

HARRY POTTER AFTER 2020

with LORRIE KIM and JC

Transcript

Episode 3.22

Book 3, Chapter 22: Owl Post Again

Caroline: You're listening to Harry Potter After 2020, an HP chapter reread podcast wherein two friends who read the books way back in the day as adults revisit the series through a post-2020 lens. Your hosts are Lorrie Kim, author of *Snape: The Definitive Analysis*, and JC, an educator and long-time HP fan. I'm your editor, Caroline. In this episode, Lorrie and JC tackle Book Three, Chapter Twenty-Two: Owl Post Again.

Lorrie: Snape has a screaming meltdown when he discovers that Sirius Black has escaped again. He blames Harry but can't prove anything. Dumbledore tells Fudge to remove the dementors. Snape tells the Slytherins Lupin is a werewolf. Lupin resigns. Sirius, who's in exile, sends an owl to the Hogwarts Express. JC, we have come to the end of *Prisoner of Azkaban*!

JC: Amazing. There were lots of little things in this last chapter that I also forgot about.

Lorrie: Right. Right!

JC: It was really fun to read, yeah, the denouement or whatever.

Lorrie: It doesn't slow down.

JC: Right.

Lorrie: Yeah.

JC: All those little details. I think my notes on this chapter are about as long as they have been for any chapter, which is very interesting.

Lorrie: Yeah. You remembered that this was the book that made you love the series. Is that still true?

JC: Yeah, I think this is still a favorite. As we go forward... We have four more books left, and I'm really curious to see how I feel about those after all this time, so we will find out. I might change my mind. I might find another favorite book. Who knows?

Lorrie: I could see this time around why this is a lot of people's favorite, because by the end Harry has a godfather, he has a lot of his own story back, he can cast a Patronus, he has a Firebolt, there's no overriding doom from Voldemort... It's just a bunch of wins.

JC: Yeah. As a 13th year could go...

Lorrie: Yeah.

JC: It's pretty good.

Lorrie: Yeah.

JC: He really comes out of it a lot more mature and with a lot more confidence. Going back to what you said, he has a lot more of his story, and you can see the impact that that has on him. He knows himself better. He knows his worth.

Lorrie: Yeah.

JC: Even at the end when he goes back to the Dursleys, there's a few flickers in this chapter of that he's despondent about having to go back and not getting to be with Sirius after all. But even at the end, he's confident in a way we haven't seen before.

Lorrie: Yeah. Yeah.

JC: He's just like, 'Yeah. I know what to say to keep them off my back. It'll be fine.'

Lorrie: Yeah, and he thinks it's funny.

JC: Yeah.

Lorrie: Yeah.

JC: You can see how much he's grown up at the end of this book. He grew up a lot this year.

Lorrie: And he's been initiated into some mysteries: mysteries about time, how to fight dementors. With his skill at fighting dementors with the Patronus, he has separated himself from the other students. Not just because he had a weird destiny, but because he can actually do something really unusual. At the beginning of this chapter, Snape has what I think is a PTSD flashback.

JC: Ah. That's interesting, because he loses his shit.

Lorrie: He is in a different mental space. When Sirius escapes again and Snape is screaming, he's spitting.

JC: Even before we get to this part, there's this really interesting adventure tone: they have to get back to the room before Dumbledore locks it, and Peeves gets in their way.

Lorrie: Oh, my God, Peeves...

JC: Yes, Peeves. They overhear this conversation between Snape and Fudge, and it's so interesting to read that conversation. This is what they're saying after they have left the room.

Lorrie: Yeah.

JC: And to see how Snape is like, 'Yes.'

Lorrie: It's going to change.

JC: And we already know.

Lorrie: Yeah.

JC: At this point, they already know that Sirius got away. There's a moment when Harry is momentarily angry at something that Snape says, but it doesn't matter now and he has a more mature reaction to Snape saying something that makes him mad.

Lorrie: Yeah.

JC: Even not too long ago, Hermione had to hold him back; this time it's like, no, he's more focused on what has to be done.

Lorrie: Yeah. And soon they hear the screaming.

JC: Oh, my God, yeah. I love that they get back, and they make it back in time. It's so interesting to me, the way that time travel works in this book, that they get there just before Dumbledore is going to lock the door. He just left them, telling them, "Here's what you need to do," and then he turns around... From Dumbledore's perspective...

Lorrie: And he's beaming at them. Yeah.

JC: Yeah. Isn't that interesting? For him, it's been minutes, and for them it's been three hours.

Lorrie: Yeah.

JC: Oh, that's so amazing.

Lorrie: Very eventful.

JC: Yeah. They get back into bed, they pull the whole thing off without a hitch, and then Madame Pomfrey is back out and like, "Okay, finally, I can tend to my..." like nothing's...

Lorrie: Yeah.

JC: The fact that after this big adventure...

Lorrie: Nope, nothing's happened.

JC: We're right back where we were, and Madam Pomfrey is sternly making them eat chocolate, which I find hilarious. They're just there and waiting. Something's... any minute now, and then the distant roar of fury.

Lorrie: There it goes.

JC: And then here comes Snape again. Yeah.

Lorrie: Not so distant.

JC: Oh, my God, and knowing it had to have been Potter.

Lorrie: Oh, God.

JC: And everyone's like, "He's been here the whole time!" Ugh... Which brings me to the question: how many of the teachers knew that Hermione had a Time-Turner? Obviously McGonagall and Dumbledore.

Lorrie: I think all of them. All of them had to have, or at least all the ones that were teaching her.

JC: That were teaching her, because he never looks at Hermione during this tirade.

Lorrie: Nope.

JC: If he could figure out... If he thought, 'Okay, Harry must have something to do with it' -- if he thought it had something to do with Hermione's Time-Turner -- it seems, at some point, he would have looked at her, too, but he seems not to see her. Well, he never sees her, right? That's something that you say a lot.

Lorrie: He never looks at Hermione. Yeah.

JC: Yeah, and you've talked about the idea of good girl privilege, how 'Hermione would never...'

Lorrie: Yeah, I don't think that's happening here.

JC: Yeah.

Lorrie: Mostly, his whole attitude to Hermione during this episode is, 'Shut up, you stupid girl,' because she's there to try to call on his better self -- to introduce logic and to calm him down -- and he doesn't want to hear it. He's avoiding her, actually, and that's the same avoidance -- not the same exact avoidance, but Lupin avoids her this way, too. She's so on top of things, and they're just not in a space to listen to her.

JC: Yeah. His meltdown... Okay, you said this is a PTSD flashback. Can you say a little more about what you're thinking there?

Lorrie: That's just how I read the physical symptoms for him. He's never like this at any other time, and he is convinced he just knows what's been happening. It's similar enough to what happened when he was a teen: you can see how his emotions from that time are transferring over now, and that trick of calling him Potter and you don't know if he's talking to James or Harry; it really, in his mind, doesn't matter because he's saying, "Look, it's happening again." That 'happening again' setup is so ripe for flashback; certainly the last time Sirius did something really terrifying and then got away without punishment in Snape's experience was traumatic for him. I liked when they come in: "Fudge, Snape, and Dumbledore came striding into the ward. Dumbledore alone looked calm. Indeed, he looked as though he was quite enjoying himself."

JC: I made a note about that, too. What is he enjoying about this situation? Is he just happy that justice was done here, or is he happy about something else? What is it that he's enjoying?

Lorrie: It took me a long time to figure out what to make of that, because for years I wondered if he was laughing at Snape or enjoying something about Snape melting down, especially because the Snape-Dumbledore relationship is so fraught and rocky throughout the series. A lot of Snape fans do read that as Dumbledore just being mocking, and I don't think that's it. I think it's a continuation of the amusement that he had at Hagrid's hut when he saw that the hippogriff had flown away. I think it's his enjoyment. 'Yes, I know something that nobody else does. We've pulled it off and at this point, it's successful and there's nothing anyone can do about it. I'm just going to let this ride; whatever they have to say, it's done. Can't be undone.' That's where I am now. The textual clues to the reader are that when Dumbledore looks privately amused, that means yes, he did know what was happening; yes, he did engineer it himself; and yes, it did go the way he wanted. That's my take on it now.

JC: And that makes sense to me. I don't see Dumbledore as being petty, or the kind of person who would take any amusement in someone else's pain. He's not unproblematic for all the reasons we've already talked about, but that doesn't seem like that would be his character to enjoy someone else's pain, so I think I like your reading of that.

Lorrie: Well, there's quite a few moments here when that's not certain, but then when he tells Fudge quietly, "No, Snape has just suffered a disappointment," then you think, okay, that's a clue to us that whatever's happening, he's not just laughing at Snape.

JC: Right, but it's interesting that he views it as a disappointment. Yeah.

Lorrie: How can he present it to Fudge so that Fudge will move on?

JC: Yeah.

Lorrie: Because, as we'll see in this chapter, he tells a number of lies to Fudge.

JC: Yeah, this is true. It's interesting to me, too, that Snape is right.

Lorrie: Yes, he's completely correct!

JC: He is one hundred percent right, and he has no evidence.

Lorrie: Of course, it has to do with Potter. Of course!

JC: Potter is wearing the plot armor. Of course he was involved. I love the fact he has no evidence.

Lorrie: Yeah, and you know Harry has that fake innocent look that he's so terrible at. There are a few times in this series when he does the fake innocent look on purpose, knowing that it's not fooling Snape. When he's screaming, "You don't know Potter!"

JC: Oh, yeah.

Lorrie: "You don't know him like I do!" Oh... No one will ever believe you, Snape, but you are, of course, completely correct.

JC: Oh. It's interesting how that's such a flip of what we saw maybe just a couple of chapters back, or even one chapter back --

Lorrie: One chapter back.

JC: Where the kids knew they were right.

