

Rev. 09/13/07 (Blue)
Rev. 10/02/07 (Pink)
Rev. 11/06/07 (Yellow)

HARRY POTTER AND THE HALF-BLOOD PRINCE

screenplay by
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based on the novel by J.K. Rowling

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WARNER BROS. PICTURES INC.
4000 Warner Boulevard
Burbank, California 91522

August 28, 2007
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DARKNESS.

THUNDER -- or something like it -- sounds in the distance.

BOOM. Then again. BOOM.

We GLIDE THROUGH the inky blackness. Ambient flashes illuminate the silhouette of the WB LOGO. We PASS THROUGH.

INTO more darkness. Lost. More FLASHES. And we --

CUT TO:

A SINGLE EYE

Blank behind glasses. FLASH! The PUPIL CONTRACTS and we --

CUT TO:

1 INT. MINISTRY OF MAGIC - ATRIUM - WIDER ANGLE - DAY 1

To find... HARRY POTTER, standing numbly beside ALBUS DUMBLEDORE amidst a MOB of REPORTERS. CAMERAS FLASH. Dumbledore's hand finds his shoulder and Harry is moving, drifting through the chaos, Dumbledore protective, graceful, dignified.

CLOSEUP - HARRY'S GLASSES

His eyes dart from side to side. The lenses glimmer with abstraction. We --

DISSOLVE INTO:

2 EXT. LONDON OFFICE BUILDING - CONFERENCE ROOM - DAY 2

... glass, a window, its surface prickling with another kind of ambient light. We are looking INTO a conference room where office workers sit around a table. But the light has caught one worker's eye, then another, and soon they are all rising, stepping to the window, mesmerized by what lies beyond.

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2 CONTINUED:

2

WORKERS' POV - LONDON SKYLINE

Blood-red and stormy. A VORTEX of CLOUDS -- strangely ominous -- hangs high in the sky, flashing from within, as if about to rain blood over the city. We --

CUT INTO:

THE STORM

itself and...

... PLUMMET, London expanding, stretching out on all sides. We SWEEP madly OVER Charing Cross, leaving the Muggle world behind and SWOOP INTO...

3 EXT. DIAGON ALLEY - DAY

3

... Diagon Alley just as the front window of OLLIVANDER'S WAND SHOP EXPLODES. Witches and wizards flee. In the drifting smoke, DEATH EATERS appear, accompanied by a tall, sinewy beast of a man, FENRIR GREYBACK. With a casual sweep of his hand he sends a wizard flying and a witch screams. In deep b.g., two Death Eaters abduct a SHROUDED FIGURE (Ollivander). Greyback grins, then APPARATES, along with the others...

... leaving Diagon Alley behind. The streets of London appear below once more, and then the river. Black trails -- the Death Eaters -- streak across the sky and then turn TRANSLUCENT as they encircle the MILLENNIUM BRIDGE. Pedestrians peer upward, bewildered, sensing a shift in the atmosphere. And then...

The BRIDGE CRUMBLES into the THAMES, the image horrifyingly beautiful, as is the SOUND of it, a ROAR, a wail, the last cry of a lion. Then the image begins to FADE and all goes slowly SILENT, until only a WHISTLING WIND is heard and...

4 EXT. MILL TOWN - LATE AFTERNOON

4

... tall grasses toss dreamily in a SLANTING RAIN. An OLD MILL lists like an ancient ruin against a charcoal sky. A DARK FIGURE (NARCISSA MALFOY) MATERIALIZES. As she turns for the town in the distance, another witch materializes: BELLATRIX LESTRANGE.

*

BELLATRIX

Narcissa!

5 EXT. SPINNER'S END - LATE AFTERNOON (MOMENTS LATER) 5

Like a rat in a maze, Narcissa makes her way through a labyrinth of dilapidated brick houses. Bellatrix trails.

BELLATRIX

Cissy! You mustn't do this. He can't be trusted.

NARCISSA

The Dark Lord trusts him.

BELLATRIX

The Dark Lord is mistaken.

Narcissa turns, shocked. Bellatrix looks shocked herself, *rain running down her cheeks*.

*

BELLATRIX

Or so I believe.

NARCISSA

Well, who *can* one trust these days?

6 INT. MILL HOUSE - SAME TIME - LATE AFTERNOON 6

Grim and dark, lit by guttering candles. *RAIN drums the roof eerily*. A KNOCKER CLANGS. A SQUAT MAN SHUFFLES forth, something familiar in his gait.

*

*

7 EXT. HOUSE (SPINNER'S END) - SAME TIME - LATE AFTERNOON 7

The door cracks, spilling sallow light onto Narcissa and Bellatrix. A face: WORMTAIL.

8 INT. HALLWAY - LATE AFTERNOON (MOMENTS LATER) 8

The sisters follow Wormtail down a narrow hallway.

BELLATRIX

He *lives* in this Muggle dunghill?

Wormtail glowers over his shoulder at her. They pass into...

9 INT. MILL HOUSE - SITTING ROOM - LATE AFTERNOON (MOMENTS LATER) 9

... a room where a MAN sits by the window *running with RAIN*, his face hidden by the *Daily Prophet*.

*

*

(CONTINUED)

9

CONTINUED:

9

On the front page is a PHOTOGRAPH of the MILLENNIUM BRIDGE CRASHING INTO THE THAMES. But even more prominent is the SILHOUETTE of a YOUNG WIZARD and a HEADLINE:

HARRY POTTER: THE CHOSEN ONE?
Young Wizard Destined to Kill You-Know-Who?

The paper drops and SEVERUS SNAPE eyes the women curiously.

SNAPE
Run along, Wormtail.

10

INT. MILL HOUSE - SITTING ROOM - LATE AFTERNOON (MOMENTS LATER) 10

Snape fills the last of three goblets with wine.

NARCISSA
I've nowhere else to turn,
Severus.

Snape hands her a goblet, extends one to Bellatrix.

BELLATRIX
You must be joking.

Snape smiles faintly, brings the goblet to his own lips.

NARCISSA
I know I ought not to be here.
The Dark Lord himself has
forbidden me to speak of this --

SNAPE
If the Dark Lord has forbidden it,
you ought not to speak.
(eyes shifting)
Put it down, Bella. We mustn't
touch what isn't ours.

Bellatrix, DARK CURIO in hand, glowers, sets it back down.

SNAPE
As it so happens I'm aware of your
situation, Narcissa.

BELLATRIX
You? The Dark Lord told you?

SNAPE
Your sister doubts me, Narcissa.
Understandable.

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

SNAPE (CONT'D)

Over the years I have played my part well. So well I've deceived one of the greatest wizards of all time.

Bellatrix makes a scathing sound. Snape turns, eyes hard.

 SNAPE

Dumbledore is a great wizard. Only a *fool* would question it.

 NARCISSA

I... I don't doubt you, Severus.

 BELLATRIX

You should feel honored, Cissy. As should Draco --

 NARCISSA

He's just a boy!

 SNAPE

I can't change the Dark Lord's mind. But it might be possible for me to help Draco. To provide some... protection.

Bellatrix eyes Snape keenly.

 NARCISSA

Do you mean it, Severus?

 SNAPE

I can try.

 NARCISSA

Oh, Severus, *please, if you would... (I would be forever in your debt.)*

*
*

 BELLATRIX

Swear to it.

Snape's eyes shift, meet Bellatrix's challenging gaze.

 BELLATRIX

Make the Unbreakable Vow.
(as Snape looks away)
You see. It's just empty words. Oh he'll *try*. He'll give it his best effort. But when it matters most he'll slither back into his hole. Bloody coward...

10

CONTINUED: (2)

10

Bellatrix goes on MUTTERING as she splashes some wine into a goblet. Snape turns back, anger flashing in his eyes.

SNAPE

Take out your wand.

Bellatrix freezes, goblet to her lips. As she lowers it, a rivulet of red runs out of the corner of her mouth.

NEW ANGLE - MOMENTS LATER

Snape faces Narcissa. Bellatrix, hand faintly trembling, places the tip of her wand over their LINKED hands.

BELLATRIX

Will you, Severus Snape, watch over Draco Malfoy as he attempts to fulfill the Dark Lord's wishes.

SNAPE

I will.

A SINGLE STRAND of LIQUID FIRE issues from Bellatrix's wand and wends its way around their hands.

BELLATRIX

And will you, to the best of your ability, protect him from harm?

SNAPE

I will.

A SECOND STRAND of FIRE intertwines with the first.

BELLATRIX

And should it prove necessary, if it seems Draco will fail... will you yourself carry out the deed that the Dark Lord has ordered Draco to perform?

Snape's hand TWITCHES within Narcissa's. Bellatrix waits.

SNAPE

I will.

11

EXT. LONDON UNDERGROUND - NIGHT

11

A TRAIN blasts through the station.

12

EXT. "TREATS" FOOD STAND - SAME TIME - NIGHT

12

Late. Lonely men and women loiter on the platform. At a food stand, patrons grimly read their TABLOID of choice. CAMERA TRACKS PAST *The Daily Mail*, *The Sun*, *The Mirror* -- LANDS ON... the *Daily Prophet*. The SILHOUETTE. The HEADLINE: "HARRY POTTER: THE CHOSEN ONE?"

But the (unseen) reader is fixated on a SMALLER ITEM, tucked at the bottom corner of the back page: "Malfoy Sentenced to Azkaban." TWO PHOTOGRAPHS accompany the piece, one of LUCIUS MALFOY, another of Narcissa and DRACO MALFOY as they exit a courtroom. Draco's eyes look distant, haunted.

WAITRESS (O.S.)

Harry Potter. Who's Harry Potter?

The paper drops, reveals... Harry. He glances up at the YOUNG WAITRESS who stands over him. Pretty. Very pretty.

HARRY

Oh. Um. No one. Bit of a tosser.

As she leans over to clear his chips wrappings, Harry's gaze drifts over the smooth skin of her neck, the spray of freckles across one cheek...

WAITRESS

Funny that paper of yours. Couple nights ago, I could swear I saw one of the pictures move.

HARRY

Really.

WAITRESS

Thought I'd gone round the twist.

She makes a face, smiles. A smile to die for. Starts to go.

HARRY

Hey. I was wondering...

WAITRESS

Eleven. That's when I get off.
(the smile)
You can tell me all about that tosser Harry Potter.

Harry watches her go, then quickly reaches into his coat and fumbles out a S'Mints container. Just then...

(CONTINUED)

12

CONTINUED:

12

... a LIGHT on the opposite PLATFORM FLICKERS. Harry looks. It FLICKERS again and this time a small cloud of GLITTERING DUST dances over the opposite platform. As a TRAIN ROARS past, Harry squints through the flickering windows and watches the dust transform into... ALBUS DUMBLEDORE. Leveling his glasses, he peers across the platform, smiles and gives Harry a wave.

13

EXT. OPPOSITE PLATFORM - NIGHT (MOMENTS LATER)

13

As Harry arrives, he finds Dumbledore studying a PERFUME ADVERTISEMENT which shows a MODEL with a WAND in her teeth: "Tonight Make a Little Magic With Your Man."

DUMBLEDORE

I once knew a Muggle girl from
Liverpool with hair like spun
silk. No light could resist it...

(turning)

You've been reckless this summer,
Harry.

HARRY

I like riding round on the trains.
It takes my mind off... things.

Harry hesitates, notices Dumbledore's hand is ASH BLACK.

DUMBLEDORE

Rather unpleasant to behold, isn't
it? The tale is thrilling if I do
say so myself, but I'm afraid now
is not the time to tell it. Take
my arm.

(extending it)

Do as I say.

Harry glances across the platform, sees the freckled Waitress appear, eye his empty table. Slowly, he reaches out and -- instantly -- all goes BLACK in a RUSH of SOUND and FURY, as if Harry had been pitched headlong into a tornado. Seconds later...

14

EXT. VILLAGE SQUARE - NIGHT (MOMENTS LATER)

14

... he re-emerges into the world, reeling, eyes stinging with tears. Slowly, his planet stops spinning.

HARRY

I just Apparated, didn't I?

(CONTINUED)

14

CONTINUED:

14

DUMBLEDORE

Indeed. And quite successfully I might add. Most people vomit their first time.

HARRY

Can't imagine why...

NEW ANGLE - MOMENTS LATER

Dumbledore leads Harry up a steep narrow street lined with darkened houses.

DUMBLEDORE

Welcome to the charming village of Budleigh Babberton, Harry. I assume right about now you're wondering why I've brought you here, am I right?

HARRY

(glancing about)
After all these years, I just sort of roll with it, sir.

Dumbledore smiles mildly, then pauses, his face darkening. Before them stands a SMALL STONE HOUSE. But something is wrong about the place.

DUMBLEDORE

Wand out, Harry.

15

INT. SLUGHORN'S HOUSE - SAME TIME - NIGHT

15

THROUGH a crack in the front door: Dumbledore and Harry move swiftly up the walk and enter.

DUMBLEDORE

Lumos...

The tip of Dumbledore's WAND BLAZES. He sweeps the shadows. CALLS OUT.

DUMBLEDORE

Horace!

Nothing. Dumbledore points his wand down a NARROW HALLWAY. Motes of dust dance in the wandlight, but nothing else. He starts down the hallway, toward the OPEN DOORWAY at its end. Slowly, the room beyond comes INTO VIEW:

16

INT. SLUGHORN'S HOUSE - SITTING ROOM - NIGHT

16

Utter devastation. A GRANDFATHER CLOCK lays upon the floor, its face cracked. A PIANO sags in the corner, keys strewn like teeth upon the rug. A copy of the *Daily Prophet* trembles in the breeze from a half-open window. As Harry looks, a DROP of something WET strikes the word "CHOSEN." His gaze rises.

He GASPS. A substance DARK and GLUTINOUS is spattered upon the ceiling. Dumbledore raises his wand. The ceiling SCREAMS RED. Another drop falls and this one strikes Harry's SCAR. As Harry moves to wipe it away, Dumbledore grabs his hand.

Training his light on Harry's forehead, Dumbledore flicks a blackened finger over the scar. Brings it to his tongue. Reacts. Turning, his eyes narrow on an OVERSTUFFED ARMCHAIR. Moving to it, he JABS his wand into the plump seat cushion.

ARMCHAIR

Merlin's Beard!

Instantly, the Armchair mutates into HUMAN FORM, though briefly gets caught inbetween. After a bit of GRUMBLING, SEAM-SPLITTING and the POPPING of a cushion button or two, a FAT OLD MAN (HORACE SLUGHORN) in a pair of WELL-WORN lilac pajamas appears.

SLUGHORN

(rubbing his rump)

There's no need to disfigure me, Albus!

DUMBLEDORE

I must say, you make a very convincing armchair, Horace.

SLUGHORN

It's all in the upholstery.

(patting his stomach)

I come by the stuffing naturally. What gave me away?

DUMBLEDORE

(nodding to the ceiling)

Dragon's blood.

SLUGHORN

Yes, well, I couldn't very well use wizard's blood, could I? *Oho!*

(CONTINUED)

Slughorn takes a step back, having spotted Harry. The blood on Harry's forehead only serves to highlight his scar.

DUMBLEDORE

Ah yes. Introductions. Harry, this is an old friend and colleague of mine, Horace Slughorn. Horace, this is, well, you know who this is.

(a droll whisper)

Apparently there's some thought he may be the *Chosen One*.

Slughorn stares at Harry as if hypnotized.

DUMBLEDORE

So why all the theatrics, Horace? You weren't perhaps expecting someone else, were you?

SLUGHORN

(blinking)

S-someone else? I'm sure I don't know what you mean.

Dumbledore raises an eyebrow. Slughorn caves.

SLUGHORN

Oh all right! The Death Eaters have been trying to recruit me for over a year. Do you know what that's like? One can only say no to these people so many times before they...

DUMBLEDORE

Take matters into their own hands?

Slughorn eyes Dumbledore miserably, gestures.

SLUGHORN

I never stay anywhere more than a week. The Muggles who own this place are in the Canary Islands.

DUMBLEDORE

Well, I think it should be put back in order for them, don't you? Mind?

Dumbledore raises his wand. Instantly, the grandfather clock resumes its rightful place, shattered lanterns reignite and the blood on the ceiling evaporates -- just as the piano keys tumble back into place with a pleasant MUSICAL run.

DUMBLEDORE

That was fun. May I use the loo?

As Dumbledore heads down the hall, Slughorn calls after.

SLUGHORN

Don't think I don't know why you're here, Albus! The answer is still no! Absolutely, unequivocally *no!*

Dumbledore doesn't respond. Slughorn glances at Harry. The silence is palpable. Awkward. A beat. Then:

SLUGHORN

You look very like your father. Except for your eyes. You've got --

HARRY

My mother's eyes, yeah.

SLUGHORN

(smiling softly)
Lily. Lovely Lily. She was exceedingly bright -- your mother. Even more impressive when one considers she was Muggle-born.

HARRY

One of my best friends is Muggle-born. She's the best in our year.

SLUGHORN

Oh, but you mustn't think I'm prejudiced! No, no, no! Your mother was one of my absolute favorites! Look, there she is. Right up front.

Slughorn waves to a dresser crowded with PHOTOGRAPHS.

SLUGHORN

All mine, each and every one. Ex-students, I mean. You recognize Barnabas Cuffe, of course, editor of the *Daily Prophet*.

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

16

CONTINUED: (3)

16

SLUGHORN (CONT'D)

Always takes my owl should I want to register my opinion on the news of the day. And there's Ambrosius Flume of Honeydukes. Sends a hamper of chocolate to the house each birthday. That is, when I had a house. And Gwenog Jones, captain of the Holyhead Harpies -- free tickets whenever I want them. Of course, I haven't been to a match in some time...

Harry steps forward, takes a picture of one particular BOY, a boy who resembles... Sirius. Seeing Harry thus distracted, he studies him intently, like a rare object.

SLUGHORN

Ah yes. Regulus Black. You no doubt know of his older brother Sirius. Died a few weeks ago. I taught the whole Black family except Sirius. Shame. Talented boy. I got Regulus when he came along, of course, but I'd have liked the set.

DUMBLEDORE

Mind if I take this? I do love knitting patterns.

Slughorn blinks, looks away from Harry and finds Dumbledore standing there, clutching a MUGGLE MAGAZINE.

SLUGHORN

Of course. But you're not leaving?

DUMBLEDORE

I think I know a lost cause when I see one. Regrettable. I would have considered it a personal triumph had you consented to return to Hogwarts, Horace. You are, like my friend Mr. Potter -- *one of a kind.*

17

EXT. SLUGHORN'S HOUSE - NIGHT (MOMENTS LATER)

17

Dumbledore HUMS placidly as he and Harry make their way down the walk. Seconds later, the front door swings open.

(CONTINUED)

17

CONTINUED:

17

SLUGHORN

All right! I'll do it. But I'll be wanting Professor Merrythought's old office, not that water closet I had formerly. And I expect a raise! These are mad times we live in! Mad!

DUMBLEDORE

Indeed they are.

18

EXT. STREET (BUDLEIGH BABBERTON) - NIGHT (MOMENTS LATER) 18

Dumbledore leads Harry back toward the Village Square.

HARRY

Sir, exactly what was that all --

DUMBLEDORE

You are talented, famous and powerful -- everything Horace values. Professor Slughorn is going to try to *collect* you, Harry. You would be his crowning jewel. *That* is why he is returning to Hogwarts. And it is crucial he return...

Harry looks intrigued by this last statement, but before he can pursue it, Dumbledore glances ruefully at the moon.

DUMBLEDORE

I fear I may have stolen a wondrous night from you, Harry. She was, truthfully, very pretty. The girl.

HARRY

It's alright, sir. I'll go back tomorrow, make some excuse --

Harry stops. Dumbledore is shaking his head.

DUMBLEDORE

You'll not be going back to Little Whinging tonight, Harry.

HARRY

But, sir. What about Hedwig? And there's my trunk --

(CONTINUED)

18

CONTINUED:

18

DUMBLEDORE

Both are waiting for you.

Dumbledore extends his arm. Mystified, Harry reaches out. As his fingers touch the silk of Dumbledore's cloak, he...

19

EXT. THE BURROW - NIGHT (SECONDS LATER)

19

... APPARATES INTO VIEW, stumbling to one knee and wincing.

HARRY

Sir?

Dumbledore is gone. Harry rises, glances about. In the distance a CROOKED HOUSE shimmers. A PRETTY GIRL with RED HAIR flits briefly past an upstairs window. GINNY WEASLEY.

20

INT. WEASLEY HOUSE - STAIRCASE - SAME TIME - NIGHT

20

Ginny DASHES down a vertiginous staircase, flies into the kitchen and finds...

21

INT. WEASLEY HOUSE - KITCHEN - CONTINUOUS ACTION - NIGHT

21

... a LARGE TRUNK and an OWL CAGE. Curious, she cocks her head to one side. The owl does the same in return.

GINNY

Hedwig...? Mum!

22

INT. WEASLEY HOUSE - DOWNSTAIRS HALLWAY - SAME TIME - NIGHT

GINNY'S POV, looking up -- a dizzying perspective of twisting railings and crooked bedroom doors. A CLOCK hangs IN VIEW, bearing NINE HANDS, each inscribed with a Weasley name, each pointing to MORTAL PERIL. MRS. WEASLEY appears, looks down.

MRS. WEASLEY

What is it, Ginny? Is it your father? Has something happened at the Ministry? Has he been kidnapped? Is it the Death Eaters?

GINNY

Exactly. How'd you guess?

(CONTINUED)

Mrs. Weasley throws her hands up over her face.

GINNY

I'm *joking*, Mum.

MRS. WEASLEY

You're worse than Fred and George.

GINNY

Now *you're* joking. I was only wondering when Harry got here.

MRS. WEASLEY

Harry who?

GINNY

Harry Dimpleton. Harry Potter, of course.

MRS. WEASLEY

I think I'd know if Harry Potter was in my house, wouldn't I?

GINNY

Well his trunk's in the kitchen. And his owl.

MRS. WEASLEY

I seriously doubt that.

Just then, HEDWIG SCREECHES O.S. Ginny gives her an I-told-you-so when another door opens and RON WEASLEY looks down.

RON

Harry? Did someone say Harry?

GINNY

Me, nosy. Is he up there with you?

RON

'Course not. Think I'd know if my best friend was in my room, wouldn't I?

Another door opens: HERMIONE, in a robe, TOOTHBRUSH in hand.

HERMIONE

Was that an owl I heard?

22

CONTINUED: (2)

22

GINNY

Harry's. Haven't seen him, have you? Apparently, he's wandering about the house.

HERMIONE

Really?

HARRY (O.S.)

Really.

Ginny spins. Harry. Standing in the doorway of the kitchen.

RON/HERMIONE/MRS. WEASLEY

Harry!

As the others rocket downstairs, Ginny gives Harry a great grinning hug. There is something oddly charged in the moment, a surprise to both of them. The others arrive. More hugs.

MRS. WEASLEY

But why didn't you tell us you were coming?

HARRY

Didn't know.
(a shrug)
Dumbledore.

*

MRS. WEASLEY

That man. But then, what would we do without him? *Ron!*

Ron is about to touch Hermione. She retracts her neck.

RON

You've a bit of...

He gestures to the stray lace of toothpaste on Hermione's chin. Quickly she wipes it off, gives him an odd look.

23

EXT. THE BURROW - ATTIC - NIGHT (LATER)

23

The Daily Prophet tumbles within a makeshift campfire of BLUE FLAMES, but magically doesn't disintegrate. Harry teases the fire with the tip of his wand, where *The Chosen One?* mingles with Draco's haunted face in the flames.

HARRY

When'd you get here?

(CONTINUED)

HERMIONE

A few days ago. Though... for a bit, I wasn't sure I *was* coming.

Harry looks up, sees her glance at Ron.

RON

Mum sort of lost it last week. Said Ginny and I had no business going back to Hogwarts. That it's too dangerous.

HARRY

Oh *come on*...

HERMIONE

She's not alone. Even my parents -- and they're Muggles -- know something bad is happening.

RON

Anyway, Dad stepped in, told her she was being barmy. Took a day or two, but she came round.

HARRY

But we're talking about *Hogwarts*. *Dumbledore*. What could be safer?

Hermione and Ron exchange another glance.

