

Transcript

Episode 3.9

Book 3, Chapter 9: Grim Defeat

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 Nine: Grim Defeat.

Lorrie: Dumbledore has the castle searched, but nobody can find Sirius Black. Lupin is unwell, and Snape is his substitute teacher in Defense Against the Dark Arts. Harry sees an enormous black dog in the stands at a Quidditch game. A hundred Dementors swarm the game, causing Harry to have a trauma flashback, pass out, and fall off his broom. Grim Defeat, JC.

JC: Yes, the title is apt.

Lorrie: Yeah, this is a very important and intense chapter. Where do you want to start?

JC: Oh, I think starting with something a little lighter, maybe, is the sleepover in the Great Hall.

Lorrie: Yes!

JC: Which seems really nice, I think, this idea of okay, here's one place where we can put everyone and you'll all be safe, we can watch over you. This is possibly the most magical room in the entire castle, the most powerful space. It's like the bomb shelter of the place; this is the place to be, where you'll be safe. And then the idea that Dumbledore... I love the description of him converting the hall into the giant pajama party with two "casual wave(s) of his wand", and it's such a nice way to remind us how powerful he is. That was great.

Lorrie: It's cozy, and the squashy purple sleeping bags have become iconic. When people want to have a Harry Potter-themed sleepover, that's code: "Bring your squashy purple sleeping bags." It's fun. Of course, they are all staying up and chattering and whispering. This is a break in the pattern.

JC: I love the fact that Harry, Ron, and Hermione immediately group their sleeping bags together.

Lorrie: Yeah.

JC: It's interesting, because we talked a while back about the fact that the dorms are segregated by sex. Somehow, the castle knows which dorm you belong in, so this is also one of the only times, at least within Hogwarts, that Harry, Ron and Hermione can whisper to each other in the middle of the night while they're lying in their beds. I don't know, there's something really cozy, even though it's, on first read, under really scary circumstances. On a second read, because I know what's going on, I'm like, 'Well, they're just having a sleepover. It's great.'

Lorrie: 'They're fine.'

JC: It's funny how different it feels. They're fine, yeah.

Lorrie: And it's one of the eavesdropping sessions in this novel -- where Harry listens to the Weasleys talk and he finds out something important there. They're going to be eavesdropping in this chapter, and they're going to also be eavesdropping in the next chapter. That's the only way Harry can find out anything, because nobody's telling him.

JC: It is interesting, too, that during this eavesdropping session Harry learns that the adults, including Dumbledore, don't know how Sirius got in. Dumbledore doesn't know now that the Marauders are unregistered Animagi.

Lorrie: Right.

JC: But he will later, right?

Lorrie: Much later.

JC: Much later, okay. Yeah. But it is interesting that Remus Lupin definitely knows.

Lorrie: Oh, he does.

JC: Does Snape know? Does anyone else know? Is it just Remus at this point?

Lorrie: I don't think Snape knows.

JC: Okay, so Remus knows, but Remus is conveniently indisposed. I do wonder, and maybe we'll see going forward, that Remus definitely will have heard about what happened and he has to know how Sirius could have evaded the dementors and gotten into the castle. I'm curious to see... I can't remember what happens to some of these details, but I'm really curious to see what happens from there, because one person does know how Sirius could get in past the dementors.

Lorrie: Do you think Remus should be telling anyone about this?

JC: Yeah, because at this point, Remus doesn't know where Sirius' allegiances lie, right?

Lorrie: Correct.

JC: He doesn't think Sirius is innocent at this point. He thinks he's just as dangerous as everybody else.

Lorrie: Maybe...

JC: At least I think he does.

Lorrie: Well, he doesn't behave like somebody who's positive that Sirius is a serial killer. If he were positive that Sirius were exactly as dangerous as everybody thinks, would he still be keeping secret about a way that Sirius could be getting in? Why isn't Remus Lupin doing the thing he was hired to do, which is give information on Sirius Black as the person on Earth who best knows him? How might Dumbledore feel about this, and what does Snape think about all this?

JC: Oh, yeah, for sure. Snape made his feelings very clear during the eavesdropping session, and then later in this chapter he makes his feelings even more clear.

Lorrie: When he can, when he's allowed to. I do love the way that this chapter starts to dole out clues. It's beautifully done, because... Okay, here we have the mystery. It's like a locked room mystery. There's no way into the castle; we have dementors. How is he doing it? Then Hermione beautifully says, "Oh, it's very lucky he picked tonight... the one night we weren't in the tower..." Right, because you assume that you know who he's going for. "All around them, people were asking one another the same question: 'How did he get in?'" There's really no getting around the fact that as a reader, you're supposed to be asking yourself that and you're supposed to be hunting for the clues. Then Hermione conveniently tells us that it wasn't by apparating, "'Because the castle's protected by more than walls, you know,' said Hermione. 'There are all sorts of enchantments on it, to stop people entering by stealth.'" That explains the Hogsmeade permission slips, which is something that fandom has been stuck on forever. These kids are risking their lives just going to class. Why do you need a permission slip? Well, they've agreed to protect the kids through all these enchantments, which don't apply beyond the school. So the kids are pretending to sleep, and Percy and Dumbledore and the professors are all whispering and searching the castle; then we have Snape entering. The door of the hall creaks open again, "and more footsteps. 'Headmaster.' It was Snape." Always, when Snape walks in, okay, it's going to be interesting. "'Have you any theory as to how he got in, Professor? You remember the conversation we had, Headmaster, just before -- ah -- the start of term?'" Snape is saying this... He's trying to block Percy out of the conversation. Uselessly, of course; Percy's listening to everything. If Snape is talking about this in front of Percy, Dumbledore has not been letting him bring this up. He hasn't been available to him. "'I do, Severus,' and there was something like warning in his voice. 'It seems -- almost impossible -- that Black could have entered the school without inside help. I did express my concerns when you appointed --'" So there, that's a clue. Now we know what it was that Snape was concerned about.

JC: Okay, by the time I read this book for the first time, I already knew that Sirius and Remus were a ship, so I had already been spoiled to the fact that they were friends or they knew each other. Again, at the time I read this, it seemed clear to me that he was referring to Lupin there and I knew that they knew each other, so I wonder what it would be like to not know that.

Lorrie: Yeah.

JC: I don't know.

Lorrie: But it's clear that he is talking about Lupin, because the only two new appointees have been Hagrid and Lupin, and Lupin is the one that Snape has been staring at with hatred this whole time.

JC: For sure, and brewing mysterious potions for.