Lorrie: And no one --

JC: No one believed them, and they didn't really have any hard evidence. It was just there and now it's completely flipped, and Snape is now in that position of screaming like a 13-year-old. "But I'm right! I know I'm right!"

Lorrie: Yeah.

JC: Yeah, and they were brushing him off.

Lorrie: Yeah. But for the reader, the tension is off because even though he's going through an extremely awful emotion right now, we know that actually no, this is better, this is safer. The

reader is in a better position than Snape is, and he's just beside himself. Wow! That's so cliché to be beside himself, but right now I can actually picture him being beside himself.

JC: For sure, yeah. His soul has left his body and it's standing next to him, that kind of a thing.

Lorrie: Yeah.

JC: I have a question for you.

Lorrie: Yeah.

JC: There's all these instances of Fudge throughout this book, and we've seen Fudge in the previous book; this is the same guy who sent Hagrid to Azkaban just for appearance's sake. Watching Fudge interact with these people, there's a point in this chapter where he's shocked at Snape's behavior and then he tells Dumbledore, "You should keep an eye on that guy. He seems like he's a little unbalanced," and that's when Dumbledore says, "Oh, no, he was just very disappointed."

Lorrie: He's not.

JC: I can't tell if Fudge is just a bumbling politician type, but he's also capable of really awful things. I guess I'm wondering what your thought on how he's being presented here is. This government looks like they talk the talk and they seem nice and they don't really know all the depth of the bad things that are going on, but yet they also do. I don't know. I guess I'm wondering what your take is on Fudge in this scene.

Lorrie: Um, I think he is as he appears. He's not very deep, and he doesn't think that there's anything to his job except his own self-interest and staying in power because he doesn't have the broadness of vision to think that, as Minister of Magic, he can do anything like improve the world. He just wants things to be generally okay so he can continue to enjoy his position.

JC: Yeah.

Lorrie: And he hasn't given much thought to the nature of power.

JC: Yeah.

Lorrie: I think he knows that he doesn't deserve the position he's in. I think he has some imposter syndrome.

JC: Interesting.

Lorrie: And that he relies heavily on Dumbledore, because Dumbledore does have the broadness of vision; because he's so insecure about it, that's why he's always suspicious that Dumbledore is trying to usurp him. He's projecting that.

JC: The whole exchange afterward... Okay, we've revealed Black has escaped. It's interesting to me that Fudge goes, "Oh, well..." That's what it feels like in the book. "Ugh, now I've got to go deal with the press."

Lorrie: Yeah.

JC: It was also the hippogriff... That's his concern, and they're immediately pulling the dementors away from the school. I thought, okay, so they no longer think that Sirius Black is a threat to Harry? What are they thinking is going on here?

Lorrie: Well, Fudge only thinks about how it affects him.

JC: True.

Lorrie: He's grumbling like, "Oh, no, I lost Sirius Black again. My ratings are going to go down. And if they hear about the hippogriff, then they'll go down even more. Poor me. Why am I the real victim here?" He wouldn't have thought about the dementors except that Dumbledore sneaks it in there and says, "You're going to take the dementors away, right?" Fudge is distracted and says, "Uh, yeah, yeah, yeah, yeah. Sure."

JC: "Uh, yeah, we'll send them..."

Lorrie: Right.

JC: And then there's that moment of, "Oh, yeah, how horrible that they attacked an innocent child! Who would have thought?"

Lorrie: "Who would have expected...?"

JC: Oh, my God. Yeah. "Who would've think it?" Really?! Who, indeed.

Lorrie: Who would have possibly been saying this exact same thing all year?

JC: Exactly.

Lorrie: But yeah, it's that phenomenon where if you don't believe something, you think that nobody's ever thought about it before; then the first time you experience it, you're like, "Oh, my God, did you know?"

JC: Yeah. For sure. "Did you know that they'll do this?" Yeah.

Lorrie: Yeah.

JC: That's really interesting. I also liked... There's that moment where he says, "I wonder what else we could have to protect the school." Then he says, "Oh, maybe dragons," and Dumbledore goes, "Oh, Hagrid would like that." But the funny thing is that Hagrid's about to get dragons very soon. They're coming!

Lorrie: I missed that. That's true.

JC: I didn't know if that was like a little look ahead, or...

Lorrie: It might have been, because we do get reference to the Quidditch coming up.

JC: Yes.

Lorrie: So back to my guy Snape melting down, he is convinced that Harry had something to do with Sirius escaping. Also, the big meltdown portion of it is that once again, Dumbledore is letting it happen, and then Dumbledore signals to Snape that he authorized it this time.

JC: Okay.

Lorrie: The last time it happened -- when Sirius tried to get Snape eaten by a werewolf -- Dumbledore was not in control of that, and he was scrambling to take care of the confidentiality for Lupin and shushing Snape. This time, Dumbledore's letting him know, 'No, I know exactly what's happening and I'm in control.' That's what stops Snape.

JC: Okay, so tell me how that happens in the text, because I missed that completely.

Lorrie: "'That will do, Severus,' said Dumbledore quietly. 'Think about what you are saying. This door has been locked since I left the ward ten minutes ago. Madam Pomfrey, have these students left their beds?' 'Of course not!' 'Well, there you have it, Severus,' said Dumbledore calmly. 'Unless you are suggesting that Harry and Hermione are able to be in two places at once....'" That's when Snape is seething, but he turns around and stomps out. It's like, okay. It's an act of great trust in Dumbledore, even at the height of his outburst. "Snape stood there, seething, staring from Fudge, who looked thoroughly shocked at his behavior, to Dumbledore, whose eyes were twinkling behind his glasses. Snape whirled about, robes swishing behind him, and stormed out of the ward."

JC: Okay, so at that point, does Snape know exactly what happened, do you think?

Lorrie: Snape knows that Dumbledore has authorized everything; he's completely happy with how it happened, and that has to do with the Time-Turner.

JC: Okay. Yeah, I wondered. The two places at once thing... I thought that's a big hint.

Lorrie: That's exactly what Hermione's been doing all year.

JC: Yeah. Okay.

Lorrie: Snape totally knows, and when Dumbledore says, "Madam Pomfrey," and she backs him up, then he's saying, "Look, I took care of it. Either you trust me or you don't." The thing that I actually respect about Snape in this position at this moment, even though he is not done throwing tantrums: he has accepted that he's going to be the fall guy in this situation. Dumbledore has set up Snape to look foolish; with very ill grace, Snape accepts that role to fall in line with whatever the heck Dumbledore's plan is, which obviously Dumbledore is not going to fully explain to him. He reads the situation and he thinks, 'I am loyal to Dumbledore and I'm not at all loyal to Fudge'; Dumbledore is saying, "Think about it," and Snape just leaves. There's nothing further for him to do here. Fudge doesn't spend very much time worrying about that, because his only concern is that... the word he uses is 'laughingstock'.

JC: "I'll be a laughingstock," he says.

Lorrie: Yeah.

JC: Yeah.

Lorrie: And then the dementors are an afterthought. "Never dreamed they'd attempt to administer the Kiss on an innocent boy.... Completely out of control...." Yeah.

JC: Yeah, yeah.

Lorrie: It's loathsome.

JC: I haven't thought about the fact that, at the end of it... Snape comes in roaring, thinking that it's Harry. Harry's done something.

Lorrie: Yeah.

JC: But when Dumbledore says, "No, whatever Harry might have done, he did it for me," it's like, "Daddy doesn't love you best anymore" or whatever. There's a little bit of the idea that now Harry is an operative for Dumbledore, and that Snape has to come to terms with that.

Lorrie: And the whole issue was that the first time around, Daddy didn't love Snape at all and said, "Whether or not a werewolf almost ate you, you're not going to tell anybody about this. You're just going to keep this to yourself. No, I'm not going to punish Sirius Black; he's going to get away with it, just like Harry Potter has gotten away with his head being in Hogsmeade this year."

JC: Yeah, right. I can see how, from Snape's perspective, there are injustices piling up.

Lorrie: And there's really nothing he can do about it.

JC: Yeah.

Lorrie: And he has gone in a few minutes from the Minister of Magic promising him an Order of Merlin to the Minister of Magic thinking that he's completely deranged.

JC: Oh, yeah. That's awful.

Lorrie: And that's part of Snape's character arc for the whole series: he has to accept being thought even worse than he actually is on the inside.

JC: Yeah.

Lorrie: And he can't defend himself. That's a human instinct that he has to fight: the instinct to clear your own name. We see that mirrored some with Sirius here, of course. Sirius had that brief fantasy that Peter Pettigrew would be brought to justice, and he briefly thought he could clear his own name and then just be Harry's godfather. No, he can't. He's going to be a fugitive forever. But Sirius knows he's innocent on the inside, and Snape does not believe that about himself. Snape knows that he brought all of this on himself.

JC: Yeah.

Lorrie: The second chance at life is him making up for the bad choices he made, whereas Sirius was set up. There's all these different things, all these different situations, in which you have to accept being thought way worse than you really are and you just have to take it. That requires bravery.

JC: I'm also thinking back to the fact -- I think it was in the last chapter or the chapter before -- when Lupin tells Snape, "You're holding a schoolboy grudge."

Lorrie: Yeah.

JC: And that is what he's doing. He refuses to accept the fact that there might be evidence that he missed while he was unconscious. He knows he was unconscious, and that a lot happened in between. He refuses to hear anything else. You were talking about PTSD before; he's really

not thinking straight at that point. He's so determined to get his revenge, or to see revenge taken out. I don't know. I just think about that.

Lorrie: I have a hard time with "schoolboy grudge", because it seems so minimizing. If you look at what's going on with his physical processes in this sequence, where he is screaming and spitting and losing it, that's not holding on to a grudge. That's a state of panic taking over.