HERMIONE

There's been a lot of chatter lately. That he's gotten... old.

HARRY

Rubbish. He's only -- what?

RON

A hundred and fifty. Give or take a few years.

Silence. Nods. Then the three break out laughing. Grow quiet again. Harry takes another poke at the *Prophet*. Draco's haunted face appears briefly, then is gone.

bearing *Weasley's Wizard Wheezes* clutched in the hand of a boy being pulled by his mother through the throng packed sardine-tight in the store.

It's utter madness: Ever-Bashing Boomerangs whip through the air, Dr. Filibuster's Fabulous Wet-Start No-Heat fireworks spit sparks, and Nose-Biting Teacups bare tiny porcelain teeth. FRED & GEORGE WEASLEY, in SCREAMING MAGENTA, stand upon a counter, selling to the masses:

FRED/GEORGE

Step up! Step up!

GEORGE

We've got Fainting Fancy...

FRED

Nosebleed Nougats...

GEORGE

And just in time for school...

FRED

Puking Pastilles!

A BOY stops chewing, turns PALE GREEN -- literally.

FRED/GEORGE

Into the cauldron, handsome.

Together, with the tips of their toes, Fred and George launch a SLOSHING CAULDRON down the counter, drop down on either side of Harry, begin to steer him through the store.

FRED

What'd you think, Harry?

HARRY

Amazing.

GEORGE

(to a browsing boy)
Pocket that and you'll pay in more than Galleons, my friend.

FRED/GEORGE

We've got eyes in the back of our heads.

The boy, working a SCREAMING YO-YO, blanches as Fred and George turn, reveal they do in fact have EYES IN THE BACK OF THEIR HEADS -- phony, but unnerving. As the EYES WINK, the tiny boy bolts.

GEORGE

Bloody urchins.

Harry eyes a display of ORANGE AND BLACK LUMPS.

(CONTINUED)

HARRY

Peruvian Instant Darkness Powder?

FRED

A real money spinner that.

FRED

Handy if you need to make a quick escape. *Hello, ladies!*

George drops one of the lumps in Harry's hand, turns to Ginny and Hermione, who peruse a display of "Wonder Witch Love Potions."

GEORGE

Yes, they do really work.

FRED

Then again, the way we hear it, sis, you're doing just fine on your own.

GINNY

Meaning?

FRED

Are you not currently dating Dean Thomas?

Harry pretends to consider a rack of "Ten-Second Pimple Vanisher," but secretly eavesdrops.

GINNY

None of your business.

HERMIONE

These are adorable.

Inside a cage, small round BALLS of FLUFF roll about, SQUEAK.

FRED

Aren't they now. Pygmy Puffs.
Can't breed them fast enough.

Just then a HUGE BOY (CORMAC McLAGGEN) passes behind Hermione and, with his eyes, takes the full measure of her. Noticing, she turns, receives a faint smile as he moves on.

RON

How much for this?

A TINY WOODEN MAN ascends a TINY GALLOWS and... DROPS.
George rides a rolling ladder INTO FRAME, drops next to Fred.

*
*

FRED/GEORGE

Five Galleons.

RON

How much for me?

FRED/GEORGE

Five Galleons.

RON

But I'm your brother!

FRED/GEORGE

Ten Galleons.

RON

C'mon. Let's go.

The trio head for the door, passing LAVENDER BROWN, who smiles flirtatiously at an oblivious Ron.

LAVENDER BROWN

Hi, Ron.

RON

Hi.

25 EXT. DIAGON ALLEY - LATE AFTERNOON (MOMENTS LATER) 25

The sun fades over an IRON ARCHWAY -- Welcome to Diagon Alley! -- as Harry, Ron and Hermione pass beneath. All around them, SHOPS sit silent, windows BOARDED-UP or SHATTERED. People scurry by, avoiding the SCARY FACES of the witches and wizards who peer out from the SECURITY POSTERS plastered to every LAMP POST. Bellatrix is there: "KNOWN DEATH EATER," And Greyback: "WEREWOLF." And LUCIUS MALFOY: "CAUGHT."

HERMIONE

How is it Fred and George are doing it? Half the alley's closed down.

RON

Fred reckons people need a laugh these days.

HARRY

Reckon he's right...

Harry eyes the poster of Bellatrix, her mocking half-smile.

HERMIONE

Oh no. Look.

Harry and Ron follow her gaze to the wreck that is Ollivander's Wand Shop.

HERMIONE

But everyone got their wands from Ollivander. Young. Old...

HARRY

Good. Bad. Speaking of which...

Across the avenue, DRACO MALFOY and Narcissa pause, glance around, then slip quickly down an alley.

RON

Is it just me? Or do Draco and mummy look like two people who don't want to be followed?

26 EXT. VARIOUS STREETS - DIAGON ALLEY - LATE AFTERNOON 26

The trio trail Draco and Narcissa, who navigate these dark streets with ease. Hermione, lagging a bit, glances up at the darkening sky. When she looks back, she sees Ron and Harry far ahead. They turn a shadowy corner, vanish.

(CONTINUED)

NEW ANGLE - SHOP FRONT - MOMENTS LATER

Harry and Ron duck inside a shop front. At the end of the alley, a single shop glimmers dully: Borgin & Burkes. Narcissa and Draco enter, greet a STOOPED MAN (BORGIN). He POINTS. Draco walks to a LACQUERED CABINET, plays his fingers over its glassy surface. Narcissa speaks and Draco turns, finds Borgin holding the curtain to the back room aside. Draco hesitates, then follows his mother through.

RON

What're they playing at?

HARRY

Dunno. Let's get closer.

RON

(a nod; stopping)

Hey. Where's Hermione?

NEW ANGLE - ANOTHER ALLEY - DUSK

Hermione moves through the shadows, alone, peering down side streets, each darker than the next, lost, but holding it together, when... a SHADOW FLICKERS overhead. She looks up, sees a FIGURE (Greyback) leap from one roof to another. She stands perfectly still, then... hears VOICES.

NEW ANGLE - OTHER ALLEYS - DUSK

Harry and Ron race down one passage then another. Stop.

RON

Harry, where is she?

HARRY

I don't know. I'm turned around.

NEW ANGLE - BORGIN & BURKES - BACK COURTYARD - DUSK

Hermione creeps to the end of a narrow passage, toward the VOICES, and finds herself... behind Borgin & Burkes. FIGURES encircle an old cauldron, among them Greyback, Bellatrix, Narcissa, and in the very center... Draco.

Hermione squints against the brilliance of the FIRE, the FIGURES twisting like Giacomettis. Draco extends his left arm... when a SHADOW falls over Hermione, fingers find her arm. She wheels, terrified.

(CONTINUED)

26

CONTINUED: (2)

26

Ron.

HERMIONE

Bloody hell.

RON

Sorry.

Just then, the cauldron EXPLODES with light. Instantly, the group, including Draco, disperses.

HARRY

What just happened?

HERMIONE

I don't know.

Harry stares at the SMOKE drifting from the cauldron. A SOUND RISES, growing more powerful and the ROAR of a...

27

EXT. HOGWARTS EXPRESS - MOVING - LATE AFTERNOON

27

... TRAIN overtakes us, the scarlet stack of the Hogwarts Express churning furiously towards the horizon.

LUNA

Quibbler...? Quibbler...?

28

INT. HOGWARTS EXPRESS - AISLE - SAME TIME - LATE AFTERNOON28

LUNA LOVEGOOD moves down the aisle wearing a pair of RED and BLUE CARDBOARD GLASSES (SPECTRESPECS) identical to the ones modeled by a witch on the cover of the current issue of *The Quibbler*, a stack of which Luna clutches to her chest.

LUNA

There's an article on Wrackspurts this month. *Quibbler...?*

The loitering STUDENTS ignore her, including DEAN THOMAS, currently WHISPERING to Ginny, who smiles mildly, more interested in the PURPLE PYGMY PUFF perched on her shoulder.

LUNA

He's lovely. They've been known to sing on Boxing Day, you know. *Quibbler?*

GINNY

Please. What's a Wrackspurt?

(CONTINUED)

28

CONTINUED:

28

LUNA

They're invisible creatures that float in through your ears and make your brain go fuzzy.

(moving off)

Quibbler? Quibbler?

29

INT. COMPARTMENT - SAME TIME - DUSK

29

Harry, Ron and Hermione sit together. Hermione has a book entitled *Advance Rune Translation* open on her lap, while Ron lets Harry's INVISIBILITY CLOAK play through his fingers.

HARRY

Don't you see, it was a ceremony. An initiation.

HERMIONE

Stop, Harry, I know where you're going with this --

HARRY

It's happened. He's one of them.

RON

One of *what*?

HERMIONE

Harry is under the impression that Draco Malfoy is now a Death Eater.

RON

You're barking. What would You-Know-Who want with a sod like Malfoy?

HARRY

So what's he doing in Borgin and Burke's? Browsing for furniture?

RON

It's a creepy shop. He's a creepy bloke.

HARRY

Look. His father's a Death Eater. It only makes sense. Besides, Hermione *saw* it. With her own eyes.

HERMIONE

I told you. I don't know what I saw.

(CONTINUED)

29 CONTINUED: 29

Harry rises, snatches the cloak from Ron's hands.

HARRY

I need some air.

30 INT. HOGWARTS EXPRESS - AISLE - DUSK (MOMENTS LATER) 30

A blood-red sun shimmers through the windows, staining the interior a deep scarlet. Students read, play cards. In one compartment, CRABBE and GOYLE slumber sloppily. As Harry enters, the ACCORDION doors to the NEXT CAR SQUALL open and a PAIR of TWIN GIRLS emerge. He watches them when a VOICE causes him to turn back. As the accordion doors slowly close, he spies Malfoy sitting with PANSY PARKINSON and a BOY with the cheekbones of a sphinx (BLAISE ZABINI).

Harry studies Malfoy when a BOY pushes through the accordion doors. As they begin to close, slowly, Harry reaches into his pocket and removes the ORANGE AND BLACK LUMP Fred gave him in Diagon Alley. He eyes Malfoy, eyes the closing door and -- impulsively -- pitches the lump into the air. It soars through the narrowing crease of the doors and -- just as Malfoy glances his way -- just as it reaches the apex of its flight -- POOF! -- explodes softly, raining DARK POWDER.

31 EXT. HOGWARTS EXPRESS - MOVING - SAME TIME - DUSK 31

One train car -- and only one -- goes DARK:

32 INT. HOGWARTS EXPRESS - AISLE/COMPARTMENT - SAME TIME - DUSK

CHAOS. PANICKED VOICES. Then, like a thinning mist, the darkness eerily recedes, the red light of dusk returns and Malfoy is revealed, standing in the DOORWAY of the car. As he looks on warily, students return to their seats. Across the way, Crabbe & Goyle continue to slumber.

MALFOY

What just happened? Blaise?

BLAISE

(tense himself)

Don't know.

Just then, a SMALL BAG TEETERS... then tumbles from a luggage rack. Malfoy wheels, eyes the bag.

(CONTINUED)

32

CONTINUED:

32

PANSY

Relax, boys. The lights went out
is all. Come, Draco. We'll be
at Hogwarts before you know it.

*
*

She pats the seat. Draco eyes the bag, slings it back
onto the luggage rack and plops down. Pansy strokes his
hair.

MALFOY

Hogwarts. What a pathetic excuse
for a school. I think I'd pitch
myself off the Astronomy Tower if
I thought I had to continue on for
another two years.

Pansy, gently twisting one of Draco's locks, stops.

PANSY

What's that supposed to mean?

MALFOY

Let's just say I don't think
you'll be seeing me wasting my
time in Charms Class next year.

Confused, Pansy glances at Blaise, who snorts derisively.

MALFOY

Amused, Blaise? We'll see just
who's laughing in the end.

Blaise shakes his head, smiling as he looks out the
window at the darkness. Just then the small bag in the
upper rack shifts. Malfoy's eyes play over it.

33

EXT. STATION - DUSK/EVENING

33

The Hogwarts Express steams into the station.

34

INT. HOGWARTS EXPRESS - AISLE - SAME TIME - DUSK/EVENING

34

Ron and Hermione step into the crowded aisle.

HERMIONE

Where's Harry?

RON

Probably on the platform. C'mon.

35 INT. COMPARTMENT - DUSK/EVENING

35

As Blaise and Pansy make to exit, Malfoy takes down the small bag, grips the handle thoughtfully.

MALFOY

You two go on. I want to check something.

Malfoy slides shut the door. LETS THE BLINDS DOWN. A beat.

MALFOY

Didn't mummy ever tell you it's bad manners to eavesdrop, Potter?
Petrificus Totalus!

Malfoy wheels, points his wand at the luggage rack. Something hits the floor with a THUMP. The Invisibility Cloak slips away and reveals Harry, paralyzed on the floor. Malfoy grins.

MALFOY

Oh, right, she was dead before you could wipe the drool off your chin.

Malfoy brings his boot down hard on Harry's face. SNAP! Blood squirts from Harry's nose. Malfoy snatches up the Invisibility Cloak, pitches it over Harry.

MALFOY

Enjoy the ride back to London.

36 EXT. STATION - EVENING (MOMENTS LATER)

36

Malfoy steps off, pulls his cloak tight and disappears into the night. Softly, a SOUND rises, of a GIRL LIGHTLY HUMMING and we --

CUT TO:

37 INT. HOGWARTS EXPRESS - AISLE - EVENING

37

... STRANGE MOVING POV - HALF RED/HALF BLUE

Luna Lovegood wanders down the aisle HUMMING, red and blue Spectrespecs wobbling on the bridge of her nose. Up ahead one compartment's BLINDS are shut. Luna stops HUMMING. Cocks her head curiously. As she does, the LIGHT from an overhead lantern kicks off the cheap plastic lenses of her glasses and, for the briefest of seconds, a FLUTTERING CLOUD appears.

(CONTINUED)

37 CONTINUED: 37

Of tiny insects. Or pixie dust. Or a trick of the light.

38 INT. COMPARTMENT - SAME TIME - EVENING 38

Luna's SILHOUETTE SWELLS over the blinds, then the door opens. She calmly draws her wand and sends forth a blast of RED LIGHT. The Invisibility Cloak slithers from Harry's body.

LUNA

Hello, Harry.

HARRY

Luna. How'd you...?

LUNA

Wrackspurts. Your head's full of them.

39 EXT. HOGWARTS CASTLE - FRONT STEPS - NIGHT (LATER) 39

The castle glitters. Harry, face blood-spattered, nose slightly off-center, approaches with Luna.

HARRY

Sorry I made you miss the carriages, Luna.

LUNA

It's alright. I enjoyed our walk. It was like being with a friend.

HARRY

I am your friend, Luna.

LUNA

That's nice.

Just then PROFESSOR FLITWICK rushes forth clutching a long roll of PARCHMENT bearing all students' names.

FLITWICK

About time! I've been looking all over for you two. Names.

HARRY

Professor Flitwick, you've known me for five years.

FLITWICK

No exceptions, Potter.

(CONTINUED)

LUNA

Who are those people?

Harry turns, sees Luna staring into the darkness, where SHADOWS drift eerily, like ghosts.

FLITWICK

Aurors. For security.

MALFOY (O.S.)

It's a not a *cane*, you cretin.
It's a walking stick.

Harry and Luna turn. Draco stands amidst a mountain of TRUNKS and OWL CAGES, watching Filch pass a long SECURITY DETECTOR over a WALKING STICK.

FILCH

And what exactly would you be wanting with a walking stick?

SNAPE

It was his father's.

Snape separates from the shadows. Draco eyes him warily, then snatches the stick from Filch.

MALFOY

Is my father's. He's not dead.

Snape watches Malfoy carefully wrap the stick in felt, lay it back inside his trunk.

SNAPE

It's alright, Mr. Filch. I can vouch for Mr. Malfoy.

Draco eyes Snape warily again, then begins to slouch off, catches Harry looking.

MALFOY

Nice face, Potter.

Harry puts a hand to his nose, watches Malfoy disappear into the darkness, trailed by Snape.

LUNA

Would you like me to fix it?
Personally I think you look a bit more devil-may-care this way. But it's up to you.

HARRY

Have you ever fixed one? A nose.

LUNA

No. But I've done several toes
and how different are they really?

This does not fill Harry with confidence.
Nevertheless...

HARRY

What the hell. Give it a go.

39

CONTINUED: (3)

39

LUNA

Episkey.

Luna poises her wand over Harry's nose and... gives it a TAP. It VIBRATES WILDLY and then... SNAPS into place.

HARRY

Well? How do I look?

LUNA

Exceptionally ordinary.

HARRY

Brilliant.

40

INT. GREAT HALL - NIGHT (MOMENTS LATER)

40

Hermione cranes her neck, looking for Harry, while Ron stuffs his face with pudding, MUMBLING, MOUTH FULL:

RON

Don' you worry. He'll be 'long soon 'nuff --

HERMIONE

(whacking him)

Will. You. Stop. Eating! Your best friend is missing!

RON

Oi! Turn around, you lunatic.

Hermione spins, sees Harry and Luna approaching. In the light of the hall, Harry's blood-spattered face is quite the sight.

GINNY

He's covered in blood again. Why is it he's always covered in blood?

RON

Looks like his own this time.

HERMIONE

(as he arrives)

Where've you *been*, Harry? And what happened to your face?

HARRY

Later. What've I missed?

(CONTINUED)

RON

(shrugging; still
eating)

Sorting Hat urged us all to be
brave and strong in these troubled
times -- easy for it to say --
it's a hat, isn't it? First Years
seemed to enjoy it, though.
Wankers. Filch give you the wand
outside?

Harry nods. Ginny, damp napkin in hand, begins to dab
his face, then feels suddenly awkward. Harry takes it
from her.

HARRY

Thanks...

Just then, the light in the Hall begins to gently dim and
all eyes turn to Dumbledore, standing at the top of the
Hall, ashen hand raised to the enchanted ceiling, where
clouds respond to his gestures and shroud a gleaming full
moon.

HERMIONE

What's happened to his hand?

DUMBLEDORE

The very best of evenings to you!
First off, please join me in
welcoming the newest member of our
staff, Horace Slughorn.

MILD APPLAUSE ensues. Harry claps perfunctorily, his
eyes drifting to the entrance of the Hall as a pair of
Aurors station themselves just outside.

DUMBLEDORE

Professor Slughorn, I'm happy to
say, has agreed to resume his old
post of Potions master. Meanwhile
the post of Defense Against the
Dark Arts will be assumed by
Professor Snape.

This is greeted by stunned silence. Dumbledore frowns,
then attempts to generate something by CLAPPING his hands
once. A few Slytherins join in and some dim-witted First
Years.

DUMBLEDORE

Now, as you know, each and every
one of you was searched upon your
arrival tonight. You have a right
to know why.

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

40

CONTINUED: (2)

40

DUMBLEDORE (CONT'D)

(a beat)

Once there was a young man who,
like you, sat in this very Hall.
Walked this castle's corridors.
Slept beneath its roof. He
seemed, to all the world, a
student like any other. His name?
Tom Riddle.

The Hall goes utterly silent.

DUMBLEDORE

Today, of course, the world knows
him by another name. Which is
why, as I stand looking out upon
you all tonight, I am reminded of
a sobering fact. Each day, every
hour, this very minute perhaps,
dark forces attempt to penetrate
this castle. But in the end,
their greatest weapon remains...
you.

Harry eyes Malfoy, slouched low, lazily levitating a fork
with his wand, as if Dumbledore were unworthy of
attention.

DUMBLEDORE

Just something to keep in mind.
Now, off to bed. Pip pip!

RON

(as they rise)
That was cheerful.

41

INT. CORRIDOR - MORNING

41

A TEEMING MASS of STUDENTS fight their way to class on
first day of term. Amidst it all, McGonagall stands tall
and stern. The twins pass by, bearing identical looks of
consternation.

PROFESSOR MCGONAGALL

History of Magic is up, ladies,
not down. Mr. Davies -- that's
the girl's toilet...

McGonagall's eyes shift, find Harry and Ron sitting upon
a ledge, clearly deriving immense pleasure from the
chaos.

PROFESSOR MCGONAGALL

Potter!

(CONTINUED)

41

CONTINUED:

41

Harry's smile droops. McGonagall beckons with a finger.

HARRY

This can't be good.

Ron grins as Harry makes his way "upstream" to McGonagall.

PROFESSOR MCGONAGALL

Enjoying ourself, are we?

HARRY

Well, you see, I've got an open period this morning, Professor --

PROFESSOR MCGONAGALL

So I noticed. I would think you'd want to fill it with Potions. Or is it no longer your ambition to become an Auror?

HARRY

It is. Or was. But I was told I had to get an Outstanding in my O.W.L. --

PROFESSOR MCGONAGALL

And so you did when Professor Snape was teaching Potions. However, Professor Slughorn is perfectly happy to accept N.E.W.T. students with 'Exceeds Expectations.'

HARRY

Really? Well... brilliant. I'll head there straight away.

PROFESSOR MCGONAGALL

Good. And take Weasley with you. He looks far too happy over there.

42

INT. CORRIDOR/SLUGHORN'S CLASSROOM - MORNING (MOMENTS LATER)

42

Ron trails Harry toward an open door.

*

RON

But I don't want to take Potions!

43 INT. SLUGHORN'S CLASSROOM - CONTINUOUS ACTION - MORNING 43

As Harry drags Ron inside, the other students turn in unison. Hermione frowns. Lavender, seeing Ron, beams.

SLUGHORN

Harry m'boy! I was beginning to worry! And I see we've brought someone with us...

RON

Ron Weasley, sir. But I'm dead awful at Potions, a menace actually, so I probably should just be going --

SLUGHORN

Nonsense, we'll sort you out. Any friend of Harry's is a friend of mine. Right then, books out --

HARRY

Um, sorry, sir, but I haven't got my book yet -- nor's Ron. You see -- (until this morning...)

*

SLUGHORN

Not to worry. You can get what you need from the cupboard.

As Harry and Ron step to the cupboard, Slughorn resumes, gesturing to the cauldrons bubbling before him.

SLUGHORN

Now, as I was saying, I've prepared a few concoctions this morning. Any ideas what these might be? Yes, Miss...?

HERMIONE

Granger, sir. That one there is Veritaserum. And that would be Polyjuice Potion. And that...

In the cupboard, Harry and Ron find two TEXTBOOKS -- one new, one shabby and soiled. Both snatch for the new when a box -- marked "BEZOARS" -- tips. As Harry makes a grab for it, Ron wrests free the new textbook and goes off grinning.

HERMIONE

... is Amortentia! The most powerful love potion in the world.
(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

43

CONTINUED:

43

HERMIONE (CONT'D)

It's rumored to smell differently to each person, according to what attracts them. For example, I smell freshly mown grass and new parchment and spearmint toothpaste --

Hermione blushes, stops herself. Slughorn regards her.

SLUGHORN

One of my best friends is Muggle-born. She's the best in our year...

Harry, settling into his seat with the soiled textbook, looks up just as Slughorn's eyes shift to him for confirmation. As Harry nods, Hermione glances curiously at him.

SLUGHORN

Now Amortentia doesn't create actual love, of course. That's impossible. But it does cause a powerful infatuation or obsession. For that reason, it is probably the most dangerous potion in this room.

Slughorn turns, finds a sea of dreamy faces leaning into the VAPORS. Instantly, he CLANGS a cover onto the cauldron, bringing them round. As Ron blinks, he finds Lavender still staring dreamily -- at him. Noticing, Hermione's eyes narrow.

KATIE BELL

Sir, you haven't told us what's in that one.

SLUGHORN

Ah yes...

Slughorn steps to a SMALL BLACK CAULDRON. Begins to ladle a bit of GOLDEN LIQUID into a TINY VIAL.

SLUGHORN

What you see before you, ladies and gentlemen, is a curious little potion known as *Felix Felicis*. But it is more commonly referred to as --

HERMIONE

Liquid luck.

A buzz runs through the class. Even Malfoy perks up.

(CONTINUED)

SLUGHORN

Yes, Miss Granger. Desperately tricky to make. Disastrous should you get it wrong. But brewed correctly, as this has been, it has remarkable powers. One sip and you will find that all your endeavors succeed... at least until the effects wear off.

KATIE BELL

But then why don't people drink it all the time?