Lorrie: Right, so that's what Snape has been worried about: that Lupin is going to come help Sirius Black do what everybody thinks Sirius wants to do, which is to find and kill Harry. Here we have, again, Snape being worried for Harry Potter (whom he can't stand) because he thinks he knows what Lupin is like. "I do not believe a single person inside this castle would have helped Black enter it," said Dumbledore, and his tone made it clear the subject was closed." I love this book. Here, again, Dumbledore is correct about Lupin, and yet Snape's concerns are really valid. Even though Dumbledore's right that Lupin would not help Sirius enter the castle, he is not right to dismiss Snape being concerned that Lupin might be holding something back. The complexity is so satisfying. Then we change subjects. Dumbledore is so cold on the subject of the dementors: "No dementor will cross the threshold of this castle while I am Headmaster." This is something that I was actually a little embarrassed at how much I missed when I reread this after 2020, which was a year of major riots against police violence because there was so much evidence that police forces sometimes would be overcome by their position and by a desire to enforce, even sometimes when there weren't actually laws being broken. It is proven that the more you put police forces on guard, saying, "Okay, there's a big protest happening, be ready," that the feeling of contained aggression is harder to control -- partly because the sense of the moment heightens everything and partly numbers. Probably, partly also temperament since, despite the rallying cry "Blue Lives Matter," we are not actually born into a profession. We do actually choose the profession.

JC: Yeah.

Lorrie: There is an element of self-sorting here. After the irrefutable evidence was shown internationally on people's cell phone recordings that police response to non-violence is a phenomenon and it can be fatal -- and even if not fatal, extremely damaging -- then I saw Dumbledore's concern about the presence of dementors in a really different light. Because he doesn't think they will even be effective, he tried to resist the Ministry's order to have them stationed there. They're under his authority, sort of, but the Ministry is interfering, and he knows ahead of time that the negative effects of having the dementors there are going to far outweigh any possible use. And the Ministry... Fudge says, "Well, never mind, we need them," but the really unfortunate data that this reminds me of is the argument that school shootings can be stopped by the presence of more armed guards. We know that doesn't stop school shootings, but it does drastically increase the number of arrests or interferences from those armed guards of kids -- often some kid who's a minority, who's already low in status in the school -- getting kids into trouble for regular infractions that do not need an armed guard. But that can escalate, and that's what has been on the increase with the presence of armed guards in schools, not any decrease in school shootings.

JC: Yeah, no, this is a huge issue and I live in Texas. Yeah, there's the right-wing push to have armed police in schools. The argument that they make is, "Oh, they're going to keep the schools safer," and of course, there's no evidence that they do; there's plenty of evidence that what they do is cause harm, particularly to POC children. You just described... One of the big things that happens is that minor infractions behavior, even in very young children, are handed over to police to deal with.

Lorrie: Yeah.

JC: Police who are not educators, whose framework for thinking about how to work with people is not one that is particularly trauma-informed or learner-informed or acknowledging how brains

grow and develop. It's behavioral. It's this very behaviorist perspective of, "I will control your behavior," so the idea on the right (that I sense a lot, I hear a lot) is that there should be people in schools who are controlling the bodies of the children and forcing them to learn. Anyone who's ever spent any time in a school, anyone who's spent much time around children, can tell you that you cannot make children learn. You can't, but yet their entire... I'm going to try not to ramble here.

Lorrie: It's an emotional subject.

JC: It is. It's one that's really close to my experience, but I think that one of the things that really is disturbing is this factor of having a person whose job is to enforce behavior using physical force.

Lorrie: Yeah.

JC: And to respond to criminal behavior using physical force. Maybe I'm probably simplifying it, but that seems to me to be the job of a police officer. They're not there to be a counselor; they're not there to do anything but that, put that person in a school. Those police officers are stationed more often than not in schools that have large populations of black and brown children, and the message that those kids are getting is re-traumatizing them around racism. It's like, "You, we can't trust you just to come to school. We have to have police officers here to make sure that you stay in line." There's so many awful messages that kids are getting from that. Very, very little good comes out of having... We call them SROs, school resource officers. I've known some school resource officers, some SROs, who were really nice people, who've wanted to work in a school because they loved working with kids and they wanted to make a difference. I've known really great people who do that job, but overall, if you step back and look at the statistics, it does harm. Yeah, and I had not made that connection either. I'm also surprised I had not made that connection between the dementors and police in schools, but wow. That's a really great point.

Lorrie: Yeah, and learning, as we do sometimes through the news, that police officers stationed at schools are more concerned about protecting themselves than they are about protecting the children. That's a type of disillusionment that I have found really impossible to recover from. Here we have the exact depiction of the struggle of a Headmaster whose priority is the education of developing children. The Ministry's priority is security and politics, and the Ministry does have power over the school to station the dementors there. Dumbledore has the power to at least forbid them to come into the castle, and nobody's happy about the dementors being there. Fudge can't explain why he thinks they're going to do a good job and cannot promise that they'll be under control; the parallel here is depicted very accurately, I feel, the tensions and just how weary it makes the students. Dumbledore is very cold about the dementors not being allowed in the castle, and then Snape stands there, looking after him with "an expression of deep resentment on his face"; this is after he's tried to bring up the person that he suspects and Dumbledore has shut him down completely, and Ron looks at Harry and mouths, "What was all that about?" 'Okay, reader, all the arrows are pointing to this mystery; we're supposed to be thinking about this.' And then after that... finally, at this point, we have a grown-up deciding that they can't put off telling Harry Potter any longer. McGonagall says, "I know this will come as a shock to you, but Sirius Black --" and he wearily stops the good woman. It's McGonagall who finally cracks and says, "We have to tell this kid," and yeah, that proves that Hogwarts administrators must have been super relieved that the Dursleys did not sign his permission slip. They would have had to tell him earlier otherwise. So that Great Hall sleepover... Wow!

JC: Oh, yeah, there's a lot that's happening there. I also found that the statement, that "No dementor will cross the threshold of this castle while I am Headmaster" ominously left a loophole for the dementors to come in the castle, right? Oh, goodness.

Lorrie: Yeah.

JC: Oh, another thing that happens when they're talking about the magic of the castle: there's a mention of Filch having all the secret passages guarded, which I thought is a really fun thing to drop for what's coming in, perhaps, even the next chapter. First of all, if everyone knows about the secret passages, are they really secret? But secondly, we will soon find out that there are secret passages that Filch doesn't know about.

Lorrie: No, he does not.

JC: That's exciting. This castle has secrets!

Lorrie: Oh, it sure does, and does Dumbledore know them all? Well, we already know that they didn't know about the Chamber of Secrets or the basilisk. Last year, basilisk. Now what? Then there's a Quidditch scene, and we get the entrance of Cedric Diggory into the story.