JC: Yeah, no, I get that. I guess I'm thinking back to... The word "schoolboy grudge", for me, made me go, 'Oh, this is about the past. It's not about what's happening now.'

Lorrie: It is about the past. Definitely.

JC: And because he's reprocessing trauma, he is unable to think rationally. He's not going to hear it when it comes in, this other evidence that contradicts the path that he's on. The fact that Dumbledore takes it out of Snape's hands and puts it into the hands of a 13-year-old child... That's got to be humiliating, too. Dumbledore was like, "You're clearly not in a place where you're able to participate or help out at all. I'm going to let you go off and melt down over here, and in the meantime, I'm going to have some children go and do my dirty work for me." That kind of thing is happening in this situation, it seems like, and there's multiple levels of humiliation for Snape, is what I guess I'm saying here. Everything from having his trauma minimized to...

Lorrie: Yeah, being cut out of decisions, to be short-handed like that, to know that there's something happening. Nobody's going to tell you you're not part of that process, you have not been confided in. In fact, you're looking foolish and you don't know the details; you just know that you're looking foolish and there's nothing you can do or believe. What I find actually admirable, as this character is written in this moment, is that even in the middle of all his meltdown -- when he sees Dumbledore looking so pleased and confident and speaking to him in code -- he actually hears that message and he acts on it. It actually gets through to him. He never fights back about this. He just leaves. Not happily, but he doesn't stare at Dumbledore going, "What the hell are you talking about?"

JC: Yeah.

Lorrie: He gets it. Something does finally get through to him. So yeah, that actually does impress me that he was able to hear and follow orders and he did it voluntarily. He could have been mutinous, but he saw Dumbledore's message and he left.

JC: Yeah. As we move forward in the book, there's the sentence that Harry thought Snape couldn't hate him anymore and he was wrong to that effect.

Lorrie: Totally. Yes.

JC: There's always room for more hate, I think.

Lorrie: Yeah. Well, Harry has grown in power. There's more to hate.

JC: Yeah. Yeah. And it sets the stage really nicely for things to come. Yeah.

Lorrie: Yeah. And when Snape complains that Harry gets away with stuff that other people don't... Well, yeah, he does. In fact, he was told to. Is Harry smug about it? A little tiny bit, yeah.

JC: Yeah. It's the only power he has as a student in some ways, is to be smug about it.

Lorrie: Yeah. After all the crap he's been through?

JC: Yeah.

Lorrie: If he finally has somebody on his side and he actually pulls off something good -- saving this completely innocent beast and then finding out that this super-important person was actually innocent -- yeah, he's going to be smug about it. Snape has been made powerless in many different directions at once, and that's a very unpleasant feeling.

JC: Yeah.

Lorrie: He's been basically told, "Yes, you may be in flashback, but you're just going to have to deal with that."

JC: Yeah. So after they all leave, we finally have the trio back in one room. Ron wakes up and he's missed all of this, or maybe he was lying there pretending to be asleep while Snape was screaming.

Lorrie: He's missed everything.

JC: But they explain to him what happened, and I really like the symmetry. In the last book, Hermione was the one who was unconscious for the whole final adventure, and in this one Ron is the one --

Lorrie: Ron gets a turn!

JC: Who's unconscious for the whole final adventure. I thought, 'How interesting it is that they each got a turn to be out for it.'

Lorrie: Yeah.

JC: It's also interesting to me that the next day is a Hogsmeade day, and even though Ron and Hermione could have gone and Harry probably could have found a way to sneak out -- Well, actually, he doesn't have the cloak back yet, so he can't. Anyway, Ron and Hermione are like, "No."

Lorrie: No, no, no, no, no, no, no.

JC: Yeah. The idea of going into town and getting butterbeer and going to the candy shop... just no. After everything that they've been through....

Lorrie: Ron's leg is broken...

JC: Well, that too.

Lorrie: Hermione has cuts and gashes from the Whomping Willow.

JC: Right. Yeah, that too. There's other reasons, but you know what? "Yesterday was a really fucking big day. I just want to sit by the lake and look out at the squid." I identify with that feeling so hard.

Lorrie: Yeah.

JC: Yeah, no. "Today, I'm going to sit here."

Lorrie: "I need to process."

JC: Yes, yes, exactly.

Lorrie: Well, there's a phrase here that calls back to Arthurian legends: when Hermione and Ron are still talking about the extraordinary events of the previous night, that's wording that you see in Arthurian legends all the time.

JC: Oh. Interesting.

Lorrie: There's that processing moment afterward, and then that beautiful, heavily symbolic, poetic passage, where Harry "looked across to the opposite bank" where "the stag had galloped toward him from there just last night..." Yes, Harry has crossed the water. He's entered a new stage. And just in case anyone missed it, that's what Time-Turners are: they're a shift in perspective that can bring you peace. While the kids are recovering emotionally that way, Hagrid shows up and gives them a great reminder that they have to get their cover stories straight.

JC: Yeah.

Lorrie: Because he doesn't know what happened with Buckbeak, he doesn't know what happened to Sirius Black, and the kids are like, 'Oh, wait, what are we supposed to know? What don't we know?'

JC: Yeah, that's true. Actually, that is a really fantastic thing about his appearance there, is that they have to think through that for the first time. Yeah.

Lorrie: Yeah. 'Oh, shoot... We know nothing. We're just children.'

JC: 'Wow, Buckbeak escaped? Amazing!'

Lorrie: 'Yeah. Shut up, Ron!' And oh, man, the wording... This kills me when Hagrid says, "Thought he mighta met Professor Lupin on the grounds, but Lupin says he never ate anythin' las' night..." Just the natural way he puts it. "Oh, no, no, he didn't eat."

JC: Yeah.

Lorrie: And the kids go, "What? Wait, what?"

JC: Yeah. Oh, my God. Yeah, it is very casual in that way that Hagrid is about magical creatures.

Lorrie: Yeah.

JC: Yeah, yeah.

Lorrie: "No, he didn't eat."

JC: "He didn't eat anything, so it's all good."

Lorrie: Yeah.

JC: "No one got eaten."

Lorrie: Right.

JC: "It's fine. It's fine."

Lorrie: Werewolves get hungry, they've got to eat. Yeah, and so the kids are there blinking, and then he says, "Oh, yeah, Snape told all the Slytherins this mornin'...."

JC: It's the only power he had left.

Lorrie: I have my own take on that, but there's so many different takes on this. What's your take on what Snape was doing there, what his motives were?

JC: Okay, my 'not having thought about it very long' knee-jerk reaction was that first of all, he's been telling Dumbledore all year, "We've got a werewolf. This is not good;" after what went down, he's probably like, 'I'll be damned if I'm ever making that potion again!' He doesn't want to have to deal with any more; he's going to have to deal with Harry's smugness, and he doesn't want to see that from Lupin. He's perceiving that. This idea of, 'I've been saying this guy's dangerous; he proved it the other night. Dumbledore won't listen. The only way I'm going to get rid of this guy is for the kids to know and then they'll tell their parents, and then shit will come down on the school.' I feel like it was the only move he felt he could make there. I think it came from a lot of different things. It actually did come from a desire to protect the kids in the school because he believed this was dangerous all year, but also a little bit of revenge in the only way he could. This is not unlike a thing that a petty, pissed-off teacher would do. I've seen this. When a teacher is mad, they've been shafted by the administration or something...

Lorrie: When they're powerless...

JC: When they feel powerless, who do they tell? They tell their students, and they get their students riled up about it. It is very much what I would expect a pissed off, powerless-feeling teacher to do.

Lorrie: I think that all of those urges were there in Snape, and that it felt perfectly good for him to indulge them while he was doing it for other reasons.

JC: Snape is complicated. He's not going to do something for one reason typically. At least that's my impression.

Lorrie: I actually disagree with one thing you said: I think he would continue making wolfsbane for Lupin the whole time, because whether he is resentful or angry at people doesn't actually change how badly he wants to defend against the Dark Arts...

JC: Okay.

Lorrie: Whether or not they're on board with this. His whole attitude toward Lupin and wolfsbane, I feel, is that he's going to shove it down his throat whether he drinks it voluntarily or not. One of the things about Lupin that irks him is that Lupin isn't on board with this clearly necessary precaution; when Snape sees people not doing defense seriously enough, he gets really angry at them and snarky at them because he doesn't know, 'Why isn't everyone as upset about this as I am?' He's been looking at Lupin that way the whole year. 'You going to drink it or not?' I think it works similarly to the way that Snape genuinely dislikes Harry. There's all that questioning. Okay: Snape is a double agent; he's really protecting Harry; he has to put on an act in front of Voldemort. Well, the act is super convincing because it's not an act. He really doesn't like Harry; they will never like each other. When he has to call upon that dislike to be convincing toward Voldemort, it is as convincing as it can be because it's completely true. And yeah, he

does have all these petty 'I told you so, why does nobody ever listen to me?' feelings about this whole werewolf fiasco, but I think that genuine resentment from him conveniently provides a cover story and it took a really long time for me to work this out. This is the kind of thing I say that makes people think, 'Oh, you're reading into it; it's far-fetched,' but it makes sense to me what I think about it. Snape told all the Slytherins that morning, and he only told his Slytherins. Obviously, he knows that the Slytherins will tell everybody else, but surely nobody can tell him that he doesn't have the right to protect his own students by telling them what they're going to have to defend themselves against, possibly. But if he did it this morning, that means there was time for Snape and Dumbledore to talk. We never hear any repercussions on Snape for him telling the Slytherins, and if he had displeased Dumbledore by doing this, we would have heard that.

JC: Hmm. Okay.

Lorrie: Just like we never see any repercussions on Sirius Black the student for setting up Snape to be eaten by his pal who doesn't want to be a werewolf. This is something where Snape does this [and] everybody is appalled. Does Dumbledore have any reaction against it? No, he doesn't. Dumbledore, back 20 years ago, made Snape be silent about Lupin being a werewolf, and Snape followed that instruction, with much resentment. I think Dumbledore has lifted that restriction.

