

A HUFFLEPUFF LOVE STORY

Written by

Sophia Lopez

Bellevue Productions - John Zaozirny
Verve - Matthew Doyle

HEDWIG'S THEME, the iconic Harry Potter song of our childhoods, beckons us into...

INT. KING'S CROSS STATION - LONDON - DAY

Where we're bombarded by a shock of GINGER HAIR belonging to a BOY, 11, his back to us. A familiar shade - *Weasley red*.

However, this is not our beloved Ron Weasley, as you might've assumed. When we see the boy's face, he's revealed to be:

FINN FLETCHER. Clutching the handle of his luggage cart, anxiously staring down the pillar between platforms 9 and 10. He takes a breath. Starts his run, straight for the bricks...

He gulps, the bricks growing closer...

He screws his eyes shut, bracing for impact...

WHOOSH!

INT. PLATFORM 9 3/4 - CONTINUOUS

Finn appears inside the bustling Platform 9 3/4. He marvels at the iconic HOGWARTS EXPRESS sitting not twenty yards away.

Distracted, he BUMPS his luggage cart into LAVENDER BROWN, 11, studying a pack of LICORICE WANDS. Lavender reacts.

FINN
Sorry! Sorry--

Finn realizes: she's cute. He's tongue-tied.

FINN (CONT'D)
Uh... hope that doesn't bruise--

LAVENDER
I'm sure it'll be fine.

Finn lingers, wanting to say something. Before he can think of anything, A TRAIN WHISTLE.

FINN
Erm, the train - wanna go? Sorry again, by the way-- your leg--

LAVENDER
Really, it's okay.

Lavender smiles at Finn. He's sweet. They roll their carts towards the train, steam billowing from its chimney--

INT. HOGWARTS EXPRESS - DAY

The train's already in motion as Finn and Lavender wander the PACKED aisle in search of a free seat. Behind them, another scrawny redhead, 11-year-old RON WEASLEY, trods.

LAVENDER
I'm Lavender, by the way.

FINN
Finn.

Lavender spots a free seat next to PADMA and PARVATI PATIL.

LAVENDER
Guess this is me. See you at the
sorting hat?

Finn smiles.

RON WEASLEY (O.S.)
You've got hand-me-down robes, too?

Finn turns to face Ron - who's a dead ringer for him.

FINN
Uh, yeah.

RON WEASLEY
Mum's always saying we've got too
many kids in our family to be
throwing away perfectly good robes.
(beat)
I'm Ron. Ron Weasley.

FINN
Finn Fletcher.

TROLLEY WITCH
Sweets from the trolley--

The SWEETS TROLLEY rolls down the aisle. Finn and Ron step aside to make room. The trolley ROLLS over Finn's left foot.

FINN
Bloody hell--

Finn hobbles down the aisle. Finn spots an apparently EMPTY CABIN a few yards up. He rushes towards it, tunnel-visioned.

He's one cabin away from the one he's set his sights on...

Suddenly, **THUNK!** Finn's foot catches on a TRUNK protruding from a train cabin. Finn goes down face-first!

FINN (CONT'D)

Ah!

Finn sits up, nose busted and bleeding. An anxious nerd, GIL, 11, pushes his trunk back into the cabin.

GIL

God. Looks awful, doesn't he?

SHERMAN, a tubby, wheezy kid, sticks his head out of the cabin's doors. He takes in Finn's bloody nose, turning green.

SHERMAN

I'm gonna be sick.

GIL

He doesn't do blood.

Sherman faints in the background. Gil, unfazed, grabs Finn's hand and hoists him into the cabin.

GIL (CONT'D)

Right-o, up ya go.

RON WEASLEY

I've got some tissues if you want,
to plug up your nose.

Ron retrieves a crumpled fist full of tissues from his pocket. Finn takes them gratefully.

Finn watches as Ron continues to the next cabin, where a boy with dark hair and round glasses sits. Ron talks to him as we realize: he's is no ordinary first year. He's Harry Potter.

A TRAIN WHISTLE screeches over the scene as we FADE TO BLACK.

FIVE YEARS LATER

(During the events of THE HALF-BLOOD PRINCE)

OVER BLACK: HOOT. HOOT. HOOT. An OWL rattles its cage.

Finn, now 16, wakes with a start. He glances around the dorm room: *an acne-riddled kid. A boy in orthodontic headgear. A boy with an anime wizard porn magazine peeking out of his sheets.* Kids you'd never catch Harry Potter hanging out with.

FINN

Yep. Still in Hufflepuff.

Finn waves his wand and WORMS appear in the hungry owl's cage. He reaches into his trunk, retrieving his WIZARD ROBE.

INT. HUFFLEPUFF BATHROOM - DAY

Finn, now in his robe, gels his hair as an enchanted toothbrush brushes his teeth. GIL, 16, takes the headgear off, eyeing his smile in the mirror.

GIL
I gotta start flossing.

Gil retrieves a massive bit of GREEN from between his teeth.

FINN
(grossed out)
Seriously?

GIL
Oh, yeah. Dental hygiene's no joke.

FINN
No, I meant, seriously? You don't floss already?

SHERMAN, 16, wheezy, the anime wizard porn kid, enters sniffing his armpits.

SHERMAN
Yep, I got the night sweats again.

Finn tries to contain the existential dread that *this is his life*. He gargles then SPITS! The bubbles transition into...

INT. HOGWARTS GREAT HALL - DAY

...The frothy top of a BUTTERBEER Finn sips. Students are packed in for breakfast, seated at four long tables organized strictly by house. Needless to say, Hufflepuff's table is filled with the clear losers and rejects.

Gil and Sherman play EXPLODING SNAP (the wizard card game), making their own loud, nerdy SOUND EFFECTS...

...As Finn gazes longingly across the hall at Lavender, 16, sitting with her fellow Gods-among-students: the Gryffindors. She holds hands with her boyfriend, Ron Weasley, 16.

FINN
You're never going to guess what I dreamed last night.

GIL
No, no, let me.
(sarcastic beat)
(MORE)

GIL (CONT'D)

Was it the one where you're back on the Hogwarts Express?

SHERMAN

Yeah, never heard that one before.

GIL

Oh, no! I sat with Gil & Sherman 5 years ago and it *ruined my life!*

SHERMAN

You know most people's nightmares are like, dementors eating their souls, right?

FINN

I was *this close--*

He motions across the room at the glorious Gryffindor table--

FINN (CONT'D)

To *that*.

GIL

That's so not how it works, mate. The sorting hat looks into your soul. It sees who you really are.

SHERMAN

Pshh, yeah. It's not who you hang out with.

FINN

Sure, that's what the Hogwarts PR machine wants us to think. But--
(beat)
Ron, Harry, and Hermione become best friends on the Hogwarts Express, and by *pure coincidence*, they're all sorted into Gryffindor?

SHERMAN

Yeah, suck it up.

FINN

Ron Weasley? He's a Hufflepuff *for sure*. I mean, for the love of ginger-haired-beta-males--

SHERMAN

Pot, meet kettle.

FINN

That's what I mean! It could have
just as easily been me.

GIL

Well, sorry for dragging you down
to Hufflepuff.

Finn steals a glance at Ron. The sun shines on him as he,
DEAN THOMAS and SEAMUS FINNIGAN laugh. Lavender feeds Ron
grapes seductively. Man, it's good to be a Gryffindor.

GIL (O.S.) (CONT'D)

Flatulencio Frago!

Finn GAGS as a stink bomb brings him back to his own social
strata. The smell attracts other kids' disgusted attention--

SHERMAN

No fair! Stink bombs aren't allowed
unless it's a sudden death round!

Finn's sighs, sadly, stealing one more look at the cool kids.

SHERMAN (PRE-LAP) (CONT'D)

*Who do you reckon you'll take to
the dance?*

INT. HOGWARTS HALLWAY - DAY

The trio passes a homemade POSTER that reads "AUTUMN BALL
THIS FRIDAY!" On it, animated stick figures actually waltz.

SHERMAN

I think I'll ask Parvati Patil.

Gil and Finn scoff, incredulous.

GIL

The same Parvati Patil who went to
the Yule Ball with *Harry Potter*?

CUT TO:

EXT. FOREST CLEARING - DAY

In the distance, a large PEGASUS stands on its hind legs as
HAGRID tosses an apple into its mouth before a crowd of
STUDENTS - separated into house-based cliques. Among them,
evil-looking SEBASTIAN, JEZ, & other SLYTHERINS.

HAGRID
 (in the background)
*The key ta' yer care o' magical
 creatures, 'specially a Pegasus--*

Finn, Gil, and Sherman stand in the back - outcasts, the only students wearing Hufflepuff's signature black-and-yellow. They ignore Hagrid's lesson, talking amongst themselves.

FINN
 You never know. She tried out the whole *rich and famous Gryffindor* thing with Harry. Maybe she'll want to switch it up. *Sweaty, wheezy Hufflepuff* could work.

GIL
 Yeah, it's a high school dance! Anything could happen! I just watched *She's All That--* it's this brilliant muggle movie--

Finn notices a nearby group of GRYFFINDORS SNICKER at Gil as he eagerly discusses his muggle delights--

GIL (CONT'D)
 Freddie Prinze Jr., You know him?
Total muggle heartthrob--

LAUGHS get LOUDER. Finn is wretchedly self-conscious. Ugh.

EXT. FOREST PATH - DAY

Students walk up a path towards the castle, passing the next block of kids headed down for class. Among them, Lavender.

NOTE: *under her robe, Lavender's shirt reads: "WEIRD SISTERS" It features a photo of the famous wizarding world band.*

Sherman catches Finn staring.

SHERMAN
 Just ask her.

FINN
 Are you mad? She would never go out with me.

SHERMAN
 Come on! Talk to her. What's the worst that could happen?

Lavender disappears into the forest. Then, WICKED LAUGHTER.

SEBASTIAN (O.S.)
Ah, Hufflepuffs. So precious.

Finn turns to see SEBASTIAN, 16, the kind of kid who grew up practicing the dark arts on insects. Flanked by JEZ, 16, an *I'm not like other girls*-girl, and BRON, 16. All Slytherin.

JEZ
So sweet, your little crush on
Lavender.

The nerds are frozen in fear. Jez approaches Finn, dancing her fingers along his shoulder seductively. Finn's eyes dart to the students passing by. He prays they don't overhear.

JEZ (CONT'D)
I could talk to her for you.

FINN
No-- that's-- uh, that's okay--

JEZ
I insist. I'll tell her all about
your sick obsession.

Sebastian sees Finn is struck by TERROR at the thought.

SEBASTIAN
Yeah. Let's tell her.

FINN
No-- it's not even true, I don't--
(they turn to leave)
Really-- I'm not-- obsessed--

Sebastian and co. Walk off, laughing at Finn's desperation. Finn groans. *Fuck*. Angry, he turns to his friends.

FINN (CONT'D)
You had to bring up Lavender?

GIL
Don't act like that was our fault--

FINN
Wasn't your fault? You two are
like, the Gringott's gold standard
of nerd!

Truly, Gil and Sherman do scream *nerdy high school virgins*.

SHERMAN
Are not--

FINN

Look at yourself! And Mr. Muggle isn't doing us any favors, either.

GIL

I know you're upset, but it's not us.

Gil and Sherman walk ahead of Finn, irritated. Finn stands alone as students *bump* past him on the crowded path. It's like nobody even sees him.

SNAPE (PRE-LAP)

Invisibility is particularly perilous for any witch or wizard--

INT. DEFENSE AGAINST THE DARK ARTS CLASSROOM - DAY

PROFESSOR SNAPE stands at the blackboard, mid-lecture, as Finn quietly enters from the back. Snape pauses.

SNAPE

How nice of you to join us, Mr...

FINN

Fletcher. Finn Fletcher. I've been in your classes for like, 6 years.

SNAPE

Ten points from Hufflepuff. For insolence.

Finn nods, *cool*. Great. He slips into one of the back rows, next to MARQUIS, who wears a RAVENCLAW scarf. As Snape drones on in the background, Marquis eyes Finn sympathetically.

MARQUIS

Sorry about Sebastian...

Finn's confused. Marquis slips a piece of confetti featuring a photo of FINN, the words *FINN LUVS LAVENDER* scribbled on.

MARQUIS (CONT'D)

He blasted these out of confetti cannons just before class.

FINN

(shit shit shit)

It's fine. Uh, not true, though.

(off Marquis' look)

Does *everyone* know?

Marquis nods. Holds up the confetti - *now they do*.

MARQUIS

Sebastian's a real piece of work.
He used to mess with me, back in
year one.

Finn's desperate to change the subject.

FINN

You uh, playing in the match today?

Marquis nods at his BROOMSTICK, below the desk.

MARQUIS

Slytherin won't know what hit 'em.

OSWALDA (O.S.)

*Yeah, about that. You still need to
complete the payment.*

Marquis and Finn look behind them: OSWALDA DOS SANTOS, *does not play well with others*, sits alone in the back mixing potions. Marquis waves her off, anxious to shut her up.

MARQUIS

(to Finn)

You know Oswalda. Always saying
dodgy shit.

Finn takes a good look at Oswalda, an obvious social outcast. Thick green highlights and a nose piercing. Chunky Doc Martens peek out beneath her wizard robes.

Oswalda eyes Finn. He averts his gaze, freaked out.

OSWALDA

Interesting. You didn't mind my
'dodgy shit' when you needed your
broomstick charmed--

MARQUIS

Whoa, haha, no idea what you're
talking about. That's hah, both
illegal and un-sportsman-like.

Oswalda shoots Marquis a look. He mouths: *we'll talk later.*

THWACK! Snape plunks an essay in front of Finn, then *THWACK!*
One in front of Marquis. Finn looks at his paper: 99%, A.

Snape looms over Oswalda's desk, staring her down. She returns the stare, vicious. He SLAPS an essay on her desk: *SANTERIA AND RAISING THE DEAD*. Score: 37%; failing.

SNAPE

See me after class, Ms. Dos Santos.

BACK WITH FINN AND MARQUIS

Marquis steals a look at Finn's essay - impressed.

MARQUIS

99%?

That catches the attention of TERRY BOOT, king of Ravenclaw.

TERRY

(competitive)

Did I hear 99%, Marquis?

MARQUIS

Not me, him.

Terry sizes up Finn: *Yeah, right.* Marquis flips Finn's essay to reveal the grade.

TERRY

Didn't realize you were an intellectual, Fletcher.

