

Unlike most wizards, he was perfectly comfortable navigating the muggle world. And he was long, long overdue some time there.

.-.-.-.

It was almost insultingly easy to sneak out into muggle London using his invisibility cloak, ducking into a public toilet to take the cloak off and stuff it in his new bag. From there he walked to the nearest tube station, his heart thudding with adrenaline at his blatant breaking of rules, and bought a travel card for the day. He glanced at the tube map, checking his journey, and stepped confidently through the barriers to join the flow of people going about their day. No one looked twice at him. No one did a double-take at his forehead, or whispered about him from several feet away, or did any of the other things he'd gotten used to in the wizarding world. It was refreshing, to say the least.

When Harry was next above ground, it was to step right into the hustle and bustle of Oxford Street. It was all a little overwhelming, and he took a deep breath to calm himself, remembering his plan. This was likely the only chance he'd get to do this — he had to make it count.

Harry looked up at all the shops, bearing names he recognised from the Dursleys' clothing, and he smiled. He could do this.

.-.-.-.

Four hours later found Harry sat outside a cafe in Covent Garden, drinking a chocolate milkshake, not a trace of his earlier anxiety in his body.

It turned out, he *liked* shopping. Once he got the hang of it, of course.

Figuring out what sort of clothes he wanted to wear — given entirely free rein, no restrictions, no outside influence — had taken him a little time, but once he started to find things that made him happy, he was off. In London, no one questioned a thirteen year-old boy by himself with seemingly endless amounts of cash. No one questioned anything in London.

He was down to his last thirty pounds, which surprised him; he hadn't expected to get quite so carried away. But he couldn't help himself once he started. Years of living in hand-me-downs had him yearning for a full wardrobe of his own choosing, his own style. He knew he'd grow out of it all sooner rather than later — if he ever actually got around to having that growth spurt — but that's what spells were for. Besides, there was plenty more money in his vault.

If he didn't get back to the Leaky Cauldron soon, Tom would start wondering where he was, so Harry finished off his milkshake, shouldered his bag and set off back to the tube station. He made a mental note to give Farlig some kind of present or reward for the tip about the bag; he dreaded to think what it would be like trying to sneak back into the Leaky carrying his purchases the muggle way.

Thanks to his invisibility cloak, Harry easily made it back up to his room with none the wiser, and there he emptied all his purchases onto the bed, staring round-eyed at his new clothes.