JC: Cedric! We also have this interesting moment where they found out that Sir Cadogan's portrait is now guarding the Gryffindor Tower, and I think it's Percy who says he was the only portrait who would agree to do it; I thought, 'Oh, that's another interesting little hint about the way that portrait magic works,' that the portraits could just refuse the job. They're sentient enough that they could just refuse it, and it made me think, again, about the portrait magic. I'm sure that there are tons of fanfics written along these lines, but it made me think, 'What if you had a portrait of yourself, that was painted when you were 20 years old, that you could talk to? Can you go and talk to your own portrait? Could you go back and talk to yourself as a young person, and what would that be like because you were a different person? I was a different person when I was 20 than I am now. I was a different person at 30 than I am now.'

Lorrie: Wow!

JC: So the idea of talking to your own portrait and going back and having conversations about your life... Oh, wow, or encoding your memories in a portrait. Yesterday, I was having a conversation with a colleague who reminded me that 15 years ago, I was interviewed for a video series that they did about our program. I have no memory of this. I have no memory. I was like, "Are you sure that was me?" and she was like, "Yeah, I just watched it." I was like, "I have zero memory of being in this video series." Wow, it would be great to encode my memories into a portrait, or I can just go back and check. "You just had a baby; tell me about it." Ah! I'm sure that there are fanfics like that, but I'm fascinated by the idea of the portrait magic and all the ways that it could be used.

Lorrie: Well, you're making me think of several ways in which we do do that. For example, if Tom Riddle... If Voldemort found the diary, he would be able to have a dialogue with his 16-year-old self. That's exactly what he did do, encoding that into this text. All you have to do is put ink into it and it'll talk to you from that perspective, but any journals or diaries or records that people have kept are serving that purpose. That's what they are for, because you can try to remember, but if you have the physical artifact or the online artifact right in front of you, that will jog memories that you couldn't access otherwise.

JC: Right. It's like an external hard drive.

Lorrie: It is, because you don't remember this video that you're in, but if there's video and you look at it, you think, 'No, that's definitely me.'

JC: No one would have gone to the trouble to do a deep fake of me talking about my classes fifteen years ago. Yeah.

Lorrie: Would that connect you to your old memories? It might, it might not, but it's definitely a tool to be used like a portrait that way. Sometimes we leave pieces of ourselves that way unintentionally in online traces that we might not have intended to have operating this way, but they're still out there. This is also the premise that I've been working from in this reread podcast: the experience of reading a formative text at a certain age will help encode our memories, so that when we go through the emotional experience of reading it again, it'll help us remember, 'Oh, yeah, when I first read this, this is where I was in life. This is how I felt. I see it differently now.' At the time, thinking about how I see it differently now versus then, that's a way to remember the past self.

JC: It's really all fascinating.

Lorrie: Yeah.

JC: Going back to the magic: one other thing that I find interesting is that I don't think photographs work this way in the Wizarding world. I think it's just portraits.

Lorrie: Yeah, you don't talk to the photos that way.

JC: They can react to the environment. A couple chapters back, Percy's girlfriend ducked out of a photo, but it's not the same somehow.

Lorrie: There's more magic involved.

JC: Yeah. There's not photographs of more current Headmasters in the Headmaster's office.

Lorrie: Right.

JC: The portraits are something... Yeah.

Lorrie: There's something about painting the portrait. I guess it's no more common than it is in our lives of sitting for an oil painting. There's nothing to stop anybody from commissioning an oil painting of themselves, except that it's a huge amount of work and expense and only very advanced artists can do it. If you're going to do that, you have to make an effort. Yeah, and we're about to find out that Harry goes through this, being reintroduced to memories that he doesn't have access to. So yeah, I just wanted to mention Cedric showing up and the weird prejudice that boys have against him because he's so good-looking.

JC: Yeah.

Lorrie: Fred says, "He's only silent because he's too thick to string two words together," and we find out later that is not true of Cedric at all. It's totally a stereotype.

JC: Yeah, he's not a himbo.

Lorrie: No!

JC: It is interesting, though, that that's what the boys would say. "Oh, well, maybe he's good at Quidditch and maybe he's really good looking, but he's stupid. You can't have it all."

Lorrie: No. Yeah. Fred... not usually an insecure type of person, but a little bit comes out there.

JC: It's also fascinating to me that Oliver Wood here -- the obsession he has with Quidditch, the way that it's played in this chapter -- I thought it was funny before, but I'm thinking of it differently now because we talked a while back about how the author dislikes sports a lot.

Lorrie: Yeah.

JC: I thought, 'Oh, with that in mind, it's actually kind of mean. It's kind of mean-spirited, poking at the obsession that Oliver has for Quidditch. It felt a little more mean-spirited to me, just thinking... Maybe I'm just not willing to think kindly of the author around some things.

Lorrie: It felt okay to me, because we see the good characters sharing this obsession like McGonagall. Anytime Harry wants to get McGonagall to break a rule, he just has to invoke Quidditch and she says, "Oh, yeah, you're right. For Quidditch, we'll break that rule."

JC: "Yeah, dementors are scary, but also Quidditch."

Lorrie: "Yeah, but Quidditch is more important." But I am not a sports person myself, so maybe there's some sensitivity here that I'm not picking up on. I just thought it was funny but also just accepted. Yes, that's how people are about their sports, and it's just a fact you're never going to change this. Are you ready to go to Defense Against the Dark Arts now?

JC: Ooh, yeah.

Lorrie: Oh, boy. Gear up. So they go, and Lupin's not there; he's got a substitute teacher.

JC: The best part of it, I think for me, is that it's the one time probably Harry has been late to this class ever, and of course that's the day that Snape is the sub.

Lorrie: Yeah.

JC: And the fact that Harry just stands there for a while, like, "This can't be happening. If I walk out and walk back in, then it'd be different." Yeah.

Lorrie: "I refuse to commit to this reality."

JC: Exactly.

Lorrie: And Snape is like, "If I have to tell you one more time to sit down..." So we have this fascinating, torturous scene of Snape being the Defense Against the Dark Arts substitute, the job that he allegedly so craves. How many different ways can readers interpret this whole scene, I wonder, because there's so much going on. We start off with the twisted smile on his face when he explains that Lupin is ill. The 'twisted smile'... Okay, there's something Snape isn't telling us, the students, or the reader. "Snape's black eyes glittered." Okay, is there some Occlumency going on? He says it's "nothing life-threatening." He's not doing anything to tamp down the wondering, but obviously, you can't ask him for any more details. I guess it's sort of shameless, like, "Yes, children, this is a secret, and no, you're not allowed to ask. It affects your life, but ignore that."