FINN

Oh, I'm not.

Marquis looks at Finn - he doesn't buy it. Terry turns to other students, comparing his 98% with their scores.

SNAPE

Class dismissed.

Students pack up and leave. Finn, curious about Oswald, watches as she makes her way to the front of the class. He packs up slowly to eavesdrop.

SNAPE (CONT'D)

Your second essay below failing.
And the term's just begun.

OSWALDA

I think it's the language barrier.

(beat)

Mi inglés es tan malo.

Snape rolls his eyes. Presses his wand into his neck.

SNAPE

(in perfect Spanish)

Tú sabes, como yo, que eso no es una excusa.

Oswalda mutters a curse under her breath.

SNAPE (CONT'D)

If you do not improve, it will
delight me to recommend your
withdrawal from school. Don't think
for one moment Hogwarts will buckle
under pressure from your father.
St. Ignacio's didn't.

Finn slowly puts his essay in his bag, listening. Oswalda shrugs ("*we'll see about that*") and turns to leave.

SNAPE (CONT'D)

The newt saliva. Return it.

OSWALDA

What?

SNAPE

You stole a vial.

OSWALDA

No, I didn't.

SNAPE

I don't play games, ms. Dos Santos.

Oswalda maintains a poker face. Finn heads for the door--

OSWALDA

Seriously, professor. What is this,
a witch hunt?

Snape shrugs, coldly. Close as she'll get to an apology. Oswalda stomps indignantly past Finn to the door.

Finn follows her out...

INT. HOGWARTS HALLWAY - DAY

Finn watches Oswalda perform a SLEIGHT OF HAND. Discreetly removes a vial from her robe sleeve, then pockets it. Finn's curious gaze lingers on her a beat, before he becomes self-conscious about all the GRYFFINDORS around him.

Then he sees...

Lavender. Walking down the hall, posse in tow. Finn can't help but stare at her a moment - she's his dream girl.

LAVENDER

Hey, Finn-- right?

Oh shit. She's walking towards him. Finn eyes the bit of confetti Marquis gave him. Gulps.

FINN

Uh--

Finn sees Lavender cringe, uncomfortable, as she nears. He breathes quicker, beads of sweat collect at his temples--

FINN (CONT'D)

I know there were confetti cannons,
or, uh, whatever, that said--
(his voice cracks)
That said I loved you, or something--

LAVENDER

(cringe)
Oh, I don't-- it's okay--

FINN

I'm not in love with you! I hardly
even know you, haha! That would be
insane, right?...
(Hopeful, off her silence)
Right?

LAVENDER

Actually, ah, Finn... I just wanted
to let you know... You have a bit
of tissue stuck to your shoe.

Finn looks down: he's trailing a foot of toilet paper. *Shit.*
Jez and Sebastian emerge from the shadows.

JEZ

Mister smooth talker over here.

SEBASTIAN

(mocking Finn)
That would be insane, right?
(laughing)
Right.

SEBASTIAN (CONT'D)

Guess she missed the confetti.

Sebastian, Jez, and Bron raise their wands in sync. CONFETTI
reading "FINN LUVS LAVENDER" shoots out, raining all over
everyone-- Lavender picks one out of her hair and reads it--

FINN

No!

Lavender gives that "Chrissy Teigen cringing at an awards show gif" look. This isn't good.

JEZ

(to Sebastian)

God, he's like Hufflepuff catnip.

FINN'S P.O.V.: The world moves in slow-mo. Students cackle and cringe. Lavender can't help but SQUEAL with laughter.

It's all too much for him.

The world spins back to normal speed. Finn looks like he might faint. Instead, he **bolts**.

SWOOSH! Sebastian shoots a spell. It hits Finn's shoes, unlacing them. He topples over himself, grazing the floor, then pops back up. Jez and Sebastian sprint after him--

JEZ (CONT'D)

Come on, baby, we just wanna talk--

Finn kicks his shoes off and runs in his socks! With no grip, he SLIDES, smashing into the wall, looking behind him--

Sebastian and Jez hunt him like a pair of wolves. He finally turns a corner to see: **an open door**.

He darts inside. SLAMS the door behind him, throws his weight against it. He screws his eyes shut, trying not to cry.

Unaware that he's stumbled into...

INT. THE ROOM OF REQUIREMENT - DAY

... Which, at this point in time, is an exact replica of THE GRYFFINDOR COMMON ROOM. Finn opens his eyes and immediately recognizes that he should not be here.

He turns to re-open the door, hand hovering over the knob...

JEZ (O.S.)

He must have gone this way!

Finn freezes. He can't leave. He looks around:

Burgundy couches sit empty. A banner ("TOP SCORE!") Hangs over a rack of FIREBOLTS and NIMBUS 3000 brooms, untouched.

A chair next to a crackling FIREPLACE beckons him. Finn approaches, anxious, to find an open SPELL BOOK on the chair. Finn looks over his shoulder, still unsure. Sits, grabbing the book. It's opened to: THE TEMPORAL JOURNEYMAN'S POTION.

FINN
 (reading)
 "For the witch or wizard with
 regrets."

Finn chortles to himself. *That's me.*

FINN (CONT'D)
 (reading)
*To those who wish to make amends...
 Father time is not a friend...*

Finn pauses realizing the gravity of the situation. *This is his golden ticket.* He quiets, listening intently to his surrounding. Is anyone there?

CRACK!

Finn jumps. He hesitates a beat, then RIPS out the page--

INT. HUFFLEPUFF BEDROOM - NIGHT

ABRAXAN HAIR. DEAD MAN'S TOE. BLIND WORM'S STING. Finn carefully studies the spell's list of ingredients.

FUMP. A bundled-up pair of socks hits Finn in the head.

SHERMAN
 Maybe we dragged you to the pits of
 Hufflepuff, but you shot down a
 very promising career in botany.

Sherman flips through *the Botany Inquisitor* on his bed.

FINN
 (distracted)
 Oh yeah? How's that?

Sherman's offended Finn doesn't remember.

SHERMAN
 Um, second year, you told me
 'botany's for losers'?

FINN
 It is for losers, though.

Sherman throws another sock at Finn, who begrudgingly looks up from the recipe. Gathers the energy for a semi-apology...

FINN (CONT'D)
 (deadpan)
 Look, it was a crazy time.
 (MORE)

FINN (CONT'D)

The chamber of secrets had been opened, there was a basilisk, we were all just barely recovered from Quirrell's "*troll! In the dungeon!*" spiel...

(beat)

Sorry if I was a bit *terse*. I was twelve. There was a lot going on.

Gil enters, playing *BACK TO THE FUTURE* on a magical floating screen in his hand. Finn glances at the potion recipe.

FINN (CONT'D)

Anyways, you know where I could get... Blind worm's sting? Or Abraxan hair? For an assignment...

SHERMAN

If it's for an assignment just ask the potions master.

(off Finn)

If it's *not* for an assignment, if it's for, say... a love potion...? You gotta go black market.

FINN

Where's the black market?

GIL

(pauses his movie)

Does Sherman really seem like someone who knows *anything* about the black market? Just go to that girl. Y'know, the witchy one.

FINN

Literally every girl at Hogwarts is "witchy."

GIL

No, I meant *witchy* the way muggles use it. Which is to say...

SHERMAN

Scary? Bizarre? Freak-like?

GIL

Exactly. Osmelda or whatever. The fixer. She charms brooms and stuff.

FINN

Oswalda Dos Santos? I don't know...

GIL

It's not like you have to hang out with her. She renders a service.

SHERMAN

Crazy expensive, though.

GIL

Maybe, maybe not. Finn, think. Do you have anything to offer her? Anything she wants?

Finn racks his brains, desperate. Then, an *a-ha moment*...

FINN

Actually, I think I might...

INT. OSWALDA'S SMOKE SHACK - DAY

Finn stands before Oswalda, seated in a floating bean bag. Santeria altars dot the place, veladoras line the windows. Oswalda smokes a GILLYWEED joint, studying a nervous Finn.

FINN

I'll write your essays.

Oswalda raises an eyebrow. Finn is intimidated by her gaze.

OSWALDA

My retainer fee's usually quite a bit more than the simple act of taking quill to parchment.

FINN

Says the girl who's about to fail out of yet another school.

Even *Finn's* surprised he went there.

OSWALDA

I did not *fail out* of St. Ignacio's. The headmistress and I had... creative differences.

FINN

I overheard Snape chewing you out. I can help. If *you* help me.

OSWALDA

How many essays are we talking?

FINN

For the rest of the term.

OSWALDA
I'm going to need better than that.

Finn, uncomfortable, does some internal calculation...

FINN
...Fine. Rest of the year. But
that's final.

Oswalda gets up and approaches Finn. She looks deep into his eyes, intimately. Freakishly. He flinches.

OSWALDA
Rest of school. Until graduation.

FINN
No.

OSWALDA
Alright.

As Oswalda falls back, the beanbag flies across the room to catch her. *Plop*. She takes a long drag on her joint.

OSWALDA (CONT'D)
You can go. See you in class, Flan.

Oswalda knows Finn knows he can't leave. Frustrated:

FINN
Fine! Rest of school!

SWOOSH. *As if by magic*, Oswalda is somehow now behind Finn.

OSWALDA
Great. What'll it be? Amortentia?
Felix felicis? Enchanted broom?

Finn, not sure what to make of Oswalda, hands her the RECIPE.

OSWALDA (CONT'D)
(impressed)
Time travel?
(beat)
So you, too, are deeply mentally
unwell? I mean, you'd have to be,
to attempt *this*-- either that or
extremely desperate...

FINN
Yeah. Put me down for the latter.

Oswalda studies Finn. He shifts uncomfortably under her gaze.

FINN (CONT'D)

Let's just say I'm in the wrong place at the wrong time. Living the wrong life.

OSWALDA

Fair enough.

(beat)

I can get all these ingredients, easy. Except blind-worm's sting. That we need Trelawney for... Meet me in the Great Hall at midnight.

Finn nods excitedly. It hits him: *This is actually happening.* We PRE-LAP the TICK-TOCK-TICK-TOCK-**DING!** Midnight chime of...

INT. HOGWARTS GREAT HALL - NIGHT

...a large GRANDFATHER CLOCK Finn stands next to. He shifts his weight, anxious. Oswalda's harsh FOOTSTEPS announce her. Finn looks up to see her nodding towards a hallway: *come on.*

INT. HOGWARTS HALLWAY - NIGHT

Finn and Oswalda walk past animatedly alive portraits.

OSWALDA

We break in, grab the Blind-Worm's sting, mix the potion & you're off.

(beat)

I was looking into it - very particular rules, this potion. You drink it, you'll be transported back into your own body at whatever moment of time you'd like, but only for twenty minutes.

FINN

That's fine.

OSWALDA

And whatever you do in those twenty minutes - can change the future.

FINN

I just gotta sit next to Harry Potter on the Hogwarts Express.

They turn the corner to see TRELAWNEY'S DOOR IS OPEN, light pouring out of it, mutters echoing from inside.

FINN (CONT'D)

I think she's still there--

OSWALDA

Great job, Sherlock.

(thinking quick)

You distract her, I'll find the
Blind-worm's sting.

FINN

Distract her? How do I--

Oswalda **SHOVES** Finn inside the classroom.

INT. TRELAWNEY'S CLASSROOM - NIGHT

Finn stumbles inside. He looks back at Oswalda, in the dark hallway, who *shoos* him toward the **FAR SIDE** of the room.

FINN

Uh-- professor?

TRELAWNEY looks up, oversized glasses distorting her eyes. Finn walks to the far side of her classroom. As she turns to watch him, she naturally angles **AWAY** from the hallway door.

FINN (CONT'D)

I received a... a bad omen! And,
was hoping for a second opinion.

TRELAWNEY

A bad omen is not to be taken
lightly, my boy. What was it?
Death? Serious mutilation?

Now Trelawney's engrossed, Oswalda **SLIPS** inside.

FINN

Uh... yeah.

As Trelawney takes Finn's hand and studies it closely, Oswalda quietly **DARTS** into Trelawney's **STORAGE CLOSET**.

IN THE STORAGE CLOSET

Oswalda rummages through drawers of potion vials, tea leaves, loose tarot cards. To her confusion, a **LIVE FROG** hops out...

TRELAWNEY (O.S.)

*Ah, yes, here we have adventure in
your future... romance... yes, a
great love with another student...*

Oswalda grabs handfuls of tiny vials, reading the labels.

INT. TRELAWNEY'S CLASSROOM - CONTINUOUS

Finn smiles as Trelawney traces the lines on his hand.

FINN
Romance? With a Gryffindor, right?
Good body, nice face?--

TRELAWNEY
...Oh my. There's the bad omen.

FINN
(shocked)
What?

TRELAWNEY
Danger. Great danger.

FINN
Are you sure? About the danger?

Scared, Finn looks at his hand himself, Across the room behind Trelawney, Oswalda motions at the door: *let's go*.

FINN (CONT'D)
Could you read that once more?
Maybe the danger was misconstrued?

TRELAWNEY
(reading his palm)
Oh, no. The danger is *grave*.

Oswalda, irritated, re-enters the room loudly.

OSWALDA
Finn? We've got to go... work on
that assignment, remember?

TRELAWNEY
You must be careful--

Oswalda rips Finn's hand from Trelawney's grip. Elbows him.

FINN
Uh, thank you, professor--

They dash out, Trelawney's gaze following them curiously.

INT. HOGWARTS HALLWAY - NIGHT

Oswalda and a worried Finn run, feet *THUDDING* on the marble, past several irritated, drowsy portraits--

 PORTRAIT
 We're trying to sleep!

 PORTRAIT 2
 What are you, a herd of elephants?

 OSWALDA
 They're called Doc Martens, old timer. And they're a lot cooler than your rococo house slippers!

We PRE-LAP a *PLUNK!...*

INT. WOMEN'S BATHROOM - NIGHT

...As Oswalda empties her purse on the counter, retrieving vials and an empty beaker. Finn's still processing his omen.

 OSWALDA
 (mixing ingredients)
 Make sure to say the exact time you want to go back to.
 (beat)
 When you're there, be precise.
 Exact. You've only got 20 minutes.

 FINN
 Did you hear what she said? Danger?

 OSWALDA
 Look, do everything exactly the same, but make sure you sit in the right place. Be meticulous.

Finn watches anxiously as she adds the strand of abraxan hair. The potion *FIZZES* violently, turning deep red.