SLUGHORN

Because taken in excess it causes giddiness, recklessness and dangerous overconfidence.

BLAISE

Have you ever taken it, sir?

SLUGHORN

Twice. Once when I was twenty-four. Once when I was fifty-seven. Two tablespoons taken at breakfast. Two perfect days...

Slughorn eyes the vial dreamily, adrift. Finally he blinks.

SLUGHORN

So. This is what I offer each of you today. One tiny vial of liquid luck... to the student who, in the hour that remains, manages to brew an acceptable Draught of Living Death, the recipe for which can be found on page ten of your textbook.

Excitement seizes the class. Slughorn smiles knowingly.

SLUGHORN

You should know that in all the years of my previous tenure at Hogwarts, not once did a student brew a potion of sufficient quality to claim this prize. In any event -- good luck.

Slughorn sets the vial upon his desk, where it SHIMMERS in a SHAFT of SUNLIGHT. Harry opens his book. Frowns. The MARGINS of the page before him are black with the tight SCRIBBLINGS of a previous owner.

(CONTINUED)

The same CREEPY GRAFFITI fills the next page as well, on and on throughout the book. Shaking his head, Harry runs his finger under the first PRINTED INSTRUCTION:

"Cut up one Sopoporous bean."

Harry takes the SILVER DAGGER upon his desk, poises it over the BEAN when... Ron's bean shoots across the room and bounces off Katie Bell's head. Harry surveys the rest of the room: everyone is struggling to cut the resistant legume. He glances back to his book, considers the instruction again.

As ARROW has been drawn from the word "Cut" to the margin, where a modification has been written in the tight scrawl:

"Crush with blade -- releases juice better."

Harry considers the dagger in his hand, then places the flat of the blade against the bean and presses. Instantly, the protective parchment covering the desk runs RED with juice.

HERMIONE

How did you do that?

HARRY

Crush it. Don't cut it.

HERMIONE

No. The instructions specifically say to cut.

HARRY

No. Really --

HERMIONE

Sh!

Harry shrugs, lifts the parchment and tips the juice into his cauldron. It HISSES, then turns LILAC. Harry grins. CAMERA BEGINS SLOW DOLLY TOWARDS the vial of Felix Felicis and...

MONTAGE BEGINS

Students struggle. A cauldron overflows. Lavender eyes Ron.

CAMERA CREEPS TOWARD VIAL. THE SUNLIGHT SHIFTS.

Hermione grows more and more frustrated. Her hair grows bushier in the steam rising from her cauldron...

(CONTINUED)

43

CONTINUED: (4)

43

Harry's finger traces under the official instruction... then drifts to the spidery scrawl in the margin...

Malfoy cuts himself, curses...

CAMERA CREEPS CLOSER TO VIAL. SUNLIGHT SHIFTS AGAIN.

Harry, cool as a cucumber, adds one last ingredient, steps back, done...

Hermione, hair like Medea now, glowers at him...

THE LIGHT SHIFTS ONE LAST TIME. THE VIAL GLIMMERS LIKE GOLD.

MONTAGE ENDS.

ANOTHER ANGLE

Slughorn wends his way amongst the cauldrons, nodding with sympathy at the fiascos before him. Then... he stops, staring in disbelief at the pearly sheen of one bubbling potion.

SLUGHORN

Merlin's Beard! But it's perfect.
So perfect I daresay one sip would
kill us all! Your mother was a
dab hand at potions, but this...
My, my, what *can't* you do, m'boy?
Perhaps you *will* save us all in
the end...

All eyes turn to Harry. His smile falters.

SLUGHORN

Here you are then, as promised.
One bottle of Felix Felicis. Use
it well.

Slowly, Harry reaches out... takes the glittering vial.

44

EXT. CASTLE - NIGHT

44

The Castle is dark, but for one WINDOW.

45

INT. DUMBLEDORE'S OFFICE - SAME TIME - NIGHT

45

Dumbledore sits alone at his desk, the deep lines of his face illuminated by the shimmering PENSIEVE. TWO OBJECTS of note are before him. One is a BLACK-STONED RING. The other is TOM RIDDLE'S DIARY.

(CONTINUED)

He briefly balances the ring upon the tip of an ashen finger, then turns a page of the battered diary. His face is troubled. A KNOCK. He takes the ring and diary, slips them inside a drawer. The door swings open, reveals Harry.

DUMBLEDORE

Good evening, Harry. You got my message, I see. Come, come. Sit.

Harry steps forward, eyes the Pensieve curiously. Sits.

DUMBLEDORE

So. How are you?

HARRY

Fine, sir.

DUMBLEDORE

Enjoying your classes? Professor Slughorn, for one, is most impressed with you.

HARRY

I think he overestimates my abilities, sir.

DUMBLEDORE

Do you?

HARRY

Definitely.

Dumbledore smiles affectionately, nods.

DUMBLEDORE

And what of your activities outside the classroom? Do they bring you satisfaction?

HARRY

Sir?

DUMBLEDORE

I notice you spend a great deal of time with Miss Granger. One can't help but wonder if --

HARRY

No! I mean... she's brilliant. And we're friends. But... no.

DUMBLEDORE

Forgive me, Harry, I...

45

CONTINUED: (2)

45

Dumbledore smiles faintly, shakes his head.

DUMBLEDORE

... I was merely curious.

(rising)

In any event, I'm sure you're wondering why I've summoned you here tonight. The answer lies here.

Dumbledore swings open a cabinet where DOZENS upon DOZENS of GLITTERING VIALS stand like tiny glimmering soldiers.

DUMBLEDORE

What you see before you are memories. In this case pertaining to one individual: Voldemort. Or as he was known then... Tom Riddle.

Dumbledore reaches down with his damaged hand and removes a stoppered VIAL, dusty and veined with age.

DUMBLEDORE

This vial contains a most particular memory -- of the day I first met him. I'd like you to see it. If you would...

Dumbledore extends his ashen hand and Harry rises, gingerly takes the vial and removes the cork. He tips the contents into the Pensieve. Dumbledore nods and Harry leans into the iridescent liquid, his face breaking the surface...

46

FLASHBACK - EXT. STREET (LONDON) - DAY (YEARS PAST)

46

A horse-drawn MILK CART rattles across a RAIN-SWEPT London street and a YOUNG DUMBLEDORE appears in a PLUM VELVET SUIT. We TRACK him down the street (and see him eye a LOVELY LASS appreciatively) until he reaches a GRIM BUILDING surrounded by IRON GATES. As Dumbledore passes through, CAMERA RISES:

*

W O O L ' S O R P H A N A G E

The IMAGE SHUDDERS and we --

CUT TO:

47 INT. ORPHANAGE - CORRIDOR - PENSIEVE - DAY

47

A skinny, sharp-featured woman, MRS. COLE, leads Dumbledore down a drab corridor. CHILDREN'S VOICES carry from an unseen COURTYARD, *splashing and shrieking*, in the midst of some game. *

MRS. COLE

I must confess to a bit of confusion upon receiving your letter, Mr. Dumbledore. In all the years Tom's been here, he's never once had a family visitor. Frankly, I was stunned to find that someone knew of his existence.

DUMBLEDORE

I am not family. But his name has been known to me since birth.

MRS. COLE

I see...

But she doesn't really. She stops, frowns.

MRS. COLE

I think I should tell you. He's a *funny* boy -- Tom. Odd. There have been incidents with the other children. Nasty things.

DUMBLEDORE

Perhaps you could give me an example.

Mrs. Cole starts to speak, then shakes her head, moves off. As Dumbledore makes to follow, his eyes happen upon a FRAMED PHOTOGRAPH on the wall, old and yellowing, depicting a SEASIDE SCENE of a SHARP ROCK OUTCROPPING and a CAVE. As he exits, we HOLD ON it.

NEW ANGLE - CORRIDOR OUTSIDE TOM RIDDLE'S ROOM

Mrs. Cole's hand appears. KNOCKS. She turns the KNOB.

48 INT. ORPHANAGE - RIDDLE'S ROOM - PENSIEVE - DAY

48

A small room, *grim and shadowy*. TOM RIDDLE, 11 years old, sits atop a bed, hands in lap. *The walls CRAWL with REFLECTED RAIN, oozing like oil down a grimy window.* *

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

MRS. COLE
You've got a visitor, Tom.

Dumbledore steps forward, extends his hand.

DUMBLEDORE

How do you do, Tom.

Riddle eyes Dumbledore briefly, looks away.

MRS. COLE

Well, I'll leave you two to yourselves.

Mrs. Cole exits, closing the door. Dumbledore studies Riddle, then begins to tour the room. Carefully placed upon a low shelf are some ODD SOUVENIRS. A grouping of SEVEN STONES... A book containing SEVEN MATCHES. SEVEN BRASS KEYS...

Moving on, Dumbledore passes a TALL CABINET, tracing his FINGERS over its surface, as if the wood's grain were Braille, as if somehow "seeing" what lies within.

Then Dumbledore pauses. Strewn on a small table are a grouping of SEVEN DARK DRAWINGS. A BOY and GIRL, their faces anguished. A sea-swept CAVE. The same cave from the photograph. Dumbledore begins to reach out...

TOM RIDDLE

Don't.

Dumbledore stops, turns. Finds Riddle's level gaze on him.

DUMBLEDORE

As you wish.

Riddle looks away and Dumbledore, for the first time, notices his hands. They are splayed, utterly still, and INTERLACED with a SILKY WEB, where a SPIDER knits back and forth.

TOM RIDDLE

You're the doctor, aren't you?

DUMBLEDORE

No. I am a Professor.

TOM RIDDLE

I don't believe you. I hear Mrs. Cole talking, her and the rest of the staff. They want me looked at. They think I'm different.

DUMBLEDORE

Perhaps they're right.

(CONTINUED)

TOM RIDDLE

I'm not mad.

DUMBLEDORE

Hogwarts is not a place for mad people.

Riddle looks up, cocks his head ever-so-slightly.

DUMBLEDORE

It's a school. A school of... magic.

Riddle stays looking, but says nothing.

DUMBLEDORE

You can do things, can't you, Tom? Things the other children can't.

Riddle eyes Dumbledore intensely, unblinking.

TOM RIDDLE

Yes.

DUMBLEDORE

Tell me some of the things you can do, Tom.

TOM RIDDLE

(watching the spider)

I can make things move -- without touching them. I can make animals do what I want without training them. I can make bad things happen to people who are mean to me. I can make them hurt... if I want.

Dumbledore studies Riddle -- then the boy looks up.

TOM RIDDLE

Who are you?

DUMBLEDORE

I'm like you, Tom. Different.

Riddle closes his hands and the web collapses.

TOM RIDDLE

Prove it.

It is not a request. Without breaking his gaze, Dumbledore's eyes narrow ever-so-slightly and... the WARDROBE BURSTS INTO FLAMES. Riddle wheels.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (4)

Slowly smiles. Dumbledore studies him. Abruptly, the wardrobe begins to SHAKE. Riddle's smile fades.

(CONTINUED)

DUMBLEDORE

I think there is something trying
to get out of your wardrobe, Tom.
Open it. *Open. It.*

Terrified, Riddle steps to the burning wardrobe and
throws open the door. On the topmost shelf, above a rail
of threadbare clothes, a SMALL BOX SHAKES VIOLENTLY.

DUMBLEDORE

Take it out.

As Riddle's fingers touch the box, the flames engulfing
the wardrobe vanish, but the box continues to SHAKE --
the only sound in the now-silent room.

DUMBLEDORE

Is there anything in that box you
ought not to have?

Riddle eyes Dumbledore, a trifle fearfully this time. He
spills the box onto the bed: a YO-YO, a silver THIMBLE,
and a tarnished MOUTH ORGAN.

DUMBLEDORE

Why did you want these things,
Tom?

TOM RIDDLE

(looking off)
I like having things that belonged
to other people. It makes me feel
... *close* to them.

Dumbledore studies Riddle's profile, pondering this.

DUMBLEDORE

Thievery is not tolerated at
Hogwarts. At Hogwarts, you will
be taught not only how to use
magic, but to control it.
Understood?

(as Riddle nods)
I'll be going now, Tom. Leave
your window open tonight. An owl
will bring you a message. Read it
carefully.

Dumbledore starts to exit, when:

TOM RIDDLE

I can speak to snakes too.

Dumbledore stops and we are ON his face, his back to
Riddle.

(CONTINUED)

48

CONTINUED: (6)

48

TOM RIDDLE

They find me. Whisper things. Is that normal. For someone like me?

DUMBLEDORE

It is unusual. But not unheard of.

Dumbledore exits then, without a backward glance, leaving 11-year-old Tom Riddle alone. The IMAGE SHUDDERS and...

49

INT. DUMBLEDORE'S OFFICE - NIGHT (PRESENT)

49

... Harry and Dumbledore reappear. The room has grown DIM in their absence. Dumbledore gestures. LAMPS BLAZE to LIFE.

HARRY

Did you know, sir? Then?

DUMBLEDORE

Did I know that I had just met the most dangerous Dark Wizard of all time? No. Had I...

Dumbledore falters, his expression troubled. Harry looks up from the Pensieve, where young Tom Riddle's fragmented face floats on the surface, eyes Dumbledore.

DUMBLEDORE

Over time, while here at Hogwarts, Tom Riddle grew close to one particular teacher. Can you guess which teacher that might be?

HARRY

You didn't bring Professor Slughorn back simply to teach Potions, did you, sir?

DUMBLEDORE

No. I did not. You see, Professor Slughorn possesses something I desire very dearly. And he will not part with it easily...

(eyeing Harry knowingly)

I'd rather not divulge any more just yet, Harry. But I promise. In time you will know everything.

(CONTINUED)

49

CONTINUED:

49

HARRY

You said Professor Slughorn would try to collect me.

DUMBLEDORE

I did.

HARRY

Do you want me to let him?

Dumbledore trails his ashen fingers in the surface of the Pensieve, vanquishing young Tom Riddle's face.

DUMBLEDORE

Yes.

50

EXT. QUIDDITCH PITCH - MORNING

50

Harry tries -- with little success -- to get the attention of the throng of aspiring Quidditch players assembled on the pitch.

HARRY

All right! Queue up! Excuse me...

GINNY

SHUT IT!

Instant silence. Harry frowns, nods to Ginny nevertheless.

HARRY

Thanks. All right. This morning I'll be putting you all through a few drills to assess your strengths. But know this: Just because you made the team last year does not guarantee you a spot this year. Is that clear?

Ron looks unnerved at this, sweating so much he's attracted a PESKY FLY. CORMAC McLAGGEN, the huge boy from Weasley's Wizard Wheezes, sidles up.

CORMAC

No hard feelings, Weasley, alright?

RON

Hard feelings?

(CONTINUED)

CORMAC

I'll be going out for Keeper as well. Nothing personal.

RON

Really? Strapping guy like you, you've got a Beater's build, don't you think? Keeper needs to be agile, quick --

Cormac nabs the FLY between two fingers, kills the BUZZ.

CORMAC

I like my chances. Say... think you could introduce me to your friend Granger? Wouldn't mind getting on a first name basis, know what I mean?

Cormac gives a lewd wink, saunters off. Ron glances up to the stands. Hermione smiles, waves.

BEGIN MONTAGE

Ginny flies swiftly, handling the Quaffle with ease.

TWO SECOND YEARS collide in mid-air.

Cormac makes a brilliant save.

Ron makes a shaky save.

Hermione looks on, nervous for him.

Katie Bell snatches a Quaffle with one hand, splits two defenders beautifully and makes a slick blind pass to Dean who jets high in the air, then lets the Quaffle roll off his fingers... right into Ginny's hands as she races below.

Seamus sends a Bludger rocketing into the stands, scatters a group of onlookers, leaving only Neville, who sidles delicately to the right as the others leg it.

TWO THIRD YEARS collide in mid-air.

Cormac makes a brilliant save.

Ron turns the wrong way but makes the save anyway as the Quaffle caroms off the tail of his broom.

Hermione looks on more nervously.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

DEMELZA ROBINS, bent low over her stick, pins the Quaffle under her chin, splits two Bludgers and a pair of Beaters.

TWO FOURTH YEARS collide in mid-air.

Two aspiring Beaters "whiff" on a pair of Bludgers, whack each other instead and plummet to the pitch as the Bludgers ricochet off one another and go flying into the stands, scattering onlookers yet again and leaving, as before, only Neville. This time, he sidles delicately to the left.

Cormac makes a brilliant save.

The Quaffle bounces off Ron's head.

Hermione looks on extremely nervously.

TWO FIFTH YEARS collide in mid-air.

END MONTAGE.

ANOTHER ANGLE

The survivors press ICE PACKS to their heads, run TAPE round twisted fingers. Only Ron, hovering at the west goal, and Cormac, hovering at the east, remain on the pitch. Luna, Spectrespecs in place, eyes Cormac -- cool, confident, clear. Then eyes Ron -- sweaty, nervous, SWARMING in WRACKSPURTS.

HARRY

All right. Cormac. Ron. It's down to you two for Keeper. We'll decide it with a shootout. Demelza, you'll bring the Quaffle up against Cormac. Ginny, you'll take on Ron.

CORMAC

Hang on. She's his sister. How do I know she won't toss him a floater?

GINNY

Piss off, Cormac. How 'bout I toss you a floater?

HARRY

Quiet! I'm Captain. We do it my way. Now line up. On three. One. Two... *Three!*

Demelza and Ginny rocket forth. Ron weaves nervously while Cormac hovers in place, a confident sneer on his face.

(CONTINUED)

50

CONTINUED: (4)

50

HARRY
(under his breath)
C'mon, Ron...

Demelza hunkers over her broom once again, flying like an arrow, then goes into a wide, sweeping slide. Ginny blasts over the pitch, ginger hair streaming like flames, then rolls recklessly to the side. As one, they both let fly...

Hermione, face buried in her fingers, MUTTERS SOMETHING.

Cormac, at the last moment, inexplicably rolls his broom to the right and the Quaffle sails over his shoulder. Ron, zig-zagging crazily, nearly falls off, rights himself in a panic, and deflects Ginny's Quaffle... with his forehead. As a few partisan CHEERS erupt from the stands, Harry grins, then has to restrain himself. Hermione opens her eyes slowly.

LAVENDER BROWN
Isn't he brilliant?

Hermione stares balefully at Lavender, then notices Cormac eyeing his broom incredulously. She gets up, slips away.

51

INT. COMMON ROOM - NIGHT

51

Harry scans his Potions book. Hermione peruses the *Prophet*. Ron cracks walnuts, pitching the pieces into the fire.

RON
Have to admit, thought I was going to miss that last one. Hope Cormac's not taking it too hard.

Behind her paper, Hermione rolls her eyes.

RON
Has a bit of a thing for you, Hermione. Cormac.

HERMIONE
He's vile.

Ron considers this, then glances across the room at Lavender.

HARRY
Ever heard of this spell?

(CONTINUED)

51

CONTINUED:

51

Harry points to a notation in the margin underlined three times: "Sectumsempra. For Enemies." Hermione frowns.

HERMIONE

No I have not. And if you had a shred of self-respect you would turn that book in.

RON

Not bloody likely. He's top of the class. Even better than you, Hermione. Slughorn thinks he's a genius.

Hermione casts Ron a withering glance.

RON

What?

HERMIONE

I'd like to know just whose book that was. Let's take a look, shall we?

HARRY

(holding it out of reach)

No.

HERMIONE

(suspicious)

Why not?

HARRY

It's... old. The binding is fragile.

HERMIONE

The binding is fragile?

She makes another grab for it, but Harry holds it clear. Then Ginny appears, plucks it out of his hand.

GINNY

Who's the Half-Blood Prince?

HERMIONE/RON

The who?

GINNY

That's what it says. Right here. *'This Book is the Property of the Half-Blood Prince.'*

(CONTINUED)

51 CONTINUED: (2) 51

Ginny points. Written on the frontispiece is: "This Book is the Property of the Half-Blood Prince."

52 EXT. MAIN STREET (HOGSMEADE VILLAGE) - DAY 52

Students lean into a bitter wind, trudging through deep snow.

HERMIONE

For weeks you carry around this book, practically *sleep* with it... and you have no desire to find out who *The Half-Blood Prince* is?

HARRY

I didn't say I wasn't *curious*. And, by the way, I don't *sleep* with it.

RON

(a sarcastic chortle)
Yeah. Right.
(as Harry glares)
Well, it's true. I like a nice chat before I go to bed. Now you're always *reading* that bloody book. It's like being with Hermione.

This time it's Hermione's turn to glare.

HERMIONE

Well, I *was* curious. So I went to --

HARRY/RON

The library.

HARRY

And?

HERMIONE

And... nothing. There's no reference to the Half-Blood Prince anywhere.

HARRY

Good. That settles it then.

Hermione starts to object, when:

HAGRID

Hey, you three!

(CONTINUED)

HAGRID emerges out of the trees, beard crusted in white, looking like a crazed Father Christmas. Behind him, deep in the woods, DARK SILHOUETTES -- AURORS -- can be seen. Hermione eyes them briefly, then nods to the PULSATING BURLAP BAG Hagrid clutches in his fist.

HERMIONE

What've you got there, Hagrid?

Hagrid tips open the bag. The trio grimace. Hagrid CHUCKLES.

HAGRID

Stinksap. Burn the whiskers right off yer chin. Trees 'ere are drippin' with it.

HERMIONE

Stinksap? You're not sick, are you?

HAGRID

It's not fer me. It's fer Aragog. Yeh remember Aragog, don' yeh?

RON

Spider? About six feet tall? Ten feet wide?

HAGRID

Tha's the one. He's taken ill. I'm hopin' ter nurse 'im back. Keep yer fingers crossed.

Hagrid crosses his fingers. Ron forces a grin, does the same, shakes his head as Hagrid disappears back into the trees.

RON

Barking. Does he not remember that raving arachnid tried to eat us? What?

Ron sees Hermione staring at the Aurors again.

HERMIONE

The Aurors. I know they're here to protect us, but... somehow I don't feel any safer.

Just then Harry spies Slughorn, heading down towards the Village, passing a weary Flitwick coming the other way.

SLUGHORN

Filius! I was hoping to find you
at the Three Broomsticks.

FLITWICK

Emergency choir practice, I'm
afraid, Horace.

Harry watches Slughorn continue on toward the Village.

52 CONTINUED: (3)

52

HARRY
Who's up for a Butterbeer?

53 INT. THREE BROOMSTICKS - DAY (LATER)

53

As the trio enter, Harry glances round, locates Slughorn at the bar, planted plumply on a stool.

HARRY
No. Over here.

Hermione and Ron, in the midst of seating themselves at a perfectly acceptable -- and clean -- table, see Harry seat himself at one strewn with the detritus of a previous customer -- but which puts him in direct view of Slughorn. They exchange a glance, shrug, join Harry. Ron starts to take the chair directly opposite Harry -- blocking his view.

HARRY
No, no. Sit next to me.

Ron stops, exchanges another glance with Hermione.

RON
O-kay.

A SKINNY KID in an apron appears, tosses a FILTHY RAG upon the table -- which begins to wipe the surface on its own. Harry cranes his neck around the kid to keep Slughorn in view.

SKINNY KID
What'll we have?

HERMIONE
Three Butterbeers. Splash of
ginger in mine, please.

The kid WHISTLES and the rag leaps back into his pocket. Harry continues to eye Slughorn, when he sees Draco. They lock eyes briefly, then Draco exits.

RON
Aw, bloody hell...

Harry turns, sees Ron glowering at Ginny, who sits in a dark corner with Dean, their faces lit by a guttering candle.

HERMIONE
Oh, honestly, Ronald. They're
just holding hands...
(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

53

CONTINUED:

53

HERMIONE (CONT'D)
 (as Dean kisses
 Ginny)
 And snogging.

RON
 I'd like to leave.

HERMIONE
 Leave? You can't be serious.

RON
 That happens to be my sister.

HERMIONE
 So? What if she looked over here
 and saw you snogging me? Would
 you expect her to get up and
 leave?

Ron blinks, utterly speechless. Then:

SLUGHORN
Harry, m'boy!

Slughorn's voice BOOMS so loudly even Ginny jumps -- and catches Harry looking. As Slughorn waddles over, SLOSHING mug in hand, Harry rises immediately -- an action so grossly out of character that Hermione regards him with amused curiosity.