JC: "He's not going to die."

Lorrie: Or I guess it's like, "If you think this will get you out of your lesson today, you're very wrong." What do you think of this scene, because I of course have a ton to say about it.

JC: The first time I read this, I completely missed the whole layer of the werewolf stuff (which is I think a big thing there), but it feels so brazen.

Lorrie: Yeah.

JC: On subsequent readings... Damn. He really went there.

Lorrie: Yes, he did.

JC: He was like, "I know that at least one person in this room is smart enough to understand why I flipped to the back of the book." The first time through, it just felt like he was being mean. He can come across like, 'Oh, he's just going to pick something that there's no way anyone knows anything about yet.' It's like skipping to the back of the math book in September. 'Oh, that's mean.'

Lorrie: Yeah.

JC: 'You can't possibly be ready to learn this.' It felt like that at first, but that's brazenly trying... begging someone to figure out what's going on with Lupin.

Lorrie: Oh, gosh.

JC: And it feels... What's the word? He's actively rebelling against Dumbledore here.

Lorrie: Yeah.

JC: Obviously, the teachers have all been sworn to secrecy about what's going on with Lupin, and he's daring a kid to figure it out.

Lorrie: He's just setting an assignment.

JC: But he knows that Hermione will figure it out, I think. I was thinking about the fact that there's a couple of moments in here where he ignores Hermione; you said (a long time ago in this podcast) that whenever Snape ignores Hermione, that's a sign that he's paying attention to her in reality.

Lorrie: Yeah.

JC: I was thinking about that. 'Whoa, he ignored her!'

Lorrie: Yeah.

JC: Again, he wants Hermione to figure it out because... okay, Hermione is close to Harry. Hermione is smart enough to be able to maybe tell Harry and protect Harry from whatever devious things Lupin is doing with Sirius Black. That's the way I read it this time around.

Lorrie: Although, if we can keep Hermione's mouth shut, there might be a chance that at least one other student can pick up on it, but no, she will not shut her mouth. She, of course, is helpfully trying to explain, "We've done boggarts, redcaps, kappas, and grindylows," because Snape is insulting Lupin's teaching, and Hermione is under the impression that they're all there to care about the teaching. "Here, I have helpful hints about the lesson plan." No, that is not

what Snape is after. Then he says, "I would expect first-years to be able to deal with those," and that to me is a hint. It's very buried. I don't know if there's anything to it other than my personal interpretation, but I often wonder: how can Hermione not hate him? Because he's so mean to her, and she just never seems to take it personally. She still shows up to class, she still raises her hand, she still does his assignments. She doesn't hate him. I thought that sentence -- "I would expect first-years to be able to deal with this" -- he is at her pace. She is so good and so patient and doesn't complain, and just sits through every class with all of her peers, going through everything she already knows. She just doesn't show her anger about it usually, but it must be a little refreshing to hear that and say, "Well, yeah, that's what I'd studied when I read ahead as a first-year."

JC: I also read that as Snape acknowledging that they have not had a real Defense Against the Dark Arts teacher.

Lorrie: Oh, yeah. Yeah.

JC: And saying, "If we had a real Defense Against the Dark Arts curriculum in place and good people to teach it, you would have learned this in your first year. You're woefully behind. Sucks to be you!"

Lorrie: Although, if you can get in a jab at Lupin, all the better.

JC: Yeah, for sure.

Lorrie: So yeah, he's trying to ignore Hermione, trying to get the whole class to possibly think about this, and she does not get the hint. He says, really viciously, "That is the second time you've spoken out of term, Miss Granger. Five more points from Gryffindor for being an insufferable know-it-all." That is a really indelible moment; that's one of the teaching moments from Snape that people can't forget. It's the kind of thing where if that happened to you as a middle schooler, you would remember it for decades. She goes completely red. She puts down her hand and she stares at the floor with her eyes full of tears, which I would, too, if I were in her position, because she knows. She has been told her whole life, "Don't do that. People hate it. They're going to yell at you." Does she stop? No. He is telling her, "No, we're not allies." She has been trying to engage with him on the surface level. He's acting like he's trying to teach them something, so she's trying to engage on that level. "It's time to talk about werewolves!" He is not trying to do that. He's trying to get compliance, with his theatrics and his agenda, to get all of them to sit there and let him belittle Lupin: let him insult them, let him run the class however he wants, punish them if they don't sit down or if they don't speak in turn. He's enforcing compliance. Her naive thinking that he wants to talk about the subject matter: no, no, no, that is not what's happening. That's the kind of unfairness that kids hate so much. Now they're defending Hermione, even though under other circumstances they would have agreed with him.

JC: It really stood out to me how the Gryffindors come together to push back against Snape.

Lorrie: Yeah.

JC: At first, it's one or two voices, and then it's all of them. They band together, and they all recognize that he's being mean to multiple people. He's being mean about Lupin, and they really like Lupin because they finally have a Defense Against the Dark Arts teacher. They band together.

Lorrie: Yeah. Also, where do you get off criticizing his teaching when his teaching methods work? When you were talking about how ineffective it is to force children to learn through discipline and punishment, we have just seen Snape say, "What do I have to do to get Neville Longbottom to learn? I'm going to get him to almost kill his toad." Guess what? That so very much does not work. That is not how children learn.

JC: Yes, it's not how children learn.

Lorrie: So here they are, watching him be petulant, enforcing his petty rules and insulting teaching that they have loyalty to... not for any bad reason, but because they felt it working. This is such a loaded scene. Then finally, even Ron loses it and says, "Why ask if you don't want to be told?" which is so very not the point. He doesn't want to be told; there is a genuine agenda underneath this all, which is that he does want people to go and figure it out. But Snape wins, all the kids shut up, and they obediently make notes on werewolves. He does win, and then he goes around and makes snide comments on all their work. He says, "The kappa is more commonly found in Mongolia," which is a really fun Easter egg; if you go to the *Fantastic Beasts and Where to Find Them* book that you can buy, there's a little note in it that says they're found in Japan, and there's Harry's handwriting in his copy of it that says Snape was wrong and he calls Snape a 'git'.

JC: Oh, wow.

Lorrie: Yeah.

JC: That's fun.

Lorrie: Yeah, it is.

JC: Because we trust Newt Scamander on this more than we trust Severus Snape.

Lorrie: Right. Snape read it and was wrong. That feeling that you can have as a kid where the teacher's generally right, but every once in a while you're like, 'No, you're not.' Then he ends with that sentence that is kind of shocking, where he says, "You will each write an essay, to be handed in to me, on the ways you recognize and kill werewolves."

