

One Last Jaunt For Old Times' Sake

by guiltysecret79

Harry, Ron and the Invisibility Cloak have one last outing.

Oneshot

Chapter 1 of 1

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A/N: I offer up thanks to my lovely Beta reader IrishEspressoGirl who found all my lost commas and poked them back into place.

It was definitely more crowded under the Invisibility Cloak than Ron remembered.

"Remind me again, Harry. Why are we here?" he whispered. "You know, creeping around Hogwarts when we're supposed to be taking Neville out for a belated birthday drink?"

Harry shifted uncomfortably and cleared his throat. "Because I need to check something out," he muttered.

Frustrated by his friend's non-answer, Ron tugged nervously at the cloak, trying to ensure that no suspicious, disembodied feet would give them away.

"Well, when you said 'help me check something out,' I assumed you meant borrowing a key to the library or visiting Dumbledore's portrait or something. It didn't cross my mind that you were planning on doing a little light breaking and entering," he grumbled as they shuffled awkwardly along the familiar corridors of Hogwarts.

"Borrow a key to the library? You've been married to Hermione for too long, Ron."

Harry sounded too amused by half for Ron's liking. His mouth fell open in indignation, then snapped shut at the thought of his wife's reaction should she ever hear about this little outing. After a moment of quiet dread, he recovered enough to try to reason with his reckless friend.

"Well, there's the thing, Harry. I'm Mr. Ronald Weasley, father and respectable junior Auror these days, not Ron Weasley, Gryffindor class clown," he began, trying to look as dignified as was possible for a lanky young man crouching under a too-small Invisibility Cloak. It was not an unqualified success.

Harry muttered something to the gargoyle which sounded suspiciously like 'powdered Skrewt bone,' and the door swung open to reveal the staircase to the headmaster's office. Despite his misgivings, Ron had no choice but to follow Harry up the stairs with a crab-like gait – it was either that or mysteriously appear in the open doorway to the Headmaster's private office in front of a wall full of gossiping portraits. He had a feeling that Hermione would hear about that in about thirty seconds flat, and no matter what he thought of the current Headmaster, he was definitely more scared of his own wife. Yes. Definitely.

It seemed that Harry knew exactly where to find the target of their adventure, for he moved purposefully over to the desk and shoved a huge book into Ron's hands.

"Just hold this for me, yeah?" he said, already starting to flip through it.

The ledger was heavier than Ron expected, and his arms were aching by the time Harry had finished fanning through the pages. He was greatly relieved when, with a final chuckle, Harry hefted the book into his own arms.

"Take a look at this," he said, gesturing at the page. It wasn't easy to read in the dim light under the cloak, but the elegant calligraphic script across the top of the page declared the list of names below '*Hogwarts Intake 2017*'. Ron scanned the page, at a loss as to why Harry was so interested in his infant daughter's future classmates.

"Ruddy hell, Harry, the only funny thing I can see on that page is proof that Malfoy is in fact male, not the girl I'd always thought. Unless, of course, he's been on the receiving end of some highly experimental magic." Ron shuddered. "Actually, mate, would you mind obliterating me? That's not a train of thought I want to continue with."

Before Harry had a chance to respond, there was a creak from below and brisk footsteps advanced upon the stairs. They continued without faltering, steadily and unerringly before coming to an abrupt halt directly behind the two hapless spies. Ron felt the unmistakable slide of cloth over his head. Hands grasped uselessly at the traitorous garment, but with a terrible inevitability, the Invisibility Cloak was whipped away. Green eyes met blue in a shared look of abject horror, and the ancient tome fell to the floor with an accusing thud. Ron closed his eyes, fervently hoping for a quick death. He could not suppress the whimper which escaped his throat, a sound usually reserved for only the largest of spiders. Still half crouching, he slowly turned to face their captor and experimentally opened one eye.

Black.

This was not good.

He closed the eye again. That was better. With his eyes closed he could pretend that this whole disaster wasn't real.

Unfortunately, it seemed that reality had other ideas. A voice, which inexplicably featured in more of his nightmares than that of Lord Snake-Face the Deceased, pierced the rosy clouds of self-delusion he was attempting to hide within.

"Mr. Weasley, I am not some bizarre variety of boggart. I will not disappear just because you cannot see me."

Given that hiding from the situation was failing abysmally, Ron decided that the best course of action would be to face up to the situation. Opening his eyes, he found himself practically nose to nose with Hogwarts' current headmaster. The usually spider-induced whimper bubbled up again, unheeded.

"What in the name of Merlin is going on?" Stepping back to better study his unexpected visitors, Headmaster Snape pinched the bridge of his nose and scowled as if in pain. "I *foolishly* assumed that you would cease to plague me once you were no longer my students, but that would appear to have been somewhat optimistic. Should I perhaps check the storeroom for Miss Granger? Or maybe Professor Longbottom has abandoned his greenhouses in favour of destroying a cauldron or two in the Potions classroom?"

As Snape paused to draw breath for what Ron suspected would be some rather spectacular shouting, Harry's elbow connected sharply with Ron's ribs. He glanced pointedly across at the still open door and mouthed "Run!" to his friend. As one, the pair bolted for the door, taking the stairs three at a time back down to the corridor below.

For a moment or two, Snape stared after them as if not quite believing the evidence of his own eyes. Then a small smile tugged at the corner of his mouth, and wand in hand, he followed after them.

His voice echoed back into the office. "Potter, I'm sure Mr. Filch would still enjoy your company, even though you are no longer a student." At this, there was a flicker on the walls as the portraits fled their frames with unseemly haste, eager to see what was to become of the Boy-Who-Lived-To-Irritate-The-Headmaster-Again.

The student enrollment ledger lay forgotten on the office floor, its pages fanned by the breeze from the slammed door. Centuries of magical history flicked past, coming to rest on the final page of neatly inscribed names. If any of the portraits had remained to look, they would have seen that the very last entry, directly beneath '*Weasley, Rose, 18th June 2006*', was '*Dursley, Darren, 31st August 2006*'.