

Font

by mia madwyn

The first time they met was earlier than you think. [Prequel to Care of Magical Creatures]

[oneshot]

Chapter 1 of 1

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*I received this prompt from sevylu in the **hpcon envy** comm during Leaky Con, 2009. I didn't match it exactly, but hope this works!*

Prompt: How about something from this wealthy past you've constructed for Hermione? Something from her childhood that none of her school friends would believe happened... you could have it involve little rich girl Hermione somehow having a run-in with Snape on the street or somewhere (something neither would bother to remember or think of by the time she got to Hogwarts--or at least not well enough that they'd remember what the other looked like).

Font

He shoved his hands deeper into his wool jacket and scuffed his Doc Martens on the cobblestones, watching through the drizzle, waiting for the tour group to exit the cathedral.

Then it would be a matter of moments to enter, to go straight to the massive black font, take care of business, and leave.

He hadn't counted on the bushy-haired little brat who stood beside it, spewing forth words she'd clearly memorised from a book.

"This twelfth-century font is made of black marble from the Tournai region of Belgium. The carvings on each side illustrate the miracles of St Nicholas, though as interesting as they are, I myself am particularly fond of this lion medallion," she announced in her clear, annoying voice while pointing to the section in question. She couldn't be more than eight years old and couldn't be more insufferable if they offered classes in the skill. "He's the patron saint of prostitutes, you know," she said confidently. "I think if they put carvings of *that* on the side, they'd get a lot more tourists in here."

"Why don't you run along and find your mum?" he asked, none too gently. He glared at her, his fingers twitching for his wand.

She glared right back at him and then announced with a prim sniff, "She's meeting with Father Gadbury about my education. I'm researching comparative religion as a matter of private study—"

"All fascinating to someone, I'm sure, but not to me. Now, run the fuck along and—"

"You know," she said, suddenly brightening, "if you're interested, the crypt under the nave is actually dry, and you can get up into all the nooks and crannies and examine the—"

"I'm not interested," he snapped, his annoyance ratcheting up exponentially with each swotty word she uttered. "But feel free to go down there yourself. Don't let me stop you." He didn't have time for this. He reached inside his jacket for the phial and instantly regretted it when her eyes lit on his hand.

"What an odd little bottle. Whatever is it for?"

He scooped up a goodly amount of holy water, gauging how quickly he could do an Obliviate. He simply couldn't wait any longer. He stoppered it, giving her a measured look. She didn't appear ready to sound an alarm.

"You know," she said thoughtfully, "I put some under a microscope, and don't tell anyone, I really wouldn't want to hurt Father Gadbury's feelings, but..." She glanced around and leaned forward conspiratorially. "It looked just like plain water to me."

"Indeed," he sneered.

She gave a sharp nod. "If you see something different, will you let me know?"

He rolled his eyes. "Yes, yes, yes," he muttered, tucking everything away and preparing to leave.

"You're sure you don't want to see the crypt? It's really quite fascinating, and I could tell you all about its history—"

"I'm sure you could," he snapped, wondering how many guide books she'd memorised.

"Oh. Well. Good luck with the holy water," she said, her eyes oddly wistful. "And if you ever want to see the crypt..."

"I'll let you know."

Her face lit up with a smile that took his breath away. "I'll be waiting!"

And then he whipped away and left, his mind already racing ahead, planning for the potion....

But he couldn't resist one last, dark scowl in her direction.

Insufferable know-it-all.

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