, too; Neville would make a great prefect. It might encourage him out of his shell a bit more, too.

There was a high-pitched shriek from downstairs, closely followed by Mrs Black spitting profanities from her portrait. Harry and Ginny shared a knowing look. “Hermione?”

“Hermione,” Ginny agreed.

There was no way the female Gryffindor prefect wasn’t her. “Merlin help us,” Harry muttered under his breath, making the redhead giggle. The last thing Hermione needed was the illusion of authority.

Deciding to get it over with, the pair headed downstairs to find Harry’s year mates — sure enough, Hermione was holding a shiny prefect’s badge like it was the most precious thing in the world.

The surprise was the matching badge in Ron’s hand.

“No way,” Ginny murmured. Then, louder; “Ron, you’re a *prefect*?” She said the word like one might say *fungus* or *pus-filled boil*. Her brother glared at her.

“What’s that supposed to mean? Yeah, I’m a prefect.” He squared his jaw in challenge, eyes flicking smugly towards Harry.

“What?” Mrs Weasley had chosen that exact moment to come by, carrying a pile of laundry. Ron looked up, and showed his mother the badge. “Oh! Oh, my! Ronnie!”