JC: Interesting.

Lorrie: Which is a little bit 'better late than never', because I think Dumbledore may have realized, finally, that he did damage by focusing only on secrecy for Lupin and not on the damage done to the intended victim. Obviously, Snape has won the year-long argument that Lupin is not above suspicion or reproach. Lupin keeping the fact of the Animagus forms of the Marauders from Dumbledore while he was formulating his own independent initiative for investigating Sirius? That is a major betrayal; that's a breach of trust; that's a lot of poor judgment from one of Dumbledore's hires. It almost ended in disaster. If there was going to be an investigation about how Sirius Black got away again -- and it came to light that Lupin was on the grounds, loose in werewolf form -- and that Dumbledore had known this and had made the decision to keep this information from the students, that poor judgment is on Dumbledore. But having Snape take on the resentable role of breaking the news: it's a distraction. Now everyone can hate Snape, going, "Oh, my God, I can't believe he did that," but whose fault was it really that they saw potential danger in not informing the students about Lupin and yet took the gamble and then this almost happened? Snape is taking the fall for Dumbledore in a way that is greatly personally rewarding to Snape, but it's not a reward. Snape would have preferred to not be in this position at all. It's not his first, second, third, fourth or fifth choice, but as long as this is happening -- as long as Snape is agreeing to look like the foolish person who's lost his shit in front of the Minister -- well... "So, old man, do you admit that there was a breach of trust and that Lupin wasn't above reproach?" "Yes, and yes. Severus, would you like to be the one to tell the Slytherins?" "Oh, yes. Oh yes, I would. Oh, yes, I would."

JC: This is interesting, because one of the things that I really like about your explanation here is that it ties into the fact that the adults were absolutely having conversations about this that night. After we see the kids eating their chocolate and telling each other what happened, the adults were talking.

Lorrie: Yeah.

JC: That's taking into account Dumbledore had conversations with everybody who was involved, and then we learned that Lupin told him about the fact that they were all Animagi back at...

Lorrie: No, he didn't. It was Sirius. It was Sirius, not Lupin.

JC: Oh, Sirius told him? Oh, I thought it was Lupin. Okay.

Lorrie: Nope. It was Sirius. That's important.

JC: Okay. Wait, let me pull this up real quick. Okay, okay, this is a really interesting moment. Yeah. He says, "Sirius told me all about how they became Animagi last night." When did Dumbledore talk to Sirius? Okay, so that's fun. All these conversations were had, and it creates this... Obviously, Harry is an unreliable narrator, but the fact that he's a child also means that he doesn't get to see everything else happening in the world. He doesn't even think about what the adults are doing, probably because that's what kids do, especially teenagers. We're in the zone of teenagers who think that "the adults are useless and I'm the only one who knows what's really happening here." After the experience that he's had, he probably even feels that even more. I love that idea that we're only seeing a tiny little bit of the story, and there's so much more going on. I like your idea here that, after all these conversations happened, this is a deal that Dumbledore and Snape made, and that Dumbledore had to on some level admit that, "Yeah, I was wrong."

Lorrie: Yeah. To be fair to Harry, we've just seen him take a first huge step in getting beyond the self-centeredness of a tween. When he took the Time-Turner and changed perspective, and was able to see Snape putting the three unconscious bodies on stretchers -- not being petty, not kicking them or whatever, but actually acting practically in a protective, practical manner -- then he got to have a glimpse into what adults do when children aren't around. He has moved from not thinking that way at all to having a glimpse of that ability; this is developmentally, brilliantly written. Then we have Hagrid staring at the kids saying, "Professor Lupin's a werewolf, see. An' he was loose on the grounds las' night. He's packin' now, o' course." So what do you think? Do you think that Lupin was right to resign as a teacher? As an education professional, do you think Lupin was right to resign?

JC: Yeah. I think that Dumbledore gave him 'the opportunity to resign' is what I think, for all the reasons we've already said. There was no benefit to him staying; it was only going to be awful for him. His students, even the ones who liked him, were going to be wary of him. He's lost all the credit that he's built up with these students. It's like, "But he's a werewolf."

Lorrie: Well, would it have gotten out though, if Snape hadn't said anything? Could he have finished out the year without the students knowing?

JC: Yeah, I think he probably would have. I don't think he resigned out of any sense of... I don't think it was his idea, is what I'm saying. I think that he was put in the position where he had to. Okay, if we're thinking about the conversations the adults had the night before -- for all the reasons that you said earlier -- he could not stay. Politically, it was not going to work, even if they could spin the story that, "Oh, no one knew he was a werewolf, and once we found out, we were like, 'Begone, werewolf!'" It has to look like that; even if everybody knows that that's not really the case, that's what it has to look like. I imagine, in a school, you've hired someone who turns out to be a criminal of some kind or whatever. Even if you knew, from a public perspective you'd have to go, "Okay, now that this is going to be public knowledge, you can't stay."

Lorrie: Yeah.

JC: And they also know they can't stay. It's not going to be a safe place for them. It's not even a safe place for him.

Lorrie: Yeah.

JC: I think that that was part of the conversation that Lupin and Dumbledore had the night before. Dumbledore was like, "You're going to have to go. And by the way, Snape's going to tell everybody that you're a werewolf anyway."

Lorrie: Yeah. I have the same read that Lupin was 'allowed to resign.'

JC: Yeah.

Lorrie: Partly as a face-saving measure for him instead of being fired, but more as a face-saving measure for Dumbledore. He didn't have to say, "Wow, what a terrible mistake I've made. I'm firing him." It's more like, "Well, he resigned. He turned in his resignation."

JC: As soon as it came to light. Yeah.

Lorrie: So when we have Harry running to Lupin's office -- because quite rightly, they do have to touch base and talk to each other before Lupin leaves -- Harry says, "'The Ministry of Magic don't think you are helping Sirius, do they?'" Lupin crossed to the door and closed it behind Harry."

JC: It's like, "Okay, kid..."

Lorrie: "No."

JC: "Let's put up some silencing wards before we have this conversation."

Lorrie: "Professor Dumbledore managed to convince Fudge that I was trying to save your lives." I didn't pay that much attention to the line at first until I went back and I thought, 'Wait a minute; that's a lie, though! Dumbledore lied! Lupin was doing no such thing!' He wasn't helping Sirius, but he wasn't going out there to save the kids' lives. He runs to the Shrieking Shack and the first thing he says is, "Where is he, Sirius?"

JC: It's because he saw Peter.

Lorrie: Yes!

JC: Yeah.

Lorrie: And that was where I realized, oh, Dumbledore had to construct an entire web of lies to tell Fudge without getting into the fact that Sirius was innocent and that Peter Pettigrew is still alive and guilty and an Animagus.

JC: Yeah.

Lorrie: And on the run.

JC: And on the run, and possibly going back to reconnect with Lord Voldemort. Yes.

Lorrie: Yeah. The whole reason why Dumbledore started the whole Time-Turner rescue of Sirius was because he realized that none of that was going to fly at all. He made up a whole story for Fudge about what had really happened, omitting those major Earth-shaking revelations and along the way saying Lupin was trying to save the kids' lives and while urgently trying to do so, he forgot to take his potion and that's why he transformed. I'm sitting there thinking, 'Wow, that was a lot of lying that Dumbledore did,' because he knows Fudge too well to think that the truth is going to have any say. Then I thought, 'Wait a minute, does Fudge ever find out the truth about what happened, including how badly Dumbledore lied to him?' He does, but it happens off the page. By the time of the beginning of the sixth book, there's a meeting between Fudge and the Muggle Prime Minister, and the Muggle Prime Minister says, "So this has to do with Sirius Black?" and Fudge is startled and says, "Oh, no, no, no, no. He turned out to be innocent."

JC: Oh, yeah.

Lorrie: "That was a big mistake. He's actually dead. Yeah, yeah, that was very embarrassing for us." I guess the conversation where Fudge gets told the truth about what happened this night took place probably after the Ministry battle at the end of *Order of the Phoenix*. You've got to explain, "All right, Voldemort's back; Sirius Black is back here and now dead." "What?!" "Okay, sit down, Cornelius."

JC: Yeah. "Take us back to a balmy night three years ago," or whatever.

Lorrie: Yeah.

JC: Another question I have related to who knows what.

Lorrie: Yeah.

JC: Lupin knows about the Time-Turner. My question is, who else do you think knows at this point?

Lorrie: I think it's the same as who knew that Lupin was a werewolf back when he was a student. Anyone who's on the Hogwarts staff that's going to have anything to do with it is going to have to know.

JC: Because I was wondering about that. There was a sentence later on, and maybe it's an unreliable narrator.

Lorrie: Oh, is this when Hermione says, "I promised I wouldn't tell anybody"?

JC: No. There was something else in there that made me... And I didn't make a note of it, of course. There was another line somewhere that made me think that it was a need-to-know thing, that not everybody knew. That Harry and Hermione had gone back in time and had saved Sirius and Buckbeak, that was a need-to-know thing.

Lorrie: Yeah, because that's not what her Time-Turner was for. McGonagall swore that Hermione would never do this, so McGonagall is not going to be told.

JC: Yeah. I was assuming McGonagall wouldn't be told, so I was wondering like who... Okay. Okay, here it is. Okay. It says, "Nobody at Hogwarts knew the truth of what had happened the night that Sirius, Buckbeak, and Pettigrew had vanished except Harry, Ron, Hermione, and

Professor Dumbledore." That means Lupin, who's now no longer at Hogwarts, but it also leaves out Snape.

Lorrie: Yeah, because Snape doesn't know.

JC: Okay. He could guess, but he hasn't been told.