HARRY
 Hello, sir. Wonderful to see you.

Hermione, brow wrinkling, turns to Ron, silently mouths: wonderful to see you?

HARRY
 So what brings you here, sir?

SLUGHORN
 Oh, the Three Broomsticks and I go
 way back. Longer than I'd care to
 admit. In fact, I remember when
 it was simply *One Broomstick!*

As Slughorn GUFFAWS, Harry joins in, LAUGHING HEARTILY as well. Slughorn's belly trembles next to Hermione's cheek and his waving mug sloshes over, spattering the table.

SLUGHORN
 Oops! All hands on deck, Granger!

Hermione smiles thinly, when a WHISTLE is heard and the FILTHY RAG is back, whisking away Slughorn's mess as the SKINNY KID slides three foaming mugs onto the table.

(CONTINUED)

(In the b.g. Katie Bell emerges from the back, starts for the exit. Her friend LEANNE follows her out.)

SLUGHORN

Listen, m'boy. In the old days, I used to throw together the occasional supper and invite a select student or two. Would you be game?

HARRY

I'd consider it an honor, sir.

SLUGHORN

You'd be welcome too, Granger.

Hermione, in the midst of emptying her Butterbeer in one long draw, SLAMS down her mug -- leaving behind a "mustache."

HERMIONE

Be delighted, sir.

SLUGHORN

Brilliant. Look for my owl.
(exiting, to Ron)
Good to see you, Wallenby.

Ron frowns as Slughorn waddles away, turns to Harry.

RON

What're you playing at?

HARRY

Dumbledore asked me to... get to know him.

RON

Get to know him?

HARRY

Dunno. But it must be important. Otherwise Dumbledore wouldn't ask.

Slam! Ron turns, sees that Hermione has emptied his mug as well. Ron gestures to her upper lip.

RON

Um... You've got a little...

Without a thought, she flicks her tongue up, wipes it clean.

54 EXT. ROAD (OUTSIDE HOGSMEADE) - DAY (MOMENTS LATER) 54

The snow falls heavily now. Ron and Harry walk together, while Hermione trails several yards behind, pirouetting happily, letting snowflakes fall on her tongue.

RON

Bit worried about her. Did you hear that rubbish she was talking back in the pub? Her and me snogging. Ha. As if...

LEANNE (O.S.)

Katie. You don't know what it could be!

Up ahead, Katie Bell and Leanne stand in the drifting snow, ARGUING. Katie holds a SLENDER PACKAGE. Hermione comes bumping up, drapes her arms over the boys.

HERMIONE

What's up?

At that very instant, Katie Bell RISES SIX FEET INTO THE AIR. Hair dancing violently in the wind, her face remains eerily placid. Then she... SCREAMS. Harry and Ron DASH FORWARD, seize her ankles. At their touch, she FALLS to the snow, THRASHING and SHRIEKING, EYES ROLLED UP in her skull.

LEANNE

I warned her! I warned her not to touch it!

Hermione looks. Lying in the snow is the PACKAGE, TORN.

RON

Harry, she's swallowing her tongue --

HERMIONE

I'll get someone --

HARRY

There's no time!

Suddenly, a MASSIVE FIGURE LURCHES out of the WHITE: Hagrid.

HAGRID

Get back! All o' yeh!

(CONTINUED)

54

CONTINUED:

54

He says this so forcefully the others instantly obey. Effortlessly, he scoops up Katie's thrashing body and then, as if calming a terrified animal, presses his face close to hers and WHISPERS with great TENDERNESS:

HAGRID

Now, now. Now, now...

Over and over he repeats this, soothingly, the words like a mantra, until Katie's lids flutter and her body goes limp.

HAGRID

Don' go touchin' tha' but by the wrappin's. Unnerstan'?

Hagrid nods darkly to the package in the snow. Harry kneels. Poking through the paper is an ORNATE OPAL NECKLACE. Taking off his scarf he carefully enfolds package and rises. Then, along with the others, he watches Hagrid lumber off, Katie cradled in his arms. In seconds they are swallowed by the snow. The only sound is the ROAR of the WIND.

55

INT. MCGONAGALL'S OFFICE - LATER (LATE AFTERNOON)

55

The necklace lies green and glittering upon McGonagall's desk.

PROFESSOR MCGONAGALL

You're sure Katie did not have this in her possession when she entered the Three Broomsticks, Leanne?

LEANNE

It's like I said. She went to the loo and when she came back she had the package. She said it was important she deliver it.

PROFESSOR MCGONAGALL

Did she say to whom?

Leanne shakes her head.

PROFESSOR MCGONAGALL

All right, Leanne. You may go.

(as Leanne exits)

Why is it always you three? Hm?
When something happens?

(CONTINUED)

RON

Believe me, Professor, I've been asking myself the same question for six years.

Just then, Snape appears at the door, eyes the trio.

PROFESSOR MCGONAGALL

Severus.

SNAPE

Is this it?

McGonagall nods. Snape takes his wand, lifts the necklace like a dead snake. Eyes it with fascination.

PROFESSOR MCGONAGALL

What do you think?

SNAPE

I think Miss Bell is lucky to be alive.

HARRY

She was cursed, wasn't she? I know Katie. Off the Quidditch pitch she wouldn't hurt a fly. If she was bringing *that* to someone, she wasn't doing it knowingly.

Snape eyes Harry levelly.

PROFESSOR MCGONAGALL

Yes. She was cursed.

HARRY

It was Malfoy.

PROFESSOR MCGONAGALL

That's a very serious accusation, Potter.

SNAPE

Indeed. Your evidence?

HARRY

I... just... know.

SNAPE

You... just... know. Once again you astonish with your gifts, Potter, gifts mere mortals could only dream of possessing. How grand it must be to be the Chosen One.

(CONTINUED)

55

CONTINUED: (2)

55

Ron and Hermione avert their eyes uncomfortably.

PROFESSOR MCGONAGALL

I suggest you return to your
dormitory. All of you.

56

INT. BOYS' DORMITORY (GRYFFINDOR TOWER) - NIGHT

56

Harry and Ron lie awake in the darkened dormitory. Ron
stares at the ceiling. Harry eyes "Malfoy" on the
Marauder's Map.

RON

What do you suppose Dean sees in
her? Ginny.

HARRY

What does she see in *him*?

RON

Dean? He's brilliant.

HARRY

You called him a slick git not
five hours ago.

RON

Yeah, well, he was running his
hands all over my sister, wasn't
he? Something snaps. You've got
to hate him. You know, on
principle.

HARRY

(troubled by this)
I suppose.

RON

So what is it? He sees in her?

HARRY

I don't know. She's smart.
Funny. Attractive...

RON

Attractive?

HARRY

You know. She's... got nice skin.

RON

Skin? You're saying Dean's dating
my sister because of her skin?

(CONTINUED)

56

CONTINUED:

56

HARRY

Well, no. I mean... I'm just saying it could be a contributing factor.

Silence. Then:

RON

Hermione's got nice skin. Wouldn't you say? As skin goes, I mean.

HARRY

I've never really thought about it. But I suppose, yeah. Very nice.

Another silence. Suddenly it feels weird.

HARRY

I think I'll be going to sleep now.

RON

Right.

Harry sets the Map aside. We HOLD. Malfoy's DOT moves down the 7th Floor corridor... and disappears.

SLUGHORN (V.O.)

A toast!

57

INT. SLUGHORN'S OFFICE - NIGHT

57

Slughorn stands at the head of a table, goblet raised to the students seated before him, which in addition to Harry and Hermione include MARCUS BELBY, Blaise Zabini, NEVILLE LONGBOTTOM and the TWINS. A distinctive CRYSTAL HOURGLASS sits in the center of the table.

SLUGHORN

To Hogwarts' best and brightest!

CORMAC

Here, here!

Hermione exchanges a wry glance with Harry, who notices that ONE SETTING is EMPTY. The twins make -- and drink -- their toast in perfect unison. Neville stares hopelessly at the vast array of forks, knives and spoons placed beside his plate.

NEVILLE

Which one do I use for the soup?

(CONTINUED)

Hermione grins, looks up, and gets a WINK from Cormac.

CUT TO: *

SAME SCENE - LATER *

SLUGHORN

So tell me, Cormac. See much of your Uncle Tiberius these days?

CORMAC

Yes, sir. In fact, I'm meant to go hunting with him and the Minister for Magic over holiday.

SLUGHORN

Well, be sure to give them both my best. What about *your* uncle, Belby? Working on anything new?
(to the others)
For those of you who don't know, Marcus' uncle invented the Wolfsbane Potion.

As he speaks, Belby never once looks up from his plate.

MARCUS BELBY

Dunno. He and me dad don't get on. Probably because Dad thinks potions are rubbish. Says the only potion worth having is a stiff one at the end of the --
(day.)

*

SLUGHORN

And you, Miss Granger? What *is* it your family does in the Muggle world?

HERMIONE

My parents are dentists. They tend to people's teeth.

SLUGHORN

Fascinating. And is that considered a dangerous profession?

HERMIONE

No. Though, a boy named Robbie Fenwick did bite my father once. Needed ten stitches.

As Slughorn nods, the door GROANS. Everyone turns.

(CONTINUED)

SLUGHORN

Miss Weasley! Come in, come in.

GINNY

Sorry, I'm not ordinarily late --

She falters, eyes red, uncharacteristically flustered.

57

CONTINUED: (3)

57

SLUGHORN

No matter. You'll be just in time for dessert. That is -- if Belby leaves you any.

As Ginny moves to her seat, Hermione WHISPERS to Harry.

HERMIONE

Look at her eyes. They've been fighting again. Her and Dean.

Harry nods, then stands as Ginny reaches the table -- the only one. Hermione notices, eyes him with amusement as he sits.

HARRY

What?

HERMIONE

Nothing.

As Hermione smiles, she lightly strokes the crystal hourglass with a finger and we --

DISSOLVE TO:

58

INT. SLUGHORN'S OFFICE - NIGHT (LATER)

58

... LATER, the sand having run out with the evening. Slughorn says his goodbyes.

SLUGHORN

Thank you, one and all, for a most stimulating evening. We'll have to do it again.

Slughorn closes the door, turns, sends a FLOOR LAMP WOBBLING and, catching it, finds Harry.

SLUGHORN

Oh. Potter.

HARRY

Sorry, sir, I was just admiring your hourglass.

SLUGHORN

Ah, yes. A most intriguing object. The sands run in accordance to the quality of the conversation. When it is stimulating, the sands run slow. When it is not...

(CONTINUED)

HARRY

I think I'll be going.

SLUGHORN

Nonsense. You have nothing to fear, m'boy. As for some of your classmates, well, let's just say, they're unlikely to make the shelf.

Slughorn steps to a makeshift bar, begins to construct a drink.

HARRY

The shelf, sir?

Slughorn gestures to the PHOTOGRAPHS seen earlier, now ranged like a menagerie atop a low bookcase. Once again, Lily Potter and Regulus Black up front.

SLUGHORN

Anyone who aspires to be anyone hopes to end up here. Then again... you are already someone aren't you, Harry?

*

HARRY

I don't really know how to answer that, sir.

SLUGHORN

Your mother was modest too. Your father not so much. As you can see, he did not make the shelf.

Slughorn smiles genially, turns back to his drink, using a pair of TONGS to drop ice into his glass.

HARRY

Did Voldemort ever make the shelf, sir?

Slughorn stiffens, his back to Harry. His hand trembles and the ice slips from the tongs. Harry notices.

HARRY

You knew him, didn't you, sir? Tom Riddle. You were his teacher.

SLUGHORN

Mr. Riddle had many teachers while here at Hogwarts.

HARRY

What was he like?

(CONTINUED)

58

CONTINUED: (2)

58

Harry can see the vein in Slughorn's temple pulsating. Fearing he may have overstepped...

HARRY

I'm sorry, sir. Forgive me. He killed my parents, you see...

Harry stops, frowns. Slughorn turns, studies Harry. Nods.

SLUGHORN

Of course. It's only natural that you should want to know more. I'm afraid I must disappoint you, Harry. When I first met young Mr. Riddle, he was simply a quiet, albeit brilliant, boy committed to becoming a first-rate wizard. Not unlike the others I've known. In fact, not unlike... you. If the monster existed, it was buried deep within.

CLOSE ON THE HOURGLASS

Nary a grain trickles through.

59

INT. GREAT HALL - MORNING

59

Ron enters the Hall, eyes lowered, knuckles taped for Quidditch, flexing his fingers anxiously as he makes for the Gryffindor table. Neville passes going the other way.

NEVILLE

Good luck, eh, Ron?

Ron nods shortly, then Seamus comes up on his side, WHISPERS CONSPIRATORIALLY.

SEAMUS

Counting on you, Ron. I've two Galleons on Gryffindor.

As Seamus peels off, Ron cuts his eyes toward the Slytherin table, where the Quidditch team sits together. One Slytherin juts his chin toward Ron, MUTTERS something. A few turn, snigger. Ron averts his eyes and... almost runs into Cormac, who eyes him with disdain as he passes. Frowning, Ron drops down opposite Harry and Hermione. Harry eyes him briefly, knowingly, pushes a plate across. Ron takes a fork, pokes at it glumly.

(CONTINUED)

RON

So. How was it?

Hermione continues to read the *Prophet*, unaware of Ron's mood.

HERMIONE

How was what?

RON

(with mock
refinement)
Your *dinner party*.

HERMIONE

Dead boring. Though I think Harry
enjoyed dessert.

Harry's eyes shift, find Hermione smiling faintly from behind the *Prophet*.

HERMIONE

Ol' Sluggy's having a Christmas do, you know. And we're meant to bring someone...

RON

I expect you'll be going with McLaggen. Isn't he a member of the *Slug Club*?

HERMIONE

Actually, I was going to ask *you*.

RON

Really?

HERMIONE

Really. But seeing as you have such a distaste for the idea --

LAVENDER BROWN

(passing by)

Good luck today, Ron! I know you'll be brilliant!

Ron smiles feebly, looks back down at his plate. Hermione stares daggers.

RON

I'm resigning. After today's match. McLaggen can have my spot.

Hearing this, Hermione turns back. Harry catches her eye, extends a SHAKING HAND to indicate Ron's mental state.

HARRY

Have it your way. Juice?

Hermione blinks, surprised by Harry's callousness. Ron is surprised as well -- and mildly put out.

RON

Sure...

As Harry pours, Luna arrives at the table wearing a HAT that bears an uncanny resemblance to a real lion.

LUNA

Hello, everyone. You look dreadful, Ron.

(CONTINUED)

Ron nods grimly, lifts his glass. Luna turns to Harry.

LUNA

Is that why you just put something
in his cup. Is it a tonic?

The tiny vial of Felix Felicis glints in Harry's palm.

HERMIONE

Don't drink that, Ron!

But Ron's frozen in mid-sip, looking at Harry's palm too.
Quickly, he gulps down the rest.

HERMIONE

You could be expelled for that.

HARRY

Dunno what you're talking about.

Harry pockets the vial, winks at Luna. Ron rises.

RON

C'mon, Harry. We've got a game to
win.

CLOSEUP - QUAFFLE

As it ROCKETS into the AIR...

Instantly, Slytherin snatches the Quaffle and rushes en masse toward Gryffindor's end, weaving and passing with wicked skill, culminating in a vicious, slicing shot on goal. Just when it appears it will clear the hoop, Ron streaks out of nowhere and sends the Quaffle screaming in the opposite direction. Ginny pauses on her broom, stunned.

GINNY

What's gotten into him?

She glances up at Harry, circling high above and he grins. Just then, Dean streaks by:

DEAN

Ginny! Let's go!

Instantly, she rolls backward, jets off and races down her fellow Chasers. Flying in spread formation, Dean -- on the far wing -- starts the Quaffle "up the line" until it lands in Ginny's hand.

60 CONTINUED:

60

Pitching herself into a wide slide to avoid a PAIR of WHISTLING BLUDGERS, she leans recklessly off her broom and whips the Quaffle through the goal untouched.

As the CROWD SCREAMS, Harry eyes the Gryffindor section, where Luna's LION HAT ROARS, Lavender CLAPS for Ron and Hermione sits with her arms crossed, a look of supreme annoyance on her face. Harry grins, jets off.

61 INT. GRYFFINDOR COMMON ROOM - NIGHT

61

The room teems with students celebrating Gryffindor's victory. It feels like Mardi Gras. Or a mosh pit. Or a riot. And Ron is right smack in the middle of it.

CROWD

Weasley! Weasley! Weasley!

Harry takes his backslaps on the periphery, smiling as he sips a Butterbeer and enjoys Ron's turn in the spotlight.

HERMIONE

Ron seems to be enjoying himself.

HARRY

Yep. Apparently it's his lucky day.

HERMIONE

You shouldn't have done it, Harry.

HARRY

Yeah. I suppose I could've just used, I dunno... a Confundus charm?

HERMIONE

(caught)

That was different. It was tryouts. This was an actual match --

She stops. Harry dangles the vial. The SEALING WAX is UNBROKEN, the bottle full.

HERMIONE

You didn't put it in?
(as he shakes his head)

Ron only thought you did?

He nods. She POPS him playfully on the arm when WHISTLES and CATCALLS rise. They turn to see what the commotion is about and find, smack dab in the center of the room...

(CONTINUED)

61 CONTINUED: 61

Ron and Lavender. In a clinch. Kissing. Harry stares, blinks, then turns back... to no one. His eyes shift, track Hermione as she bumps through the crowd toward the portrait hole.

62 EXT. CORRIDOR - NIGHT (SECONDS LATER) 62

Harry leaves the ROAR of the party for the QUIET of the corridor. Ahead, a door stands ajar. CHIRPING can be heard.

63 INT. CHAMBER - SAME TIME - NIGHT 63

Hermione sits atop a desk, a small ring of TWITTERING BIRDS circling her head. The birds change color as they orbit, from sunny yellow to a dark, angry scarlet.

HERMIONE

Charms spell. Just practicing.

HARRY

Ah. Well... they're really good.

HERMIONE

(studying her wand)

How does it feel, Harry? When you see Dean with Ginny?

(off his look)

I *know*, Harry. You're my best friend. I see how you look at her.

Just then the DOOR BURSTS WIDE and Ron rushes in, pulling a GIGGLING Lavender by the hand. They stop. Take inventory.

LAVENDER BROWN

Oops. I think this room's taken.

As Lavender pulls Ron out, he cuts his VOICE LOW to Harry.

RON

What's with the birds?

Before Harry can reply, Hermione rises, points her wand.

HERMIONE

Oppugno!

Instantly the birds race like angry red bullets toward Ron, who flees, SLAMMING SHUT the door.

(CONTINUED)

63

CONTINUED:

63

As the birds hit the door, they EXPLODE SOFTLY into small FEATHER CLOUDS and Hermione covers her face and SOBS. Harry goes to her, hesitates, then tentatively drapes his arm over her. As she turns her face into his chest, he pulls her closer, watching as, across the room, the last scarlet feather drifts to the floor, joining the pool already there.

HARRY

It feels like this.

64

EXT. CASTLE - WINDOW - SAME TIME - NIGHT

64

THROUGH the icy window, we see Harry cradling Hermione within. As CAMERA DRIFTS AWAY, RISING THROUGH the FALLING SNOW, the VIEW EXPANDS. In the Common Room, the party rages on, while three windows down, Lavender pulls Ron into a kiss. Figures pass by windows, including one tall, pale boy standing at a WINDOW on the SEVENTH FLOOR: Malfoy. As he turns away, the castle slides FROM VIEW and the CAMERA TILTS UP TO the sky, drifting with snow.

65

INT. CORRIDOR - DAY

65

Tinsel decks the banisters and mistletoe droops from the ceiling. As Ron and Harry make their way down the crowded corridor, passing the BIRDCAGE, Ron walks with a new air of confidence, not exactly strutting, but close.

RON

Look, I can't help it if she's got her knickers in a twist. What Lav and I have -- well, let's just say there was no stopping it. It's chemical. Will it last? Who knows? Point is, I'm a free agent.

66

INT. LIBRARY - NIGHT

66

Harry trails Hermione through the stacks.

HERMIONE

He's at perfect liberty to kiss whomever he likes. I really couldn't care less. Was I under the impression that he and I would be attending Slughorn's Christmas party together? Yes. Of course, now, given the circumstances, I've had to make other arrangements.

(CONTINUED)

HARRY

Have you?

HERMIONE

Yes. Why?

HARRY

I just thought, you know, since neither one of us can take who we'd really like... maybe we'd go together. As friends.

HERMIONE

(stopping)

Why didn't I think of that?

HARRY

So who *are* you taking?

HERMIONE

(evasively)

Um... it's a surprise. Besides, it's you we need to worry about. And you can't pick just anyone. See that girl over there. That's Romilda Vane. Rumor has it she's trying to slip you a love potion.

HARRY

Really...?

Harry considers a fine-boned GIRL with RAVEN HAIR (ROMILDA VANE). She is exquisite, an absolute work of...

HERMIONE

(snapping fingers)

Hey! She's only interested in you because she thinks you're the Chosen One. You know that, right?

HARRY

But I *am* the Chosen One.

Hermione cocks her head at him, exasperated.

HARRY

Okay. Kidding. I'll just ask someone I like. Someone cool.

67 INT. STAIRCASE/CORRIDOR - NIGHT 67

Luna Lovegood, decked out in a set of SPANGLED SILVER ROBES, and Harry, in basic black, make their way toward the STRAINS of CHRISTMAS MUSIC, RED LANTERNS lighting their way.

LUNA

I've never been to this part of the castle. At least not while awake. I sleepwalk, you see. It's why I wear shoes to bed.

As Harry and Luna pass out of sight, we PICK UP Malfoy, standing in the shadows of an alcove. He watches them go, then moves off.

68 INT. HOGWARTS CASTLE - ANOTHER CORRIDOR - SAME TIME - NIGHT 68

In the f.g., the BIRDCAGE glimmers dully in the gray moonlight streaming through a window. Within, the TWO BIRDS huddle quietly. We RACK FOCUS and see, THROUGH the grid of wire, a FIGURE APPROACHING.

Draco moves down the corridor, eyes fixed oddly ahead. He looks pale in the moonlight. In his fist he grips an APPLE. As he passes the cage, we HOLD ON the BIRDS.

69 INT. SEVENTH FLOOR CORRIDOR - NIGHT (MOMENTS LATER) 69

Draco approaches. Stops. Turns to the wall. Closes his eyes.

70 INT. ROOM OF REQUIREMENT - NIGHT (SECONDS LATER) 70

CAMERA GLIDES PAST dozens of TOWERING SHELVES, dust-strewn and listing like dominoes, cluttered with all manner of strange OBJECTS. Draco appears, his legs pushing him on, wending his way through the narrow passages.

NEW ANGLE - BEHIND LARGE RECTANGULAR MASS

We RISE ABOVE it, watch Draco walk directly TOWARD us and stop. He stares at the solid mass before him. Reaches out and takes the fringe of the tapestry covering it. Tugs. The tapestry shivers like water to the floor, revealing...

A CABINET, identical to the one in Borgin & Burkes.

(CONTINUED)

70

CONTINUED:

70

Draco runs a hand over the glossy finish, comes away with DUST upon his fingertips. Glancing around, he spies a BUST of a WOMAN wearing a TIARA, removes the SILK SCARF hanging from her porcelain neck and gently wipes the dust away from the cabinet. Bringing the apple up, he opens the cabinet and places it within. Shuts it. Closing his eyes, he MUTTERS a LOW INCANTATION, barely discernible.

He reaches out. Opens it. The apple is gone. He closes the cabinet again. Waits. Longer this time. Finally, he opens it. Removes the apple. Rotates it.

Someone has taken a BITE out of it.

71

INT. SLUGHORN'S OFFICE - NIGHT (MOMENTS LATER)

71

FLASH! A CAMERA POPS, reveals Harry smiling with Slughorn before a PHOTOGRAPHER (ADRIAN). The ceiling and walls are draped with HANGINGS of emerald, crimson and gold, so the room feels like a tent... or the inside of a gift box. It is LOUD and packed with people.

SLUGHORN

Thank you, Adrian!