 FINN
 Trelawney said--

 OSWALDA
 The woman's an old kook. Here.

Oswalda hands the potion to Finn. He doesn't take it.

 OSWALDA (CONT'D)
 The potion's only active for 45 seconds, you have to take it now!

Finn hesitantly brings the potion to his lips. Oswalda doesn't have the patience. She grabs the beaker, trying to force it down his throat, but HE MOVES.

Some of the potion SPLASHES, getting in her mouth.

OSWALDA (CONT'D)
(coughing)
Gross--

She tries to spit it out, but it's absorbed into her tongue.

OSWALDA (CONT'D)
Now or never-- ten more seconds--

Finn breathes deeply, then CHUGS the potion.

FINN
September first, 1991, nine A.M...

Finn blinks, and when he opens his eyes...

INT. KING'S CROSS STATION - LONDON - DAY

We're again bombarded by a shock of GINGER HAIR. FINN'S. Finn takes a moment, mind-blown by where - and *when* - he is...

Jolted, Finn approaches a mirror - HIS ELEVEN-YEAR-OLD SELF STARES BACK. A man reads a newspaper on a nearby bench. Finn glimpses the date on the paper. *September 1st, 1991.*

FINN
(awestruck)
Bloody hell.

Finn zeroes in on the task at hand. Rushes at the pillar...

INT. PLATFORM 9 3/4 - CONTINUOUS

...Enters on the other side, with his luggage cart. He sees Lavender Brown five feet ahead, and purposely BUMPS INTO HER.

LAVENDER
Ow--

Lavender drops her LICORICE WANDS. Finn picks them up. Hands them to her. He knows this is weird, but he shoots his shot--

FINN
Sorry about that--
(hands her the candy)
These are rubbish, by the way.

LAVENDER

Excuse me?

Finn's got the confidence of a 16-year-old. She likes it.

FINN

The licorice wands. You're better off with Cockroach Clusters.

(off Lavender)

You know, the insect chocolates...?

LAVENDER

(sheepish)

Mum doesn't let us have sugar in the house.

FINN

Guess you better load up from now 'til summer, then.

LAVENDER

Guess I'd better.

Sparks are flying. The TRAIN WHISTLES!

FINN

Shall we?

They roll their luggage carts towards the train-- Finn checks his watch, they're running late.

FINN (CONT'D)

Shoot-- Lavender, we're late--

Lavender stops in her tracks.

LAVENDER

How'd you know my name?

FINN

...Your luggage tags.

Lavender looks at her luggage tag - it reads *MR. HAROLD P. BROWN*. Her dad's trunk. She eyes Finn suspiciously.

INT. HOGWARTS EXPRESS - DAY

Lavender keeps her distance from Finn as they walk the crowded aisle, RON behind them. They reach the Patil twins.

FINN

(to Lavender)

You should probably sit here.

Lavender, crept out, purposely disobeys. She discreetly turns around, heading in the opposite direction. Finn continues up the aisle checking his watch religiously. 9:16--

TROLLEY WITCH
Sweets from the trolley--

Finn sticks his left foot out. The trolley runs over it.

9:17-- he turns to Ron, next to him--

FINN
You've got hand-me-down robes, too.
Our mums would get along great.

9:19-- Finn carefully steps over Gil's trunk-- and then...

A DOOR OPENS, blocking Finn's path. It SEPARATES RON AND FINN - Ron continues towards Harry's cabin, while Finn is trapped where he is! Finn PANICS! A young TERRY BOOT steps out.

TERRY
Did I hear you talking about
cockroach clusters earlier?

Finn tries to push past, but neither Terry nor the door budge. Finn checks his watch, horrified--

FINN
Hey, I've gotta get through--

TERRY
--Me and the lads are debating the
equitability of the animation of
insects for wizard enjoyment--

Finn looks into Terry's cabin - Marquis and other future RAVENCLAWS sit. Horrified, Finn decides to ram the door. He backs up. Just as he RUSHES AT THE DOOR-- We FADE TO BLACK.

OVER BLACK: HOOT. HOOT. HOOT.

Finn GASPS AWAKE, jolted. His hands rush to cover his face - which only moments ago was headed for collision with a DOOR. His hands swipe through air. Realizes: he's in a strange bed.

FINN
Oh my God.

Grabs a mirror sitting on a bedside table. Examines himself:

FINN (CONT'D)
(sees he's 16)
It worked.
(MORE)

FINN (CONT'D)
 (looking around)
 So this is what the Gryffindor
 dorms look like.

Finn proudly takes it all in. But... *his sheets are purple.*

FINN (CONT'D)
 Wait... no...

Finn spots MARQUIS asleep across the room...

FINN (CONT'D)
 No....

TERRY
 Still in bed?

Finn's blood runs cold. He looks up to see TERRY BOOT.

TERRY (CONT'D)
 I've already solved three Merlandic
 riddles, written an essay on house
 elf liberation, and given a
 presentation on the re-population
 of chimaeras in captivity.

FINN
 Goddammit!

Finn, horrified, realizes: he's **RAVENCLAW**.

INT. RAVENCLAW BATHROOM - DAY

Finn SPLASHES his face with cold water, in terrible shock.

FINN
 What in the bloody--

Finn looks in the mirror, loathing his purple-accented robes.

TERRY
 --Hell-o?

Finn jumps to see Terry has entered again, waving a paper.

TERRY (CONT'D)
 You scampered away before I could
 tell you the good news!
 (beat)
 Got your class schedule from
 Flitwick's office. Lucky you, he
 approved you for honors botany.

Finn takes the paper, studying his schedule: all honors courses. Uneasy, he again looks at himself in the mirror...

RAVENCLAW 1 (PRE-LAP)
You're such a nitwit--

INT. HOGWARTS GREAT HALL - DAY

Finn's now at the Ravenclaw table, still dazed and confused. His breakfast is untouched. He eyes the GRYFFINDOR TABLE...

...Where Ron basks in all his glory, Lavender by his side.

RAVENCLAW 2
 I know. An A *minus*. At this rate,
 I'll never be minister of magic by
 thirty.

TERRY
 I got a 98%. But there's always
 room for improvement. Right Finn?

FINN
 (distracted)
 Uh... Yeah... I mean, I'm
 practically failing potions...

The table laughs. Finn raises a butter beer to his lips.

TERRY
 Come on, Finn. No need for modesty.
 (lowers voice)
 We know you're in the Slug club.

FINN
 (does a spit-take)
 Sorry, *what?* I'm in Slughorn's
 club? For *gifted* students?

RAVENCLAW 1
 I know it's secret or whatever, but
 you don't need to play dumb.

TERRY
 We may not have gotten *outstandings*
 on all our O.W.L.s Like you, but
 we're not that thick.

FINN
 I got *outstandings* on all my
 O.W.L.s?

Finn realizes he's being an ass. The other Ravenclaws are clearly annoyed with him. He sips his butter beer, isolated and alienated in a sea of strangers.

GIL (PRE-LAP)
*So, the whole idea of this movie--
 film, really, the muggles in
 Hollywood call them "films"-- is
 that no man is an island.*

INT. HOGWARTS HALLWAY - DAY

Finn walks past the homemade POSTER reading "AUTUMN BALL THIS FRIDAY!" He's alone and confused.

GIL (PRE-LAP)
*We need our friends, whether we
 realize it or not--*

EXT. FOREST CLEARING - DAY

Hagrid feeds the PEGASUS an apple. Finn walks in, last one there. He spots Gil and Sherman and makes a beeline for them.

GIL
 (to Sherman)
 And so there's this muggle, Tom
 Cruise-- real charismatic bloke--

Finn grabs Gil's shoulder. Gil turns towards him - he's wearing a TOP GUN T-shirt.

FINN
 Gil!
 (Gil's like *me???*)
 You guys aren't gonna believe this--

Gil and Sherman stare back at him blankly. Finn realizes.

FINN (CONT'D)
 Oh, right, of course. God, where to
 begin. So... *this isn't real.* Like,
 none of it. In the real world--
 which this is not -- in the real
 world we're best friends.

They look at each other as Finn babbles like a maniac.

SHERMAN
 Is this... a joke?

FINN

No! I just, I went back into the past, and I screwed things up--

GIL

(*aha*)

Ah. You must have seen my presentation on the muggle film, *Back to the Future*.

FINN

Back to the-- what? No, no--

(beat)

Since when do you give presentations on muggle movies?

SHERMAN

Uh, it's kind of his *thing*, if you haven't noticed.

Gil hands Finn his business card: an animated roll of film dances under: GIL PENDERGAST, MUGGLE FILM SCHOLAR AT LARGE.

GIL

Hence the shirt. *Top Gun*. My favorite muggle movie.

FINN

But you never-- back in the real world, people kind of... make fun of you for the muggle stuff--

Sherman laughs. He looks at Gil: *get a load of this guy*.

SHERMAN

Sorry, back in the *what*?

GIL

People made fun at first. They stopped when the ministry made me an official affiliate on their board of muggle affairs.

Finn flips the card: *MINISTRY AFFILIATE*. Finn's blown away. He steps back from his friends, realizing he's now an outsider - and they're better off without him.

EXT. FOREST PATH - DAY

Finn, trying to process this world, walks back to the castle.

SEBASTIAN (O.S.)
*I was wondering where I'd find
 you...*

A chill runs down Finn's spine. He turns to see: **SEBASTIAN**.
 Snarling, headed his way. Flanked by Jez and Bron.

The blood drains from Finn's face. He braces for impact...
 Sebastian and Co. Walk right past him, towards... Marquis.

SEBASTIAN (CONT'D)
 What'cha got in there?

Sebastian grabs a fear-stricken Marquis' book bag inside out,
 spilling all its contents.

JEZ
 Aren't you going to pick that up?

Marquis gets on his hands and knees to gather his stuff...

SEBASTIAN
 (brandishing his wand)
Dissipo dissicio!

The papers and pens scatter. Marquis goes to grab them again--

JEZ
Dissipo dissicio!

They scatter again! LAUGHTER. Finn can't stand to watch.

FINN
 Hey-- stop that--

SEBASTIAN
 And who do you think you are?

It's clear Sebastian doesn't recognize Finn. Finn stammers,
 afraid of Sebastian. However, after a beat he loses interest
 and the Slytherins disperse, Sebastian shoving past Finn.

SEBASTIAN (CONT'D)
 (to Marquis)
 We'll be seeing you later.

After the Slytherins leave, Finn rushes to help Marquis.

FINN
 I'm sorry. I know what it's like.

MARQUIS
 How?

Marquis is different now. No hope in his eyes. No joy.

MARQUIS (CONT'D)

Won't be long now, anyway. Suppose I'll withdraw before Christmas. I'm failing my classes.

FINN

But you're so smart-- and, at least you have quidditch--

MARQUIS

Quidditch? If I tried out for the team, they'd have a field day.

(beat)

Wouldn't make the team anyway.

FINN

But you would!

Finn's words are futile. Marquis gets up, sighs.

MARQUIS

Just be happy it isn't you.

He walks away, somber. Finn feels horrible. Then, he sees OSWALDA, also in purple-accented robes, walking towards him. Without warning, she GRABS HIM, yanking him into the forest.

IN THE FOREST

Now they're alone, she pins him against a tree angrily.

OSWALDA

What the hell is going on?

FINN

You can see this, too?

OSWALDA

All I wanted was someone to write my essays and now the whole world is effed.

(irritated)

Come with me.

They walk deeper past the trees to find: **a log cabin.**

OSWALDA (CONT'D)

Thank God even Ravenclaw me needed a smoke shack.

INT. OSWALDA'S SMOKE SHACK - DAY

Oswalda paces, panicked and furious. Finn's scared.

FINN

This was a bad idea, wasn't it?

OSWALDA

Oh, I don't know, was it?

(beat)

Let's see. In this universe, I
apparently wear *headbands*--

Oswalda rips a fussy purple headband off her head. Tosses it.

OSWALDA (CONT'D)

And I'm in *Ravenclaw*, an insult to
borderline psychopaths everywhere--

Oswalda draws nearer to Finn. He steps back.

OSWALDA (CONT'D)

Plus I can't find my gillyweed
stash, so that's super chill--

FINN

Look, I know you're upset, but--

OSWALDA

No, I'm not upset. I'm thrilled to
have lost any amount of personal
liberty I've retained over the past
six years, so you could get your
rocks off with some girl named
after a mediocre-at-best plant.

FINN

Yeah, well, your potion didn't
work. No rocks are getting off,
believe me.

OSWALDA

We have to do it again.

FINN

Whoa, no-- I don't think--

OSWALDA

Riddle me this, if you don't go
back to the past, how do we get out
of this mess?

FINN

Maybe... we go to Dumbledore.
Explain everything.

OSWALDA

Sure. I'm super down to get kicked
out of school. Are you?

Finn realizes - shit. She's right.

FINN

Then you go into the past. Since I
clearly messed up.

OSWALDA

I can't go back and fix 'past
you''s messes. Only you can.

(beat)

Okay. Come on. Trelawney's office.
Blind-worm's sting. Now.

She opens the door. On the way out, Finn gawks at her
VELADORA-filled altar near the window. He bends down to
quickly examine a voodoo doll, careful not to touch it.
Oswalda chuckles at his horrified expression.

OSWALDA (CONT'D)

You go to a school for witchcraft
and wizardry but you're afraid of
Santeria? That's straight-up
racist.

FINN

(stammering)

No, no-- I think it's, erm, a
beautiful tradition--

OSWALDA

I'm messing with you.

(laughs)

But, seriously. Trelawney's. Now.

Her boots shift from STOMPING on these dusty floorboards...

INT. HOGWARTS HALLWAY - DAY

...To padding on the castle's lush carpet. They rush past
students studying at breathtaking gothic windowsills...

At the end of the hallway, Finn sees LAVENDER. Time slows as
she bounces towards him, wearing a "WEIRD SISTERS" band tee.

OSWALDA

Uh, Finn--?

Oswalda realizes she's now ten paces ahead of him. She traces his gaze to LAVENDER. *Oh*. She rolls her eyes.

OSWALDA (CONT'D)

Come on, we don't have time.

She reaches for his hand. He moves it from her reach, clearly not wanting to associate with her in front of Lavender. Lavender passes, giving Finn a creeped-out glare.

OSWALDA (CONT'D)

She clearly thinks you're a creep.

(beat)

And for the record, I'm perfectly normal in this dimension. Not a loaded gun to your social life anymore, don't worry.

