

# Mischief Managed

by Anastazia Silverwind

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## Weasleys' Wizarding Wheezes

Chapter 1 of 1

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Job hunting is a somewhat depressing thing. It brings laughter, humiliation, and desperation to a soul. In the space of five minutes, Mira had become an expert on those emotions. The jobs in America for wizards and witches were few, especially for people under the age of thirty. The choices were young entrepreneur or waitress in a bar. Not that Mira would have minded being a waitress, it was just that there were no bars that suited her. She had a few, ahem, standards that had to be met. She refused to work in a place that required her to give her supervisor favors, she refused to strip, and she wanted her co-workers mostly sober. Some of her friends said that such standards took the fun out of it.

So, Mira had pooled all of her money and bought herself a Portkey to England. Her parents told her that she would have no more luck in England, but Mira was excited by the whole England part of it. Their Ministry was much more organized, and their country was not suffering through a depression. And it was England, the source of all magic. If nothing else, Mira would work in a Muggle bar just to be there.

Getting the Portkey had been interesting. She had borrowed money, filched it, and worked odd jobs. She spent time cleaning a sketchy potions lab, walked a few nasty wizarding dogs, and babysat a wildly magical two-year-old for three weeks. The torture of all of those activities netted her at one hundred fifty-three Galleons. One forty-one Galleon Portkey later, Mira found herself, rather disheveled, in Diagon Alley with an army surplus backpack hanging from an arm that felt uncomfortably like linguini.

She trekked down the street and found herself in front of a pub with a rickety sign proclaiming the Leaky Cauldron. Her tired legs brought her to the door, which opened of its own accord. *Lovely*, she thought wickedly. The place was nearly empty. She wasn't sure if the people there were employees on break or patrons left over from the night before. Mira made her way to the front desk, or what she assumed was the front desk. It was large, and at one point in its life, it might have been gleaming oak. Now it was a beat up, ruddy, chipped, molding hunk of wood sitting at the front of one of the oddest bars Mira had ever been in.

"Hey, I need a room for a week," Mira said with a yawn. The man behind the desk looked at her as if she were batty.

"Yew fro'm'ERICA?" he asked, leaning out of a hole created by the desk's shadow, pushing his face out into the light. At first Mira thought he'd been splattered by a horrid potion in his youth. A few seconds later, there was a flicker, and he was a normal looking boy. Mira would later find out that the boy was actually almost thirty years old.

"Yea, sure..." Mira wasn't sure if she should have answered that question.

"Yew from Minesooata?" the boy asked with a grin. Mira glared. She had grown up in Minnesota but had attended school in Salem. No one usually noticed her accent anymore. The last few weeks with her parents must have rubbed off on her.

"Look are you going to give me my room key?" She asked, trying not to bite her bottom lip, it was a terrible habit and made for bad kissing. She considered putting her

head down on his desk and sleeping there. At the moment it certainly looked inviting.

"Yaaaaah, suuuuuuuuuure, doll. Fifty fer the week, hundred if ya break anything. Room ten. Up tha' flight of stairs an to the righ'. Have a nice stay at the Leaky," he said as he slipped her a key and leaned back into the dark of the corner. The antique key was a cold weight in her hand, a feeling that reminded her of some of the Muggle horror shows she had seen at home, but at the moment she was far too exhausted to give it much thought.

The room was dank and tiny. She was stripped off her green corduroy pants and overly large sweatshirt. The hot pink bra came off from under her ill-fitting, worn, blue shirt, and she crawled into the bed. As an afterthought, she charmed her wand to work as an alarm, and set it to go off at seven the next morning.

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An angry sound awoke her, and Mira responded in kind. She flung an arm up and out of the cocoon that she slept in and slapped at the nightstand. The fiercely yelling wand clattered to the floor and rolled across the floor with the speed of a mouse. It yelled obscenities at her, calling her a lazy dog that should have awoken with the sun, not hours after the day had begun. The angry voice (that sounded suspiciously like her mother) continued to get louder, and one of her neighbors began banging on the wall opposite her. Mira clambered out of her bed, cursing as her foot caught in the web of her bedding, causing her to hit the floor and bit her tongue, drawing blood.

Eventually, she made it the three feet from her bed to the wand. She grabbed it in a stronghold and muttered, *Finite Incantatem*."

She staggered around the closet-like hotel room, looking for her bag. She found it between the nightstand and the bed. Her shampoo had popped in its plastic bag, which was why her mother had made her put it in the Muggle contraption. For yet another of the many times in her life, she was thankful for the Muggles.

After a shower and a cup of tea, Mira stepped outside, determined that the day wouldn't be so awful. She was wrong. It was completely awful. She started with the smaller stores, thinking a personal owner would be more likely to hire her than a larger store. But the ladies laughed at her in the charms shops, "Honey, no one's hiring now. It's the middle of summer!" They all chortled as they shooed her out. She waited for hours, in one case, to be looked at, snickered at, and sent on her way. It was one of the most trying times of her young life.