(quietly to Harry)

One of mine. Class of '78. I had hoped for more out of him, but at least the pictures are in focus.

(suddenly)

Oh my! Excuse me, Harry. I must greet the new Minister of Magical Transportation. Class of '67.

(as he goes)

Mingle, m'boy! Mingle! We're all friends here. And we run the world.

Harry watches Slughorn make a beeline across the room, along the way nodding to the twins, who have apparently come with each other.

VOICE (O.S.)

Drink?

Harry turns, finds Neville standing with a tray.

HARRY

Neville...?

NEVILLE

I didn't make the cut for the Slug Club. It's okay. He's got Belby handing out towels in the loo.

(CONTINUED)

71

CONTINUED:

71

As Neville turns away, Harry notices a pair of GIRL'S FEET protruding from beneath a CRIMSON HANGING. His gaze rises, finds Hermione peeking out. As he moves off, we see Luna talking to a small, stout bespectacled man (ELDRED WORPLE).

ELDRED WORPLE

Lovegood, did you say? I once encountered a seriously unbalanced man by that name at a book signing. Claimed to run a magazine...

NEW ANGLE - HERMIONE - BEHIND THE HANGING - SECONDS LATER

HARRY (O.S.)

What're you doing?

Hermione YELPS, turns, pulls Harry behind the hanging. Her hair is slightly askew, her lipstick a bit blurry.

HARRY

And what's *happened* to you?

HERMIONE

Hm? Oh, I've just escaped -- I mean, *left* Cormac. Under the mistletoe.

HARRY

Cormac! *That's* who you invited!

HERMIONE

I thought it would annoy Ron most. But he's a menace. He's got more tentacles than a Snarfalump plant.

WAITER (O.S.)

Dragon tartar?

They turn, find a WAITER peeking in, tray in hand.

HERMIONE

No thank you.

WAITER

Just as well. They give one horribly bad breath.

HERMIONE

(grabbing the tray)
On second thought -- maybe it'll keep Cormac at bay. Oh no, here he comes!

(CONTINUED)

71

CONTINUED: (2)

71

Hermione pops two of the Dragon blobs into her mouth, shoves the tray in Harry's hand and flits away.

NEW ANGLE - PARTY - SAME TIME

Snape, looking bored, stands on the periphery of a conversation, when he sees Hermione exit one side of the hanging and Cormac enter the other.

NEW ANGLE - BEHIND THE HANGING - SAME TIME

HARRY

I think she went to powder her nose.

Harry looks past Cormac's shoulder, out past the hanging and sees Slughorn laughing with a guest. Cormac plucks a dragon blob off the tray in Harry's hand, pops it.

CORMAC

Slippery little minx, your friend. Likes to work her mouth too, doesn't she? Yak yak yak. What is this I'm eating, by the way?

HARRY

Dragon balls.

As Cormac's face freezes, Harry starts to head toward Slughorn when the HANGING IS SWEAP ASIDE: Snape.

SNAPE

What's going on back here?

Cormac SPEWS raw dragon all over Snape's shoes. Snape surveys the damage, then his eyes rise darkly.

SNAPE

You've just bought yourself a month's detention, McLaggen.

McLaggen dashes off. Harry makes to follow.

SNAPE

Not so quick, Potter.

HARRY

I think I should rejoin the party, sir. My date...

SNAPE

... can surely survive your absence for another minute or two.

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

71

CONTINUED: (3)

71

SNAPE (CONT'D)

Besides, I only wish to convey a message.

HARRY

A message...?

SNAPE

From Professor Dumbledore. He asked that I give you his best and that he hopes you enjoy your holiday. You see, he's traveling and won't return until term resumes.

HARRY

Traveling? Where?

Snape merely stares at Harry silently, briefly, then exits, taking Harry's gaze with him, to Slughorn once again, wildly gesturing with a full glass of wine.

MALFOY (O.S.)

Take your hands off me, you filthy squib!

A frown overtakes Slughorn's face and he turns toward the source of the commotion, exits Harry's view. Harry emerges from the hanging, finds Malfoy in Filch's rough grip.

FILCH

Professor Slughorn, sir! I've just discovered this boy lurking in an upstairs corridor. He claims to have been invited to your party.

MALFOY

Okay, okay, I was gate-crashing. Happy?

SNAPE

I'll escort him out.

Draco's eyes shift, regard Snape. He shrugs free of Filch.

MALFOY

Certainly... *Professor.*

72

EXT. DARK CORRIDOR - NIGHT (MOMENTS LATER)

72

CAMERA GLIDES in the DARKNESS. VOICES are HEARD.

(CONTINUED)

72

CONTINUED:

72

MALFOY (O.S.)

*Maybe I did hex that Bell girl.
Maybe I didn't. What's it to you?*

Two SILHOUETTES come INTO VIEW -- Malfoy, slumped against the wall in lazy insolence, and Snape.

SNAPE

*I swore to protect you. I made
the Unbreakable Vow --*

MALFOY

*I don't need protection. I was
chosen for this! Out of all
others. Me! And I won't fail
him.*

SNAPE

*You're afraid, Draco. You attempt
to conceal it, but it's obvious.
Let me assist you --*

MALFOY

*No! I was chosen. This is my
moment!*

Malfoy exits. Then Snape.

WIDER ANGLE

Harry is revealed in an adjacent alcove. He's heard all.
A TRAIN is HEARD...

73

EXT. HOGWARTS EXPRESS - MOVING - DAY

73

The Hogwarts Express CHUGS through a SNOWY COUNTRYSIDE.

74

INT. HOGWARTS EXPRESS - MOVING - DAY

74

Ron lies on his back, while Harry sits opposite, leafing through the Half-Blood Prince's potions book.

RON

*Unbreakable Vow. You're sure
that's what Snape said.*

HARRY

Positive. Why?

RON

*It's just, well, you can't break
an Unbreakable Vow.*

(CONTINUED)

74

CONTINUED:

74

HARRY

I'd worked that much out for myself, funnily enough.

RON

No, you don't understand -- Oh, bloody hell...

Lavender stands outside the compartment door. Fogging the glass with her breath, she ETCHES "Ron + Lav," encircles it with a HEART, mimes "I miss you," and exits with a pout.

HARRY

Lovely.

RON

All she wants to do is snog me. My lips are getting chapped. Look.

HARRY

I'll take your word for it.

Just then, Hermione passes by, breaks stride as she spots Lavender's handiwork, then continues on. Ron shakes his head.

HARRY

So what happens? If you break an Unbreakable Vow?

Ron glowers, watching as Lavender's heart slowly VANISHES.

RON

You die.

75

INT. WEASLEY HOUSE - SAME TIME - NIGHT

75

The house glows with light and HOLIDAY MUSIC rings from the WIRELESS. Fred and George fill cups with STEAMING NOG and Mrs. Weasley and Ginny ferry plates of food.

MRS. WEASLEY

Eat up, eat up, everyone! There's more to come!

Harry sits in deep conversation with LUPIN, TONKS, and MR. WEASLEY. Ron sits by silently. Lupin looks haggard.

(CONTINUED)

HARRY

Draco's plotting something, I know it, something to do with Voldemort. He's been given a task or a mission -- and Snape was offering to help.

LUPIN

Voldemort has chosen Draco Malfoy for a mission?

HARRY

I know it sounds mad --

LUPIN

Has it occurred to you, Harry, that Snape was simply pretending to offer Draco help so that he could find out what he's up to?

HARRY

That's not what it sounded like.

TONKS

Perhaps Harry's right, Remus. To make an Unbreakable Vow, after all --

LUPIN

It comes down to whether or not you trust Dumbledore's judgement. He trusts Snape. Therefore, I do.

HARRY

But Dumbledore can make mistakes. He's said it himself --

LUPIN

You're blinded by hatred.

HARRY

I'm not --

LUPIN

(sharply)
You are! People are disappearing, Harry. Daily. We can only put our trust in a handful of people. If we start fighting amongst ourselves, we're doomed.

Tonks gives Harry a furtive glance, as if to say, "Leave it."

GINNY

Open up, you.

Harry turns, finds Ginny, holding something in her fingers.

GINNY

Don't trust me?

He obliges and she pops a SMALL TART in his mouth.

HARRY

It's good.

75

CONTINUED: (3)

75

GINNY

'Course 'tis. Made them myself.

She smiles at him, hooks her ginger hair over one ear and Ron plops down between them. Big brother to the rescue.

76

EXT. REEDS (SURROUNDING BURROW) - NIGHT (LATER)

76

Within the reeds. An eerie POV. TRACKING Harry and Mr. Weasley as they walk from the house to the adjacent WORKSHOP.

77

INT. MR. WEASLEY'S WORKSHOP - NIGHT (MOMENTS LATER)

77

Harry trails Mr. Weasley through his cluttered workshop, which is chock-a-block with MUGGLE OBJECTS: Steam irons. Toasters. Clock radios. Plugs. Lots of plugs. The PARTY can still be heard, drifting faintly from the main house.

MR. WEASLEY

You'll have to forgive Remus. It takes its toll -- his condition.

HARRY

(studying him)
Are you alright, Mr. Weasley?

Arthur tries a smile, but it fades. He frowns, pained.

MR. WEASLEY

We're being followed, all of us. Molly doesn't leave the house most days. It's not been easy.

HARRY

(a nod, then)
Did you get my owl?

MR. WEASLEY

Yes, but I thought it best if I replied in person. If Dumbledore's traveling, it's news to the Ministry. But perhaps that's the way Dumbledore wants it. As for Draco Malfoy -- I know a bit more.

HARRY

Go on.

(CONTINUED)

MR. WEASLEY

I sent an agent to Borgin & Burkes. From what you describe, I think what you and Ron saw at the end of the summer -- the object that Draco seemed so interested in -- was a Vanishing Cabinet.

HARRY

A Vanishing Cabinet?

MR. WEASLEY

They were all the rage when Voldemort first rose to power. You can imagine the appeal. Should the Death Eaters come calling, one needed only slip inside and disappear for an hour or two. But they're tricky contraptions. Require a tremendous amount of looking after. Eventually they fell out of favor.

HARRY

What happened to it? The one at Borgin & Burkes?

MR. WEASLEY

Nothing. It's still there.

Harry nods, pondering this.

MR. WEASLEY

Harry. You know, I went through all this before -- the last time around. Times like these -- dark times -- do funny things to people. It can bring them together and it can tear them apart. Things... speed up. It's what happens when you don't know if today will be your last.

Similar eerie POV. On the porch, Molly and Arthur, looking middle-aged and fragile, say goodbye to Lupin and Tonks.

79 EXT. PORCH - SAME TIME - NIGHT

79

While the others TALK, Lupin stands a bit off to the side, staring into the reeds. His nostrils flair subtly.

TONKS

It was delicious, Molly. Really.

MRS. WEASLEY

You're sure you won't stay?

TONKS

No, we should go.

(under her breath)

The first night of the cycle is always the worst --

Tonks gestures vaguely to the moon. Arthur glances at Lupin.

ARTHUR'S POV - LUPIN'S HAND

... as the HAIRS on the knuckles RISE.

BACK TO SCENE

MRS. WEASLEY

Remus...?

80 INT. WEASLEY HOUSE - SECOND FLOOR - SAME TIME - NIGHT

80

Harry peers through the ripples of an imperfect windowpane, studying the others below. A FLOORBOARD CREAKS. He turns, watches Ginny emerge into the light, in a robe, twisting her wet hair in a towel.

GINNY

Everyone gone to bed?

HARRY

Soon.

GINNY

I don't sleep these days. So I wash my hair. Silly, right?

Harry just stares at her, the air prickling with silence. Ginny eyes him knowingly.

GINNY

Happy Christmas, Harry.

81 EXT. PORCH - SAME TIME - NIGHT 81

Lupin continues to peer into the reeds. His PUPILS CONTRACT.

TONKS

Sweetheart...

LUPIN

There's someone out there. I can smell him. There's more than one --

Suddenly -- throughout the reeds -- TORCHES BLAZE.

82 INT. WEASLEY HOUSE - SECOND FLOOR - SAME TIME - NIGHT 82

The rippled window behind Harry blushes with light. Ginny's eyes shift from Harry to the trees beyond.

GINNY

Oh my god...

Harry turns, his BREATH FOGGING the WINDOWPANE as, far below, FLAMES SNAKE out of the reeds and SLITHER toward the house. Bellatrix emerges, peering up through the darkness toward Harry's SILHOUETTE, a mad grin on her face. As she SHRIEKS EERILY, his eyes flash with hatred.

83 EXT. WEASLEY HOUSE - PORCH - SAME TIME - NIGHT 83

Harry bursts through the front door, wand drawn, pelts toward Bellatrix. She grins, turns, and vanishes into the reeds.

MR. WEASLEY

Harry, no!

Flames race up the porch steps, climb the walls of the house. Lupin draws his wand and races after Harry.

TONKS

Remus!

Ron, Fred and George appear, join Arthur as he dashes toward the smoking marsh. Arthur glances back as Ginny emerges.

MR. WEASLEY

Ginny, stay with your mother!

Without hesitation, she races for the reeds.

84 EXT. REEDS (SURROUNDING BURROW) - NIGHT (MOMENTS LATER) 84

Harry careens through the marsh, reeds flashing past, then spies Bellatrix. She GRINS, looking like a crazed wood nymph, then flits off, her LAUGHTER mocking him. As he pursues, FIRE SNAKES through the reeds toward him.

NEW ANGLE

Fred, George, Ron and Arthur fan out, running full-out, their feet kicking up SPARKS as SHADOWS splinter throughout the reeds. It's like chasing ghosts.

NEW ANGLES

Ginny, copper hair gleaming, races through the reeds.

Bellatrix leads Harry on, grinning madly.

Ginny comes dashing to a halt, chest heaving as she peers into the smoking marsh. A HUGE FIGURE QUIVERS through a veil of smoke. Ginny's eyes SHIFT, see Bellatrix racing forward through the reeds, then SHIFT back as the veil of smoke evaporates, reveals... Greyback. Bellatrix makes an ODD, CLICKING noise -- like a signal -- and Greyback edges forward, sweeping away the reeds in front of him and revealing...

... Harry as he pelts forward.

GINNY

No, Harry! It's a trap!

Harry falters, looking toward Ginny's voice and spies Greyback. Bellatrix stops dead, wheels in her tracks and, seeing Ginny, SHRIEKS with RAGE. Raising her wand, she fires a BOLT of RED LIGHT which explodes in a SHOWER of SPARKS around Ginny. Ginny fires back, then wheels away, flashing through the reeds and coming face to face with...

Greyback, sharp teeth glittering.

GREYBACK

Don't you smell clean.

Just then, a BOLT OF BLUE bursts off Greyback's back and he turns, sees Harry standing several yards off. As Greyback gives chase, Ginny pelts after and we CUT BACK AND FORTH BETWEEN Harry, Ginny and the beast between them, faster and faster, their BREATHS shortening until...

(CONTINUED)

84

CONTINUED:

84

Greyback rushes into a clearing, panting, glancing about.

Just then, TWIN BOLTS of light blast from opposite sides of the clearing and Greyback is lifted in the air, slammed to the ground. As he regains his feet he looks into the reeds and sees Harry and Ginny, wands poised. He grins... when Bellatrix's odd, CLICKING signal carries through the night once again. Turning away, he exits.

Harry and Ginny slowly step out of the reeds, stare at each other wordlessly. Then... Ron, Fred, George, Arthur and Lupin come thrashing into the clearing, stop. All around them, the reeds SMOKE, the flames dying. Across the marsh, Bellatrix's cackle rises briefly on the air -- then all is quiet.

HERMIONE (V.O.)

You're lucky you weren't killed.

85

INT. HOGWARTS CASTLE - CORRIDOR - SAME TIME - DAY

85

Hermione reads the *Daily Prophet* as she walks alongside Harry. The HEADLINE is GLOOMY: "MORE DISAPPEARANCES."

HERMIONE

You have to realize who you are,
Harry.

HARRY

(sharply)
I know who I am, Hermione,
alright?
(frowning)
Sorry.

HERMIONE

So tell me what Arthur said.

HARRY

If Dumbledore's traveling places,
it's news to the Ministry. But
get this: that night at Borgin &
Burkes? It seems Draco was
looking at a Vanishing Cabinet.

HERMIONE

What would Draco want with a
Vanishing Cabinet?

HARRY

You tell me.

Hermione frowns, pondering this. Then:

(CONTINUED)

HERMIONE

He looks different, don't you
think? Draco. Almost... ill.

HARRY

Who could tell the difference?

85

CONTINUED: (2)

85

RON (O.S.)

Lav, c'mon. Of course I'll wear
it.

They glance ahead, see Ron and a pouting Lavender. Ron holds a GOLD CHAIN which spells out "My Sweetheart."

LAVENDER BROWN

That's my *Won-Won*.

HERMIONE

Excuse me, I have to go vomit.

As Hermione exits, Harry spies Ginny, in an alcove, sitting by as Dean laughs with SEAMUS. Looking up, she sees Harry, gives a feeble wave. He waves back and we --

CUT TO:

86

INT. DUMBLEDORE'S OFFICE - NIGHT

86

HARRY'S FACE PLUNGING INTO WATER, BREAKING THE SURFACE...

87

FLASHBACK - INT. SLUGHORN'S OFFICE - NIGHT (YEARS PAST)

87

We emerge from the CRACKLING EMBERS of a FIREPLACE. A much younger -- and more smartly dressed Slughorn probes a dish of CRYSTALLIZED PINEAPPLE as he holds court before 16-YEAR-OLD TOM RIDDLE and five other BOYS. The CRYSTAL HOURGLASS sits on a side table.

TOM RIDDLE

Sir, is it true that Professor Merrythought is retiring?

Slughorn chuckles, wags a sugar-encrusted finger at Riddle.

SLUGHORN

Now, Tom, I couldn't tell you if I knew, could I? I must say, m'boy, I'd like to know where you get your information. More knowledgeable than half the staff, you are.

(as the other boys
laugh)

By the way, thank you for the pineapple -- you're quite right, it is my favorite -- how is it you knew?

(CONTINUED)

TOM RIDDLE

Intuition.

Riddle smiles but his expression suggests intuition had nothing to do with it. Slughorn chuckles uneasily.

SLUGHORN

Good gracious, look at the time.
Off you go, boys, or Professor
Dippet will have us all in
detention. Lestrangle, Avery,
don't forget your essays...

As the others file out, Slughorn busies himself with some papers when -- Ping! -- he turns, finds Riddle still there, standing by the crystal hourglass.

SLUGHORN

Look sharp, Tom. You don't want
to be caught out of bed after
hours...

TOM RIDDLE

I know a secret shortcut or two.

SLUGHORN

Yes, I imagine you do. Something
on your mind, Tom?

TOM RIDDLE

Yes, sir. I couldn't think of
anyone else to go to. The other
professors, well, they're not like
you. They might... misunderstand.

SLUGHORN

Go on.

Riddle slips off the RING on his left hand, begins to roll it between his fingers. It is set with a BLACK STONE.

TOM RIDDLE

I was in the library the other
night, in the Restricted section,
and I read something rather odd,
about a bit of rare magic, and I
thought perhaps you could
illuminate me...

Suddenly, a DENSE FOG engulfs the room and SLUGHORN'S VOICE twists into an ANGRY SHRIEK:

(CONTINUED)

87

CONTINUED: (2)

87

SLUGHORN

I don't know anything about such things and I wouldn't tell you if I did! Now get out of here at once and don't ever let me catch you mentioning it again!

The FOG grows thicker and...

88

INT. DUMBLEDORE'S OFFICE - NIGHT (PRESENT)

88

... CAMERA EMERGES FROM the swirling Pensieve. Harry blinks, finds Dumbledore studying him from across the room.

DUMBLEDORE

Confused? I would be surprised if you weren't.

HARRY

I don't understand -- what happened?

DUMBLEDORE

This is perhaps the most important memory I've collected. It's also a lie.

(off Harry's look)

This memory has been tampered with. In this case by the person whose memory it is, our friend Professor Slughorn.

HARRY

But why would he tamper with his own memory?

DUMBLEDORE

I suspect he is ashamed of it.

HARRY

Why?

DUMBLEDORE

Why indeed.

Dumbledore trails his withered fingers in the Pensieve.

DUMBLEDORE

I asked you to get to know Professor Slughorn and you've done so.

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

88

CONTINUED:

88

DUMBLEDORE (CONT'D)

Now I want you to persuade him to divulge his true memory. Any way you can.

HARRY

I don't know him that well, sir --

DUMBLEDORE

You're the Chosen One, Harry. And Horace is, at heart, a decent man. Provide the proper circumstances and he will confess his sins.

Dumbledore lifts his fingers from the Pensieve, studies them. They are, in this moment, iridescent, whole.

DUMBLEDORE

This memory is everything, Harry. Without it, we are blind. Without it, we leave the fate of our world to chance. You have no choice. You must not fail.

As Harry watches, the damp sheen enveloping Dumbledore's hand evaporates and once again his fingers decay.

89

INT./EXT. SLUGHORN'S CLASSROOM - DAY

89

As the CLASS BELL RINGS, a group of FIRST YEARS rise.

SLUGHORN

Now don't forget to look over the chapter on antidotes. I'll be poisoning one of you next time we meet. *I'm joking!* Off you go! Don't forget your rattails, Miss Alys.

As the tiny ones scurry out, Harry is revealed, waiting just outside the door. He enters. For a moment, Slughorn merely HUMS over his briefcase, unaware. Then...

SLUGHORN

Ah! If it isn't the Prince of Potions himself! To what do I owe the pleasure?

HARRY

Well, sir, I wondered if I might ask you something.

SLUGHORN

Ask away, my dear boy, ask away!

(CONTINUED)

HARRY

Well, you see, the other day I was in the Restricted Section -- in the library -- and I stumbled upon something rather odd while reading. Something about a bit of rare magic...

SLUGHORN

Yes? And exactly what was this rare magic.

HARRY

I'm not sure... That is, I don't recall the name... exactly. But it got me wondering... Are there some kinds of magic you're not allowed to teach?

Slughorn looks up, eyes Harry carefully.

SLUGHORN

I'm a Potions Professor, Harry. Perhaps your question would best be posed to Professor Snape.

HARRY

Yes, well, we don't exactly see eye-to-eye, sir. What I mean to say is, he's not like you. He might... misunderstand.

Recognition flickers in Slughorn's eyes. A glint of fear.

SLUGHORN

There can be no light without the dark. And so it is with magic. Myself, I have always strived to live within the light. I suggest you do the same.

Slughorn gathers his briefcase, starts to exit.

HARRY

Did you say the same to Tom Riddle, sir? When he came asking questions.

Slughorn freezes in the doorway, then slowly turns.

SLUGHORN

Dumbledore put you up to this. Didn't he? *Didn't he!*

(CONTINUED)

89

CONTINUED: (2)

89

HARRY

Sir --

Slughorn silences him with an upraised hand. Then, without another word, he is gone.

90

INT. CORRIDOR - DAY (MOMENTS LATER)

90

Lightning flashes. Thunder rumbles. Rain lashes the windows. Through the birdcage's grid of wires someone approaches. We RACK FOCUS... FIND Harry. As he passes, we HOLD ON the cage. One bird is missing. Only the BLACK one remains. As thunder BOOMS, the bird RUFFLES its feathers.

Harry glances down the corridor adjacent, sees a FIGURE start up the far stairwell. As the SHADOW ASCENDS, Harry follows.

91

INT. CORRIDOR - SAME TIME - DAY

91

The FIGURE continues on, passes OUT OF VIEW. Harry follows.

92

INT. CORRIDOR - SAME TIME - DAY

92

Harry, still trailing. The FIGURE turns a corner...

93

INT. SEVENTH FLOOR CORRIDOR

93

... comes INTO VIEW. It's Draco. He stops halfway down, looks back the way he came. HARRY'S SHADOW scales the wall as he approaches. Draco watches calmly, then turns, CLOSES HIS EYES. And simply... DISAPPEARS.

Harry turns the corner. Stops. No one.