FINN

No, you're fine in, uh, any dimension. I just--

OSWALDA

Come on.

They push past tight cliques organized by house... turn a corner to find... TRELAWNEY'S OFFICE. Door closed. Oswalda KNOCKS on the door. Nothing. She whips out her wand.

OSWALDA (CONT'D)

Watch my six, okay?

FINN

Your *what*?

OSWALDA

(waves her wand)

Alohomora.

FINN

You can't just enchant professors' doors in broad daylight! It's against the rules--

The door *CREAKS* open. She enters. He hesitates, nervous.

OSWALDA

Oh, yeah, 'cause we never do anything against the rules.

Finn gives up - *fine*. He follows her into...

INT. TRELAWNEY'S CLASSROOM - DAY - CONTINUOUS

Finn follows Oswalda as she makes a beeline for--

THE STORAGE CLOSET

Oswalda reaches into the exact drawer the blind-worm's sting was in last time. Except - it's empty. *Huh?*

RIBBET! RIBBET! The frog from the last dimension jumps out of a drawer on the opposite side of the closet.

OSWALDA

Things must've shifted around.

Finn and Oswalda take stock of the unorganized closet - rows and rows of drawers ascend all the way to the cartoonishly high CEILING. Sorting through all this could take years.

FINN

So... you take the left side, I'll take the right?

Oswalda looks at Finn with condescension. *This poor idiot.*

OSWALDA

(waving her wand)

Accio blind-worm's sting.

Oswalda opens her hand expectantly. Nothing.

OSWALDA (CONT'D)

(clears throat)

Accio *blind-worm's sting.*

Nothing. Finn shoots her a look - who's the idiot now?

OSWALDA (CONT'D)

Well, it's not here. If an *accio* can't procure it--

She reaches to open the door back to the classroom when--

A DOOR OPENS AND CLOSES. FOOTSTEPS.

TRELAWNEY (O.S.)

--Ah, yes. Welcome, Professor Dumbledore. Sorry it's a tad messy.

DUMBLEDORE (O.S.)

Messy is the world, Sybill.

Oswalda and Finn look at each other. SHIT. Finn gasps--

OSWALDA
 (whisper)
 Shut up--

Oswalda motions a hand over her ear - *listen*.

TRELAWNEY (O.S.)
...Marquis Delisle, he's a bright fellow. Unfortunately, I've had some troubling premonitions about his future at Hogwarts...

DUMBLEDORE (V.O.)
As often, your premonitions stand correct. Has Severus informed you of the additional credit option we've offered Mr. Delisle?

TRELAWNEY (O.S.)
Ah, yes. I sent the ingredients required for the assignment to Severus' office--

Oswalda shoots Finn a look.

OSWALDA
 (whisper)
 Snape has the blind-worm's sting!

FINN
 (whisper)
 Don't tell me we're breaking into Snape's office--
 (off Oswalda - *they are*)
 He's *terrifying*.

Oswalda eyes a VENT - large enough to crawl through. She quietly climbs up the shelves towards the vent, 20 feet up.

FINN (CONT'D)
 (harsh whisper)
 Hey! What are you--

OSWALDA
 (harsher whisper)
 I'm not sitting around for hours while Dumbledore pontificates. We got shit to do.

Finn looks desperately at the door - then at Oswalda, who's now ten feet up.

FINN
 (whisper)
 For the record, I hate this.

Finn puts a foot on one of the shelves, testing it. He climbs slowly. Oswalda reaches the vent - *TAPS* her wand on it--

TRELAWNEY (O.S.)
Do you hear something, Albus?

Oswalda Flinches. Finn holds his breath. His hand, sweaty, SLIPS! He hangs, only one hand gripping the shelf above--

DUMBLEDORE (O.S.)
The castle is prone to mice--

Phew. Oswalda quietly removes the vent face and CRAWLS IN...

Finn reaches the vent, then looks down twenty feet. He grows pallid, fear of heights setting in. Just as he loses his footing-- OSWALDA GRABS HIM, pulling him inside.

INT. THE HOGWARTS VENTS - DAY

Finn lands on top of Oswalda, their lips mere inches apart. Embarrassed, he quickly rolls over.

She closes the vent behind them, waving her wand to seal it. **THEY'RE NOW IN THE DARK**, crawling on their hands and knees.

FINN
ACHOOO!

OSWALDA
 Ugh. Didn't realize I was in the splash zone.

FINN
 Sorry... *Lumos*.

Finn's wand lights up the cobweb-riddled vents. They crawl in silence. Finn tries to think of something to break the ice...

FINN (CONT'D)
 So are we extra smart in this dimension?

OSWALDA
 Hah. Like being in Ravenclaw makes you smart.

FINN

No, it's just weird. Like, I'm in all these honors classes, I mean, Slughorn even let me join his club--

OSWALDA

What? The Harry Potter club?

FINN

The Slug Club, yeah.

OSWALDA

Hmm. I guess different people bring out different parts of your personality. Same with houses.

(beat)

Though I will say, I do seem just as messed up in this world, only better at *hiding it*, which is to say... I'm somehow *more* messed up.

Finn chuckles. A beat.

FINN

So, why Hogwarts?

(off Oswaldalda's silence)

You're from Mexico, right? Why not somewhere local?

OSWALDA

Let's just say, I'm on a list at pretty much every school across Central and South America.

FINN

But why?

OSWALDA

Necromancy.

Finn's clearly a bit frightened.

FINN

So you are a... dark witch?

OSWALDA

That's what they all say. So it must be true, right?

Finn is curious, but senses her discomfort. Chooses not to press her. They hear LIGHT flooding in - the other side of the vent. Oswaldalda peeks through the slits: *coast's clear*.

Oswalda taps her wand on the vent - it falls to the ground with a CRASH. She jumps down eight feet to the ground. Finn points his wand at the wall--

FINN

Scalae.

The wall quivers as a LADDER emerges from it. He climbs down.

INT. HOGWARTS HALLWAY - DAY

Oswalda tosses the vent face back up. It *clicks* back into place by magic. She walks in silence. Finn follows. Finn study's Oswalda's stoic face - is she *hurt*?

FINN

Sorry - *I don't think you're a dark witch, personally, but also, you know, necromancy, there's gotta be a story there--*

OSWALDA

In case you couldn't tell, I don't care what people think of me.

(beat)

Honestly, the world'd be so much better off if we were all like me.

(considers a beat)

Actually... maybe not.

FINN

At least we'd all have combat boots and free piercings.

OSWALDA

If people like you ran the world...

(shudders)

Like, why? Why care so much about social hierarchies, you'd eff the world just to escape a low house?

Finn scoffs, shocked at her subtweet.

FINN

A, not "a low house", *the lowest house*. B, I was not aware the plan would include... *effing the world*.

OSWALDA

Who cares if it's the worst house?

FINN

Me, I guess.

(beat)

Look, you don't get what it's like to be *literally* invisible. Admit, good or bad, people have *thoughts* on you. They see you.

OSWALDA

And do they like what they see?

FINN

Hey, I never said they did.

OSWALDA

Do you?

Finn's caught off-guard. A beat. Oswalda forces a laugh.

OSWALDA (CONT'D)

God, you should've seen your face.

They go down a FLIGHT OF SPIRAL STAIRS...

INT. LOWER CORRIDOR - DAY

It's dark down here. They creep through a torch-lined hall filled with sculptures, portraits, tapestries.

OSWALDA

This time, when you go back, you think *like me*, okay, goal-oriented. Get your ass next to Potter.

FINN

Erm, next to Potter. Right.

OSWALDA

Doesn't matter how you do it, just get to that seat.

There's a door, AJAR, down the hall. Light emanates from it.

OSWALDA (CONT'D)

Snape's in there.

Oswalda checks her watch.

OSWALDA (CONT'D)

He's supposed to be upstairs teaching right now--

FINN

Sorry. I'm sure this is my bad.

(beat)

I can distract him? If you'd like?

OSWALDA

I'd very much like.

Oswalda motions for Finn to WALK DOWN THE HALL. She whips out her wand, waiting for him to cross the classroom door...

When he's at the other side of the hall, she waves her wand.

OSWALDA (CONT'D)

Lapsus acquio!

Suddenly, the soles of Finn's shoes become WET and SLICK.

He SLIPS, clinging to an ancient tapestry trying to keep his balance, before SWINGING into a standing lamp, which lights fire to a curtain before knocking down a BUST.

The animated bust SCREAMS before falling to the floor with a CRACK. Finn lets go of the tapestry, hitting the ground hard.

FINN

(groaning)

Professor-- come quickly--

Unhurried FOOTSTEPS from inside the classroom.

FINN (CONT'D)

Professor!

Snape pokes his head out warily. Finn tries to pull himself up then falls again. Snape exits the classroom, walking to the far side of the hall towards Finn.

With his back to Oswalda, she tip-toes towards the door.

SNAPE

Have you any idea the value of the singing bust you've destroyed?

Oswalda gives Finn a hand-sign to STALL!

FINN

I'm feeling a bit loopy-- hit my head-- could you check it out?

Snape sighs angrily. Oswalda enters...

INT. DEFENSE AGAINST THE DARK ARTS CLASSROOM - NIGHT

Oswalda rushes to professor Snape's desk. She opens all the drawers - very austere, only quills and ink - until:

A parcel in parchment. From, *Sybill* scrawled on. Oswalda rips it open: BLIND-WORM'S STING. She puts the vial in her purse.

INT. LOWER CORRIDOR - NIGHT

Back with Finn, Snape is waving his wand over his head.

 SNAPE

 I'll be taking 300 points from
 Ravenclaw.

 FINN

 (doesn't give a shit)

 Aw.

Snape raises an eyebrow at Finn's lack of care. Behind Snape's back, Finn spots Oswalda exiting the classroom.

 FINN (CONT'D)

 I mean, that's so unfair.

Snape traces Finn's gaze over his shoulder to see: OSWALDA.

 SNAPE

 You.

 OSWALDA

 Just, ah, taking a stroll. Is that
 against the rules, professor?

Snape looks from Finn, to Oswalda. Savvy, he grabs Finn's foot - he sees the bottom of it leaks WATER.

 SNAPE

 I'm always happy to expel one
 snide, insolent, pretentious
 Ravenclaw, let alone two--

 OSWALDA

 Run!

Finn is like, *huh?* Oswalda sprints past him.

 OSWALDA (CONT'D)

 I have the rest of the ingredients--

Finn gets up and begins running, too. But his feet are wet, he slides! He kicks off his shoes, removing his socks as he jogs. Finn sees Snape brandishing his wand--

He hesitates a moment, unsure, then--

FINN
Expelliarmus!

Snape's wand goes flying. Snape is FURIOUS!

SNAPE
You will pay for this--

Finn follows Oswalda as they TURN a corner-- then another--
They see A BATHROOM and ALL-OUT SCRAMBLE towards it--

INT. BATHROOM - NIGHT

SLAMMING the door behind them. She puts her wand on the knob--

OSWALDA
Colloportus--

The door glistens, fortified by magic. Oswalda spills out the contents of her purse - vials and an empty beaker - when:

BANG! The door QUAKES.

SNAPE (O.S.)
Alohamora!

OSWALDA
Shit.
(mixing potion)
What did we say? Doesn't matter how you do it, all that matters is ass--

FINN
Next to Potter.

OSWALDA
You've got one shot to fix it, alright? Just get next to Potter.

BANG-BANG! The door's about to give way. Oswalda portions a tiny bit for herself too. Finn looks at her, confused.

OSWALDA (CONT'D)
I'm not getting stuck here. I want my life back, too, buddy.

The door comes down-- they raise their glasses to their lips--
Oswalda steals one last look at Snape, raising his wand--

OSWALDA (CONT'D)

Later, hater!

FINN

September first, 1991, nine A.M...

Snape rushes at Finn, who screws his eyes shut & GUZZLES.

INT. KING'S CROSS STATION - LONDON - DAY

Finn blinks his eyes open violently. Still running on adrenaline, he leans on his luggage cart for support. He looks around wildly, orienting himself.

FINN

Next to Potter.

Determined, he RUNS at the wall between platforms 9 and 10.

INT. PLATFORM 9 3/4 - CONTINUOUS

Finn scans the crowd for Harry Potter. He spots one kid with black hair-- *who turns towards Finn: not Harry*. A kid with round glasses-- *no, false alarm*.

He doesn't realize he's got a white-knuckled grip on his cart. Still amped up from battle with Snape, he spots Lavender Brown. Resolute, he races at her...

LAVENDER

Ahh!

Off balance, she falls over herself, twisting her ankle.

LAVENDER (CONT'D)

(wailing)

My ankle!

FINN

No... no, no--

(off her purple ankle)

We need a mediwizard--

Parents and mediwizards flood the scene, hovering over Lavender, who looks at Finn with hatred.

FINN (CONT'D)

I am so sorry--

Lavender's face doesn't soften. Finn consults his watch. GROANS. Nothing is going to plan. He gets up, sheepish.

FINN (CONT'D)

I'm sorry--

Finn rushes off, approaching a horde of hundreds of kids waiting to board the train. He's confused by the crowd--

FINN (CONT'D)

This is a proper mess--

KID IN CROWD

Needed to get a mediwizard off the train, so it blocked up boarding--

Finn groans. Eyes his watch, anxious. He's got to get on.

FINN

Coming through-- excuse me--

Finn inches into the mob. He realizes he's making no headway. Checks his watch: *ten minutes gone!* Frustrated, he shoves his way through-- accidentally elbowing young Marquis--

MARQUIS

Ow--

--Impressing a young Sebastian. Finn cuts through the crowd slowly but surely - and aggressively.

INT. HOGWARTS EXPRESS - DAY

Now, Finn's inside, with five minutes left. He pushes past the other kids looking for seats. He's got tunnel vision, bulldozing through bird cages and cat carriers alike--

Finn spots HARRY'S TRAIN CABIN. He runs for it!

Finn steps over Gil's luggage poking out. Can't help himself:

FINN

You should really watch where you put your luggage.

Gil is offended. But Finn cares not, as he pushes past to the next cabin, sliding the door open.

FINN (CONT'D)

Hey, I'm--

The cabin is empty. Finn looks about the train. Befuddled. He examines his wake - cat carriers toppled over, students straightening their robes, eschewed from being trampled.