JC: Yes, I wrote down the line, too. I was like, 'Damn.'

Lorrie: "It is time somebody took this class in hand." Is there any other way to get away from an attacking werewolf other than killing them? Is it that he secretly (not secretly) wants Lupin to be killed, or is that something that they need to know? How else can you get away from a werewolf intact?

JC: I don't know.

Lorrie: Right? Because I thought, 'Is that just him being extreme?' I'm not sure it is. You can try to outrun the werewolf; presumably, that won't get you very far.

JC: It's a very strong word. It's not "defend yourself against", or "incapacitate".

Lorrie: Right. "Survive." Yeah. So yeah, on the one hand, wow, Snape. On the other hand, huh. Hmm... Definitely, it's correct that nobody else is bringing up the subject at all, as though there is no reason to be worried about it.

JC: it definitely made me wonder what Lupin was going to do when they got to the chapter on werewolves in the spring.

Lorrie: Yeah.

JC: I really thought, 'What would that be like?'

Lorrie: Right. Yeah. Leaving that very intense session, the kids are saying, "Snape's never been like this with any of our other Defense Against the Dark Arts teachers, even if he did want the job," and I'm thinking, 'Well, it's true.' Quirrell and Lockhart were also very dangerous, but Dumbledore was on the case with the two of them; that's what Snape means when he says, "It's time somebody took this class in hand." He can't stand anymore watching Dumbledore act like there's no risk. He's so worried about the risk that he's using his substitute teaching class to say, "I can't do this, I can't do that, but I can say you children should at least know what a werewolf looks like and what to do if you encounter one."

JC: Is the risk that he's worried about -- that Lupin is a werewolf -- is it outright werewolf prejudice, let's say, or is it that he thinks Lupin is helping Sirius Black get into the castle? Which is the risk that he's worried about there?

Lorrie: What we're going to learn later is that Snape's experience of Lupin and Sirius together is that one of them will chase the quarry into the path of Lupin when transformed. Now, Snape doesn't know that that was against Lupin's will. Why would he know that? Because Sirius and Lupin and the Marauders were all really, really good friends; there was no reason to think that there was dissension between them. For all Snape knows, Lupin was in on it. He doesn't know whose idea it was. We will learn later he does know that James did not think this was a good idea and risked his friendships to go protect Snape (whom he dislikes) and to put himself in harm's way, because you're not safe from a werewolf, even if usually, in human form, the werewolf knows you. That's Snape's experience of the Lupin/Sirius alliance and he has no evidence to counter it, but he does know that when it happened to him, he wasn't allowed to talk about it. So yeah, he is worried because Sirius Black... probably his least favorite person in the world; probably, I think he likes Sirius even less than he liked James.

JC: Yeah, what's on the list of people Snape hates?

Lorrie: Yeah.

JC: Who does he hate more than Harry?

Lorrie: Oh, yeah. Sirius Black is on the run, headed to Hogwarts, and then Dumbledore hires Lupin. Snape can see a problem with this potentially. He may not be right, but he tries to bring it up with Dumbledore and gets shut down. Now the portrait's been slashed. Meanwhile, Lupin's taken ill and he's got this class, so he does what he can; he is so incredibly unpleasant about it that it provides excellent cover within this novel's mystery, so it's extraordinarily hard to see what his intention is other than being a complete jerk. Certainly, the people he suspects have their own good agendas that he is ignoring, so in my reading, this all comes down to a rift between Snape and Dumbledore. Yeah, he's being mutinous, and the big thing in this chapter hasn't even happened yet. Oh, my God!

JC: One thing I find humorous at the end of this scene, though, is that poor Ron gets the brunt of it for once instead of Harry at the end and he's got detention. The bit where he comes out...

it's the first instance, I think, in this series of the author handling the kids swearing in a really fun and clever way.

Lorrie: Yeah, yeah.

JC: This continues on, but I think this is the first instance that I'm aware of. Peeves has sworn and it's rude words, but I love the way that this is handled and it's very clear. A couple of things come to mind what Ron could have said; it's left to the imagination, which is almost more fun than if the words had actually been there, so yeah.

Lorrie: But it's so good saying, "Of course, children this age swear, and we're not going to get into the silly debate about whether an author for this age group is allowed to put those words in or not. Sidestep that debate altogether."

JC: Yeah, and the kids know. The kids can imagine what words it was, the kids who are reading it. Yeah.

Lorrie: Right. Whatever is going on, if the author put in the actual word, the middle school readers would not be learning this word for the first time from this author.

JC: Exactly. That's the point.

Lorrie: So any banning going on is absurd. Yeah, that's beautifully handled, that he says something that makes Hermione reprimand him. Yeah, then there is a Quidditch game where you know that dementors are coming, because the weather is terrible, just like it was on the Hogwarts Express when there was a dementor attack coming.

JC: And everything is just miserable. I think, too, that whole day starts off with Peeves waking Harry up at four in the morning.

Lorrie: Right.

JC: Oh, my God. How... Are the... I didn't know that...

Lorrie: Yeah. Peeves is allowed?

JC: The idea that Peeves can just do that, right. It's like, really?!

Lorrie: Oh, God, gross. Yeah.

JC: Ugh... Yeah, that was really like, 'Nooooo!' It also parallels that idea of when you've got a big day and you're super anxious about it and you're worried, and then you wake up and you can't go back to sleep. It's exactly that.

Lorrie: Yeah, when you were desperate to sleep. Yeah, no chance. So yeah, the weather is terrible; they can't even see because it's raining so hard. Hermione has a beaming moment I love. Hermione does that and Dumbledore does that, too: no matter how dire their circumstances are, if they get a brain wave, they beam. I find this lovable. She does 'Impervius' on Harry's glasses so he can at least see in all of the rain. Then we have that moment where poor Harry is trying and trying to not give in to seeing the black dog as an omen of death, but there we have it again: there's lightning, and then he sees "the silhouette of an enormous, shaggy black dog, clearly imprinted against the sky, motionless in the topmost, empty row of seats," and then the next time he looks the dog is gone. Is Harry seeing things? Is he about to

die? He's been trying to say, "No, I can keep an open mind. This could mean a lot of things," but oh, that's scary. And the lightning... The fact that it's lightning, jeez.

JC: The fact that there's lightning... No. I guess when the lightning happens, they do pause the game, right?

Lorrie: I think so.

JC: Yeah, they pause it long enough for the lightning to pass. Okay, that's at least something sane about this ridiculous game. Yeah.