94

INT. ROOM OF REQUIREMENT - DAY (SECONDS LATER)

94

Draco wends his way through the towering shelves, removes the tapestry and faces the gleaming cabinet. He reaches into his coat and carefully removes the WHITE BIRD. Holding it in one hand, he studies it, gently stroking its feathers with the other. For a moment, he seems lost in the activity, lost in the bird's coal black eyes, its bobbing head. Then, gently, he places it in the cabinet and closes the door. Waits.

When he opens the cabinet, the bird is gone. He closes the cabinet once more.

(CONTINUED)

94 CONTINUED:

94

A feather, white and gleaming, clings to the cuff of his jacket. He takes it, turns it in the light. It is fragile, translucent. He looks briefly lost again, then blinks, turns back to the cabinet, slowly reaches out and opens it. The bird is there.

Dead.

95 INT. COMMON ROOM - NIGHT

95

Hermione does her homework while Harry peers at the Marauder's Map. They are the only ones present.

HERMIONE

Did you actually expect you could just walk up to Ol' Sluggy and ask him to reveal his deepest, darkest secret? Honestly, Harry, sometimes I think the *Daily Prophet* should call you the Dim One.

HARRY

Nice.

HERMIONE

(rising to go)
You're going to have to *persuade* him somehow. And now, I'm afraid, you've made it a lot harder.

HARRY

Hermione. I think Malfoy's leaving the castle.

Hermione stops dead, looks back at Harry. He nods.

HARRY

I've seen it. Sometimes... sometimes he just disappears off the Map.

HERMIONE

That's... not possible. No one can leave the castle these days. The Map is wrong.

HARRY

The Map is never wrong.

Hermione frowns, thinking, then shakes her head, turns away.

96 INT. BOYS' DORMITORY (GRYFFINDOR TOWER) - NIGHT (LATER) 96

Harry slumps into the darkened dormitory. Stops. On the floor, glittering in the moonlight, is a trail of CANDY FOILS. A bit further along, Ron sits in his PJ's upon the window sill, a HEART-SHAPED BOX by his side.

RON

It's beautiful, isn't it? The moon.

HARRY

Divine. Had ourselves a little late-night snack, did we?

RON

It was on your bed. The box. Thought I'd try one...

HARRY

Or twenty.

RON

I can't stop thinking about her, Harry.

HARRY

Really? Honestly, I reckoned she was starting to annoy you.

RON

She could never annoy me. I think... I think I love her.

HARRY

Excuse me?

Ron nods. Harry looks bewildered.

HARRY

Well... Brilliant.

RON

Do you think she knows I exist?

HARRY

Bloody well hope so. She's been snogging you for three months.

RON

Snogging? Who're you talking about?

HARRY

Who're you talking about?

(CONTINUED)

RON

Romilda, of course. Romilda Vane.

Harry stares at Ron... then grins.

HARRY

Okay. Very funny.

He turns to his bed, throws back the covers when... the heart-shaped box caroms off his head.

HARRY

What the hell was that for?

RON

It's no joke! I'm in love with her!

HARRY

Okay! Fine! You're in love with her! Have you ever actually *met* her!

RON

No. Can you introduce me?

Harry stops rubbing his head, eyes Ron oddly, then glances at the candy box at his feet. There is an envelope. Taking it, he slides out a card: "Dear Harry. Thinking sweet thoughts of you. Happy Valentine's Day. Romilda." He suppresses a smile.

HARRY

Ron, these chocolates, they're -- C'mon. I'm going to introduce you to Romilda Vane.

Harry leads Ron, still in his PJs, toward a door.

RON

How do I look?

HARRY

Devastatingly handsome.

Harry RAPS on the door. FOOTSTEPS -- followed by a LOUD CRASH.

SLUGHORN (O.S.)

Damn it all!

97

CONTINUED:

97

The door OPENS. Slughorn stands in a GREEN VELVET DRESSING GOWN and matching NIGHTCAP, looking bleary-eyed and annoyed. Something SMOKES on the floor behind him -- the FLOOR LAMP he'd sent wobbling the night of the dinner party.

SLUGHORN

Yes???!!!!

(warily)

Oh. Potter. It's you. I'm afraid I'm busy at the moment --

He starts to close the door. Harry sticks his foot in.

HARRY

Sir. I'm sorry. I wouldn't bother you if it weren't absolutely --

RON

Where's Romilda?

Slughorn squints over Harry's shoulder at Ron who is doing precisely the same from the other side.

SLUGHORN

What's the matter with Wenby?

Harry leans forward, WHISPERS into Slughorn's ear. He frowns.

SLUGHORN

Ah. Very well. Bring him in.

98

INT. SLUGHORN'S OFFICE - NIGHT (MOMENTS LATER)

98

Slughorn, with practiced ease, mixes a concoction of powders and potions into a goblet while Ron peers into a mirror. As he paces, Harry passes "the shelf" and finds, front and center, a PHOTOGRAPH of himself and Slughorn -- the one taken at the Christmas party. In deep b.g. is photograph of Snape, as a young student, clutching his POTIONS TEXTBOOK.

SLUGHORN

I'd have thought you could whip up a remedy for this in no time, Harry -- an expert potioneer like you.

HARRY

I figured this called for a more practiced hand, sir.

(CONTINUED)

RON

Hello, darling. Fancy a drink?

Slughorn and Harry turn, watch Ron WINK into the mirror.

SLUGHORN

Hm. Perhaps you're right.

As Slughorn goes back to mixing, Harry eyes him furtively.

HARRY

I'm sorry, sir. About the other day. Our... misunderstanding.

Slughorn eyes Harry briefly, looks away.

SLUGHORN

Yes, well, water under the bridge as they say, correct?

HARRY

I mean, I'm sure you're *tired* of it, after all these years. The questions. About... Voldemort.

Slughorn's mixing hand falters instantly.

SLUGHORN

I'll ask you not to use that name.

Slughorn's stare is fierce. Finally, he turns, goblet in hand, and puts a smile on his face, his voice cheery.

HARRY

Yes, sir. It's just, well, Dumbledore once said that fear of a name only increases fear of the thing itself. It seemed sensible.

SLUGHORN

With all due respect, Dumbledore sometimes forgets that most of us do not possess powers so great that we can risk offending the most dangerous Dark Lord who ever lived.

Slughorn's stare is fierce, as fierce as the one Dumbledore fixed Harry with. Finally, he turns away.

SLUGHORN

Alright, m'boy! Bottoms up!

RON

What's this?

(CONTINUED)

SLUGHORN

A tonic for the nerves.

Ron drinks. Beams briefly. Then his grin sags.

RON

What happened to me?

HARRY

Love potion.

SLUGHORN

And a bloody strong one at that.

RON

I feel really... *bad*.

SLUGHORN

Pick-me-up's what you need, m'boy.

(eying Harry again)

Do us all good, I think. I've got
butterbeer, wine -- ah -- and a
dazzling oak-matured mead. I had
other intentions for this but
given the circumstances...

Slughorn takes a STOUT BOTTLE and fills a glass for Ron.
As Ron SIPS, Slughorn fills a pair for he and Harry.

SLUGHORN

There we are, Potter. To life!

CRASH! -- Ron's glass hits the floor and he crumples to
his knees, then tumbles full out on the rug, SPASMING
horribly, FOAM oozing over his lips. Harry rushes to
him.

HARRY

Ron! *Ron!!!* Professor, help him!

SLUGHORN

I d-don't understand --

HARRY

Professor! Do *something!!*

Slughorn shuffles haplessly through his bag, MUMBLING, at
a loss. Harry turns back to Ron -- his skin is turning
BLUE.

HARRY

He's choking!!

98

CONTINUED: (4)

98

Harry glances about, then leaps up, and frantically begins to strip the walls of its potion stores, looking for something, anything. A box tumbles, something spills: a scattering of stones, no bigger than a robin's egg, shriveled and dry. Snatching one, he wrenches open Ron's jaw and THRUSTS it deep into his THROAT. Instantly Ron stops moving, paralyzed. The room is suddenly silent. He's not breathing. Harry places both hands behind Ron's head and gives it a SHAKE. Another.

HARRY

Breathe! C'mon, Ron, don't be a prat. *Breathe!* **BREATHE!**

Harry shakes him again and again... then stops. Ron's head rolls limply from his fingers. Slughorn looks on, mouth agape. Useless. Then... A COUGH, a great hiccupping COUGH -- like a swimmer almost drowned -- and Ron is back. Breathing.

RON

These girls are gonna kill me, Harry.

Harry grins. Then Ron's eyes flutter. Out. But breathing.

99

INT. HOSPITAL WING - EARLY MORNING (LATER)

99

Harry, Dumbledore, Snape, McGonagall, Ginny and a very somber Hermione circle Ron's bed as MADAM POMFREY ministers to him. Slughorn sits off to the side, in a chair, looking stunned.

DUMBLEDORE

Quick thinking on your part, Harry. Using a Bezoar. You must be very proud of your student, eh, Horace?

SLUGHORN

Hm? Oh. Yes... very proud.

PROFESSOR MCGONAGALL

I think we all agree that Mr. Potter's actions were heroic. The question is: Why were they necessary.

DUMBLEDORE

Why indeed.

Dumbledore takes the half-empty bottle of mead, still bearing a bit of GIFTWRAP.

(CONTINUED)

DUMBLEDORE

This appears to be a gift, Horace. You don't by chance remember who gave you this bottle, do you -- which by the way possesses remarkably subtle hints of licorice and cherry when not polluted with poison.

SLUGHORN

Actually I had intended to give it as a gift myself.

DUMBLEDORE

To whom might I ask?

SLUGHORN

You, Headmaster.

Just then -- the DOOR BURSTS OPEN: Lavender Brown.

LAVENDER BROWN

Where is he? Where's my Won-Won! Has he been asking for me?
(stopping; glaring daggers)
What's *she* doing here?

HERMIONE

I might ask you the same.

LAVENDER BROWN

I happen to be his girlfriend.

HERMIONE

I happen to be his... friend.

LAVENDER BROWN

Don't make me laugh. You haven't spoken in weeks. I suppose you want to make up with him now that he's suddenly all *interesting*.

HERMIONE

He's been *poisoned*, you daft dimbo! And for the record, I've *always* found him interesting.

Hermione frowns, a bit embarrassed. Ron SNORTS, stirring.

LAVENDER BROWN

Ha! See? He senses my presence. I'm here, *Won-Won*. I'm here --

(CONTINUED)

RON

Er... My... Nee... Er! My! Nee!

Ron, in a haze, reaches out blindly. Blushing, Hermione takes his hand. Instantly, he falls unconscious again. Lavender, vibrating with rage, stalks out. Dumbledore beams.

DUMBLEDORE

Ah, to be young and feel love's keen sting. Come, everyone, I think Mr. Weasley is well tended.

As Dumbledore leads the others past Harry, Harry studies him. Ginny passes, face very close, WHISPERING as she indicates Ron and Hermione.

GINNY

'Bout time, don't you think?

Harry watches her go, hopelessly smitten, sees that Slughorn has paused in the doorway.

SLUGHORN

I've always cherished my students. They're my life...

Then he is gone too. Harry turns back, studies Hermione, hand enfolded over Ron's. She looks up, sees his faint smile.

HERMIONE

Oh shut up.

Harry spoons soup into his mouth while perusing the Half-Blood Prince's Potion book, his eyes lingering, as before, over the SECTUMSEMPRA SPELL: "For Enemies." Ron absently twirls his wand as he covertly eyes Lavender. Hermione frowns over the *Prophet* when... a snowflake falls upon her nose.

HERMIONE

Ron. Stop. You're making it snow.

RON

Huh?

Ron looks up, sees that it is SNOWING exclusively over the trio. Hermione places her hand atop his wand and he blinks, as if the gesture kindles some sense-memory.

RON

Tell me again how I broke up with
Lavender?

Harry pauses on his soup, exchanges a glance with
Hermione, who carefully withdraws her hand from Ron's.

HERMIONE

Um, well, she came to visit you in
the hospital, you see, and you
talked -- I don't believe it was a
long conversation --

RON

Don't get me wrong. I'm bloody
thrilled to be shot of her. It's
just she seems... a bit put out.

As one, the three glance over at Lavender and are
rewarded with a lethal squint.

HERMIONE

Does, doesn't she? And you say
you don't remember a thing from
that night? Not one thing?

RON

Well... there is... something.
(as Hermione hangs)
But no. It can't be. Besides, I
was completely boggled, wasn't I?

HERMIONE

Right. Boggled...

Hermione slumps back, frowning. Harry smiles with
amusement. Just then, a MILD COMMOTION draws his
attention. At the back of the Hall, a group of girls
surrounds a new arrival.

HERMIONE

That's Katie. That's Katie Bell.

Katie Bell, pale but smiling, greets the other girls.
After a moment, she looks up. Finds Harry standing
before her.

HARRY

How are you, Katie?

KATIE BELL

Give me a moment, girls.

The girls drift off. Harry watches them go, curious,
then:

(CONTINUED)

100 CONTINUED: (2)

100

KATIE BELL

I know you're going to ask, Harry.
 But I don't know who cursed me.
 I've tried to remember. Honestly.
 But I just... can't...

Katie's eyes shift. She goes ashen. Harry turns, follows her gaze and finds... Malfoy, staring at her. Katie backs away, retreating to the other girls. Harry watches her go, then looks back. Catches Malfoy fleeing the Hall.

101 INT. CORRIDOR - DAY (MOMENTS LATER)

101

Malfoy hurtles past, forehead gleaming with sweat, passes OUT OF FRAME. Seconds later, Harry appears, follows. As he passes the birdcage... we HOLD. It's now EMPTY.

102 OMITTED

102

103 INT. BATHROOM - SAME TIME - DAY

103

Malfoy lurches to the mirror, steadies himself against the sink. Then, with a great, heaving shudder begins to... CRY.

In the MIRROR, we see the bathroom DOOR ease open: Harry. He stops, stunned. Malfoy's eyes shift. Horrified to be exposed. He wheels, points his wand. WHOOSH! The LAMP next to Harry's head SHATTERS. FLAMES spider up the ceiling.

Harry draws his own wand, fires back. The CISTERN behind Malfoy EXPLODES and WATER sweeps the ceiling, rains down. Malfoy HOWLS with RAGE. Harry readies himself.

MALFOY

Cruci--

HARRY

SECTUMSEMPRA!

BLOOD SPURTS from Malfoy's face and SCARLET SLASHES OOZE through the white of his shirt. He staggers, HOWLS again and COLLAPSES. Harry glares at his wand in horror, then slushes across the floor, the water running red with Malfoy's blood.

(CONTINUED)

103 CONTINUED:

103

MALFOY

Don't touch me! Don't you dare touch me!

Harry stops dead... transfixed by a FLASH of SOMETHING DARK pushing through the wet fabric of Malfoy's shirtsleeve. Just then... Snape BURSTS THROUGH THE DOOR. Seeing Malfoy -- and the nature of his injuries -- he eyes Harry with keen curiosity. Kneeling, he traces the TIP of his WAND over Malfoy's wounds, MURMURING an EERIE INCANTATION. Instantly, the skin begins to knit itself together. Harry backs away, Snape's ancient CHANT ringing in his ears, blood floating like crimson flowers on the floor, backing away until he reaches the door...

104 INT. COMMON ROOM - DAY

104

Harry sits numbly, the Potions textbook lying limp in his hand. Hermione, Ron and Ginny sit together, a bit apart, keeping a kind of vigil. Finally, Ginny rises, steps to him.

GINNY

You have to get rid of it. Today.

105 INT. SEVENTH FLOOR CORRIDOR - DAY (LATER)

105

Harry, Potions book in hand, follows Ginny *past the empty birdcage and* down the corridor when she pauses, turns to the wall and shuts her eyes.

*
*

GINNY

Take my hand.

106 INT. ROOM OF REQUIREMENT - DAY (SECONDS LATER)

106

Ginny and Harry materialize.

HARRY

The Room of Requirement...

Ginny nods, turns away. Harry follows.

NEW ANGLE - SECONDS LATER

Harry eyes the shelves that tower above him and the odd things they hold: a SMALL CAGE bearing the SKELETON of some long-dead creature. A JAR of QUIVERING EYEBALLS which track him as he passes.

(CONTINUED)

GINNY

Over the years, if someone had a secret, if they wanted to conceal something, this is where they came. Some of these things are almost as old as the castle itself.

HARRY

Who showed you this? First.

GINNY

Fred and George. First year. I hid Tom Riddle's diary here for a time. Wish I'd left it...

As Ginny drifts in the memory, Harry studies her, then a SCUFFLING SOUND is heard nearby. They turn, look off.

GINNY/HARRY

(at the same time)

What was that?

They turn back, look at each other. Ginny smiles. Then:

NEW ANGLE - BEHIND VANISHING CABINET

Harry and Ginny approach. The SCUFFLING GROWS LOUDER. Harry reaches out, pulls aside the tapestry. Reacts. The cabinet door VIBRATES. Slowly, he opens it and...

... the BLACK BIRD flies free in a rush of FLAPPING wings.

GINNY

See, you never know what you'll find up here.

Harry nods, looks back to the cabinet, mystified.

GINNY

All right. Close your eyes. That way you can't be tempted.

Ginny slips the book from his fingers and starts to back away. She mouths: Close... your... eyes. As she leaves FRAME, CAMERA PUSHES EVER-SO-SLOWLY IN ON Harry. Still. Waiting. For a long moment, there is only silence. Then a shadow gently eclipses Harry's face.

GINNY

There's something else. Another secret of sorts. One of mine...

(CONTINUED)

106 CONTINUED: (2)

106

Ginny leans in then and places her mouth on Harry's.

GINNY

That can stay hidden up here too,
if you like.

Harry opens his eyes, watches Ginny back away, then disappear around the corner. He stares at the empty air, blinking, then watches the black bird flutter overhead.

107 INT. CORRIDOR - LATE AFTERNOON (LATER)

107

Harry, looking a tad dazed, walks aimlessly.

RON (O.S.)

So. Did you and Ginny do it?

Harry jumps, watches Ron appear.

HARRY

What?

RON

You know. Hide the book.

HARRY

Oh. Yeah.

Just then, Slughorn rounds the far end of the corridor and -- spying Harry -- does a little Oliver Hardy "Oops" and retreats.

RON

Still no luck with Slughorn, I
take it?

Harry shakes his head -- then stops cold, stares at the empty space where Slughorn stood moments before.

HARRY

Say that again.

108 INT. COMMON ROOM - DUSK

108

The tiny VIAL of FELIX FELICIS glimmers in Harry's palm as he and Ron and Hermione huddle in the empty dormitory. They exchange glances, then Harry brings the vial to his lips.

HERMIONE

Well? How do you feel?

(CONTINUED)

108 CONTINUED:

108

HARRY

Excellent. Really excellent.

HERMIONE

Now remember. Slughorn usually eats early, takes a short walk and then returns to his office.

HARRY

Right. I'm going down to Hagrid's.

HERMIONE

What? No, Harry -- you've got to go see Slughorn. We have a plan --

HARRY

No. I've got a good feeling about going to Hagrid's. I feel like it's the place to be tonight, know what I mean?

HERMIONE/RON

No.

HARRY

Trust me. I know what I'm doing.
Or at least Felix does.

109 INT. CORRIDOR - DUSK (MOMENTS LATER)

109

A BOY with a PREFECT'S BADGE patrols the corridor. Bored, he ponders the progress of his FAINT MUSTACHE in a mirror. Harry walks by, unseen.

110 INT. ENTRANCE HALL - DUSK (MOMENTS LATER)

110

Filch paces, standing guard while Mrs. Norris sits calmly by. A MOUSE appears in the OPEN helmet of a SUIT OF ARMOR, washes its face with its tiny paws, then spies Mrs. Norris -- who HISSES. The mouse makes a quick retreat and the FACE PLATE comes CLANGING down. As Filch wheels, Harry strolls past.

111 EXT. GROUNDS/HOGWARTS CASTLE - DUSK (MOMENTS LATER)

111

TWO AURORS, twin SILHOUETTES, patrol the grounds. Harry approaches, about to intersect their paths when, at the last second, something on the ground catches his eye. He KNEELS, considers a BEETLE on its back, legs churning helplessly. Harry extends his finger, letting the tiny bug gain purchase, then tips it upright...

(CONTINUED)

111 CONTINUED:

111

...just as the Aurors' SHADOWS quiver over him and vanish. Rising, Harry starts off in one direction, then stops, as if compelled by some inner voice, and heads the opposite way.

112 EXT. GREENHOUSE - DUSK (MOMENTS LATER)

112

Harry HUMS placidly. Up ahead, a FIGURE ripples beyond the steamy panes of the Greenhouse. It's Slughorn, hunched over a PLANT whose TENDRILS coil eerily, resisting his attentions. Snip! He stealthily removes a sprig, looks up and JUMPS.

SLUGHORN

Merlin's beard, Harry!

HARRY

Sorry, sir. I should've announced myself. Cleared my throat. Coughed. You probably feared I was Madam Sprout.

SLUGHORN

Well, yes, actually --
(paranoid)
Why would you think that?

HARRY

Just the general behavior, sir. The sneaking around. The jumping when you saw me. By the way, those Tentacula leaves -- they're quite valuable, aren't they?

SLUGHORN

Ten galleons a leaf to the right buyer -- not that I'm familiar with such back alley transactions. One hears rumors is all. My own interests are purely academic, of course.

HARRY

Personally, these plants have always kind of freaked me out.

Harry gives a little SHIVER of the shoulders, smiles. Slughorn cocks his head, studies him oddly.

SLUGHORN

Exactly how did you get out of the castle, Harry?

HARRY

Through the front doors, sir. I'm off to Hagrid's, you see. He's a very dear friend and I felt like paying him a visit. So if you don't mind, I'll be going.

(CONTINUED)

112 CONTINUED:

112

SLUGHORN

Harry!

HARRY

Sir?

SLUGHORN

It's nearly nightfall. Surely you realize I can't allow you to roam the grounds all by yourself.

HARRY

Well, then by all means come along, sir.

113 EXT. HAGRID'S HUT - DUSK (MOMENTS LATER)

113

Harry appears over a rise, strolling happily along... when Slughorn appears, huffing and puffing to keep up.

SLUGHORN

Harry, I must insist you accompany me back to the castle immediately!

HARRY

That would be counterproductive, sir.

SLUGHORN

And what makes you say that?

HARRY

No idea.

Slughorn frowns impatiently -- then stops, blinks.

SLUGHORN

Merlin's beard...

Up ahead, Hagrid sits disconsolately upon a stump. Nearby, Aragog's massive body lies legs up.

SLUGHORN

Is that an actual Acromantula?

HARRY

A dead one, I think, sir.

NEW ANGLE - SECONDS LATER

Harry and Slughorn approach a sullen Hagrid.

(CONTINUED)

HAGRID

'Arry. 'Orace.

SLUGHORN

My god, dear man. How did you ever manage to kill it?

HAGRID

Kill 'im! Me oldest friend, 'e was!

SLUGHORN

I'm sorry, I... (didn't realize.)

*

Slughorn falters helplessly. Hagrid waves his hand.

HAGRID

Ah, don' worry yerself. Yer not alone. Seriously misunderstood creatures -- spiders. It's the eyes, I reckon. Unnerve people.

HARRY

Not to mention the pincers.

Harry makes a little claw motion with his hand, while making a CLICKING sound. Hagrid eyes Harry curiously.

HAGRID

I reckon that too... How'd yeh get outta the castle anyways?

HARRY

Through the front doors.

SLUGHORN

Hagrid. I wouldn't want to be indelicate, but Acromantula venom is uncommonly rare and, well, if you wouldn't mind my extracting a vial or two -- purely for academic pursuits...

HAGRID

Don' suppose it's doin' 'im any good, izzit?

SLUGHORN

My thoughts exactly! Always carry a few spare ampoules for just such occasions. Old Potion Master's habit, you know...

113 CONTINUED: (2)

113

Slughorn rummages about his pockets, extracts some SMALL VIALS -- all empty save for one containing a HAIRY WORM -- then scrambles up close to Aragog. Harry and Hagrid watch.

HAGRID

Wish yeh coulda seen 'im in 'is prime. Magnificent 'e was. Jus' magnificent...

Hagrid BLINKS wildly, then takes out a handkerchief and SNORTS LOUDLY into it. Slughorn looks up, studies Hagrid's sorry expression with empathy and steps away.