Among the chaos, **Harry Potter struggles to right his owl HEDWIG in her cage**, the result of Finn knocking into them as he shoved past. Harry shoots Finn a displeased look. *Shit.*

A hand lands on Finn's shoulder.

FELLOW STUDENT (O.S.)
This seat taken?

Finn looks up to see it's eleven-year-old **Sebastian**. *Shit!* As it dawns on Finn what a huge error he's made, WE FADE TO...

OVER BLACK: *HISS-HISS-HISS.*

Finn's eyes dart open - he shudders, as if jostled awake from a terrible nightmare. His heart POUNDS with terror as he realizes: his sheets are GREEN. His owl is now a SNAKE.

FINN
(horrified)
Oh my God. I'm a SLYTHERIN!

Sebastian sits up in his bed, next to Finn's.

SEBASTIAN
I know, isn't it cool? I wake up everyday and say the same thing!

Finn looks like he might puke.

INT. HOGWARTS GREAT HALL - DAY

Finn, in his green-accented robe, scans the tables of students eating breakfast. His eyes land on the SLYTHERINS--

They POUND THE TABLE, silverware RATTLING, as they point and CACKLE at various kids from other houses.

To Finn's dismay, there's no Oswalda in sight. He looks out of a large window, towards the forest...

EXT. FOREST PATH - DAY

Finn PUSHES PAST all of the students on the path--

FINN (PRE-LAP)
Oswalda?

EXT. THE FOREST - OSWALDA'S SMOKE SHACK - DAY

Finn rushes towards Oswalda's SMOKE SHACK.

FINN

Oswalda? We've got a problem--

BANG BANG BANG!!! Finn knocks on the door. Nothing. He goes to the window, cupping his face to the glass - no veladoras.

It's ABANDONED.

His yells echo in the empty forest. He catches his skeezy Slytherin reflection in the window--

FINN (CONT'D)

What the--

INT. HOGWARTS CASTLE BATHROOM - DAY

Finn stares at his reflection in the ornate mirror. Hair slicked back, slimy. As he turns on the tap, rinsing the excessive gel out, he spots something on his arm...

Finn looks over his shoulders to make sure no one else is in there. He pulls up the sleeve of his robe to reveal: **A DARK MARK**. The official Death Eater tattoo. He quickly flips the sleeve back down.

FINN

Nooo... nope. Nope. Nope.

Finn puts both hands on the sink, steadying himself. He shakes his head, muttering to himself.

Finn rushes to the door, pushing it open fast, unaware Gil is on the other side of it. He inadvertently HITS GIL IN THE FACE. Gil falls to the floor.

FINN (CONT'D)

Gil! Thank God--

INT. HOGWARTS HALLWAY - DAY

Gil tremors, Finn standing over him. Finn realizes--

FINN

No, I know how it looks, but--

Gil gets up and TAKES OFF! Finn sprints after him--

FINN (CONT'D)

Wait! Gil--

They *whoosh* past a group of Slytherins, who applaud Finn!

SLYTHERINS

Get him!

They turn a corner--

FINN

Gil! I'm not going to hurt you!

GIL

Yeah, I've heard that one before!

They turn another corner to a dead-end. Finn closes in on Gil, who's nearly terrified to tears...

FINN

I know this is going to sound insane, but hear me out...

(beat)

You're my best friend.

Gil cocks his head, assuming Finn's mocking him.

GIL

What do you mean, I'm your best friend?

FINN

I mean...

Finn sighs, he's desperate. Looks into Gil's eyes.

FINN (CONT'D)

I mean, I'm Maverick and you're Goose and you can ride my tail anytime.

Gil's jaw drops.

FINN (CONT'D)

I feel a need...

GIL

...For speed.

A shocked Gil comes closer to Finn, realizing he's genuine. Finn, grateful, HUGS Gil. Thrilled to have his friend back.

GIL (PRE-LAP) (CONT'D)
*So is it better? Y'know, not being
 in Hufflepuff?*

EXT. HOGWARTS COURTYARD - DAY

Finn and Gil walk through the courtyard. Students shoot them odd looks - it's clear they're an unlikely pair.

FINN
 No. Not yet. But I'm going to go back - I have to, I can't be a Slytherin for the rest of my life.

GIL
 Back to being a Hufflepuff?

FINN
 Gryffindor. Hopefully, this time I'll get it right.

OSWALDA (O.S.)
 Yeah, 'cause you have such a great track record.

They look up to see Oswalda. She wears GRYFFINDOR ROBES? No nose piercing, gorgeous make-up. Her formerly frizzy hair falls in loose waves. Finn's struck by her beauty.

OSWALDA (CONT'D)
 Apparently *someone* disrupted the seating arrangements, placing Harry Potter in *my* train cabin.

FINN
 You sat next to Harry Potter?

OSWALDA
 (off Finn's gaze)
 Yeah, I know. I look hideous.

FINN
 No. You never look hideous.
 (covering)
 It's your personality.

OSWALDA
 Ha, ha.
 (realizing)
 Hey, where's the other one? You know, the wheezy one?

GIL
He... withdrew.

Finn stops in his tracks, horrified. Gil turns to Finn.

GIL (CONT'D)
You and Sebastian... it got really
bad. Sherman couldn't handle it.

Oswalda looks to Finn sympathetically. He feels terrible.

FINN
But where is he? How is he?

GIL
Actually, he's doing alright. He
was on the honors botany track,
before he withdrew. Got a job offer
from Nesbitt's in Lincolnshire.

Finn repeats what Sherman told him earlier, feeling awful:

FINN
I got in the way of a promising
career in botany...

GIL
They gave him full reign to breed a
new strain of his favorite plant...

Gil looks at Finn, assuming he knows Sherman's favorite
plant. Finn feels terrible he doesn't.

GIL (CONT'D)
You know, the cobra lily?

FINN
Right.

GIL
Anyways, cobra lilies are finicky,
they only bloom on full moons, so
he's got his hands full.

Gil can tell this is all news to Finn.

GIL (CONT'D)
How well did you say you knew
Sherman, back in the 'real world'?

FINN
We were best friends.

Gil studies Finn, a bit quizzical. Oswalda steps in.

OSWALDA

Come on. We've got to get to
Trelawney's.

FINN

But what if Snape has it?

OSWALDA

Sherman was the one bullied,
meaning Marquis wasn't, so Snape
didn't need the blind-worm's
sting... Trelawney still has it.

Finn tries to follow the logic...

OSWALDA (CONT'D)

Just trust me, okay?

Finn nods, still feeling horrible. He turns to Gil.

FINN

How awful was I? To Sherman, I
mean?

GIL

Sebastian was always the one
leading the charge.

(beat)

But you were right there with him.

Finn glimpses his reflection in the large double doors. He's
filled with horror and rage.

SEBASTIAN (PRE-LAP)

*Heard you got one of the
Hufflepuffs good this morning.*

INT. HOGWARTS GREAT HALL - DAY

Finn and Oswalda cut across the cafeteria, where students
feast on lunch. Sebastian and Bron approach excitedly.

SEBASTIAN

Took him for a little run through
the castle?

FINN

What's wrong with you?

Sebastian laughs, thinking it's a joke. Finn is stone-faced.

FINN (CONT'D)

No, seriously. You like making people miserable?

SEBASTIAN

Not sure what you're talking about.

FINN

Not sure what I'm talking about? People *withdrew* because of you.

SEBASTIAN

I think you mean, *us*.

Sebastian gets in Finn's face. Finn doesn't back down.

FINN

Is it your parents? Do they make you feel small? And doing-- *this*, it makes you feel big?

(beat)

Or is it because you know now is the only time in life an idiot like you will have any power over the smart kids?

SEBASTIAN

Think you're tough, do you?

Tensions sky-rocket. Oswalda steps in the middle.

OSWALDA

Hi, true Slytherin here. Ignore the robes, they make me want to puke, too. Let's all just take a breath--

Sebastian **SHOVES** Oswalda out of the way. Finn sees red. He **PUNCHES** Sebastian in the face, **KNOCKING HIM OUT COLD**.

Oswalda gasps. Finn is shocked, too. He stands over unconscious Sebastian - then glances at the stone-faced Slytherins around him. He grips his wand, ready to run.

Then... they **LAUGH**. The Slytherins pat Finn on the back.

SLYTHERINS

(ad-libbed)

Well done, mate... Got him good...

Finn looks around, confused.

FINN

I thought he was your friend...

They laugh again! High-fives all around! Jez approaches and plants a massive KISS on Finn's lips. Oswalda looks at Finn - *wtf?* He returns her confused look as Jez *smooches* him.

JEZ
That was brilliant.

FINN
Huh?

JEZ
Nailed it about his parents - Gryffindors. Never stopped arguing over whose fault it was their kid turned out to be a Slytherin. Nasty divorce, that was.
(beat)
He never talks about it. Told me back when we used to snog 3rd year.

Jez places Finn's uncomfortable hand on her waist. He tries to retract it, but she won't let him. Oswalda is grossed out.

JEZ (CONT'D)
I was thinking, let's go find that Hufflepuff you chased earlier.
(twirls her wand)
Got some spells I wanna practice.

Jez tries to stick her tongue down Finn's throat once more.

FINN
Okay, this is too weird, sorry.
(beat)
I thought you thought I was a freak.

JEZ
Are you kidding? I've had the hots for you since the minute I saw you, year one. You know that.

Finn is blown away. Oswalda shoots him a look-- *let's go!* He takes Jez's hands off him politely. Oswalda glares at Jez.

OSWALDA (PRE-LAP)
That girl uses a lot of tongue.

INT. HOGWARTS HALLWAY - DAY

Oswalda is high-strung as they rush to Trelawney's.

FINN

Do I hear a hint of jealousy in your voice, Ozzy?

OSWALDA

A, this is a strictly professional relationship, so no nicknames. And B, *me*, jealous of you tonguing some girl? Please.

(studies Finn)

You totally loved it, didn't you?

FINN

I thought this was a professional relationship.

OSWALDA

It is.

FINN

Then why do you care to know if I loved it?

OSWALDA

Don't act like you didn't punch Sebastian to defend my honor.

FINN

Did not.

They pass a group of students on their way to class: among them, Marquis, who carefully avoids Finn's gaze--

OSWALDA

(to Finn)

From what I've heard, you bullied Marquis year one--

Finn accidentally knocks into Lavender Brown. Oswalda watches their interaction intently - *jealous?*

LAVENDER

(hateful)

Watch where you're going.

OSWALDA

(to Finn)

Yeah, and you broke her ankle. Better luck next time, buddy.

She traces Finn's concerned puppy-dog gaze back to Lavender.

OSWALDA (CONT'D)
 Don't worry. She'll be in your arms
 soon enough.

Finn looks at Oswalda - *is she bitter?* They reach Trelawney's
 classroom - door ajar, a large class in session inside.
 Oswalda reaches to open the door, Finn stops her.

FINN
 We can't just--

OSWALDA
 --I've got a life to get back to.

INT. TRELAWNEY'S CLASSROOM - DAY

Trelawney's in the front of the packed room, waving her hands
 over a crystal ball demonstratively. Oswalda enters, making a
 beeline for the storage closet.

TRELAWNEY
 Excuse me a moment, students--

Oswalda picks up her pace, entering...

THE STORAGE CLOSET

Oswalda knows exactly which drawer to open. A frog *RIBBET-*
RIBBETS, jumping out. Oswalda grabs THE BLIND-WORMS STING...
 then someone SNATCHES IT.

TRELAWNEY (CONT'D)
 They warned me about you - a
 trouble-maker--

OSWALDA
 Harry Potter's a trouble-maker. I
 don't see you going after *him*.
 (beat)
 All I need is an ingredient for my
 potions assignment.

Oswalda tries - and fails - to snatch the blind-worm's sting.

TRELAWNEY
 And I'll be happy to give it to
 you. Once you've undergone a palm
 assessment.

Oswalda studies Trelawney's bulging, wonky, crazed eyes.

OSWALDA
 ...A palm reading?

TRELAWNEY

If you want this--
 (waves blind worm's sting)
 You'll come back after class.

She fumes as Trelawney pockets the blind-worm's sting.

OSWALDA (PRE-LAP)

That crazy old kook.

INT. HOGWARTS SPIRAL STAIRCASE - DAY

Finn and Oswalda drink butter beer on the empty steps.

FINN

I'm just happy she's not asking *why*
 we want the blind-worm's sting...

OSWALDA

Yeah, well, it's not *your* secrets
 on the line.

Finn shrugs. He bites his tongue a moment, then...

FINN

Afraid she'll find out about the
 necromancy?

OSWALDA

Everyone knows about that.

FINN

But we don't know details.

OSWALDA

You want them?

Finn nods, obviously.

OSWALDA (CONT'D)

Too bad.

FINN

How do you do it? You know, no
 friends - no offense - alone,
 trusting no one. Keeping it all in.

OSWALDA

It's what I'm good at.

FINN

I dunno what I'd do if I didn't
 have Gil or Sherman to talk with.

OSWALDA

You don't want to know about my life, trust me. No one does. They're better off with the *rumors*, the *whispers*.

(beat)

The truth would be a let-down.

FINN

Well, if you won't tell me a secret, I guess I'll tell you one.

(beat)

That was my first kiss. Earlier.

OSWALDA

Yeah, no surprise there.

Oswalda laughs, before realizing Finn's silent. Hurt.

OSWALDA (CONT'D)

See? I'm really messed up. You just told me something personal and I made fun of you, like an asshole.

FINN

It's fine. You're not an asshole.

Oswalda studies Finn. Where she's hard, he's soft. Forgiving. She takes a breath...

OSWALDA

The principal accused me of attempting to raise an inferius.

FINN

You mean like-- a zombie?

OSWALDA

Yes, like a zombie. And I did it.
(off Finn)

It was a re-animated Chihuahua. I just wanted to see if I could do it. But shit, it caused problems.

Oswalda pauses. Finn inches closer to her.

FINN

Like...?

OSWALDA

My parents were mortified. They wanted to keep the family image squeaky-clean.

(MORE)

OSWALDA (CONT'D)

So they shipped their child
psychopath off to a different
continent.

FINN

You're not a psychopath.

(beat)

And it's not your fault. You were
so young. How... *why* does a ten-
year-old try to raise the dead?

The hallway's lights flicker ominously.

OSWALDA

Because despite the magic that
surrounds us, people we love still
die. My brother. He was eight.

Oswalda wipes her eyes, trying to fight floodgate opened.