Lorrie: And then there is the gathering of at least a hundred dementors. This is such overkill; you don't need a hundred dementors. It's not necessary. The dementors are doing this; they can't help themselves.

JC: Right.

Lorrie: They sense some trouble, and it's gotten them excited and they've lost control. Yeah, after the riots of 2020, I remember watching the police response to the non-violent protesters in Seattle night after night.

JC: Oh, wow. There's also this specter of... Okay, so why a hundred? Why? Why that many?

Lorrie: At least, yeah.

JC: Wouldn't two or three have been enough?

Lorrie: Yeah.

JC: Right? Okay. It was complete overkill that the Ministry has that many dementors stationed there, but also there's this thought of, 'Well, can the ministry actually control how many dementors show up?'

Lorrie: Exactly.

JC: And you're going to station them around a school, and they feed on happiness. Children have probably an excess of happiness in the world. If you're going to have a group of kids together, you're going to have laughter and joy and shrieking. It's feeding time for these dementors. It's icky on so many levels, that these are probably their favorite victims.

Lorrie: Are they all from the Ministry?

JC: Right, right.

Lorrie: Are some of them off duty and just came here for the party?

JC: Right, yeah.

Lorrie: How many did the Ministry actually hire, and did they know that it was going to be a gathering of a hundred? I don't think they did. The last really chilling aspect of this for me is that the global conversation about fatal racism that was happening at the time is exactly what was going on when J.K. Rowling issued her gender manifesto and kicked off TERFpocalypse in earnest. The succinct response that I recall on Twitter (which was at the time called Twitter) to this was, "Not now, J.K.R." I don't know to what extent this was a response to feeling

uncomfortable with the race dialog, but the timing had the effect of diverting attention away from a contemporary, very much current global race issue to an issue that wasn't even in the news at the moment but could divert outrage because -- just as we saw Lupin doing with the Boggart in the Wardrobe -- you can depend on certain prejudices to get people riled up and to divert attention.

JC: Yeah. It's a very common behavior in white women to divert attention to themselves, or to make it about themselves in this situation. That was such an example of white women behavior to me. I remember at the time thinking, 'Wow, this is textbook.'

Lorrie: Right. And unlike the murder of George Floyd -- which was the piece of evidence that people couldn't deny seeing that really kicked Black Lives Matter protests into gear following months of pandemic, in which it was really obvious which populations were most affected by a global pandemic -- unlike that, entering gender critical concerns into the international dialogue wasn't triggered by any contemporary issue; it just sort of happened. The response that I really resonated with, that just wasn't going to be having any of this bullshit, came from Katie Leung, who is the Scottish-Chinese actress who played Cho Chang in the movies. She did a clickbait that was so funny and clever, and very angry. So here's this woman of color who said, "All right, you want to know, for real, my opinions on the character of Cho Chang? Click here." You would go because, of course, she's been pestered about this forever, and she had a whole thread of nothing but links to giving funds to Black trans people's fundraisers. She connected race, transphobia, and individual people's rights as a direct refutation.

JC: Beautiful.

Lorrie: Yeah. Was that really what was going on? We're not going to actually waste time debating on how intentional that was; the fact is that was the effect, at least, if you were somebody who was going to be affected by it. So yeah, here we have the hundred dementors sensing trouble; they affect everybody there, but Harry is on a broom in a Quidditch game in a rainstorm, and he hears something in his head: "Someone was screaming... screaming inside his head... a woman... 'Not Harry, not Harry, please not Harry!' 'Stand aside, you silly girl... stand aside, now....' 'Not Harry, please no, take me, kill me instead --' Numbing, swirling white mist was filling Harry's brain.... What was he doing? Why was he flying? He needed to help her.... She was going to die.... She was going to be murdered.... He was falling, falling through the icy mist. 'Not Harry! Please... have mercy... have mercy....'" So that's the thing that happens in flashbacks. The thing that you're remembering... it's happening in real time in your brain, because it's more urgent to you than the actual present that you're in; it overtakes that and your body reacts as though it were real. If your memory is that you're fighting for your life, then your body reacts as though you're fighting for your life and then you are exhausted. What we're seeing here in this memory is the origin of Harry's 'saving people thing'; this is what Voldemort did to him to change him from being a baby to somebody who is scarred for life. This is unbearably pathetic. This tiny baby felt he had to help his mother, and from now on that's Harry's nature that Voldemort did to him with the scar. And yet, Harry having this flashback... it's also restoring some of his own story and his own mother to him -- which makes it so conflicted and so bittersweet -- and the poor kid passes out.

JC: Yeah, it's really powerful. Even as the first time I read it years ago, it was obvious what was happening, what he was remembering.

Lorrie: Yeah.

JC: So it's interesting that the reader knows before Harry does what he's hearing, and you're getting a bit of his story that maybe he's still processing.

Lorrie: Yeah, and hadn't been able to access because he had been so young.

JC: Yeah. I also really like your point that this is the origin of his 'saving people thing.' Before I had a child, I think I would have been like, 'A baby?' I don't know if I would have understood it, but having had a child, I understand. I have this memory of my kiddo... I don't even know if he was walking yet. He was probably baby Harry's age, the age Harry was; there was this incredible hailstorm, and it was so bad that it damaged the roofs of everybody in town and everybody got a new roof that year. But it was coming down so hard, it was loud; it was banging against the windows and smashing up the deck. I walked over to the back door and I thought, 'I'm just going to reach out and grab one of these giant hailstones, because I want to actually hold it in my hand.' I opened the door and I half stepped out, and my one-and-a-half year old baby started screaming and ran to me and grabbed me, like, "No, mama, no! I am saving you from yourself right now."

Lorrie: "You're going to get hurt," yeah.

JC: And I didn't associate that at the time with a Harry Potter thing, but later on, it made sense to me that of course, at that age, a child is going to feel protective of the people that they love, even though he doesn't know he's a baby and that he can't really help. But damned if he's going to try, right? Yeah.

Lorrie: Yeah. The distress is real. Also, by that age, they have experience of being comforted or being protected, and they will use those behaviors on adults. If they feel like you need to be comforted or protected, they will do the things that you've been doing for them, and it's very humbling.

JC: For sure.

Lorrie: Even animals will do this; when you learn that the reason cats hate it when you take a shower, it's because they're convinced you're going to drown.

JC: Yeah.

Lorrie: It's really sobering to know how early and how intense these feelings are in an infant. There's really no such thing as an infant too young to know and feel. Poor Harry has this incredibly terrible flashback that he did not know was one of his memories, and wakes up in the hospital wing and -- love this -- his first thought is for the first time ever, he had lost a Quidditch match. I love that! His team is there, and they say, "Don't beat yourself up, Harry, you're still the best Seeker we've ever had," which is true. That is an excellent point.