SLUGHORN

Why don't I say a few words? I trust he had family?

HARRY

Oh yeah.

SLUGHORN

(clearing his throat)
Farewell...

Slughorn frowns.

HAGRID

Aragog.

SLUGHORN

(a nod)
Farewell, Aragog, king of arachnids. Though your body will decay, your spirit lingers on in the quiet, web-spun places of your Forest home. May your many-eyed descendents ever flourish and your human friends find solace for the loss they have sustained.

HAGRID

Tha' was... tha' was... beautiful.

Hagrid wipes his eyes, then rises. He walks to Aragog, studies him lovingly, then puts a shoulder to the big beast's body... and sends him tumbling into the freshly-dug grave adjacent with a SICKENING THUNK.

HAGRID/SLUGHORN (O.S.)

(singing)
*And Odo the hero, they bore him
back home...*

114 INT. HAGRID'S HUT - NIGHT (HOURS LATER)

114

Harry, Hagrid and Slughorn sit at the massive kitchen table, which is strewn with EMPTY WINE BOTTLES. Hagrid and Slughorn are feeling no pain, while Harry looks clear-eyed, focused.

HAGRID/SLUGHORN

*To the place he'd known as a lad,
They laid him to rest with his hat
inside out and his wand snapped in
two, which was sad...*

As they finish, both men CHUCKLE. Hagrid tops off everyone's mug with a bit more wine. Harry brings his mug to his lap... then slyly pours it into the bucket at his feet.

HAGRID

I had 'im from an egg, yeh know.
Tiny little thing he was when he
hatched. No bigger'n a Pekinese.

SLUGHORN

Sweet. I once had a fish.
Francis. Lovely little thing.
One day I came downstairs and he'd
vanished. Poof.

HAGRID

Tha's odd.

SLUGHORN

Isn't it? That's life, I suppose.
One goes along and then... poof.

HAGRID

Poof.

HARRY

Poof.

They all nod soberly. Slughorn's eyes rise to the ceiling.

SLUGHORN

That's never unicorn hair, Hagrid?

Hagrid looks up, reels a bit. Nods.

SLUGHORN

But my dear chap, do you know how
much that's worth?

(CONTINUED)

HAGRID

No idea... no idea at all...

Thunk! Hagrid's great shaggy head hits the table. Instantly, he is SNORING, so DEEPLY his MUG shimmies across the table. Slughorn smiles, regards Harry, who merely stares back. Slughorn averts his eyes. Suddenly nervous. A WIND rises outside. Windowpanes rattle.

SLUGHORN

It was a student who gave me Francis. One spring afternoon I discovered a bowl upon my desk with a few inches of clear water. There was a flower petal floating upon the surface. As I watched, the petal sank, but just before it touched bottom... it transformed. Into a wee *fish*. It was beautiful magic, wondrous to behold. The petal had come from a lily.

Hearing "lily," Harry looks up. Slughorn nods.

SLUGHORN

Your mother. The day I came downstairs, the day I found the bowl empty... was the day she...

Slughorn falters, pain etching his face.

SLUGHORN

I know what you want. But I can't give it to you. It will ruin me...

Harry studies Slughorn a moment, thinking, then speaks.

HARRY

Do you know why I survived? The night I got this.

Slughorn looks up, sees Harry pointing to his scar.

HARRY

Because of her. Because she sacrificed herself. Because she refused to step aside. Because her love was more powerful than Voldemort.

SLUGHORN

Please don't say his --

(CONTINUED)

HARRY

I'm not afraid of the name,
Professor. And I'm not afraid of
him. And you shouldn't be either.
She didn't just die for me that
night. She died for you too. She
died for everyone who's ever woken
in the middle of the night afraid
a Death Eater waited on their
doorstep.

Slughorn gazes into the guttering candle before him.

HARRY

Professor. I'm going to tell you
something, something others have
only guessed at. It's true. I am
the Chosen One.

Slughorn looks up. Harry nods.

HARRY

Only I can kill him. But in order
to do so, I need to know what Tom
Riddle asked you that night in
your office all those years ago.
And I need to know what you told
him.

Slughorn's eyes well with tears, his hands tremble.

HARRY

Be brave, Professor. Be brave
like my mother. Otherwise you
disgrace her. Otherwise she died
for nothing. Otherwise, the bowl
remains empty forever.

Slughorn shakes his head, staring into the candle.
Finally, slowly, he removes his wand.

SLUGHORN

Don't think too badly of me once
you've seen it. You don't know
what he was like... even then.

Slughorn fishes out a tiny vial -- the one with the WORM
-- but his hand is shaking so violently, Harry has to
take it. Slowly, Slughorn raises his wand, touches it to
his temple and withdraws a LONG, SILVER THREAD. Harry
extends the vial and... it drops within.

115 INT. DUMBLEDORE'S OFFICE - NIGHT

115

Dumbledore holds the vial in wonderment. The worm hangs in eerie suspension.

DUMBLEDORE

How is he? Horace?

Harry shrugs. Dumbledore nods, then tips his hand. A LONG strand hangs suspended like glass. A pearl forms... and as it hangs... Harry's eyes shift, notice a DRAWING on Dumbledore's desk, one of Tom Riddle's drawings seen at the orphanage, of the CAVE and the distinct OUTCROPPING. Then... the pearl drops.

116 FLASHBACK - INT. SLUGHORN'S OFFICE - NIGHT (YEARS PAST)

116

As before. The CRACKLING EMBERS of the FIRE. Slughorn, a circle of six. Riddle commanding the room.

TOM RIDDLE

Sir, is it true that Professor Merrythought is retiring?

Slughorn chuckles, wags a sugar-encrusted finger at Riddle.

SLUGHORN

Now, Tom, I couldn't tell you if I knew, could I? I must say, m'boy, I'd like to know where you get your information. More knowledgable than half the staff, you are.

(as the other boys
laugh)

By the way, thank you for the pineapple -- you're quite right, it is my favorite -- how is it you knew?

TOM RIDDLE

Intuition.

SLUGHORN

(an uneasy chuckle)

Good gracious, is it that time already? Off you go, boys, or Professor Dippet will have us all in detention. Lestranger, Avery, don't forget your essays...

The others exit, when -- PING! -- Slughorn turns, eyes the hourglass, finds Tom Riddle still there.

(CONTINUED)

SLUGHORN

Look sharp, Tom. You don't want to be caught out of bed after hours...

TOM RIDDLE

I know a secret shortcut or two.

SLUGHORN

Yes, I imagine you do. Something on your mind, Tom?

TOM RIDDLE

Yes, sir. I couldn't think of anyone else to go to. The other Professors, well, they're not like you. They might... misunderstand.

SLUGHORN

Go on.

TOM RIDDLE

I was in the library the other night, in the Restricted section, and I read something rather odd, about a bit of rare magic and I thought perhaps you could illuminate me. It's called, as I understand it... a *Horcrux*.

Slughorn's weak smile evaporates altogether.

SLUGHORN

Excuse me?

TOM RIDDLE

Horcrux. I came across the term while reading and I didn't fully understand it.

SLUGHORN

I'm not sure what you were reading, Tom, but that's very Dark stuff, very Dark indeed.

TOM RIDDLE

Yes, sir. Which is why I came to you. I mean no disrespect to the rest of the staff, but I thought if anyone could tell me... it would be you.

Slughorn frowns, clearly disturbed, then speaks quietly.

(CONTINUED)

SLUGHORN

A Horcrux is an object in which a person has concealed part of their soul.

TOM RIDDLE

Yes, I thought it might be something like that. But I don't understand how that works, sir.

SLUGHORN

One splits one's soul and hides part of it in an object. By doing so, you are protected should you be attacked and your body destroyed.

TOM RIDDLE

Protected?

SLUGHORN

That part of your soul that was hidden, lives on. In other words, you cannot die.

Riddle nods and TURNS AWAY, staring at himself in the MIRROR on the wall opposite. A hint of RED glints in his eyes.

TOM RIDDLE

How does one split his soul, sir?

SLUGHORN

I think you can guess the answer to that, Tom.

TOM RIDDLE

Murder.

SLUGHORN

Yes. Killing rips the soul apart. It is a violation against nature. After, one is never the same.

TOM RIDDLE

Out of curiosity, sir -- can you only split your soul once? For instance, isn't seven the most powerfully magical number --

SLUGHORN

Seven! Merlin's beard, Tom! Isn't it bad enough to think of killing one person? To rip the soul into seven pieces...

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

116 CONTINUED: (3)

116

SLUGHORN (CONT'D)
 (stopping; worried)
 This is all hypothetical, isn't
 it, Tom? All academic...

TOM RIDDLE
 Of course, sir. And I promise
 I'll not speak of our
 conversation. It'll be our little
 secret...

Riddle reaches out then and pinches the FLAME of a
 candle, killing it. As SMOKE RISES, we --

DISSOLVE INTO:

117 INT. DUMBLEDORE'S OFFICE - SAME TIME - NIGHT (PRESENT) 117

... the surface of the Pensieve, where Riddle quivers.
 We RACK FOCUS and Dumbledore's troubled face bleeds
 through Riddle's.

HARRY
 Sir --

Dumbledore holds up his withered hand, silencing him,
 turns away. Harry studies him, waiting, the hush
 palpable.

DUMBLEDORE
 (haunted)
 This is beyond anything I
 imagined. In my life I have seen
 things that are unimaginably
 horrific. I know now... you will
 see worse.

Dumbledore looks off, his eyes distant. Harry watches
 him intently, as do the HEADMASTERS in their frames
 above. Finally, tentatively, Harry speaks.

HARRY
 Do you mean to say he succeeded,
 sir? In making a Horcrux?

DUMBLEDORE
 Oh he succeeded. And not just
 once. Think, Harry. He's just
 told us.

HARRY
 Seven. He made seven -- the most
 powerfully magical number. But...
 what are they exactly?

(CONTINUED)

DUMBLEDORE

They can be anything. The most commonplace of objects. A ring, for example. Or a book...

Dumbledore slides open a drawer, removes the RING and Tom Riddle's battered DIARY.

HARRY

Tom Riddle's diary --

DUMBLEDORE

It's a Horcrux, yes. Four years ago, when you saved Ginny Weasley's life in the Chamber of Secrets, when you brought me *this* --

(holding up the diary)

I *knew*. This was a different kind of magic. Very dark. Very powerful. But until tonight, I had no idea just how powerful...

HARRY

And the ring...?

DUMBLEDORE

Belonged to Voldemort's mother. It was difficult to find and...

(raising his damaged hand)

... even more difficult to destroy.

HARRY

But if *you* could find them all. If *you did* destroy each Horcrux...

*
*

DUMBLEDORE

One destroys Voldemort.

Harry begins to reach out for the ring...

HARRY

But how *would you* find them? They could be hidden anywhere, couldn't they...

*

DUMBLEDORE

True. But magic, especially Dark magic...

117 CONTINUED: (2)

117

Just then, as the flash of Harry's fingers make contact with the ring, IMAGES FLASH by in DIZZING succession: VOLDEMORT'S FACE, twisted in pain. A DERELICT HOUSE, deep in a haunted clearing. An ANCIENT CUP, gleaming as it tumbles from an old woman's hand. A SNAKE (NAGINI) slithering through damp grass. Dumbledore slipping the ring onto his finger, recoiling as his skin decays...

DUMBLEDORE

... leaves traces.

Harry's clenched hand SPASMS, RELEASES. The ring skitters across Dumbledore's desk and Harry brings a hand to his chest, a look of bewilderment on his face. Dumbledore watches the ring spin down, then glances at Harry and slowly extends his own hand, lightly touching the center of Harry's chest with the tips of ashen fingers, as if reading braille, as if he can somehow "see" into Harry's heart. Trepidation -- and recognition -- flicker over his face.

HARRY

It's where you've been going,
isn't it, sir? When you leave the
school.

Harry's eyes drift once again to the postcard on the desk. Dumbledore withdraws his hand, nodding, still studying Harry oddly, his voice, when it comes, distant.

DUMBLEDORE

Yes. And I think... perhaps... I
may have found another. But this
time I cannot hope to destroy it
alone.

Harry peers into Dumbledore's eyes. Dumbledore nods.

DUMBLEDORE

Once again, I shall ask too much
of you.

118 INT./EXT. GARGOYLE CORRIDOR - LATE DAY

118

Harry stands at a window, looking out. He brings his fingers to his chest again when... Hermione comes up behind him.

HERMIONE

Harry. It's time.

119 INT./EXT. COURTYARD - LATE DAY (MOMENTS LATER)

119

Harry, Hermione and Ron walk.

HARRY

Hermione, is the Room of Requirement unplottable?

HERMIONE

If one wants it to be. Why?

HARRY

It would explain why I thought Malfoy was leaving the castle when he disappeared off the Map.

HARRY

He was going to the Room of Requirement.

HERMIONE

Of course, and that explains the Vanishing Cabinet as well!

RON

No. I got an owl from Dad this morning. The one at Borgin & Burke's? It's still there.

*

HARRY

But I'm telling you. I saw it --

Just then, the twins appear, pass. Harry watches them, a thought forming.

HARRY

What if there are two? Vanishing cabinets.

HERMIONE

What if there are?

HARRY

I don't know...

Harry watches the twins vanish around a corner.

RON

Good luck, mate.

Harry turns back to Ron and Hermione, neither able to fully conceal their concern. He smiles reassuringly, continues on.

(CONTINUED)

119 CONTINUED:

119

HARRY

I don't need luck. I'll be with
Dumbledore.

120 EXT. ASTRONOMY TOWER - DYING LIGHT (LATER)

120

As Harry trots up the spiraling exterior stairs, he hears VOICES coming from the topmost level and pauses, peering up through the grid-like floor above: Dumbledore and Snape.

SNAPE

Have you ever considered that you
ask too much? That you take too
much for granted? Has it ever
crossed your brilliant mind that I
don't want to do this anymore?

DUMBLEDORE

Whether it has or hasn't is
irrelevant. I will not negotiate
this with you, Severus. You
agreed. There's nothing more to
discuss.

Harry stands poised, peering upward, where Dumbledore squints toward the dying sun and Snape glares at his back. Finally, Snape turns away and -- before Harry can react -- is descending the stairs. Seeing Harry, Snape falters briefly, then continues on without a word. As his FOOTSTEPS fade, Harry ascends to the upper tier. Dumbledore turns. Smiles.

DUMBLEDORE

Harry. You need a shave, my
friend.

Harry runs his hand over his face.

DUMBLEDORE

At times I forget how much you've
grown. At times I still see the
small boy from the cupboard.

(smiling)

Forgive my mawkishness, Harry. I
am an old man.

HARRY

You look the same to me, sir.

DUMBLEDORE

Like your mother, you are
unfailingly kind.

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

120 CONTINUED:

120

DUMBLEDORE (CONT'D)

A trait people never fail to undervalue. I'm afraid.

Dumbledore turns then, eyes the fiery sky again.

DUMBLEDORE

The place to which we journey tonight is exceedingly dangerous, Harry. I promised that you could accompany me and I stand by that promise. But there is a condition: You must obey any command I give you -- without question.

HARRY

Yes, sir.

DUMBLEDORE

Understand what I'm saying. Should I tell you to hide, you must hide.

Harry nods.

*

DUMBLEDORE

Should I tell you to run, you will run.

*

Harry nods.

*

DUMBLEDORE

And should I tell you to abandon me and save yourself...

*

Harry's eyes rise, meet Dumbledore's.

*

DUMBLEDORE

You will do so.

*

*

Harry hesitates.

DUMBLEDORE

Your word, Harry.

Harry debates this internally, then, finally, nods.

*

HARRY

My word.

DUMBLEDORE

Take my arm.

(CONTINUED)

120 CONTINUED: (2)

120

HARRY

Sir, I thought one couldn't
Apparate within Hogwarts.

DUMBLEDORE

Being me has its privileges.

The WIND GUSTS and Harry reaches out. Dumbledore's CLOAK
BILLOWS and we are TOSSED INTO...

121 EXT. OCEAN - DUSK (MOMENTS LATER)

121

BLACK. Undulating. The sound of WAVES. We EASE UP, out
of the ocean. A GIANT WAVE crashes over a jagged
outcropping. As the SPRAY clears... Dumbledore and Harry
are revealed. Dumbledore eyes the TOWERING CLIFF FACE
opposite, the CAVE.

HARRY

It's there, isn't it?

122 EXT. CAVE - SAME TIME - DUSK

122

Harry and Dumbledore materialize. It is quiet here, eerily so, the waves merely distant thunder. As Harry glances about, Dumbledore moves to an archway, passes beyond. Harry follows, finds Dumbledore standing below a towering dome of rock, probing its mysteries with the light from his wand.

DUMBLEDORE

This is the place. Oh yes, this place has known magic.

(closing his eyes)

Where you stand, Harry, Tom Riddle once stood many, many years ago, when he was but a poor orphan boy with a penchant for cruelty...

Dumbledore's wand stops briefly in its arc and his face registers pain, as if detecting some past unpleasantness. He begins to TRACE HIS FINGERS over the surface of the rock.

DUMBLEDORE

One wintry afternoon, he lured two younger classmates to this cave. What happened is unclear. But this much is known: the children were damaged.

Dumbledore begins to MURMUR in a STRANGE WHISPER as his fingers play over the rock... then stop. His eyes open. He takes a dagger from his robes and draws the blade across his forearm, speckling the rock face with scarlet beads.

HARRY

Sir!

The rock face SIZZLES like acid and begins to crumble, forming a narrow opening.

DUMBLEDORE

In order to gain passage, payment must be made, payment intended to weaken any intruder.

HARRY

You should've let me, sir.

DUMBLEDORE

Oh, no, Harry. Your blood is much more precious than mine.

123 EXT. ARCHWAY/UNDERGROUND LAKE - NIGHT (MOMENTS LATER) 123

Dumbledore and Harry emerge onto the rim of a VAST LAKE teeming with MIST. A chill hangs in the air.

DUMBLEDORE
Careful. The water.

Harry peers into the lake. It is black as ink.

NEW ANGLE - MOMENTS LATER

Harry follows Dumbledore around the rim of the lake. In the center, a GREENISH GLOW shimmers in the mist.

DUMBLEDORE
It's there. The only question is
how do we get to it?

HARRY
We couldn't, perhaps, just try a
Summoning Charm, sir?

Dumbledore smiles, motions: Be my guest. Harry lifts his wand.

HARRY
Accio Horcrux!

There is an EXPLOSION and something PALE erupts out of the water. Harry nearly sheds his skin. Dumbledore calmly watches it VANISH beneath the surface.

DUMBLEDORE
Perhaps not.

NEW ANGLE - MOMENTS LATER

Dumbledore leads Harry on. Stops. Takes a step back. He CLOSES HIS EYES and to Harry's horror walks right to the lake's edge. As the dark water laps over the toes of his shoes, Dumbledore PASSES HIS HAND slowly through the air, then closes it... as if gripping something invisible. Taking his wand, he gives his CLENCHED FIST a TAP and a thick coppery-green CHAIN appears out of thin air, extending from the water to Dumbledore's hand.

DUMBLEDORE
If you would, Harry...

Quickly Harry grasps the end of the chain and together he and Dumbledore pull, end over end, until the PROW of a SMALL BOAT pierces the surface, green with algae.

(CONTINUED)

123 CONTINUED:

123

NEW ANGLE - MOMENTS LATER

In eerie silence, the boat cleaves the water, ferrying Harry and Dumbledore toward the GREENISH GLOW.

HARRY

Sir... have you ever taken *Felix Felicis*?

DUMBLEDORE

Only recreationally. You see, I believe one creates one's own luck.

Harry looks down into the water, watches a FACE skim by beneath the surface.

HARRY

Professor... there are bodies in this lake.

DUMBLEDORE

Yes.

NEW ANGLE (SMALL ISLAND) - MOMENTS LATER

Here the GREENISH GLOW is ferocious. As the boat arrives, Dumbledore steps out.

DUMBLEDORE

Remember... the water.

Harry nods, steps out carefully and joins Dumbledore at the source of the GLOW -- a BASIN filled with a PHOSPHORESCENT LIQUID. Dumbledore extends the tips of his blackened fingers toward the basin, but cannot touch the liquid.

HARRY

Do you think the Horcrux is in there, sir?

DUMBLEDORE

Oh yes.

Dumbledore steps back, ponders the basin. Notes the CRYSTAL GOBLET sitting beside it. Smiles ruefully.

DUMBLEDORE

It has to be drunk.

(as Harry reacts)

You remember the condition on which I brought you with me?

(CONTINUED)

123 CONTINUED: (2)

123

Harry starts to respond. Stops. Nods.

DUMBLEDORE

This potion might paralyze me. It might cause me to forget why I'm here. It might create so much pain I beg for relief. You are not to indulge these requests, Harry. It is your job to make sure I keep drinking this potion even if you have to force it down my throat. Understood?

HARRY

Why can't I drink it, sir?

DUMBLEDORE

Because I am much older, much cleverer... and much less valuable.

(taking the goblet)

Your good health, Harry.

Dumbledore dips the goblet into the gleaming liquid and brings it to his lips. Drinks deep. Closes his eyes.

HARRY

Professor?

Dumbledore shakes his head, silencing Harry, then dips the goblet once more. Twice more he drinks. His hand TREMBLES and he grips the side of the basin.

HARRY

Professor? Can you hear me?

Dumbledore says nothing. The corners of his eyes TWITCH. His hand TREMBLES, savagely this time, and he nearly drops the goblet. Harry reaches out, steadies his hand.

DUMBLEDORE

Don't... don't make me...

Harry eyes Dumbledore's anguished face, steels himself.

HARRY

You... you can't stop, Professor. You've got to keep drinking. Like you said. Remember.

DUMBLEDORE

Noooooooo!!!

(CONTINUED)

123 CONTINUED: (3)

123

Harry staggers back, so primal is Dumbledore's plea. Dumbledore's arm goes slack, the goblet clanging dully against the side of the basin. Harry takes a breath, steps forward, places his hand over Dumbledore's, lifts the cup.

DUMBLEDORE

Make it stop... Please... make it stop...

HARRY

It will, sir. It'll stop. But only if you drink...

Harry, his own hand TREMBLING now, tips the goblet over Dumbledore's lips.

DUMBLEDORE

My fault. It's all my fault...

Harry brings the goblet up once more. Dumbledore drinks.

DUMBLEDORE

Too much... I can't... take it... I want... to die... kill... kill me... KILL ME, HARRY!

HARRY

What?

DUMBLEDORE

Your word, Harry! Your word!

HARRY

No...

DUMBLEDORE

KILL ME! IT'S THE ONLY WAY!

Harry stands paralyzed, unsure what to do. Then... Dumbledore collapses, rolls onto his back. Harry pelts forward, dips the goblet into the basin and kneels by Dumbledore.

HARRY

One more. Just one more. And then -- I promise... I'll do what you say.

Dumbledore, jaw clinched shut, eyes Harry.

HARRY

I promise.

(CONTINUED)

Dumbledore's jaw relaxes and Harry pries open his mouth, tips the liquid down his throat. Pain ripples through Dumbledore's face. He tries to speak, Harry eyeing him with trepidation, fearful of what he will request. Again and again Dumbledore struggles and then... his eyes... open. Find Harry.

DUMBLEDORE

Water.

A shudder of relief goes through Harry. Grinning, he leaps to the basin. A GOLDEN LOCKET now lies at the bottom. Harry snatches it up.

DUMBLEDORE

Water...

HARRY

Aguamenti.

Instantly COLD CLEAR WATER rises in the basin.

HARRY

You did it, sir. Look --

Harry frowns. The goblet is empty.

DUMBLEDORE

Water!

Harry dips the goblet into the basin yet again, brings it to Dumbledore's lips... but once again finds it empty. Dumbledore tries to speak, but his lips are CRACKING, his tongue like SAND. He GULPS DRILY for air.

HARRY

I'm trying, sir. I'm --

Harry stops. All is silent... except for the SOFT LAPPING of the lake. He considers the GHOSTLY SHAPES gliding just below the surface. Deciding, he dips the goblet into the dark water. Instantly, the lake begins to CHURN. Harry backs away, the goblet sloshing in his hand. FACES, pale and haunted, quiver in the roiling water.