OSWALDA (CONT'D)

I thought, if I could hone my
ability...

(beat)

I just wanted him back.

Oswalda can't help her tears. She's raw, laid bare in front
of Finn. He instinctively puts an arm around her. She cries
into his chest. Finn realizes--

FINN

You have a dead brother. And we
have a time travel spell. And I
used it on *Lavender Brown*?

(beat)

God, I'm a selfish wanker.

Oswalda chuckles, wiping her tears.

OSWALDA

After the inferi incident, my
parents placed a protective spell
over my brother's spirit. To stop
his demented sister from trying to
bring him back.

FINN

So we couldn't've--

Oswalda shakes her head, *no*.

FINN (CONT'D)

Still. You have *actual* problems.
And I have... made up problems.

OSWALDA

High school's a bitch for everyone.
Especially you.

Oswalda takes a breath, sniffing. She leans in towards Finn - *for a hug* - but he thinks she's going in for a *kiss*-- for a moment, the wires get crossed, resulting in a forehead kiss.

FINN

Sorry, that was-- an accident--

OSWALDA

Yeah, forehead kiss? What are you,
my grandpa?

FINN

You had something in your hair I
was trying to get, and you, like,
came in at a weird angle-- it
wasn't a *kiss*--

OSWALDA

Right--

They sit in the awkwardness a moment.

TRELAWNEY (PRE-LAP)

Ah, young love.

INT. TRELAWNEY'S CLASSROOM - DAY

Trelawney traces a line on Oswalda's palm, the two of them
sat across from each other at her desk.

TRELAWNEY

I, too, had feelings for a fellow
student when I was at Hogwarts.
Like you, I was too proud to admit
it.

Oswalda tries to retract her palm. Trelawney holds it still.

TRELAWNEY (CONT'D)

He went on to court other witches
and I loathed him for it, the pig.
However, fate may have shifted had
I been open with my heart's desire--

OSWALDA

I don't see what that has to do
with me. Or the blind-worm's sting.

TRELAWNEY

I see you're not malevolent, my dear girl. I see that you're going to make things right.

OSWALDA

Are you... accusing me of being a good person?

Trelawney hands Oswalda the blind-worm's sting.

TRELAWNEY

Love is a powerful force. It can shift realities, alter destinies...
(beat)
Tell him how you feel.

Oswalda can't comprehend that. We PRE-LAP the CLATTERING of vials and empty beakers being poured onto a marble counter...

INT. HOGWARTS BATHROOM - DAY

Oswalda mixes the ingredients into a beaker.

FINN

So, what'd she say?

OSWALDA

A load of rubbish.

FINN

Like...

OSWALDA

That I'm a good person, for one.

FINN

Definitely rubbish.

Oswalda playfully shoves Finn.

OSWALDA

She said I need to be more open...
And... uh...

Oswalda looks at Finn. Trying to be open.

OSWALDA (CONT'D)

She said the most ridiculous stuff about, like, romance or something.

There's an electric current in the room. They both feel it.

FINN
Oh, God. That's weird.

OSWALDA
I know. I mean, me? Romance? Pshh.

Oswalda measures & mixes the ingredients. Finn draws nearer.

FINN
Did she say with who?

OSWALDA
She speaks in vagaries, you know.
So her B.S. Prophecies have a
better chance of seeming real.
(word vomit)
But I think she sort of insinuated
it was you. I mean, so stupid.

Oswalda forces a laugh. Finn doesn't laugh.

OSWALDA (CONT'D)
Oh, come on, Finn. You want to be
with Lavender. That's the whole
reason we're in this mess.

FINN
What if I... don't?

Oswalda stops laughing, realizing Finn's serious.

OSWALDA
This little time loop experiment, I
won't lie. It's been fun. But this
isn't the real world, Finn.

FINN
No, but maybe we could figure out--

OSWALDA
Are you okay being an outcast?
(beat)
Because that's what being with me
would entail.

Finn's struck by that. He can't go back to his old life.

FINN
No, I mean, I don't know *who* I'd
want to be with, really. I just--

OSWALDA
You don't like being an outsider.
And I don't like weak men.

(MORE)

OSWALDA (CONT'D)

(beat)

So *this*-- would never work.

Oswalda takes her sip of the potion, gagging at the taste.

OSWALDA (CONT'D)

Better be the last time.

(shoves potion at him)

Drink up.

Finn tries to find the right words - but can't. Guilty and conflicted, he raises the beaker to his lips.

FINN

September first, 1991, nine A.M...

Finn takes one last look at a hurt Oswalda before...

INT. KING'S CROSS STATION - LONDON - DAY

11-year-old Finn opens his eyes. Still clearly feels guilty. He hurdles towards the pillar...

INT. PLATFORM 9 3/4 - CONTINUOUS

Finn sees Lavender a few feet away, her back to him. Conflicted, he considers a beat, then walks around her.

LAVENDER

Excuse me?

Finn turns. She approaches, handing him a pack of CANDIES.

LAVENDER (CONT'D)

You dropped this.

Finn takes the candies, nods gratefully. He hesitates. Lavender lingers, looking at him, curious. He studies her.

Is this fate? Unsure, he wades in...

FINN

I'm Finn.

LAVENDER

Lavender.

Lavender notices HEADHPONES sticking out of Finn's pocket.

LAVENDER (CONT'D)

What are you listening to?

Finn can't help himself. He takes a breath - *he's doing it--*

FINN
This band... Weird sisters?

LAVENDER
(gasps)
I LOVE THEM! What's your favorite
song?

INT. HOGWARTS EXPRESS - DAY

Lavender follows Finn down the aisle excitedly.

FINN
Can You Dance Like A Hippogriff is
definitely up there...

LAVENDER
I can't believe you like *Weird
Sisters*. Nobody likes *Weird
Sisters*!

FINN
Yeah, I don't reckon they'll take
off for, say, three years?

Finn spots the empty seat near the Patil twins.

FINN (CONT'D)
Don't you want to sit there?

LAVENDER
Well, can I sit with you?

FINN
I have someone I'm sort of sitting
with already. But... see you at
Hogwarts.

Lavender sits down, smiling at Finn.

RON WEASLEY (O.S.)
You've got hand-me-down robes, too?

Finn turns to see Ron behind him. Decides to blow his mind.

FINN
Mum's always saying we've got too
many kids in our family to be
throwing away perfectly good robes.

Ron is gobsmacked.

RON
That's exactly what *my* mum says!

TROLLEY WITCH
Sweets from the trolley--

The trolley ROLLS over Finn's foot. He checks his watch. He's got two minutes: perfect timing. He steps over Gil's trunk...

THUD! Ron tumbles over it, busting his nose.

RON
Bloody hell!

FINN
I think you've got some tissues in your pocket.

Ron feels his pockets, finds the tissues gratefully. Gil helps Ron into his and Sherman's train cabin. Finn enters the next train cabin over to see **Harry Potter**.

FINN (CONT'D)
Excuse me... do you mind?
Everywhere else is full.

HARRY
Not at all.

Finn sits. Takes a moment, shocked at his luck. FADE TO BLACK

OVER BLACK: *HOOT. HOOT. HOOT.*

Finn opens his eyes, eager like a kid on Christmas morning. He sits up-- the room is RED and GOLD. Finn, awestruck, runs his hands along the Gryffindor sheets, savoring the moment.

FINN
Holy mother of--

INT. GRYFFINDOR BATHROOM - DAY

Significantly nicer than all the other house bathrooms - it's fit for royalty. Finn, in his red-and-gold accented ROBES, gels his hair as an enchanted toothbrush brushes his teeth.

NEVILLE
--God! It burns!

NEVILLE LONGBOTTOM accidentally shot toothpaste into his eye. SEAMUS FINNIGAN and DEAN THOMAS roll their eyes at him.

SEAMUS

So, Fletcher, feeling pretty good
about our chances?

Finn is in awe. The cool kids are talking to him!

FINN

(playing it cool)
Ah, sure. Yeah.
(beat)
What chances?

DEAN

(chuckles warmly)
Look at this clown. Quidditch,
hello? Match against Slytherin?

Finn's blown away. This is too good to be true--

FINN

Right. Yeah. Totally. We're
gonna... crush them...

They head for the door. Finn's unsure if he should follow--

SEAMUS

Well, come on. You're going to miss
breakfast.

Finn is so happy to be included, he could cry. He discreetly
PINCHES himself: he isn't dreaming.

INT. HOGWARTS GREAT HALL - DAY

Finn basks in sunlight that pours through the stained glass
window of GODRIC GRIFFYNDOR. Various Gryffindors high five
Finn, their joyful chatter humming in the background.

Now he's one of the beautiful people.

Finn looks up to see: Lavender striding towards him.

Finn glances around: *She's walking towards me, right?*
Lavender runs into his arms, planting a kiss on his lips.

LAVENDER

I was just talking to Parvati, and
she said Katie asked Kellah to
remind me to tell you to get me
white roses for Saturday.

FINN

Saturday?

LAVENDER

The dance...?

It hits Finn. He's going to the dance with *Lavender Brown*. His dream girl. As Lavender rattles on, he's hit by a pang of guilt. He looks at the Slytherin table...

...No sign of Oswalda.

LAVENDER (CONT'D)

Baby?

Finn brings his attention back to Lavender.

LAVENDER (CONT'D)

The roses. All the girls are doing matching. I'll be *humiliated* if you don't get the right ones.

FINN

Right. White roses.

LAVENDER

And you better win the match for me like you did last time.

FINN

I'll certainly try.

LAVENDER

Try? Come on, you're only the best player on the team...

GRYFFINDORS

Bloody right he is!... Finn!...

The Gryffindors HOOT AND HOLLER! For a glorious moment, Finn revels in the glow of their praise. Everything is awesome.

EXT. FOREST CLEARING - DAY

Hagrid feeds the Pegasus in front of a large class. Finn stands with Seamus and Dean, while Lavender, Parvati and other cool Gryffindor girls chat nearby.

SEAMUS

So I was telling this girl, you're proper fit and all, but you're a *Ravenclaw*, you know?

DEAN
 Mate, it's like, you can *hook up*
 with any girl, long as she's hot.
 Except a Hufflepuff--

Dean and Seamus SHUDDER at the thought.

DEAN (CONT'D)
 But you really should only *date* a
 Gryffindor... long as she's hot.

Finn cringes as the lads FIST-BUMP.

EXT. FOREST PATH - DAY

Finn and Lavender walk back towards the castle, flanked by
 their cool Gryffindor friends.

LAVENDER
 At first I was thinking coral, for
 the dance, then I realized - *hello*,
 it's autumn, so I'm considering a
 burgundy, maroon, or amaranth.
 (beat)
 Babe, do I do *matching* earring-
 necklace combo, or *coordinating*
 earring-necklace combo?

Lavender looks at Finn, expectantly. He's zoned out,
 processing this overwhelming mind-fuck of a day.

LAVENDER (CONT'D)
 Babe?

FINN
 Uh- um--

LAVENDER
 You never even listen to me. I
 might as well be talking to a coma
 patient at St. Mungo's!

FINN
 I'm sorry, I didn't mean to--

LAVENDER
 You're such a moron!

Well *there's* a side of Lavender Finn's never seen. Finn
 sighs, taking it. He gazes around, taking it all in.

FINN
 So this is it.

This is his life. And he doesn't feel too great about it.

EXT. HOGWARTS COURTYARD - DAY

Finn and the Gryffindors continue towards the castle for their next class. Suddenly - **an explosion!**

Finn gazes across the courtyard to see a group of HUFFLEPUFFS playing exploding snap. They're lively, laughing, unafraid to be themselves. A far cry from the too-cool Gryffindors.

Finn realizes to himself...

FINN

Houses don't matter, do they?

LAVENDER

Come again?

FINN

I mean, the house you're sorted into. It doesn't matter.

PARVATI

Believe me, *it matters*.

Finn eyes Lavender and the Gryffindors. Disillusioned.

FINN

Does anyone know where I can find Oswalda Dos Santos?

SEAMUS

Who?

FINN

Green highlights, nose piercing, chunky boots that look like she's about to ship off to war?

LAVENDER

And why would you want to know anybody like that?

The Gryffindors ROAR with laughter.

FINN

Because I've made a mistake.

At that very moment... **The SKY GOES DARK.** Inky ribbons swirl through the air, as SCREAMS ring through the courtyard! Lavender jumps up, terrified--

LAVENDER
Come on! We've got to go!

Finn follows her, and the horde of students RUSHING inside as alarm bells RING. Finn looks around the crowd, confused.

INT. HOGWARTS CASTLE - DAY

It's utter chaos as students stampede in through the double doors. SCREAMS! TEARS! TERROR! Glass breaking! Finn, Lavender, Parvati and other Gryffindors run inside--

PARVATI
Dad didn't want me and Padma to come back this year! I should've listened!

LAVENDER
My mum warned me this would happen!

FINN
Warned you *what* would happen?

LAVENDER
That *He-Who-Must-Not-Be-Named* would return to claim Hogwarts!

Finn stops in his tracks.

FINN
I'm sorry, *what*?
(beat)
Where's Harry? Isn't he supposed to... you know? Isn't this typically *his* department?

The Gryffindors look at Finn blankly.

LAVENDER
What are you talking about?
(beat)
Harry Potter died years ago.

Finn grows shaky at the knees.

FINN
Sorry, *what*?

PARVATI
During the Triwizard Tournament.

FINN
We are SO. MEGA. SCREWED.

GRYFFINDORS

(ad-lib)

Yeah...

CRASH! Busts and statues fall among the crowds.

FINN

Well, don't just stand there!
Aren't you guys supposed to be, you
know, courageous, brave, all that?

They nod.

FINN (CONT'D)

So why don't you *do* something about
this?!

Shrugs. CLANG! A chandelier comes down. They begin to RUN.

DEAN

Like what?

FINN

Like, I don't know, fight Volde--

THUD. Finn trips--

ON THE GROUND

Finn dodges stampeding feet. He's overjoyed to see: **A chunky boot.** He looks up at OSWALDA.

OSWALDA

Don't look up my skirt, perv.

FINN

No, I wasn't--

OSWALDA

Gotcha.

Oswalda helps Finn up.

FINN

A bit dire for jokes, no?

OSWALDA

Okay, how's this--

(barking at him)

WE'RE SO TOTALLY EFFED AND IT'S ALL
YOUR FAULT!

(Off Finn)

Joking.

(MORE)

OSWALDA (CONT'D)

(beat)
But only kind of.