Lorrie: No, he has not been told.

JC: Okay, he's not been told, but he could work it out, probably.

Lorrie: He will be getting bits and pieces of it later, but at this point he doesn't know that Peter Pettigrew was a rat and not dead. He doesn't know that Sirius was innocent and that Peter set him up.

JC: But does he know about the Time-Turner, I guess was my question. The events of the night... I was interpreting that as Harry and Hermione used the Time-Turner, went back and freed Buckbeak and Sirius. That's what I was referring to.

Lorrie: Yeah. He knows that the Time-Turner was involved and that Dumbledore authorized it, but he doesn't know any of the details.

JC: Okay, all right. But then none of the other teachers know about this unauthorized use or authorized illegal --

Lorrie: Off-label --

JC: Off-label use. Exactly. Okay. All right.

Lorrie: Yes.

JC: Okay, that's interesting. Okay, we're in Lupin's office and Lupin does know what happened. I love this conversation between Harry and Lupin, because it's the first time that Lupin has really been able to not have teacher mode on...

Lorrie: Yeah.

JC: When he's talking to Harry, and he can be more relaxed about it. I love that he gives him back his cloak and he gives him back the map and tells him a little bit more. I wanted more from it, somehow.

Lorrie: Right?

JC: But I also understand why I didn't get it.

Lorrie: Well, we get the promise. We get Lupin saying to Harry, "I'm sure we're going to meet again later."

JC: Yeah.

Lorrie: That's something to calm down the reader saying, "But... but...."

JC: Yeah.

Lorrie: One of the functions of the Lupin character in this series regarding Snape is that he is always the source of misinformation about Snape's motives. Rowling uses Lupin to say things that turn out to be red herrings.

JC: Interesting. Okay.

Lorrie: Lupin says, "That was the final straw for Severus. I think the loss of the Order of Merlin hit him hard. So he -- er -- *accidentally* let slip that I am a werewolf this morning at breakfast." But Lupin is the one who says, "Oh, I think Snape disliked James because he was jealous of him at Quidditch," or he'll say things about Snape that sound exactly like somebody guessing at the motives of someone that they don't know well.

JC: Yeah.

Lorrie: And that's done to help the story along and keep the mystery a little longer. Then Lupin admits: "After last night, I see their point. I could have bitten any of you.... That must never happen again." We see Lupin concluding this on his own, and then he does the thing that I know you love, where he says, "Tell me about your Patronus." Ah. Finally, they get to have this conversation.

JC: It's got to be... I'm trying to think... Okay, if you're Lupin at this point, damn. There's a lot of emotions and a lot of things going on his head, but I think --

Lorrie: Yeah.

JC: That he is always going to know that he gave this to Harry.

Lorrie: Yeah.

JC: He gave Harry this gift of teaching him this really powerful magic, helping him reconnect with his father. He's always going to be the person who gave Harry that, and that's great.

Lorrie: And to be shocked at how well Harry responded, knowing that he was doing a big thing and then to get this shocking gift. 'Oh, my goodness, this child is extraordinary!'

JC: Yeah.

Lorrie: 'Look at that! That's so beautiful!' And Lupin is the kind of person who would be happy about this. 'He's so much better at it than I am!'

JC: Yeah.

Lorrie: That's a constant about Lupin as a teacher. We always see that he's not that good at the things he teaches, because that's not the important thing; the important thing is *how to teach it*.

JC: Yeah.

Lorrie: And to just want to get the thing in the kid out in the world. 'Ah, look at that. It's so powerful in this one.'

JC: It really is too bad that he can't continue to be a teacher. I understand why for story reasons... I know that you're not that fond of him, but I think maybe that's one of the reasons why he's beloved in the fandom: he really was a good teacher for Harry.

Lorrie: Well, I don't --

JC: I know he wasn't a good teacher for everybody, but for Harry? Oh.

Lorrie: I don't dislike him as a teacher. Now, I agree: he's by far absolutely the best teacher in the series. What I don't like is where his teaching faltered, because of his inner flaws that were holding him back. His refusal to teach Hermione was because he was afraid of her because of his own issues, and his inability until now to connect with Harry about the form that Harry's Patronus takes is because he was constraining himself. He could not; he made it so he couldn't have that conversation with Harry. That is an inequality that I know readers and a lot of fanfic writers have picked up on. In so many ways, Lupin was just as important to James' life as Sirius was, but Sirius gets the uncomplicated, pure love relationship with Harry. Lupin, who was not nothing, is like the uncle, even though they knew each other just as well. A lot of that constraint is because during the time that Sirius was able to just give James back to Harry, Lupin was all conflicted.

JC: Yeah.

Lorrie: This is, I don't think, a good or bad thing; just a fascinating thing, as far as writing characters go and the complications.

JC: I love how human and real that is.

Lorrie: The giving, yeah. That's just how people are. Wherever you have your inner conflict, that's going to hold you back, including from the things that you really wish. The moment of him finally saying, "Tell me about your Patronus," is like, "Oh, that's really nice." Oh, goodness! The whole book, Harry's been like, "Wait, so you knew my father?" and Lupin's like, "Yeah, we met." "What? What?! Tell me something!" And he's like, "Yeah, we were friends." But then giving Harry back the cloak and the Marauder's Map, to me... Oh, gosh, that makes me laugh, because Lupin so distinctly crosses over from being a teacher to being a pure agent of chaos. He has zero compunction about this, but that's his actual true nature. He is a very edgy character, and that's something that I want to advocate for in portrayals of Lupin in fanfiction: sometimes he gets woobified too much as the much more rational, temperate heart of the Lupin/Sirius relationship. He is a mollifying person, but he isn't a domesticated safe human. He is chaotic. He has a lot of edge to him; he is now, from this point in the plot, unemployable again.

JC: Right.

Lorrie: He's going to be a spy. He's totally going to be living on the edge. This is not a safe person, and I mean that in the best way, in an exciting character way. Yeah, he's sad, he talks like a grown-up. Yes, he's a good teacher, but he's not without edge.

JC: Now I want to go and look for the fanfictions where he's actually edgy.

Lorrie: Yeah.

JC: Because you're right. It's been a long time, honestly, since I've read much Harry Potter fanfiction, but I think my memory of it is that he was very woobified. It's like the puppy shipping kind of thing where you have the two puppies, and now I'm wondering... There must be stuff out there where he's very edgy and complicated.

Lorrie: Yeah.

JC: And that his and Sirius' complications clash at times and sometimes meld well. Anyway...

Lorrie: I find that reading ships with Lupin and someone who's not Sirius brings out Lupin's edgier side more, because Sirius obviously has such major fallout from being imprisoned. He is always going to be dealing with big capital letter Issues, and Lupin is going to look a lot more... In canon, that's Lupin's role -- to try to calm Sirius down and keep him in check -- which is funny, considering that no, Lupin has his own issues. Anyway, I find this comes more easily to the fore when he's with other characters. Then Dumbledore shows up.

JC: Yes. Okay, there's this moment where Harry talks about the Divination exam or something and it was the day before, and I had a moment where I was like, 'The day before?'

Lorrie: 'The day before.' Oh, my God!

JC: That feels like it was three months ago.

Lorrie: Who can remember then?!

JC: That was the day before?

Lorrie: Yes. We've all aged!

JC: Good Lord. Yes. Anyway...

Lorrie: And that happens a number of times at the end of each volume. That happens especially in *Half-Blood Prince*, and it's Trelawney again revealing something; it's super, super consequential, but Harry forgets it because other things happen.

JC: Ah, yeah.

Lorrie: Dumbledore shows up and says that Remus's carriage is at the gates, and he [Lupin] says, "'Headmaster, there is no need to see me to the gates, I can manage....' Harry had the impression that Lupin wanted to leave as quickly as possible. 'Good-bye, then, Remus,' said Dumbledore soberly.... Then, with a final nod to Harry and a swift smile, Lupin left the office." First of all, a smile. Uh-oh! You know when Lupin is feeling endangered, that's when he's doing things like smiling and being pleasant and quiet. But this was amazing to me to think, 'Wait a minute.' You would think that Snape would be the one in trouble with Dumbledore. He's not; it's Lupin. Lupin is the one who's in trouble with Dumbledore.

JC: Yeah. For good reason, yeah.

Lorrie: And I think a lot of readers miss that because the good points about Lupin are so relatable, but if you're thinking that Dumbledore shows up and says, "Your carriage is at the gates..." obviously Dumbledore and Lupin have spoken earlier that morning. Then I'm thinking, 'Wait a minute, what is the timeline here?' because we have Dumbledore being approached by Snape with the bodies on a stretcher, and Snape is saying, "Look, I've gotten the criminal Sirius Black for you. Administer the Kiss! By the way, Lupin is a werewolf, just like I told you. He's running around and it's dangerous." This is happening shortly before midnight, and I'm thinking, 'Okay, the first thing Dumbledore must have had to do' -- and this is me purely making this up and reading into it. If I were Dumbledore, the first thing I would do is try to do something to contain the dangerous werewolf running around loose. I don't know how he would do it; we get the sense later from Dumbledore's reaction to Fenrir Greyback that Dumbledore doesn't have a

whole lot of power over werewolves. They are powerful, frightening creatures, but Dumbledore would have to do something. How did Lupin get back? He must have transformed back. Where did he find himself when he was human again? How did he take care of himself? The first thing Dumbledore must have done when Snape showed up with this report is, 'Okay, deal with the danger and then talk to Sirius.' That's when he comes and says, "I've been talking to Sirius Black, and he's been telling me about Peter Pettigrew." That's when Sirius must have told Dumbledore that they had all been Animagi.

JC: Ah, there we go.

Lorrie: Because there wasn't time after that. Sirius was flying off on Buckbeak.

JC: Right.