Harry tips the water into Dumbledore's mouth. Dumbledore blinks. His tongue probes his lower lip. Harry returns to the water's edge, hesitates, then plunges the goblet into water once more. Instantly, a SLIMY WHITE HAND snags his wrist and Harry is pulled under. The goblet bobs on the surface.

(CONTINUED)

123 CONTINUED: (5)

123

NEW ANGLE - UNDERWATER

Utterly silent. Harry twists madly as HANDS reach for him, turning him this way and that. HAUNTED FACES float by.

NEW ANGLE - THE SURFACE

Harry breaks the surface, GASPING for air, blinking, catching a glimpse of Dumbledore slumped against the basin as he is...

NEW ANGLE - UNDERWATER

... pulled underwater once again, into the eerie SILENCE of flailing arms. He shakes free again and again, but there are too many hands, too many haunted faces. We STAY UNDER a very long time, feel his lungs burning. His eyes lose their focus, turning blank. Bubbles trail out of his mouth as his face goes slack. He sinks deeper, in free fall, takes one last look at the SHIMMERING SURFACE ABOVE, the last thing he will see... when a SHADOW SHIVERS briefly and...

... the SURFACE SIZZLES with RED LIGHT, like blood, then becomes TRANSPARENT, revealing DUMBLEDORE, wand pointed directly at the water.

NEW ANGLE - THE SURFACE

Harry breaks the surface, SPITTING UP WATER, GASPING FOR AIR. Dumbledore staggers, slumps once more against the basin, weakened by his effort. Harry scrambles up, steadies him and the lake EXPLODES WITH FIRE. Harry wheels, watches the bodies in the lake twist in pain.

DUMBLEDORE

Go...

Harry turns, confused. Dumbledore's hand finds his face.

DUMBLEDORE

We have to... go.

Harry glances to the boat. Flames lick the prow, darkening the wood, but do not destroy it. He nods.

124 EXT. CAVE - ENTRANCE 124

Harry and Dumbledore emerge from the cave. Dumbledore, pale and weak, scans the stars wearily, leans heavily on Harry.

HARRY

Don't worry, sir. We're nearly there.

DUMBLEDORE

I am not worried, Harry. I am with you.

A CHOIR IN FULL VOICE RISES ON THE AIR and we --

CUT TO:

125 INT. GREAT HALL - SAME TIME - NIGHT 125

We HOLD ON the Gothic glass of the main window. Ambient light, ominous and cool, plays across its shimmering surface. Flitwick, arms flowing gracefully, conducts a group of FIFTH YEARS, looks up toward the window, eyes the pulsating light.

126 EXT. COURTYARD - SAME TIME - NIGHT 126

McGonagall stands in the courtyard as the CHOIR DRIFTS FAINTLY on the night air. She glances up to the sky, a curious expression on her face, then spies a pair of First Years straggling across the courtyard.

PROFESSOR MCGONAGALL

To your Houses. No dawdling.

As they scuttle off, McGonagall looks back to the sky. A VORTEX of CLOUDS swirls eerily in on itself. We PULL BACK...

127 INT. CASTLE - WINDOW - SAME TIME - NIGHT 127

... out of a window, its glass prickling with ambient light, and find Snape standing silently, staring at the gathering storm, his expression inscrutable. The choir a murmur.

128 INT. COMMON ROOM - SAME TIME - NIGHT 128

Darker than usual. The fire muted. Ron and Hermione sit together. Silent. Glance toward the window, the sky beyond.

129 INT. HOSPITAL WING - SAME TIME - NIGHT 129

Draco's face, skin glimmering with the light crawling across the ceiling above him. He stares, unblinking, swings out of the bed. Bare feet -- Draco's -- drop to the tiles.

130 INT. CORRIDOR - NIGHT (MOMENTS LATER) 130

The choir echoes eerily. SIXTH YEARS, little more than SHADOWS, hang out, giggling in dark corners. Malfoy glides by in his bare feet. Unnoticed. A ghost.

131 INT. ROOM OF REQUIREMENT - NIGHT (MOMENTS LATER) 131

Dense with shadow. Strange slashes of light. Malfoy, a shadow within shadows, pulls the tapestry from the Vanishing Cabinet, steps back...

He stares at the monolith before him, lifts his wand and begins to CHANT eerily. The surface of the cabinet glimmers, atremble in the ambient light. Almost alive. Then he stops. Looking back, his eyes haunted, he slips away.

Light plays within the cabinet. Movement. Shadows flicker within, coalesce. We ease up, reveal...

Bellatrix. Greyback. And a few friends. Bellatrix steps into the light. Glances around. Grins.

132 EXT. ASTRONOMY TOWER - NIGHT (MOMENTS LATER) 132

Harry and Dumbledore materialize on the rooftop. Dumbledore glances above, notes the clouds.

HARRY

We need to get you up to the hospital, sir, to Madam Pomfrey --

DUMBLEDORE

No. Severus... Severus is who I need... Go and wake him... Tell him what has happened...

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

132 CONTINUED:

132

DUMBLEDORE (CONT'D)

Speak to no one else... I... I
shall wait here...

HARRY

All right. Okay.

Harry gently disengages from Dumbledore, leaves him leaning against the ramparts. He dashes to the stairwell door and, glancing back, sees Dumbledore MUTTERING WEARILY as he GESTICULATES with his blackened hand.

HARRY

Sir, are you... *praying*?

DUMBLEDORE

(smiling faintly)

No, Harry. I do not pray. I was merely closing a window -- the one that had allowed us to Apparate.

Harry nods, begins to open the door, when FOOTSTEPS sound. Draws his wand. Dumbledore cocks his head, listening. Wincing, he straightens up, as if to mask his infirmity.

DUMBLEDORE

Hide yourself below. And do not speak or show yourself without my permission. No matter what.

Harry looks down, through the LATTICEWORK at his feet, to the tier below. The FOOTSTEPS DRAW CLOSER.

DUMBLEDORE

Do as I say, Harry.

Harry hesitates. Dumbledore's eyes blaze...

DUMBLEDORE

Trust me.

Harry meets Dumbledore's eyes, then pockets his wand and slips down the stairs. As he reaches the level below, the DOOR above FLIES OPEN. Harry peers up through the grid, watches Malfoy come INTO VIEW.

DUMBLEDORE

Good evening, Draco. What brings you out on such a fine Spring evening? Or is it Summer?

Draco stands poised, wand in hand, eyes darting about.

(CONTINUED)

MALFOY

Who else is here? I heard you talking.

DUMBLEDORE

I often talk aloud to myself. I find it extraordinarily useful. That which sounds sane at a whisper can seem utterly mad when said for all the world to hear. Haven't been whispering to yourself, have you, Draco?

Draco eyes Dumbledore with unease.

DUMBLEDORE

You are not an assassin, Draco.

MALFOY

How do you know what I am? I've done things that would shock you.

DUMBLEDORE

Like cursing Katie Bell and hoping she would, in turn, bear a cursed necklace to me? Like replacing a bottle of mead with one laced with poison. Forgive me, Draco, but these are attempts so feeble I cannot help but question if your heart has been really in them. I'm curious. When Voldemort gave you this task, when he asked you to kill me, was it in a whisper?

MALFOY

He trusts me! I was chosen!

Malfoy thrusts out his arm, pulls back his sleeve and reveals the DARK MARK. Dumbledore barely looks at it.

DUMBLEDORE

Then I shall make it easy for you.

*Slowly and without intent, Dumbledore draws his wand.
Instantly Malfoy raises his own.*

MALFOY

Expelliarmus!

Harry watches in horror as Dumbledore's wand flies free, clattering across the grid above. Malfoy watches it roll to a stop, a curious mixture of fear and awe at his own actions. Dumbledore eyes the wand, then Draco.

(CONTINUED)

132 CONTINUED: (3)

132

DUMBLEDORE

Well done, Draco. But I warn you.
Killing is not nearly as easy.

*
*

(CONTINUED)

132 CONTINUED: (4)

132

Malfoy looks into Dumbledore's eyes, then to the sky, at the gathering clouds, twisting darkly, then glances to the stairwell. Dumbledore notices.

*

DUMBLEDORE

You're not alone. Are you. There are others. How?

A sneering smile plays over Malfoy's lips.

MALFOY

The Vanishing Cabinet in the Room of Requirement.

DUMBLEDORE

That cabinet has been broken for years.

MALFOY

I've been mending it.

DUMBLEDORE

Ingenious. Let me guess. It has a sister. A twin.

MALFOY

In Borgin & Burkes. They form --

DUMBLEDORE

A passage, yes. Very good.
(eyes shifting)

I once knew a boy years ago who made all the wrong choices. Let me help you, Draco.

MALFOY

I don't want your help! Don't you see! I have to do it! I have to!
(in a whisper)
I've got to kill you or he'll kill me.

DUMBLEDORE

Say that again, Draco. But aloud this time.

Draco looks deep into Dumbledore's eyes. His hand trembles. Transfixed, Harry watches from the shadows. Slowly, Malfoy begins to LOWER HIS WAND... when FOOTSTEPS ECHO. The DOOR FLIES OPEN: Bellatrix, Greyback and the others.

BELLATRIX

Well now, look what we have here. Dumbledore. Wandless and alone.

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

132 CONTINUED: (5)

132

BELLATRIX (CONT'D)

Cornered in his own castle. Well done, Draco.

Harry peers up, eyes flashing angrily at the sound of Bellatrix's voice. He draws his wand slowly.

DUMBLEDORE

Good evening, Bellatrix. I think introductions are in order.

BELLATRIX

Love to, Albus. But I'm afraid we're on a bit of a tight schedule.

(to Malfoy)

Do it.

Malfoy's wand rises once again. Harry raises his own, aiming through the grid, poised. Just then, a SHADOW splinters through the columns to his right. He looks, finds Snape, quiet as a ghost, peering upward. Carefully, Snape draws his wand, then turns to Harry, a finger to his lips: Shhh. Then he is drifting upward. Silent. A ghost again.

GREYBACK

He doesn't have the stomach. Like his father. Let me finish him. In my own way.

BELLATRIX

No! The Dark Lord was clear. The boy's to do it. Go on, Draco. Now!

Once again Draco raises his wand, his hand trembling. Harry's own arm is stiff, sure. The vein in his hand pulsates...

SNAPE (O.S.)

No.

Harry watches Snape come INTO VIEW.

DUMBLEDORE

Severus...

BELLATRIX

Well, look who's here. Hogwarts own Defense Against the Dark Arts teacher. Come to see the slaughter?

DUMBLEDORE

Severus... please.

(CONTINUED)

132 CONTINUED: (6)

132

SNAPE

I gave my word. I made a vow...

Harry's eyes dart back and forth frantically, trying to make sense of the scene playing out above. Snape's arm rises.

SNAPE

Avada Kedavra!

A JET of GREEN LIGHT hits Dumbledore squarely in the chest. For a second he hangs, suspended upon the ramparts, and then... the night swallows him.

HARRY SCREAMS in RAGE. Bellatrix raises her wand to the sky and a DEAFENING BLAST shakes the castle, masking Harry's cry. The CLOUDS EXPLODE with GRIM LIGHT, mutating into a SKULL. As the Death Eaters flee, Snape's arm drops limply to his side.

SNAPE

You can no longer stay here.

Draco, stunned, stares at the empty place where Dumbledore stood only seconds before. Snape takes him by the scruff of the neck, forces him through the door, then follows.

Harry scrambles up the stairs and lurches to the ramparts, BATHED IN THE GREEN LIGHT from above. He peers down. Agony wrecks Harry's face and he has to steady himself. He looks up into the leering skull above. Rage fills his eyes.

132A EXT. ASTRONOMY TOWER - SAME TIME - NIGHT

132A

Snape leads Malfoy and Bellatrix down the spiraling staircase.

132B INT. SLUGHORN'S CORRIDOR - NIGHT

132B

Snape leads on, his face a mask as he rounds a corner. STUDENTS in pajamas and robes peer at the emerald sky, then turn, stare curiously at their teacher and his companions. Snape sweeps past wordlessly. Draco averts his eyes. Bellatrix leers at a TINY FIRST YEAR, leans close:

BELLATRIX

Boo.

132C INT. OUTSIDE GREAT HALL - NIGHT 132C

Hearing FOOTSTEPS, an AUROR turns, is BLASTED off his feet as Snape and the others appear. Bellatrix lags, then steps to the TOWERING DOORS of the Hall, peering upward, past the FLOATING CANDLES to the vaulted ceiling, solemn as a church. Raising her wand, she sends a FIERY BOLT toward the GRAND WINDOW opposite. As it EXPLODES, a BLAST of COLD AIR sweeps the room, EXTINGUISHING THE CANDLES. Snape turns, looks back. Bellatrix simply GRINS, a mad child.

132D INT. CORRIDOR - SAME TIME - NIGHT 132D

As Bellatrix's BLAST ECHOES, Ron and Hermione -- racing side by side in their regular clothes -- glance at one another, dash on.

132E EXT. CASTLE - SAME TIME - NIGHT 132E

Filch, on guard, looks up, watches SHARDS OF GLASS spill from the window like jewels, standing transfixed as the fragments lash his face, draw blood.

132F INT. CORRIDOR - SAME TIME - NIGHT 132F

Harry races on, glances out a window and sees Snape and the others racing across a lower courtyard.

132G EXT. LOWER COURTYARD - SAME TIME - NIGHT 132G

Malfoy slows, glancing upward, watching the students come to the windows and peer out at the emerald sky. They look like ghosts in their nightclothes.

BELLATRIX

Draco! *Draco!*

(as he turns)

They'll kill you if you stay.

132H INT. CORRIDOR - SAME TIME - NIGHT 132H

Hermione and Ron push through the other students, who are confused, crying. McGonagall appears, meets Ron and Hermione's glance, continues on.

132I EXT. HAGRID'S HUT/GROUNDS - SAME TIME - NIGHT 132I

Quiet here. A VIEW TOWARD the castle. We HOLD. Slowly FIGURES appear on the horizon. The Death Eaters. Greyback. Bellatrix, Draco. And Snape.

133 EXT. HOGWARTS CASTLE - NIGHT 133

Harry bursts through the entrance doors, wand in hand. Before him, the grounds shimmer eerily in the GREEN GLOW. He sees the FIGURES FLEEING towards Hagrid's Hut.

134 EXT. HAGRID'S HUT / GROUNDS - SAME TIME - NIGHT 134

Snape and the others race toward the edge of the grounds. Suddenly, Snape pulls up, looks back. Sees Harry sprinting toward him. Malfoy, looking edgy, is watching Harry too.

SNAPE

Go on!

(CONTINUED)

134 CONTINUED:

134

Just then a GIANT FIREBALL erupts into the sky. Snape wheels, sees Bellatrix and the others silhouetted against the flames. They've set Hagrid's Hut ablaze. Malfoy stands paralyzed.

SNAPE

Go on!

NEW ANGLE - HARRY

Running. Harry bolts forth, wand in hand, vengeance in his eyes. Up ahead, Snape stands stolidly, tall and black against the raging fire. Harry points his wand, fires a JET of RED LIGHT. Snape doesn't move, merely lets it streak by his head. Harry stops, chest heaving, and takes aim again.

HARRY

Cruciatus!

Snape raises his wand, parries the curse with ease.

HARRY

Incacerata!

Once again, Snape deflects the spell.

HARRY

Impedimenta!

Another lazy flick of the arm, another curse defeated. Harry drops his arm in frustration.

HARRY

Fight! Fight back, you coward!

With staggering quickness, Snape's wand whips forth and Harry is off his heels and crashing to the earth.

SNAPE

Don't ever associate that word and my name again.

Harry raises himself up on one knee, points his wand when... a JET of RED LIGHT sends him crashing back into the grass. Snape wheels, sees Bellatrix standing behind.

SNAPE

No! He belongs to the Dark Lord!

Bellatrix eyes Snape levelly, then turns, trots off. Snape glances at Harry, then turns away himself, walking. Harry grimaces, pulls himself to his feet and aims one last time.

(CONTINUED)

HARRY

Sectumsempra!

Bang! Snape wheels and once more sends Harry flying onto his back. Harry stares at the stars as they wheel over him, when Snape comes INTO VIEW.

SNAPE

You dare use my own spells against me, Potter?

Harry goes still. His eyes shift, meet Snape's.

SNAPE

You may have gotten your mother's eyes, but you're as dim as your father. Yes. It's me. I'm the Half-Blood Prince.

Snape kicks Harry's wand aside and turns away, joining Malfoy and the others where they wait beyond the flaming ruins of Hagrid's Hut. They head for the darkness of the treeline. And VANISH. Harry pounds his fist into the ground, then stops.

HARRY

Hagrid... HAGRID!

Harry races toward the hut when the DOOR flies off its hinges. Seconds later, Hagrid stumbles out, beard SMOKING.

HARRY

Hagrid! You alright?

HAGRID

Take more'n tha' ter finish me off. Not sure about me 'ouse, tho'. But if anybody can put it righ', Dumbledore can.

HARRY

Hagrid, Dumbledore --

HAGRID

Only thing I can't reckon is wha' Snape was doin' with tha' lot.

Hagrid turns then, sees the HUGE THRONG of STUDENTS and STAFF assembled outside the castle.

(CONTINUED)

134 CONTINUED: (3)

134

HAGRID

An' wha's this wi' the Dark Mar'?'
 Who's been killed?
 (stopping)
 Where's Dumbledore, 'arry?
Where's Dumbledore!!

Harry tries to speak, but he is mute. Hagrid goes still.

135 EXT. HOGWARTS CASTLE - MIDDLE COURTYARD - NIGHT

135

Ron, Hermione and Ginny stand with the staff. They turn and watch the throng of students part for Harry and Hagrid.

Hagrid stops short, shattered by what he sees. Harry pushes on, kneels. Dumbledore's eyes are closed, his face peaceful. Harry straightens his half-moon spectacles, wipes a trickle of blood from his mouth. Runs the back of his hand, gently, over the weathered cheek.

Then he notices something lying beside Dumbledore's ashen hand: the locket. He takes it, considers it numbly. Then begins to cry, great shudders of grief wracking his body. Hermione gives Ginny a nudge and she steps forward, drops beside him. At her touch, his head falls on her shoulder and she begins to stroke him. Ron looks on. Understands all.

McGonagall lifts a trembling wand to the sky and slowly the TIP GLOWS to life. One after another, students and staff do the same, lifting their wands in salute. As CAMERA RISES, the pinpricks coalesce into one BLAZING FIRE. The sky, briefly emerald, turns black once more. The Dark Mark vanishes.

136 EXT. HOGWARTS CASTLE - DAY

136

The castle sits silent. BLACK BANNERS fly on the parapets.

136A EXT. BRIDGE - DAY

136A *

Silent. Desolate.

*

137 INT. GREAT HALL - DAY

137

Dumbledore's chair -- empty. The House tables -- empty.

138 INT. CORRIDOR - DAY

138

A tapestry tosses lightly in the breeze. The PERCH in
the empty birdcage sways, SQUEAKING gently.

*
*

139 INT. DUMBLEDORE'S OFFICE - DAY

139

Quiet. Still. Empty. Then:

The door eases OPEN and Harry enters. For a moment, he simply stands staring. Taking inventory. Spying something, he crosses to the great desk opposite. Looks down.

Dumbledore's wand.

Reaching out, Harry takes it in hand. Old, oft-used and bearing the impression of its owner's fingers, it is a strangely beautiful object. Harry traces his thumb lightly over the wood, transfixed, when...

... McGonagall enters.

PROFESSOR MCGONAGALL

Potter.

He doesn't respond, lost in the wand. McGonagall's eyes drift to it, briefly, then study Harry's face. She frowns, trying to call forth some words.

PROFESSOR MCGONAGALL

Potter, in light of what's happened... should you feel the need to *talk* to someone...

She falters. Harry gently sets the wand back upon the desk, retraces his steps to the door, pauses for one last look.

PROFESSOR MCGONAGALL

You should know... Professor Dumbledore...

Harry turns then, studying her drawn face, no words necessary. At a loss, she finishes quietly:

PROFESSOR MCGONAGALL

You meant a great deal to him.

Harry's eyes rise. High upon the wall, the past Headmasters snooze in their frames. The last looks remarkably peaceful, the trace of a smile on his lips as he sleeps.

Dumbledore.

Harry nods, lingering one last moment, and exits.

140 INT. TOWER DORMITORY - DAY 140

Harry stands at the window, alone in the empty dormitory. At the doorway, he looks back. As if committing it to memory.

141 INT. COMMON ROOM - DAY (MOMENTS LATER) 141

Harry starts down the stairs, stops. Hermione, Ron and Ginny sit talking quietly. Ginny looks up. Smiles softly.

142 EXT. ASTRONOMY TOWER - DAY 142

Harry and **Hermione** stand by the ramparts while **Ron** and **Ginny** stand further along, **just out of earshot**. Harry stares into the distance at the ashes of Hagrid's Hut. **Hermione toys with the locket before them.** *

HERMIONE *

Do you think he would've done it. Draco?

HARRY

No. He was lowering his wand. In the end, it was Snape. It was always Snape. And I did nothing...

Hermione studies Harry, takes the locket from the rampart. *

HERMIONE *

Strange. Thinking this is a piece of Voldemort's soul...

HARRY

Yeah, strange. Only... it's not. It's a fake. *

As Hermione reacts, Harry nods. *

HARRY

Go on. Open it. *

(CONTINUED)

Hermione pries open the locket and removes a piece of PARCHMENT folded in a tight square. READS:

HERMIONE

'To the Dark Lord. I know I will be dead long before you read this but I want you to know that it was I who discovered your secret. I have stolen the real Horcrux and intend to destroy it as soon as I can. I face death in the hope that when you meet your match, you will be mortal once more. R.A.B.'
(looking up)
R.A.B.?

HARRY

Dunno. But whoever they are, they have the real Horcrux. Which means, it was a waste. All of it.

Hermione studies Harry's troubled face, then glances at Ginny and Ron.

HERMIONE

Ron's okay with it, you know. You and Ginny. But if I were you, when he's around, I'd keep the snogging to a minimum.

Hermione smiles faintly, trying to cheer him, but Harry merely nods, looks away again.

HARRY

I'm not coming back, Hermione.

Hermione nods.

HERMIONE

We reckoned -- Ron and me.

HARRY

I have to finish what Dumbledore started. I'm not sure where that will lead me... but I'll let you and Ron know where I am -- when I can. (ALT: I have to finish what Dumbledore started. And... I have to do it alone.)

HERMIONE

I've always admired your courage, Harry, but sometimes... you're really thick.

Harry turns, looking at her in surprise. *

HERMIONE

You don't honestly think you can
find all those Horcruxes by
yourself, do you? *

(leaning in; a
whisper) *

You need us, Harry. *

Harry just stares at her. She cocks her head, smiling,
doing her best to coax one out of him. Finally, he does,
briefly. *

HARRY

Yeah. I do. But do me a favor.
When I'm around? Keep the
snogging to a minimum. *

Hermione looks stunned. Reddens. *

HERMIONE

Like that's going to happen. *

She glances at Ron, shakes her head. *

HERMIONE

Besides, he's barking. *

HARRY

Funny, he says the same about you. *

HERMIONE

Yes, but I'm exceptionally
perceptive. *

HARRY

You're brilliant. You both are. *

Harry looks off again and Hermione follows his gaze. She
looks out over the grounds. Slowly losing herself. We
can tell. She's taking inventory. Pressing it into a
scrapbook. *

HERMIONE

Do you think we'll ever... (come
back?) *

She stops. Her eyes glisten briefly. Then she fights it
back. Tough. Harry fights back his own emotion, reaches
over and gives her hand a brief squeeze. Then releases
her. *

(CONTINUED)

HARRY

I don't know.

*

Hermione nods and Harry's eyes shift, consider Ron and Ginny. As if sensing his gaze, Ron turns and they exchange a look, something unspoken but true passing between them.

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Just then a SONG rises on the air, mournful and haunting, and seconds later a BIRD soars out from beyond the tallest turret and begins to stitch its way across the sky.

*

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*

Ron and Ginny cross to Harry and Hermione, lean against the rampart. All look to the horizon, watching the bird grow smaller while its song -- magically -- endures.

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*

No one says a word.

*

FADE OUT.

THE END