She's happy to see him, but plays it cool. Finn can't help but smile when he's with her, even if they're all gonna die.

OSWALDA (CONT'D)

But seriously, we've got to go get the ingredients and make the potion-

Oswalda notices all the Gryffindors have stopped running to look at her. They throw stink eyes. She throws one back.

OSWALDA (CONT'D)

Can I help you?

Lavender grabs Finn away from Oswalda, angrily.

LAVENDER

Are you joking right now? That girl's social suicide.

Finn is smack-dab in the middle of Lavender and Oswalda. Each girl looks at him expectantly. He wavers-- stealing a glance at gorgeous Lavender...

Then, a glance at soulful Oswalda...

CRASH! BANG! CLANK! Tables, chairs, windows all break--

FINN

Yeah, well, sticking around here's actual suicide.

Finn grabs Oswalda's hand - to the disgust of Lavender and the Gryffindors. *They run off through the castle as...*

BOOM. BOOM. BOOOOM.

Finn looks through a giant window to see:

Voldemort, Bellatrix Lestrange and **Fenrir Greyback** apparate onto the quad, green lightning shooting from their wands. Sebastian, Jez, and their clique BOW DOWN to Voldemort.

FINN (CONT'D)

Oh God.

OSWALDA

(off Voldemort)
Botched nose job on that one.

Finn protectively grabs Oswalda, they turn a corner-- then another-- until they reach someplace QUIET.

INT. HOGWARTS HALL - DAY

Besides the chaos in the distance, the only noise here is Finn's HYPERVENTILATION. Oswalda SLAPS him across the face.

OSWALDA

Get it together.

(beat)

I don't have the other ingredients.
So we'll have to break into the
potions lab, then Trelawney's for
the blind-worm's sting.

FINN

But that'll take forever-- we don't
have enough time to do both--

Glass SHATTERS in the distance. SCREAMS! Finn shakes. They're going to die. He takes Oswalda's hand.

FINN (CONT'D)

Oswalda, in the event I irreparably
screwed the universe and we die
horribly preventable and untimely
deaths... I wanted to tell you-- I
mean, I wanted to let you know--

OSWALDA

Let me stop you there.

(beat)

I am a Slytherin, dammit, and when
the world is falling apart... we're
usually the cause of it. But when
we're not-- we don't take time for
sanguine professions of--

FINN

Professions of what? Did you have
something to profess to me?

Oswalda rolls her eyes. CLANK! SCREAMS! CRIES!

OSWALDA

Even in the apocalypse, you're
literally impossible.

GIL (O.S.)

This is worse than Jason Voorhees,
Freddy Kreuger, and the wrath of
Khan *combined*--

Finn and Oswalda turn to see a petrified GIL AND SHERMAN run in. A crying Gil babbles incessantly as Sherman just SCREAMS!

GIL (CONT'D)
 Bellatrix, she could definitely be
 one of the Heathers-- Winona
 Ryder'd do a great Bellatrix--

Finn steps in their way, stopping them.

FINN
 Thank God. Gil, Sherman, I need
 your help!

Gil stops babbling. Sherman stops screaming. Confused.

FINN (CONT'D)
 Guys?

GIL
 So you act like we don't exist for
 6 years and the first time you ever
 talk to us is when you conveniently
 need help? Yeah, no thanks.

SHERMAN
 No offense, but there's an end-of-
 days situation going on, and we're
 going to go hide until our moms
 pick us up. But good luck.

FINN
 Look, you're not going to believe
 this, but-- we're best friends.

Gil and Sherman are like - *is he on drugs?*

FINN (CONT'D)
 (to Sherman)
 Sherman, you're an amazing
 botanist. Favorite plant - cobra
 lily. But, they're finicky because
 they only bloom on a full moon.

Sherman stops in his tracks, turning to Finn.

SHERMAN
 How do you know that?

Gil continues walking - Finn grabs his shoulder.

FINN
 Okay, let's try this one again. I'm
 Maverick and you're Goose and you
 can ride my tail anytime.

Gil stops. Looks at Finn with new eyes - recognizing him.

FINN (CONT'D)
 (smiles)
 Works every time.

Gil and Sherman study Finn, slowly realizing he's for real.

FINN (CONT'D)
 You guys are my best friends. And -
 I messed up. Badly. And I don't
 deserve you, but I need you. And--

Oswalda, irritated, cuts in.

OSWALDA
 Hi, Slytherin here - we typically
 don't take time for feel-good
 speeches when genocidal maniacs are
 on the loose. Or... ever... so--
 (to Gil and Sherman)
 Are you boys in or out?

Gil and Sherman pause. They look at Finn - he's genuine.

SHERMAN
 Well, if he's our best friend...

GIL
 ...Of course we're in.

A-WOOOOO! **A werewolf's howl** rings through the hall - it's
 nearby. They all BOLT!

INT. HOGWARTS SPIRAL STAIRCASE - DAY

They RUN FOR THEIR LIVES down a spiral staircase.

OSWALDA
 Okay, you two-- you've got to break
 into the potions lab!

Sherman WHEEZES, out of breath.

SHERMAN
 Badass.

OSWALDA
 Use a *reserare* charm to get the
 vials out. Grab abraxan hair, newt
 saliva, and dead man's toe, okay?

GIL
 Got it.

OSWALDA
Meet us back at the second floor
girl's bathroom--

Gil and Sherman PEEL OFF down a hallway as Oswalda and Finn continue. They're not going fast enough, so Oswalda SLIDES down the bannister! Finn follows, sliding too--

They reach the next floor down, and run into the...

INT. HOGWARTS HALLWAY - DAY

Finn and Oswalda SPRINT past SHRIEKING Hogwarts portraits. The castle walls QUIVER!

FINN
What happened?!

OSWALDA
I should be asking *you!*

FINN
This is all my fault.

OSWALDA
You're *just* realizing that?

FINN
How did Harry Potter die?!

OSWALDA
Basically-- from what I can gather--

They turn a corner, picking up the pace--

OSWALDA (CONT'D)
You stopped Harry and Ron from meeting, but Harry and *Hermione* still met--

They reach TRELAWNEY'S CLASSROOM, run inside--

INT. TRELAWNEY'S CLASSROOM - DAY

The classroom's a MESS! Shit thrown about EVERYWHERE! They make a beeline for the STORAGE CLOSET--

OSWALDA
And since *someone* was preoccupied with Lavender Brown... there was no one to stop Hermione and Harry from getting together.

FINN

I always thought they'd be a great match--

OSWALDA

Yeah, except they broke up at the end of year 3! So she never helped him win the Triwizard tournament!

FINN

Oh my God. That dragon got him, didn't it?

IN THE STORAGE CLOSET

Oswalda and Finn rummage desperately through the drawers, throwing things around as they search.

OSWALDA

I guess Dumbledore tried to hold Voldemort off, but--

TRELAWNEY (O.S.)

Albus Dumbledore was killed this morning.

Finn and Oswalda turn to see TRELAWNEY, camouflaged to blend in with the closet. They jump!

FINN

So now I've killed two beloved wizards. Lovely, just lovely.

Trelawney eyes him suspiciously--

OSWALDA

He's joking. He's got a really odd sense of humor. Don't you, Finn?

(beat)

Professor, this is of utter importance. Do you know where your blind-worm's sting is?

TRELAWNEY

(emotional)

The death eaters. They raided my stores earlier today, took all my most potent elements.

OSWALDA

Oh, great. We're effed. Awesome.

Oswalda SLAMS a drawer to the ground. Finn realizes--

FINN

Hang on.

BACK IN THE CLASSROOM

Finn peeks his head out of the closet. He eyes the grotesque MESS left all about the room.

FINN (CONT'D)

They must have dropped a *lot* on
their way out. Come on--

Finn follows a trail of dropped, cracked bottles that zig-zags through the desks. He steps over shattered crystal balls, scattered tea leaves... to find:

The BLIND-WORM'S STING. Only a bit left in the broken bottle.

OSWALDA

We only need a pinch-- this'll have
to do--

Finn grips the bottle tightly. He and Oswalda take off...

INT. HALLWAY OUTSIDE TRELAWNEY'S CLASSROOM - DAY

Only to find Sebastian and Jez waiting for them, wands drawn.

SEBASTIAN

Hand it over.

FINN

We don't have anything--

JEZ

Hand. It. Over.

Oswalda takes a moment. Looks knowingly at Finn.

OSWALDA

Should we tell them?

A flicker of confusion passes over Finn before he catches on.

FINN

I'm not sure they're trustworthy.

SEBASTIAN

(raising his wand)
Tell us what?

Oswalda looks to Finn, who studies Sebastian. Finn nods.

OSWALDA

Fine.

(takes a dramatic breath)
I'm working under direct orders
from the Dark Lord to deliver him
the Blind-Worm's sting.

Jez cackles. She raises her wand at Oswalda.

JEZ

Well *that's* a load of shit.

Finn takes a protective step in front of Oswalda.

FINN

It's true. And I can prove it.
(beat)
Due to my close, trusted
relationship with him, the Dark
Lord has given me mind-reading
abilities.

Sebastian and Jez are thrown - unsettled--

SEBASTIAN

Well, then, prove it--

FINN

You.

Finn places his hands on his temples, putting on a show.

FINN (CONT'D)

Your parents, they're both
Gryffindors. Aren't they?

SEBASTIAN

(defensive)
Anyone could know that.

FINN

And you being in Slytherin, it
brought a lot of shame. Didn't it?
(beat)
Yes. You brought them so much
shame, so many problems, the
marriage couldn't withstand it...
(beat)
They divorced because of you.

SEBASTIAN

DID NOT!

OSWALDA
 (under her breath)
 Someone get this guy in therapy.

Jez knows that's the truth. She's stunned.

JEZ
 What about me? Prove it to me.

Finn steps closer to Jez.

FINN
 You don't want me to repeat the
 filthy things on your mind.

Jez fights a wicked smile--

FINN (CONT'D)
 You've had the hots for me since
 day one.

JEZ
 Uh, no-- that's not true--

Finn steps closer. Jez puts her wand down. Finn SMOOCHES her.

OSWALDA
 (annoyed)
 Are we done here?

Finn and Jez break apart. Jez, flushed, giggles like a schoolgirl with a crush. She nods, *you can go*, before winking at Finn. She mouths: *call me*.

Finn and Oswalda don't waste a minute, they rush off--

JEZ
 (to Sebastian)
 You think the Dark Lord might give
 us mind reading powers, too?

BACK WITH FINN AND OSWALDA

They gallop as fast as they can, full-speed ahead.

SEBASTIAN (O.S.)
Impedimenta!

Sebastian SHOOTS A SPELL at them. Oswalda sees it in the nick of time, shouting back at him--

OSWALDA
 Protego!

Sebastian's spell bounces back - he falls to the ground, then thrusts his wand towards them-- SHOOTING another spell out!

THE WHOLE CASTLE SHAKES--

Finn SHOOTS A SPELL at Sebastian, who matches his force in a deadlock. The two are engaged in a SPELL BATTLE, grunting--

FINN

Keep going-- make the potion! Go back and make things normal!

OSWALDA

You're the only one who can do that!

The CASTLE SHAKES AGAIN -- a PILLAR COMES DOWN--

Sebastian jumps out of the way as the ceiling crumbles. The fallen pillar now separates them-- Finn and Oswalda RUN!

INT. HOGWARTS SPIRAL STAIRCASE - DAY

They run up the staircase, as terrified students sprint down!

INT. HOGWARTS SECOND FLOOR GRAND HALL - DAY

Oswalda and Finn weave through a frenzy of students and professors, as both SCREAMS and EVIL CACKLES echo!

BELLATRIX (O.S.)

AVADA KEDAVRA!

SCREAMS! Pieces of the castle come down around them as they set their sights on THE SECOND FLOOR GIRL'S BATHROOM.

GIL AND SHERMAN sprint towards them from the other side of the hall-- avoiding the chaos, the hooded death eaters shooting spells indiscriminately into the crowd...

Finn and Oswalda DUCK behind a couch, dodging a spell--

FINN

I did this.

(beat)

I did this so I could get out of Hufflepuff, away from my friends, who are risking their lives for me right now...

(beat)

I'm a horrible person.

OSWALDA

You're not horrible, you're *selfish*-

As they get up, Oswalda SLIDES through a puddle of blood--

OSWALDA (CONT'D)

No wait, that's not it. Naive!

(that's right)

You're *naive*. You thought it'd all be better if you had this, or that, if you dated this girl, were friends with that guy--

They rush towards the bathroom, a mere few feet away--

OSWALDA (CONT'D)

But that's just not true! It's never true--

A death eater raises his wand at Oswalda-- Finn immediately shoots a spell at him, *knocking him out cold*. Oswalda grins.

OSWALDA (CONT'D)

That was hot.

They rush into the bathroom--

INT. SECOND FLOOR GIRL'S BATHROOM - DAY

Oswalda and Finn stumble in, slamming the door behind them.

FINN

Gil? Sherman?

SHERMAN

(terrified)

Yeah...

They wade deeper into the massive bathroom to REVEAL: Sebastian holds his wand trained on Sherman and Gil.

SEBASTIAN

What the bloody hell is going on?

FINN

Put the wand down.

Oswalda sees Sherman's satchel, full of ingredients, on the floor. She quietly inches towards it - Sebastian turns, violently, to train his wand on her!

FINN (CONT'D)
 The thing about bullies, Sebastian?
 They need followers.

While Sebastian's attention is focused on Finn, Gil slowly, discreetly reaches towards his pocket... Oswalda inches closer to the bag...

FINN (CONT'D)
 And look around. You're outnumbered.

GIL
Expelliarmus!

Sebastian's wand goes FLYING out of his hands! He looks about the room, fear invading his face. Suddenly - he runs out. The castle SHAKES! BOOM! BOOM! BOOM! As war wages within its walls. DUST falls from the bathroom ceiling--

MOANING MYRTLE (O.S.)
*Here I am, minding my own business,
 and Voldemort decides to attack!*

The group turns to see MOANING MYRTLE emerge from her stall. Oswalda rolls her eyes, mixing the potion rapidly--

OSWALDA
 It's not like you can die *again*,
 Myrtle.
 (beat)
 Unfortunately.

BOOM! BOOM! THUD! THUD!

SHERMAN
 Yeah, this old girl's coming down.

GIL
 This old girl as in Hogwarts
 castle?!