Lorrie: That's happening before Dumbledore goes and tells Harry and Hermione to use the Time-Turner. By that point, Dumbledore walks in there knowing that Lupin had kept this secret from him. Then the whole Time-Turner thing happens, Snape has a meltdown, and Dumbledore is smiling and amused because Sirius Black is gone. And then at some point, he must have talked to Snape that night but not talked to Lupin yet because, as he told Harry and Hermione, Lupin is currently running wild in the forests.

JC: Right. So Lupin has been a werewolf all night. He wakes up in the forest, like, 'Oh, shit, what happened?' Yeah, and he had time, so Dumbledore talked to him, but also Hagrid talked to Lupin in there somewhere, too, right?

Lorrie: Um...

JC: Did Hagrid find him?

Lorrie: Yeah, no, you're right, because Lupin said he never ate anything.

JC: So did Hagrid find him, is my question?

Lorrie: Maybe... I guess maybe Hagrid was part of Dumbledore's strategy for containing the danger.

JC: Hagrid is the Care of Magical Creatures professor, and is definitely --

Lorrie: That's right. He would have been... Yeah, I think you're right. Yeah, there would have been some protective measures that Dumbledore would have put in place, and Hagrid would have been part of that and Hagrid would have spoken to Lupin the person. Presumably, I guess he only transforms when the moon is out, so in the morning he would be back to his human form; as a human in the morning (after that terrible night) is when he would have talked to Dumbledore and Dumbledore would have called him a carriage, which makes me think, 'How do you think that conversation went between a boss and a guy that he hired to teach?'

JC: Also, Lupin is exhausted. We've seen in the past that it took him days to recover.

Lorrie: Yeah.

JC: And that was when he didn't transform.

Lorrie: Yeah, and he's been beaten. Oh, my goodness.

JC: It was a rough morning to be Lupin, for sure.

Lorrie: Dumbledore... this is when he has to say to Lupin, "So Sirius Black tells me that they all became Animagi, and every month -- despite our building the Shrieking Shack and the Whomping Willow for you, and making sure that you were super safe -- you would leave and transform and run around with these kids who did this illegal Animagus thing that actually can get you into Azkaban, every month. Is that true? Is it true that you did that despite everything we did for you, and is it true that you knew Sirius might have been coming into the castle in dog form using one of the secret passageways that you guys used every month, and you didn't think it necessary to tell me? And is it true that, when you saw on the Marauder's Map that Sirius and Peter Pettigrew were around, that you didn't come tell me; you thought you would go deal with it yourself? Is this true, Remus?"

JC: Yeah. In my head, Remus is getting smaller and smaller and smaller throughout this conversation.

Lorrie: I get so much pushback from people who adore the Remus Lupin character. What am I missing, and how is what he did defensible?

JC: I think that any adult who shows genuine love and kindness to Harry is going to get the fandom on their side. It doesn't matter how flawed they are. He loves Harry, and therefore the fandom loves him. I think that's what it boils down to.

Lorrie: When I hear people say, "Oh, Snape's ruined his life now and made him unemployable by revealing that he was a werewolf..."

JC: I don't blame Snape for that.

Lorrie: Wouldn't that have come out eventually about this evening anyway?

JC: Yeah, that's the thing. You can't keep a secret like that. Everybody knows it. My thought is that when Lupin woke up that morning and came back into his right mind, his first thought was probably, "I ruined it. I fucked it up, and there's nothing to be done." Even though before, when you said, "Would he have continued on the job?" and I said, "Yeah, probably..." Actually, I'm going to take that back now, because I think that probably shook him.

Lorrie: Yeah.

JC: How easy it was for him to slip up and make a mistake that could have been a disaster. I think that probably shook him quite a bit, waking up in the forest the next morning and had no idea what had happened. Apparently, he can tell whether or not he ate something; that's good. But no idea if he had bitten one of the kids...

Lorrie: Geez.

JC: What happened to Sirius, no idea. That would be horrifying. He seems like the kind of person who his first thought would be, 'Did I hurt one of these kids that I've been taking care of this whole year?' Now upon reflection, I think that when Dumbledore talked to him, he may have said, "You know what? I think it's best if I leave." Maybe Dumbledore suggested it, and Lupin went, "Yeah," but I think they both agreed.

Lorrie: Just thinking what it must have taken for Lupin to sit in his chair and face Dumbledore...

JC: Oh, that must have been awful.

Lorrie: Instead of maybe sinking into the ground forever...

JC: Or slinking away and leaving a note that says, "I resign" or something. Yeah, that would be awful.

Lorrie: "I'm changing my name and moving to Australia." Yeah.

JC: Yeah, exactly.

Lorrie: The degree to which he screwed up... It's pretty immense, because it goes back to how scared he had been to lose Dumbledore's trust as an 11-year-old and that he let it grow and grow. Considering all this, it's quite amazing to me that he and Dumbledore maintained a relationship after.

JC: It seems to be Dumbledore's nature to forgive people, even when they've really, really screwed up, if he believes that they deserve another chance. Yeah.

Lorrie: I think in Dumbledore's position, my job at that moment would have been, 'How do I keep Remus Lupin from sinking into the floor forever and saying, "No, don't you hide from me, I still need you"?''

JC: Yeah. "You're still going to be important in this fight that's coming, and we need you and Harry needs you." And Harry does need him.

Lorrie: Yes.

JC: Harry does not need to lose any more adults who love him. Please, please! He will, but...

Lorrie: And Sirius... Sirius needs him.

JC: Yeah. I don't know. I assume that Dumbledore does understand this, and this is probably why the fandom latched on to Sirius and Remus as a ship: it reconstructs a family for Harry if Harry has two dads, right?

Lorrie: Yeah. Yeah.

JC: It reconstructs this family that everybody wants so badly for Harry.

Lorrie: Yeah. People who remember the love from James and have more of it to give.

JC: Yeah.

Lorrie: But yeah, the issue facing Lupin in this moment is if Dumbledore wants to say, "No, don't go away. I still want to know you. You're still the person we've always known you to be," the issue is, 'Was he, though?' That's the problem that has created this near disaster: Lupin was presenting himself as trustworthy, and he was letting this secret become way, way bigger.

JC: And that's also very human.

Lorrie: Yeah.

JC: Humans do that, right? Oh...

Lorrie: Not all humans do that.

JC: But many do. Many people get in over their head. It's not as big a secret as 'I'm a werewolf,' but there are people who do that.

Lorrie: Yeah. "I know how the serial killer is getting into the castle!"

JC: Right, right. That's big, but little things... It's an exaggerated case of that, but I think that's one of the things that I really like about all the adult characters, honestly, in these books: even though we're seeing them from Harry's perspective, they are presented in very real ways. They're all flawed, they're all complicated... I haven't read a heck of a lot of other YA books that were written in the children's literature genre, but my impression is that this is unusual to have the adults be so three-dimensional in a book that's written for children.

Lorrie: These are good characters. What's great, too, is what we see from Harry's perspective is so surface, but if you look behind the surface (like we're doing now) -- whether or not it was written in or whether I'm just reading into it -- the narrative holds. It's so robust and it's consistent with these characters to make up these stories, as uncountable numbers of fanfic stories can attest.

JC: Yeah.

Lorrie: You can do so much with these, because the psychological truth in these characters is so sturdy.

JC: Yeah.

Lorrie: But oh, what a conversation it must have been for Dumbledore to say, "I hired you to do a job. Did you do that job?"

JC: He did do the job that Dumbledore hired him to do.

Lorrie: Well...

JC: For the most part.

Lorrie: We don't know exactly why Dumbledore hired him.

JC: Okay, that's true.

Lorrie: Because nobody who gets hired for this job is only there to teach Defense Against the Dark Arts.

JC: To teach, yeah. No, that's true, that's true.

Lorrie: He's been hired to protect Harry against the serial killer who's trying to get into the castle. Did he do that? Fortunately, the serial killer wasn't after Harry.

JC: Yeah. Right, exactly.

Lorrie: Okay, nobody died, but Peter Pettigrew has escaped, and Harry has the extremely understandable response that everything he did was for nothing because Peter Pettigrew has left to join Voldemort. That's when I love Dumbledore reframing and saying, "Didn't make any difference? It made all the difference in the world, Harry. You helped uncover the truth. You saved an innocent man from a terrible fate." That is one of my favorite reframings: we can't just measure things in binary wins and losses. Then Harry says, "But -- I stopped Sirius and

Professor Lupin from killing Pettigrew! That makes it my fault if Voldemort comes back!" That's another reminder: Sirius and Remus are not safe people, that Harry had to stop them from killing someone. Yeah, that just happened. They're dangerous... and so is Harry. Then we have the beautiful quote from Dumbledore: "When one wizard saves another wizard's life, it creates a certain bond between them... and I'm much mistaken if Voldemort wants his servant in the debt of Harry Potter."

JC: That is such an interesting revelation.

Lorrie: Yeah.

JC: Yeah. I love that so much. I also love the line... He talks about how when you save someone's life that it creates this deep, magical bond; he says it's "magic at its deepest, its most impenetrable..."

Lorrie: Yeah.

JC: I love that comparison. We'll see what killing does later. Saving someone creates this incredible deep bond that connects two people forever, and killing someone rips part of your soul away. That's really cool.

Lorrie: It's true, too, and it's not something that you necessarily enjoy. It doesn't go necessarily the way you would like it to, but it's there. For those people who can handle extracanonical information from the author, which I find valuable: in 2007, in the same event in Carnegie Hall where she said that Dumbledore is gay, Rowling also said that there's nothing magical about the life debt.

JC: Oh, that's interesting.

Lorrie: Yeah. The quote is, "It was more that Dumbledore's extensive wisdom and knowledge of human nature, he knew as Harry later thinks in book seven, he knew that Pettigrew would react a certain way to having saved his life."

JC: Oh. That's interesting.