JC: And they start doing the math of how they might still win, yeah.

Lorrie: Right, and that's a really good grounding technique. He's adorably being a bit of a perfectionist about Quidditch here, and that is such a good lesson to me: Harry Potter cannot lose Quidditch based on skill, but trauma will hold him back. You can be your full self; trauma, you have to factor that in. For Harry Potter, Quidditch player, they're going to have to acknowledge this and accommodate for this. When you have a player, he's still, by far, obviously the best choice to be Seeker, and you can't say, "Harry, you have to play up to your athletic potential." You have to say, "Harry, you're a whole person. Trauma is one of the things

that we're going to work around." By the end of this volume, it'll turn out that he is not the only character who has to deal with incapacitating trauma, and yeah, you really do have to accommodate for it; if you don't, if you think that you can ignore that, you will be so very wrong. JC, you have mentioned a number of times the phrase 'trauma-informed teaching'. What is that, because that's not a phrase that I had ever heard until you'd brought it up.

JC: Oh, okay. Well, it's going to sound very familiar to you, to be honest. When I describe it, you're going to go, "Oh, I know exactly what this is and I understand it." Trauma-informed instruction is essentially a mindset about how to work with children who have experienced trauma. So, I guess, first to define trauma: the CDC defines trauma as adverse childhood events, and that includes abuse (emotional/physical/sexual abuse), it includes neglect (physical or emotional neglect), and third category is household challenges (a parent who has substance abuse, a parent experiencing domestic abuse, mental illness, a parent who's incarcerated, living in poverty), things like that. The CDC estimates that two-thirds of children will experience something traumatic during their childhood; one in five kids will experience three or more instances of this, and that's when you start getting into trauma having a mental health effect on kids. If you're growing up and your parents split up, okay, yes, that's traumatic, but that's probably not going to be the thing that affects you in school. But if it's just one of five things, then it's going to be a big impact. There's also growing up in poverty; there's a lot of trauma around that, and then there's also the category of racial trauma (the experience of growing up in white supremacy and either experiencing racism firsthand or seeing other people experiencing it, or the constant beating down of microaggressions and things like that). There's a lot of trauma around that, too. Okay, that's what the definition of trauma is, and kids come to school with varying levels of this. It affects kids and their learning in a lot of ways; the list of the ways that it affects kids in schools are things like kids have difficulty self-regulating. They don't necessarily trust adults, particularly adults that remind them of the adults who have abused them in the past.

Lorrie: Oh, poor Harry.

JC: They tend to have that Fight/Freeze/Flight reaction in situations where it seems disproportionate to what's actually happening, and they act out in ways that feel, to adults in charge, antagonistic. They're defiant, they're overly defensive, they're constantly expecting criticism, they're under stress from being on high alert.

Lorrie: Ouch.

JC: The impact of stress on the brain, particularly in developing brains, is well documented, so there's a lot of ways that kids who are traumatized act in classrooms that look, from the outside, like kids are just misbehaving and need to be...

Lorrie: Like naughtiness.

JC: Right, and need to be controlled.

Lorrie: It needs to be beaten out of them.

JC: Right, so the traditional perspective is that teachers should be in control in their classrooms and that they should be able to make the kids sit down and shut up and learn. That's your very traditional, Puritan perspective on teaching. In contrast, trauma-informed teaching is having a mindset of understanding that behavior is communication; when students are acting in ways that

they understand are outside the norm of what's expected in a classroom, they are communicating to you that they are in trouble, that they have a need, that they are in distress. As the adult, your job is to help them with that distress; rather than punishing them or trying to force them to behave in a way that they are unable to, the idea is to actually support them and to take that child aside and try to figure out, "Okay, what can we do to help you here? You're clearly distressed." It's that idea. Instead of seeing kids acting out as being troublemakers and they need to be whatever -- they need to be punished, they need the police officer to come in and scare them, whatever -- we are thinking of them as human beings. We're focusing on the relationships we have, and we're focusing on who they are and separating that from their behavior. There are lots of strategies that teachers can use here. When we talk about social-emotional learning -- SEL, as it's known -- this is the big thrust of it: to help kids learn how to navigate their own emotions, especially when you've got kids who have experienced trauma, to help them know what to do. Instead of acting out in these ways, to learn how to regulate themselves better and to say, "I need a moment. I need to have control over that," to learn how to have control. That's what a lot of SEL is, and unfortunately and ironically enough, right-wing parent groups who oppose SEL oppose it mostly on the grounds that they think it's about gender somehow. One of the things that I keep seeing is that a lot of right-wing parents are associating SEL with teaching kids about gender identity. There are plenty of school districts where the attempt is to ban SEL and ban trauma-informed teaching strategies because they think it's going to make kids trans, so there's a connection here to the J.K.R. stuff that's really kind of terrifying. But what SEL is is giving kids the tools that they need to self-regulate in stressful environments, to help them recognize how to handle trauma that they may have experienced, helping them recognize that other kids might be struggling. What do you do when your friend is behaving in this way? When your friend is hurting themselves, how do you support your friend? It's all about helping people, I think that's what it comes down to. As the adult, your role in the classroom is to de-escalate situations, and there's lots of strategies that teachers can use. It's a lot of being mindful, but overall being trauma-informed is changing your perspective from "As a teacher, my job is to control these children" to "As a teacher, my job is to help these children grow into healthy human beings." That's the upshot of it. Another thing I want to mention about trauma: there's a growing body of evidence that kids who have experienced trauma... there's an overlap. The Venn diagram of kids who have experienced trauma and kids who have ADHD, there's an overlap; there are a lot of symptoms of things that are often thought of as traditional ADHD symptoms that are actually a result of trauma, so it's something to explore. If we think about who is then diagnosed with ADHD, often there's an overlap there, so it's something to explore. Of course, they need accommodations of some kind, but perhaps what they actually would benefit from is some mental health support. Let's try that, too, in addition to other kinds of things that we would do for children with ADHD. I tried to keep it short.

Lorrie: Yeah, no. It's heavy and there's so much kindness in it, and it all makes me think about why somebody might be afraid to allow SEL or trauma-informed teaching: maybe they're trying to protect something that they're nervous about. I'm going back to the scene in the Great Hall with the squashy purple sleeping bags, when Snape is trying to bring his concerns to Dumbledore: Snape is acting out and saying, "I'm uncomfortable with this," and instead of dealing with something that they have a history with, Dumbledore shuts him down and he's warning him; it's a bit of discipline. Snape has been uneasy and he's had trouble in his classroom already from his own behavior due to his suspicions about Lupin; now that he's tried to bring it to Dumbledore's attention and been rebuffed, then he goes into the Defense Against

the Dark Arts classroom and he gives this 'acting out,' somewhat hostile-seeming assignment. But is there trauma there?