The potion FIZZES. Finn reaches for it-- she swats him away.

OSWALDA
 Ladies first--

Oswalda takes her sip -- hands the rest to Finn--

OSWALDA (CONT'D)
 Take it! Quick!

Finn turns to his friends and Oswalda to say goodbye.

FINN
 I should've appreciated you.
 (beat)
 Thank you.

Finn DOWNS THE POTION.

FINN (CONT'D)
 September first, 1991, nine A.M...

He blinks. And suddenly--

INT. KING'S CROSS STATION - LONDON - DAY

Finn's back at King's cross. He's alive. He's safe.

Finn takes a grateful breath, leaning on his cart. After a beat, he glides calmly into the pillar...

INT. PLATFORM 9 3/4 - DAY

Finn spots Lavender a few feet away. He glances at his cart - *nah*. He merely walks towards her.

FINN
 Hey, I'm Finn. Nice to meet you.

Lavender smiles.

LAVENDER
 Lavender. You catching the train?

INT. HOGWARTS EXPRESS - DAY

Finn and Lavender walk up the aisle, with Ron behind them. Lavender spots a seat with the Patil twins--

RON
 You've got hand-me-down robes, too?

FINN
 Hey, nice hair.

Ron realizes they have the same shade of red. He smiles.

RON
 Ron. Ron Weasley.

FINN
 Finn Fletcher.

Finn's distracted as the SWEETS TROLLEY rolls over his foot.

TROLLEY WITCH
Sweets from the trolley!

Finn winces, hobbling about. Something catches his eye:

11-year-old Oswalda, sitting alone. Finn stops.

FINN
Hi. I'm Finn... want to come sit
with me and my friends?

Oswalda hesitates - obviously surprised he asked. Finn offers
a kind smile.

OSWALDA
Sure.

Oswalda gets up and joins Finn and Ron in the aisle.

THEY REACH GIL AND SHERMAN'S CABIN

Loud self-made SOUND EFFECTS arise from within. Finn
carefully avoids the trunk sticking out of the door.

FINN
You lads have room?

Gil and Sherman pause their game of exploding snap. Look up
to see Finn, Oswalda, and Ron.

GIL
Yeah! Might be tight, we can
squeeze. We were about to watch a
movie, actually--

RON
A movie?

GIL
They're these muggle things, sort
of like real life but with less
magic.

Oswalda and Finn cram into the packed cabin.

RON
Think you have room for one more?

A flash of panic crosses Finn's face--

FINN
The next cabin over, there's a kid
sitting alone.

RON
Alright.

FINN
But, why don't you come back for a
game of cards later?

Ron nods, happy to be included.

RON
Cool. I'll be back.

Ron continues on to Harry's train cabin. Gil looks at
Sherman, Finn, and Oswald.

GIL
Anyone wanna play exploding snap?

FINN
I love exploding snap!

As Gil deals the cards excitedly... We FADE TO BLACK.

OVER BLACK: *HOOT. HOOT. HOOT.*

Finn cautiously opens one eye, holding his breath. Then the
other. He glances about the room... *an acne-riddled kid. A
boy in orthodontic headgear. A boy with an anime wizard porn
magazine peeking out of his sheets.*

Finn is emotional, overcome with gratitude. He leaps up,
walking to the space between Gil's and Sherman's beds.

FINN (CONT'D)
Gil-- Sherman--

GIL
(groggy)
What?

SHERMAN
(groggy)
Bugger off--

FINN
We're best friends, right?

Gil shoots Finn a weirded out look. Sherman yawns.

SHERMAN
Yeah, so?

Finn's eyes well with happy tears.

INT. HUFFLEPUFF BATHROOM - DAY

Gil removes his headgear as Sherman spritzes on cologne and an enchanted toothbrush brushes Finn's teeth.

FINN

And, Harry Potter, he's still
alive?

GIL

Sorry, are you having a stroke?

INT. HOGWARTS GREAT HALL - DAY

Finn happily chows down among his fellow Hufflepuffs.

FINN

Dumbledore's okay too, right? Still
kicking?

SHERMAN

Uh, yeah...

GIL

What's going on with you?

Finn doesn't know where to begin. He starts, unsure...

FINN

You know how in *Back to the Future*,
Marty goes into the past, and at
first he kinda messes everything
up, but then he actually makes
things *better* than they were?

GIL

You watched *Back to the Future*?

Gil is touched.

SHERMAN

You've only recommended it to him,
like, a million times.

GIL

So, if you're saying you're Marty
McFly, does that mean everything
worked out alright?

FINN

Look around. I'm here. With you
guys. And we're--

SEBASTIAN (PRE-LAP)
Hufflepuffs!

We PRE-LAP LAUGHTER...

EXT. FOREST PATH - DAY

Gil and Sherman freeze, fearful, as unbothered students trod down the path to Hagrid's class. Finn turns to see:

Sebastian thundering towards them, Jez and Bron by his side.

SEBASTIAN
 (sniffs)
 You wearing cologne, hufflepuff?
 Got a hot date tonight?

JEZ
 Yeah, a hot date with his *mom*.

The Slytherins CACKLE.

FINN
 Wow, good one. Real apex of comedy
 right here.

Sebastian is thrown by Finn's confidence.

SEBASTIAN
 What'd you say, Hufflepuff?

Sebastian steps towards Finn, menacing. Students en route to class stop to watch the fight. Finn steps towards Sebastian.

FINN
 Look, Sebastian. I know you're
 going to say something about how
 we're such losers, or make fun of
 me for having a crush on Lavender,
 or whatever. You want me to be
 scared of you.

Finn's fear is gone. Sebastian steals an uneasy glance at his sidekicks-- at the crowd of students--

FINN (CONT'D)
 But truth is, I feel bad for you.

SEBASTIAN
 Hah! *You*, feel bad for *me*?

FINN

Come on, man. You're angry. Things aren't good at home. Your parents blame you for things beyond your control. They don't accept you.

(beat)

You think you need to be feared. But, I think you actually just need love. And friendship. And I hope you find it.

Sebastian is cut off at the knees and Finn knows it. As Finn turns to leave, Gil and Sherman swarm him, now unafraid.

GIL

That was wicked!

SHERMAN

Who's got a date with his mom *now*?

FINN

So not the point, Sherman.

Finn, Gil, and Sherman continue their way to class. Jez watches Finn as he walks away.

JEZ

That was so sexy.

EXT. FOREST CLEARING - DAY

Hagrid feeds the Pegasus an apple in front of the class. Finn, Gil, and Sherman stand in the back.

A manicured hand brushes Finn's shoulder. He turns - surprised to see Lavender.

FINN

You're not in this class..

Finn's afraid he messed something up. Lavender laughs.

LAVENDER

No. I saw what happened, earlier. With Sebastian. It was brilliant.

FINN

Oh, thanks. Someone had to do it.

LAVENDER

I was wondering... do you have any plans for Saturday?

(MORE)

LAVENDER (CONT'D)

(beat)

You know, the dance?

Lavender bats her eyelashes at him. Gil and Sherman, unbeknownst to Lavender, make hand motions like *DAMMMMN BRO!*

FINN

Aren't you and Ron-- you're dating Ron Weasley, right?

LAVENDER

What? No.

(beat)

Okay, you caught me. I have a thing for redheads. But between the two of you, you're way better looking.

FINN

Say *what?*

LAVENDER

It's like, a nuanced handsome, not obvious. Hell, if I'd never seen you two side-by-side I wouldn't have noticed. But since you're always together with those weekly game nights--

FINN

(realizing)

Right... Exploding snap...

LAVENDER

So, what do you say?

Finn's shocked. He pauses, unsure of what to do.

FINN

Look, you're amazing. And there are guys out there who would literally risk the future of the entire world for you. I'm sure of it.

(beat)

But I have feelings for someone else.

Lavender is taken aback. Finn looks at her, apologetic.

LAVENDER

No, no, it's okay. Sorry. I'm just not used to getting rejected.

FINN

Ron's a great guy.

Lavender thinks about it, considering.

FINN (CONT'D)

And I know someone who could hook you up with some amorentia, if you want.

A smile creeps across Lavender's face, idea forming. She leaves, as Gil and Finn look at Finn--

GIL

Dude, you turned down *Lavender*?

SHERMAN

Kind of a boss move.

FINN

I have someone else in mind.

SHERMAN

Who?

GIL

Who?

Finn smiles.

CUT TO:

INT. HOGWARTS BALLROOM - NIGHT

WEIRD SISTERS music BLASTS through the room as enchanted streamers twirl around the ceiling and a magical punch bowl serves students by itself.

The room is a who's who of social ranking - Gryffindors stick with Gryffindors, Ravenclaws with Ravenclaws.

ON THE DANCE FLOOR

Oswalda, freaky as ever in her combat boots and gothic black lace dress, sticks out horribly. She dances wildly by herself as other students avoid her like the plague.

Lavender, dancing with Ron, says loudly to Parvati, dancing with Seamus--

LAVENDER

(re: Oswalda)

God, what a pathetic case.

AT THE ENTRANCE

Finn enters, dashing in a suit. As he wades into the dance, kids from all houses give nods of approval and fist-bumps.

Marquis pats him on the back.

MARQUIS

I doubt Sebastian's going to be
bothering you again anytime soon.

Finn nods, Marquis smiles. Finn spots Oswaldalda - then he sees how everyone looks at her. She's a bonafide outcast.

AT THE PUNCHBOWL

The punchbowl serves Finn a glass. Lavender approaches.

LAVENDER

I don't see your date.

Finn eyes Oswaldalda once more - dancing like a true weirdo--

FINN

Uh--

Finn turns to Lavender, looking at him expectantly.

FINN (CONT'D)

She's right there.

Lavender traces his line of sight to the dance floor. A few feet from Oswaldalda is HERMIONE GRANGER.

LAVENDER

Viktor Krum's ex? Well done.

FINN

No...

(pointing at Oswaldalda)

Right there.

Lavender chokes on her punch at the sight of Oswaldalda.

LAVENDER

You must be joking.

Oswaldalda, across the room, turns to see Finn.

LAVENDER (CONT'D)

(loudly)

You turned me down for OSWALDA DOS
SANTOS?

A crowd of nearby students GASP! One by one, they turn their heads toward Finn. Finn, hyper-conscious of the attention--

FINN

...Yes.

Oswalda continues to dance. Despite all the eyes on him, Finn starts to dance, too. Stiff, at first.

LAVENDER

You turned me down for that FREAK?

FINN

Yeah, and I'd do it again.

Oswalda smiles. As wide, scandalized eyes follow him, Finn dances towards Oswalda, mirroring her freaky movements.

Gil senses an opportunity. As Finn dances, Gil RACES to...

THE DJ BOOTH

Where he PLEADS with the DJ--

GIL

Come on, you *have* to--

Sherman reaches the booth, backing his friend up--

SHERMAN

I know it sounds weird, but he explained the whole plot to me and it really is fitting--

The too-cool DJ sighs, waving his wand over his turntable--

AT THE DANCE FLOOR

(I've Had) The Time of My Life from *Dirty Dancing* plays. Finn and Oswalda dance closer towards each other, to the horror of students and professor-chaperones alike. It's clear this is so very lame and uncool.

Oswalda and Finn RUSH TOWARDS EACH OTHER, and OSWALDA JUMPS INTO FINN'S ARMS! They do a DIRTY DANCING SPIN!

Gil, now at the edge of the floor, FLIPS A SHIT!

GIL

Art imitates life! Ahh!!

AS THEY SPIN-- Oswalda and Finn's faces are close, intimate. Oswalda giggles as he puts her down. She holds his hand...

OSWALDA

So are we, like, trauma-bonded?

FINN

Even if we weren't... you're fun.
You're fearless. You just-- you
just rock, if you haven't noticed--

OSWALDA

I have--

FINN

And I don't know why it took living
in four different universes to see
you had it right all along.

(beat)

Or to realize that... I, you know--

(beat)

I love you.

Oswalda takes Finn's face in her hands and KISSES HIM.

OSWALDA

Grand professions of love just feel
better when they're in front of a
crowd of haters.

IN THE CROWD

Snape shoos the weirded-out students towards the dance floor.

SNAPE

(dead serious, unhappy)

Go. Dance. Enjoy yourselves. Or
suffer the consequences.

Students uncomfortably filter back onto the dance floor...

ON THE DANCE FLOOR

Finn and Oswalda slow-dance among other couples. Of all
people, **HARRY POTTER** shuffles by, patting Finn on the back--

HARRY

Well done, mate.

(beat)

You on for a game of snap this
week?

FINN

Sure.

Oswalda leads Finn towards...

THE REFRESHMENTS TABLE

Gil, Sherman, Finn, and Oswalda use magic to toss peanuts ten feet in the air then catch them in their mouths, in competition. They OVERHEAR LAUGHTER...

GRYFFINDOR (O.S.)

Hah. Look at those Hufflepuff losers.

Oswalda raises an eyebrow at Finn.

OSWALDA

What do you say, should we go back and make sure he's sorted into Hufflepuff?

FINN

Tempting.

Finn puts an arm over Oswalda. She leans into his chest.

FINN (CONT'D)

But I'm done with the past.

(beat)

I like the way things are right here. Right now.

OSWALDA

God, you're corny.

GIL

I, for one, enjoy being a loser.

SHERMAN

Well, my mum says there's no such thing as losers.

FINN

Your mum's right.

(to Oswalda)

'Cause if I'm a loser with you--

(turns to his friends)

And I get to hang out with losers

like you--

(beat)

Aren't I a *winner*?

Oswalda and Finn exchange a loving look as CLOSING TIME by Semisonic plays. Oswalda inches closer; Finn takes her hand.

OSWALDA

I hate to say it, but it seems like the rest of Hogwarts is going to be pretty great.

FINN

Seriously. I've got the best friends, and the best girl in the whole world-- it's smooth sailing from here.

(beat)

What could possibly go wrong?

Finn leans in, Oswalda meets him halfway. They kiss - a *Hufflepuff* love story indeed.

We pan through the happy ballroom and out into the glistening sky above Hogwarts castle. **BOOM!** Among the clouds: a giant, ominous skull - the DARK MARK, the universally known harbinger of terror and suffering: of *Voldemort*.

GIL (O.S.)

Hey guys, you see that? In the sky--

The 90's-teen-rom-com-evoking, sing-at-the-top-of-your-lungs chorus of CLOSING TIME drowns out Gil's concerns.

THE END