Lorrie: A life debt... Yeah, it's exactly the same for Muggles. It's just a human nature thing, and I think it is that powerful.

JC: Oh. Okay, that's interesting.

Lorrie: But yeah, Pettigrew remembers this and that impulse. It's still alive in him.

JC: Thinking about someone like Pettigrew: if you still have some human in you, you're going to recognize that, as opposed to someone like Voldemort, who's not really human anymore at all.

Lorrie: Oh, Voldemort still has it, too.

JC: Okay, well, I defer to your expertise.

Lorrie: Voldemort still has it!

JC: I was thinking it's a statement about Pettigrew's humanity here, which is interesting, considering that he's been a rat for the last twelve, thirteen years.

Lorrie: Well, Sirius has been a dog.

JC: Yeah, exactly. The humanity of these folks... Another thing that Dumbledore says here that I found really moving is this idea that -- it's a very Christian platitude, but if you're a Christian, it probably applies to many, many faith traditions around the world -- your ancestors, or those that you loved or who are dead, still live on in you as long as you remember them, and that you can call on that memory when you need strength.

Lorrie: Yeah.

JC: And to couch that as a form of magic is really cool.

Lorrie: Or that it comes up in you when you need that strength, whether you know to call on it or not. Part of what Dumbledore's explaining to Harry is, "You didn't even recognize it, but it was true anyway." That thing about magic: magic is the thing that happens whether you believe in it or not. That's what was happening. "You can't doubt that you're your father's son; you obviously are, because look what happened when you really needed him."

JC: Yeah. I like that idea a lot, and that's something that Harry really needed to hear in that moment.

Lorrie: Yeah.

JC: But also, there's a quote that "You're never really dead until the last time your name is mentioned."

Lorrie: Oh.

JC: If the last time someone thinks of you, and how powerful -- how that's true. There's the meme that goes around the internet of the copper merchant from Mesopotamia that got the clay tablets. People chiseled out the tablets and sent letters of complaint, and that guy is immortal!

Lorrie: Yes, he is!

JC: Oh, my God, how powerful it is for people to remember you, and that memory is incredibly powerful. That guy is now part of human history.

Lorrie: He's so relatable.

JC: Because people cannot forget about him. It's a really interesting way to think about the mortality of humans. Okay, this is coming from a person who's not a single bit religious: we're here for a span of several decades. What was it for? If other people remember you and remember the impact that you had on their lives, then that extends your lifespan. It also implies how important it is to spend your life helping other people.

Lorrie: Make that connection.

JC: And making the world a better place, and connecting with others in ways that are going to make their lives better. There's a whole philosophy here that you can dig into, that I think is really, really profound and really true from my perspective.

Lorrie: I like when it says, "Harry wasn't the only one who was sorry to see Professor Lupin go. The whole of Harry's Defense Against the Dark Arts class was miserable about his resignation." That's exactly what you were just talking about: they didn't want to let him go because the bond

was so rich and it kept on giving, and of course they wanted to continue with that. Yeah, the one year that he provided lessons... We're going to see that all the students who learned from him that one year are going to retain that forever.

JC: Yeah, and Harry passes it on.

Lorrie: Yes.

JC: In the fifth year.

Lorrie: Right.

JC: Right. He starts with what Lupin taught him.

Lorrie: Yeah.

JC: And that's how Dumbledore's Army is created, so Lupin's impact on the Gryffindors, in particular, is tremendous. This is the thing about being a teacher: when you decide -- well, this is just me speaking; I can't speak for all teachers, but I actually work with a lot of teachers and this is not uncommon. You think to yourself, 'I'm really good at biology and I could work in a biology lab and I could use my skills, or I could be a teacher and I could help kids fall in love with biology. Which one of those things is going to make me happier? At the end of my life, which one of those things will I have found more fulfilling?' A lot of people make the choice to go towards teaching because it's an act of service, and when we poll our students at the university that I work at, most of them say they chose teaching over other jobs that would have paid more because they want to live a life of service. Most teachers go into it... at least at that age. Maybe later, it's different. If you come back to teaching after twenty years, you're like, 'Hmm, these benefits look good.'

Lorrie: Oh, gosh, yes.

JC: 'Health insurance? Thank you! Good retirement, plan? Hell yeah!' But certainly, if you ask a 20-year-old who's in a teacher preparation program, "Why do you want to be a teacher," very often it's because they want to serve, and that's what Lupin did here. His impact on this one kid will have this ripple effect that perhaps saves... that perhaps ends up in helping Harry win this fight in the end. That's the power of a teacher. Not to be all like, *sings* "Teachers," but it's true. The reason that you get into teaching is to have maybe one or two kids a year whose lives you change, and they go on to do things that they never would have done if not for you helping them find their way, and that's what Lupin did here. I love that.

Lorrie: One thing I really love about it: it reminds me of many times in my life when I remember favorite teachers leaving. Not the teachers that I personally missed (although those, too), but the ones where there was a noticeable difference in the whole school or the whole class. They were human, so it wasn't ever universal love, but where so much of the class understood something special had happened there. They could acknowledge that. One thing that drives me nuts is the narrative that children don't want to learn; they do.

JC: Yeah, exactly. Oh, my God.

Lorrie: Children are starved to be in that good place, where somebody looks into them and recognizes something and they respond to it. They hunger for teachers who teach to them and don't underestimate them, and take what's in the kids and make those things blossom.

JC: Yes. Yeah.

Lorrie: No, it's not that kids don't want to learn. You put them in the right teaching relationship and they'll respond so eagerly.

JC: Yes. One hundred percent. Yeah, there's research on this. There's research that backs up everything that you just said, and it's also the foundation of this progressive perspective on the importance of public education. Right now, we're living in a time where people on the right are trying to actively dismantle public education in this country. By the time people listen to this, I hope that the world has taken a turn where it doesn't look like that's inevitable.

Lorrie: Yeah.

JC: Where I'm sitting right now, in July of 2024, we're well down that path. One of the lines that you hear people say is, 'Well, these children, they don't even want to be in school. They don't deserve to be educated. They haven't earned it.' There's this implication that they haven't earned the right to have good teachers, and if they really "cared" about education -- if their families "cared" and on and on -- then they would be acting differently in school, they would be showing their teachers more respect. And that's not how human beings work.

Lorrie: Yeah.

JC: Yeah, that's not how human beings work.

Lorrie: And when they have teachers who are able to connect with them, they do show them the respect.

JC: Yes, absolutely. In fact, we have so many movies about that.

Lorrie: Yeah.

JC: Any movie that you've ever seen about a great teacher, a teacher did exactly what you just said. We love that myth of -- and they're almost always white -- the white savior teacher; love that myth of the savior teacher going in and saving the poor brown kids or whatever. We also somehow, as a society, don't believe that that can really happen, because on a societal level we don't think those kids are worth saving, saveable.

Lorrie: Fortunately, where I live, it's all teachers of color, so the good teachers and the bad teachers and everyone in between are all different races, and the kids that are receiving the good teaching are also all different races. Really, it's about if you know how a child thinks and you find them interesting and you say so, and then you work with them about what they can do with what's inside of them. Right? That's what people want.

JC: We've wandered away from whatever's happening in Hogwarts, in a sense.

Lorrie: Well, the kids are devastated that they're losing a good teacher, and now it's going to go back to all the crap that they're used to where this one subject is concerned. Oh, well... Shall we board the Hogwarts Express?

JC: Yeah. There's the interesting moments where Harry hears everyone speculating about what happened, and everyone's wildly off base. He's in this really interesting position of knowing exactly what happened and just having to sit there and go, 'Hmm. Oh, wow. I wonder...' Yeah, that's going to happen a lot. I don't think I've ever been in that position, talking to my peers. With

kids, like if you're keeping a surprise from a kid or something, you have to be like, 'Oh, hmmm,' but I don't know if I've ever been in that position that Harry's in. It's so interesting that he's going to be in that position a lot from here on out.

Lorrie: Yep.

JC: Often in a bad way.

Lorrie: Yes.

JC: And not in a fun, 'Oh, I know something you don't' way.

Lorrie: You mentioned earlier his awful feeling about Hogwarts Express: "For maybe half an hour, a glorious half hour, he had believed he would be living with Sirius from now on... his parents' best friend." Wow. Once he has that fantasy, the longing will never go away. It's so powerful.

JC: Yeah. Later on, we find out why that could never have been true anyway, but I remember hurting. The first time I read this, I remember feeling that pain with him.

Lorrie: Yeah.

JC: 'Ugh, he came so close! It didn't have to be...' and then that raises the whole question of, 'Why does he have to live with the Dursleys? Why?!' It's interesting that we do get more information about that later.

Lorrie: But we do see that this book... No wonder people love it so much: he gets comfort on that point immediately within this chapter still, with the perfect ending where we get this comic relief owl.

JC: Oh, the owl.

Lorrie: The cutest little owl.

JC: Oh, my goodness, and it's so excited to have a job.

Lorrie: I know. And with Pigwidgeon, we get an apology from Sirius to Ron, because Ron has suffered so much from Sirius this year.

JC: That's true. Yeah.

Lorrie: And that leads to Ron apologizing to Crookshanks.

JC: Oh, that's a beautiful moment. Yeah.

Lorrie: Then we get to read this letter from Sirius that is beautifully written. It shows the character. He is such a fluent writer and his strategic thinking is so clear. You can see, 'Oh, yeah, he was the smartest kid in his year,' where he says he's going to let himself be seen away from the castle so that the dementors can be lifted; he doesn't know that Fudge has already taken them away, but he's thinking this way. All this book, he's been this wild, disreputable, crazy-looking felon, and he turns out to be this thoughtful, eloquent person. Then we get the payoff about Hermione having been correct about who sent the Firebolt, and we get that amazing Hogsmeade permission slip.