JC: Well, Snape definitely has some trauma in his life, let's be real. It is interesting to put a trauma lens on a lot of these characters. I'm not an expert -- I'm not claiming to be an expert in this at all; I have no background in psychology outside of what we need to know for education -- but it is an interesting idea to think about how these characters, how their trauma, is impacting how they're making choices and how they're behaving, and how they're thinking about the world. Snape is such an interesting case, too, because he's a terrible teacher. We've established that. But when I look at the way that he has worked with Neville, for example... Neville is a great example of a kid who I think... Neville has a lot of trauma. Neville's the kid who's in that category where I'm thinking, 'What's going on with him?' This is a kid you might think, okay, this is your classic kid with ADHD. He's always forgetful, he's awkward, all these things.

Lorrie: But it's obviously more than that.

JC: Yeah, and that's the stuff that Neville is in the middle of the Venn diagram between ADHD and trauma. I'm like, okay, Neville in particular is a kid who really needs some support. Neville needs the SEL stuff. Neville needs some tools to help him. He does make progress through the years, but the way that Snape treats Neville is exactly the wrong way. It's triggering Neville left and right. It's just awful.

Lorrie: Yeah, but I'm thinking also that Snape is embarrassed by Neville, because Neville is showing the trauma in a way that Snape is afraid of. Obviously, Snape, having come to school already with some trauma, he had his defenses, and Neville is totally not living by those defenses; that's a kind of personal animosity that people feel when your own defenses are being laid out like that.

JC: Yeah.

Lorrie: You're going to pick on the person who reminds you of yourself, and what you're most embarrassed about with yourself.

JC: Right, and there's a little bit of... not a little bit. There's disdain for someone who can't do it the same way you did, and God, we see that a lot. Yeah.

Lorrie: Yeah. It's a frantic kind of projection.

JC: "Why can't you just suck it up? I did." That kind of... ugh.

Lorrie: Yeah. The way that people say you're beating yourself up... this is the externalization. No, he's beating up on this kid who is reminding him of that. But yeah, my takeaway rereading it -- on multiple rereadings of this chapter -- is that the originating dynamic is an old trauma between Snape and Dumbledore. Dumbledore -- I think, in my reading of it -- his neglect of Snape in the old trauma (back when they were students) stems from his overwhelming concern for Lupin to the point that he's not paying full attention, and this is coming back to have really negative effects a generation later. It's not necessarily bad or coming from a bad place, but just like when Dumbledore switched the House Cup from Slytherin to Gryffindor and did it in a really taunting way, that had really negative effects that Dumbledore (if he had thought about it) would

not have wanted them. I'm not saying this to pick on Dumbledore, at all. It's more like I think that's how people are.

JC: Yeah.

Lorrie: I do not think that anyone could have done so much better than Dumbledore did. The overcompensation that I see from him when he's concerned, for example, with Harry in first year or Lupin as a student: "Protect this person. This person needs protection." No matter how good of a person you are and how thorough you are, that may leave somebody else unprotected; that is the burden of being a god, a teacher, or a parent, somebody who is charged with the protection of somebody who needs you. The humanity in you will lead you to make really bad mistakes. It's also the thing that will be responsible for any good that you do. Anyway, you can't not because humans love.

JC: Yeah.

Lorrie: You can't not hurt and you can't not help. Again, in the middle of this, we have the image of 15-month-old Harry wanting to help his mom. This is, I believe, a major reason why the Harry Potter series became the globally successful phenomenon that it has, because this is something that happens to humans. This is our nature; we care. We care and we're imperfect and we hurt each other, and then we have to deal with it and then we feel quite sorry about it later. Our feelings are hurt; we keep trying anyway. It can be incredibly sad. Sad things can happen to the least deserving, the youngest, the most helpless. It's a beautiful story, in my opinion, and I am not willing to cancel it. I don't think it's very common. We don't, in every generation, get a story that's so compelling that it has this kind of global reach, and I think chapters like this one that tell this kind of truth and this kind of complexity and imperfection and lack of understanding... All these characters do not understand each other; they're not ever going to understand each other. Only the reader is going to see it all, but that's life and we have to go on and live it together in this world anyway. I think that's what makes this story so embraced and such an important tool for humans to know together and to use this conversation with each other, and the fact that we are now going on year four of TERFpocalypse is part of it. But yeah, it's an amazing achievement, this chapter, I think, and very tiring, because trauma is tiring.

JC: Oh, and just the description of that Quidditch match... Oh, it sounds miserable. Five minutes in, Harry was wet and cold, and I'm like, 'This is misery.' Oh, ugh... And then he couldn't see, and he was never going to catch the Snitch. He was going to be cold and wet forever, and weirdly it was almost a relief when the dementors came in and ended the game.

Lorrie: I know. It wasn't going anywhere.

JC: Oh, it wasn't going anywhere anyway.

Lorrie: And then that beautiful touching detail that Cedric was trying to get the match canceled because it wasn't fair. Cedric caught it and then realized what happened and wasn't going to have it; the rules of the game overrode him, but that was so touching. The goodness in Cedric was so touching.

JC: Yeah, and that tells us something about this character, who we're going to get to know a lot better.

Lorrie: Also, what's genuinely in people, like the class full of Gryffindors telling Snape, "You can't assign us page 394. It's not fair. You're treating us unfairly. You're treating our least favorite classmate unfairly." People want fairness in a way that's super touching. I also love how touching the ending of the chapter is, when Harry is heartbroken to see what remains of his Nimbus 2000: that it's just splinters, and it's his "faithful, finally beaten broomstick". The characterization of that is very touching. And what beat his broomstick? It wasn't a Quidditch opponent; it was the tree that had been planted to try to provide protection for another student's accommodations. We're all just trying our best over here.

JC: Yeah, that's true. There's also a mention at the end of Dumbledore casting a Patronus from Hermione's perspective, but I completely missed that on other readings. I've never noticed that before, and I was like, 'There it is, and here it comes.' Yeah.

Lorrie: Yeah.

JC: Very cool.

Lorrie: So our next chapter is The Marauder's Map.

JC: Oh, my gosh, we're going to meet the Marauders. That's going to be fun. We need something uplifting after the Grim Defeat, for sure.

Lorrie: It's going to be more intensity.

JC: Yes.

Lorrie: So, I will talk to you then.

JC: All right!

Caroline: 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.