But Mira was determined. By the afternoon of the second day, she was beginning to think that she was going to have to make that floo call home. That call in which the child admits that she were stupid, wrong, and needs money to come home. Mira did not want to make that call.

As she was walking back to the Leaky for lunch, on the afternoon of the second day, she was distracted by two red haired men handing out flyers on the street. She snagged a flyer and read, *Weasleys' Wizard Wheezes*. "What in the world?" she muttered to herself as she crossed the street.

*Weasleys' Wizard Wheezes*

*Bored with Zonko's?*

*Need something new for your archenemy?*

*We'll have it.*

*Opening Friday!*

"Okay, why not," Mira shrugged and walked up to the taller of the two, fire topped men. "Hello, I'm Mira," she said, to the broad shouldered boy, for she realized he was quite young, about her age.

He smiled and shook her head. "Fred Weasley, it's nice to meet you, Mira. What can I do for you?" he asked, winking at his brother.

"I'm in need of a job and was wondering if you were hiring," she said bravely.

"So you're the girl who's been bothering all of the other shop owners then?" he asked with another smile. Mira blushed for a second time before shrugging.

"If that's a bad thing then, no, I've never bothered a shop owner in my life!" she cried with false bravado. "And I'm shocked that you could even think such things of me!" For a moment, Fred really thought she was going to cry before a smirk graced her features, quite a flirty smirk actually.

"How old are you?" he asked as he handed out another flyer.

"Twenty- one," she said with a wink.

"You're not a day older than nineteen at most," it was Fred's turn to smirk. "I'll wager you not even eighteen," Fred's smirk disappeared and gave her an appraising look. *She does have a way about her that our customers would like. And that smirk! There's a little devilry in this one.* "Alright, we'll give you a go. You're hired," the sound that escaped Mira's mouth at that moment reminded George of the noises Ginny made when her girlfriends were at the Burrow.

They walked into a building that would adequately be described as cavernous. The walls were a bright fuchsia, and the shelves lime green. The register was set up and there were neon blue tables scattered across the room. There was just one thing off....

"Ah... Boss... Where's the product?" she asked, looking around. "I can't sell something that's not here!" she was walked further into the room, rotating slowly in circles.

"Oh, yeah, it's in the back; we just have to set it out. Then, after the first weeks' sales, we'll talk to the providers- you know, for the raw materials. All the charms, and hexes, and stuff we'll do ourselves. The first weekend all three of us'll be down here, working the floor," he seemed very pleased with himself. "Have you ever managed a store? Er...managed anything?" this thought had just occurred to him, he'd have to demote her if she'd never done any leading.

"Ah ... I was Quidditch captain. I'm sure I can manage a store. But wait, you said three of us?! You need more than three employees! This place is huge! How are we going to make sure the product doesn't waltz out of here in little boys' pockets? How are you going to stop a riot? Explain what everything does? What are we even selling?"

Fred stopped her wild tirade by picking her up so her toes were off the street, and she was eye-to-eye with him. "The rooms not that big missy, it just looks big cause it's mostly empty. Theft isn't a worry, there are anti-theft charms--" he flipped her over his shoulder and headed to the back of the store. For a millisecond, Mira enjoyed her upside-down view of Fred's rear.

"Wait just a minute, boss," she grunted. "My aunt owns a store, and she says anti-theft charms only work half of the time in big crowds."

"Yes, well, Fred and I have modified them... No worries, princess. Riots we'll stop with knockout powder."

"Knockout powder? Is that an English thing? I've never heard of it."

"It's a Weasley twin thing; don't interrupt. We sell prank assistants, school skipping aids... anything Fred and I find amusing really."

"I thought you were Fred." Mira's brain was spinning as he set her down on a stool.

"I am, shut up. Of course we've thought this out! We've been working on it since we were born. Why would we need schooling to run a joke shop? We graduated from Hogwarts..."

"No, we didn't...Dumbledore just said we did. I'm George. Are you our manager?" now there were two redheads standing next to each other, the new one, George, was carrying a box.

"Hi, nice to meet you," she muttered. *You both need nametags...* she thought to herself.

"I trust George has now explained that most of this you will not understand until you've seen, experienced, and helped create these things yourself. These are our uniforms," he said with a grin as he opened the box of black t-shirts.

"I solemnly swear that I am up to no good?" Mira looked at them in confusion.

"Mischief Managed!" the boys said at the same time.

"Do I want to know?" she asked skeptically.

"It's a quote from the Marauders Map," they said together, as if that explained it.

Mira raised one eyebrow.

"It's a map of Hogwarts--"

"Created by the Marauders--"

"Who were the best pranksters in--"

"Hogwarts history."

"We owe them everything," the pair finished in unison.

"And what does this map do? No offense, but what makes this map so wonderful?" she asked.

"It shows everyone--"

"Everywhere--"

"At any time--"

"And what they're doing."

"Within Hogwarts?" Mira was beginning to understand.

They both nodded enthusiastically.

"So you've pledged your allegiance to these, Marauders, then?"

Again the boys nodded.

"But what does this have to do with the shirt?"

Both boys blanched.

"That is for us to know--"

"And you to find out."