JC: Aww.

Lorrie: From now on, Harry has a parent, somebody who loves him, and I thought, 'Well, what is it that makes Sirius so special?' Harry now has somebody in the world whose entire heart is devoted to him. Sirius' happiness depends entirely on whether or not Harry is doing well. That's something you can assume and take for granted if you have an adult who loves you, who is your caretaker; if you don't have that, and there's people who are saying, 'Oh, well, / love you!' Yeah, but I'm not the first person you think of.

JC: Right.

Lorrie: That's the difference between Sirius and Molly Weasley (who does an incredible job of being like a mom), and she also acknowledges that no, it's not the same. Of course, it's not the same, but she'll say, "I tried to think what your mother would have wanted to do, and that's what I did." But no, Sirius belongs to Harry because Sirius will never be happy again if Harry is miserable, and that's something that's changed Harry's life forever.

JC: All three of them show how much they've grown up in this scene at the end. We've seen Harry do this earlier in this chapter -- we've seen Harry's new maturity -- but we see this from Ron and Hermione, too. Hermione talks about the fact that she's handed in the Time-Turner and she's not going to do this double schedule, and she's sorted out which classes not to take. This is like my own kid: a year ago, he was on the AP track for everything -- and he's at this really academically competitive school where it's actually physically impossible to do all that, because they really do give you all that homework.

Lorrie: Yeah.

JC: And he had to decide, 'What do I not want to take the AP in?' He decided history was the one that was going to go, and he's very happily dropped off the AP track. Now, everything else... He's got five AP classes coming this year, so he's going to be Hermione needing the Time-Turner, but it could have been six. I was just really glad that he was able to make that choice, so when Hermione was like, "Nope, I've dropped Divination and I'm going to drop Muggle studies." "Even though you got three hundred and fifty percent?" "Yes."

Lorrie: I love the detail that she got the most extreme test score.

JC: Yeah. How do you get three hundred and fifty percent? How is that possible? Well, Hermione can do it.

Lorrie: She chooses sanity.

JC: Yeah.

Lorrie: And this is such a real struggle.

JC: Yes. She proved she could do it, she knows that she couldn't have done it, and she's making a choice not to live her life that way. She's like, "I just don't need this anymore."

Lorrie: Yeah, and it is an informed choice, and she wouldn't have known if she hadn't been given this chance.

JC: Yeah, so I love that.

Lorrie: Yeah.

JC: Then I love the moment when Ron holds Pigwidgeon up to Crookshanks and says, "Crookshanks, what do you think?" That is incredible growth on Ron's part.

Lorrie: So good.

JC: All three of them have grown up.

Lorrie: Yeah.

JC: The other two, you see these little hints of maturity, but I love that we see that in this chapter.

Lorrie: Yeah. Wow, the three of them all are doing that thing that you mentioned Harry doing, where people are talking, they're very wrong, and they're just going to have to sit there like, "Hmm. Yep."

JC: And it's interesting that they can sit in the train car and say whatever they want, so it makes me wonder: are the train cars on the Hogwarts Express soundproof? They're not being careful with what they're saying here at all, but who knows? Maybe Hermione put a charm on the door, I don't know. Oh, the other thing that I really like about this is that Harry's really sad about going back to the Dursleys, but I think this is the first time we've seen this in the series. We get all these little hints about what's coming: Ron's like, "Oh, the Quidditch World Cup is this summer. You should come and stay with us. We're going to go." We start to see... The other two books just ended and then they picked up, but here it's like, "Here's what's coming! Harry, here's some things for you to look forward to." For the reader, it's for us to look forward to.

Lorrie: Yeah.

JC: 'The Quidditch World Cup?! What?! Harry's going to go and stay with Ron?!'

Lorrie: "Don't worry, there's more!"

JC: Yeah, this is what's coming.

Lorrie: Yeah.

JC: He's optimistic about the summer at the end, even though he has to go back to the Dursleys. He's optimistic, and I really like that little preview of what's to come. I thought that was really cool. It made me excited to pick up the next one.

Lorrie: Yeah. Do you have any final thoughts on *Prisoner of Azkaban* before we head to the fourth book?

JC: Well, I think I really love the fact that Harry uses Sirius to scare Uncle Vernon at the end.

Lorrie: To keep him in line.

JC: That's wonderful.

Lorrie: Yeah.

JC: Yeah. He's like, "Yeah, my godfather is a serial killer on the loose. He really wants to make sure I'm happy. He's going to keep writing me!"

Lorrie: And Harry doesn't even know that for sure yet, but it turns out to be completely correct. That is, in fact, going to be their relationship. Yeah, I love Harry's reminder that Sirius is dangerous; Harry himself is dangerous. I guess this has given him the confidence to own that he's a dangerous, powerful person. Before, he was just trying to be virtuous and perfect, and that got him nowhere.

JC: And trying to keep his head down with the Dursleys and not do anything to piss them off, because that was only going to cause him trouble. After the whole Aunt Marge incident, he's given up on that. "Yeah, I'm going to make you angry. You're not going to like me. You're going to treat me like shit, no matter what I do."

Lorrie: Yeah. "And you're not my only family anymore."

JC: "You're not my only family anymore," right. Yeah. I love the fact that Molly Weasley gives him a big hug right in front of Uncle Vernon.

Lorrie: Yeah.

JC: Just, like, the reminder that Harry has this whole other life where he is loved.

Lorrie: Valued.

JC: And valued, and not everybody looks at Harry the way that Uncle Vernon does. It's really important for Uncle Vernon to get that reminder, because they have all convinced themselves that Harry is this little deviant that is not ever going to amount to anything. To have that visual reminder that that's not true... He's got friends, he's got people -- look, even the other grown-ups really love him.

Lorrie: Yeah.

JC: Even the serial murder godfather loves him, right? It's a little bit... I love that little stick to Uncle Vernon. "Oh, yeah, it's just you. You and Aunt Marge and your wife. You're the ones who are weird here. You're the weird ones anyway."

Lorrie: Yeah. "This is how normal people treat children."

JC: Yes. Yes, that's it. I really liked the ending.

Lorrie: Yeah.

JC: Because even though we're back with the Dursleys, Harry seems more powerful than he has in the past.

Lorrie: He's got so much more now.

JC: Especially after last summer, where they locked him in with the bars.

Lorrie: That was a bad summer!

JC: Two summers ago. Yeah, that was a bad summer, and then the previous summer with the whole thing with Aunt Marge, where he had to run away. He's got bad summers continuing ahead of him, but he's more powerful now.

Lorrie: Yeah.

JC: And he knows himself and what he's capable of.

Lorrie: Well, at the beginning of the book, Aunt Marge was saying, "I'm sure that James Potter was worthless." Now he knows a lot more about James Potter; if Marge tries that on him again, now he knows what it's like to know the truth and even still be silent about it. Just know.

JC: Right He was lashing back out before, but now it's like, "You don't know what you're talking about, and I know."

Lorrie: Yeah. "I know because I've seen it."

JC: And if someone's just ignorantly babbling, you have a choice and you know the truth. You can choose to walk away. You can choose to close that window on your computer and log off of Facebook. You can be like, "No, not today, Satan," and you can walk away. He was cornered in that situation, but he's not going to feel cornered by people like that moving forward.

Lorrie: Yeah.

JC: That's a gift. Oh, my God.

Lorrie: He's so much stronger.

JC: Yeah. So yeah!

Lorrie: I'm so happy that you're still with me, playing with this series like this. Thank you so much!

JC: Yeah, this is great! And it's interesting because we're about to get it to the big books now.

Lorrie: Yeah. Into the door stoppers.

JC: Oh, yeah, the door stoppers. Oh, my gosh. Yeah. The length is about to go up, and I think we're going to have to start to be a little more judicious in what we choose to talk about, because these are going to be two-hour episodes for a long time if we don't.

Lorrie: Yeah. Well, some of those chapters are going to need it, because things get really complicated.

JC: Mm, for sure. I'm looking forward to it. I'm looking forward to the Quidditch World Cup. Oh, my God! Yes.

Lorrie: Next time!

JC: There's so much fun. Yes, next time!

Lorrie: Chapter one of *Goblet of Fire*: The Riddle House.

JC: Ooooh. Oh, my God! The Riddle House... That's in this book?

Lorrie: That's the first chapter of *Goblet of Fire*. It's a huge change of tone.

JC: Holy crap, okay!

Lorrie: Yeah.

JC: I'd forgotten. Yeah, I haven't read this book in a really long time, so this is going to be interesting.

Lorrie: It's going to be. Even the print is smaller.

JC: It's like, 'All right, we know that this is not just for children at this point.'

Lorrie: Yeah.

JC: Yeah. Wow.

Lorrie: Well, I'll talk to you then.

JC: All right!

Caroline: Producer Caroline here with an announcement as we wind down book 3 and head into book 4. In between these two seasons, we're going to release the first episode of a whole new open-ended season 8, which is going to exist outside the regular book seasons and be published outside our normal Wednesday release schedule. So your regular chapter reread episodes won't be moved around at all, and you can look forward to season 8 episodes like bonus content. And our first episode is in the can, so look forward to Lorrie and JC sitting down with writer, publisher, and sexuality activist Cecilia Tan, author of *The Binge Watcher's Guide to the Harry Potter Films*. That episode comes out on Saturday, November 16, 2024, so we'll see you then!

You've been listening to Harry Potter After 2020 with hosts Lorrie Kim and JC. You can find show notes for this and all other episodes at HPAfter2020.com. There, you will also find ways to support the show, contact the hosts and more. If you like what you heard, consider giving us a review on Apple Podcasts or wherever you get your podcasts. Harry Potter After 2020 is produced and edited by Lorrie Kim and Caroline Rinaldy. Original music was composed by C.L. Smith. Thank you for listening.