



## Transcript

### Episode 4.25

#### Book 4, Chapter 25: The Egg and the Eye

**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 Four, Chapter 25: The Egg and the Eye.

**Lorrie:** The Egg and the Eye. Harry goes to the prefect's bathroom and figures out the golden egg clue with Moaning Myrtle's help. On his way back under his Invisibility Cloak, he gets trapped in a standoff between three scary specimens of British manhood: Filch, Snape, and Mad-Eye Moody. Haha! JC, this chapter has so much for both of us: world-building and tons of character intrigue, and the common room password even sounds delicious -- banana fritters! I love bananas. Did you have a good time reading this chapter?

**JC:** Yeah, yeah. It's also interesting that it opens up with the reminder that Harry has both the Invisibility Cloak and the Marauder's Map, and it hit me that wow, this is some kind of fantasy wish fulfillment for teenagers. "What superpowers would you like to have?" "Oh, I'd like to have the ability to be invisible. I'd like to have the ability to know what other people are up to."

**Lorrie:** Yeah.

**JC:** Harry has both of these freaking superpowers, but it's also interesting that that's not enough to keep him out of trouble.

**Lorrie:** No.

**JC:** Right? He's got these superpowers; it's still not enough, but there is this wish fulfillment piece there. If you're a teenager and you're in this situation, what do you wish

you could do? I wish I could be invisible and snoop on people. I wish I could sneak around. I wish...

**Lorrie:** I wish I could go get the things that I need without anyone stopping me.

**JC:** Speaking of people stopping you, it was also interesting to me that he snuck out of the common room... That he and Ron had staged this thing where Ron would say the password and come in and then Harry would sneak out at the same time under the Invisibility Cloak, and it hadn't really occurred to me that that's a function of the portraits -- to be a bit of a guard -- so if some student goes out after hours, then the portrait can tell whoever and can report on it. I thought, 'Whoa!' I don't think it ever occurred to me that that's a function of the portrait guarding the Gryffindor common room.

**Lorrie:** Yeah, well, that's what Sir Cadogan gets in trouble for when McGonagall says, "Did the intruder have a password?" and Sir Cadogan says, "He had all of them. He read them off a list."

**JC:** Yeah.

**Lorrie:** Oh yes, that's a hole in the security, isn't it?

**JC:** So Harry goes and he sneaks up and he finds where he's going to the prefect's bathroom, and then he hits the statue of Boris the Bewildered, which I was like, 'Who is this? Why is there a statue of this guy?' I did a little bit of Googling and from what I can tell, no one knows; there's no story. Even the character himself is standing there, bewildered that he has a statue of himself. What did he do? To be in a painting is maybe not a big deal, but to have a statue of you at Hogwarts...

**Lorrie:** A whole statue, yeah.

**JC:** What did he do? Why is he there? Even he is bewildered. it's just like... I don't know. I don't know! I looked, and I didn't find anything. Do you know anything about Boris the Bewildered?

**Lorrie:** Not only do I not know, it's never even occurred to me to look.

**JC:** There we go with the world-building, yeah. Starts with a random guy looking bewildered that he's there at all, and he's the direction marker for the prefect's bathroom here.

**Lorrie:** Right, and also obviously a prompt for many a fanfic should you desire to go in that direction.

**JC:** Ah, for sure, for sure.

**Lorrie:** Speaking of which: the prefect's bathroom!

**JC:** The prefect's bathroom. I remember reading this for the first time and just being like, 'What? What the hell?' It's this bizarre, over the top... If you've ever been able to go into the penthouse hotel room in a really fancy hotel -- which I have been able to do a few times in my life -- you walk around, and the opulence and the stupidity of it... It's like, 'This is a freaking hotel room. Who needs five bedrooms? No one needs this. This is ridiculous!' That's what I felt like watching Harry -- I remember the first time I read this going into this and being like, 'Why is there an indoor swimming pool at Hogwarts?' Okay, yeah, you can think, 'Okay, maybe they have a swim team or whatever,' but it's this bathroom apparently. It's a giant bathtub with a diving board and all these different foam things and it fills up quickly. There's all this magic around it... What usually happens in this bathroom? It's clearly not meant for one person to use at a time. What goes on in this bathroom?

**Lorrie:** Well, I think of it as the iconic prefect's bathroom, site of countless fanfics.

**JC:** Well, sure, yeah. That's where people's minds go, absolutely.

**Lorrie:** I also think that it was an opportunity for people who can do magic to just have fun with it.

**JC:** All the taps!

**Lorrie:** Oh, hey, what would you do if you could do magic? Well, why not just have a hundred golden taps set with jewels and every kind of bubble bath you can think of, and the chandelier, the wet marble... Even if you had a swim team, you wouldn't be using this pool because it's a hot water pool.

**JC:** Yeah. It's like a hot tub.

**Lorrie:** My response to this was just wonder and glee, and also thinking, 'If this is the prefect's bathroom, what do the head boys' and head girls' bathrooms look like, and what does the faculty bathroom look like?'

**JC:** Right. 'Is there a staff bathroom that's...' Yeah.

**Lorrie:** Yeah. And I just thought, 'Okay, it's just that I'm more into world-building when it's things like spas or candy shops.' That's when I get super excited.

**JC:** There you go.

**Lorrie:** So yeah, I'm thrilled with this. Ahh... Actually, I guess this is my answer for when people say, "If you could go to Hogwarts would you want to?" Usually, I just stare at people. "No. Why would you? The whole castle's out to kill you." But I guess if I could spend my whole time in the prefect's bathroom, I would be a yes.

**JC:** Yeah. It's just so over the top, but I do love the little detail that it fills up surprisingly quickly.

**Lorrie:** Yeah.

**JC:** Because I have, in my house, one of those big giant garden tub things. When we first moved here, I was so excited to take baths in that; now I haven't taken a bath in that in a decade. I think the last person who took a bath in that was my child when he was a toddler -- it's been a while -- but part of it is it takes so long to fill it up and it's so much water, and it just feels like a waste. We now have a hot water heater that's tankless, but when we had a tank hot water heater when we first moved here, you couldn't fill it up. It would have run out of hot water, so I would have to get a tea kettle -- an electric kettle -- and then I would fill it up until the hot water would run out, and then we'd fill up with cold and then I would just boil water and pour it in until it got to the right temperature. Taking a bath in it was just not worth the effort, really, so this is making me think, okay, so there's magic...

**Lorrie:** It's all magic.

**JC:** Involved in keeping the water hot, heating it properly in the first place, making it fill up quickly... The whole thing just sounds like one of those ridiculous, over-the-top... And that's what it is, right? It's a ridiculous, over-the-top luxury that is just making Harry go, 'Wow!'

**Lorrie:** Wow. Wow, it's like magic.

**JC:** It's like magic, complete with a portrait of the mermaid who is asleep and who is our first lovely hint. Well, not our first, honestly, but it is a big hint for this scene.

**Lorrie:** Yes. We get Moaning Myrtle.

**JC:** Moaning Myrtle, who travels all around. I love that he's mortified that she's maybe seen him naked, and he asked her, "Do you come to the bathroom to watch the prefects take baths?" and she says, "Sometimes." No shame; just "Yeah."

**Lorrie:** Well, but then she says slyly, "You're the first one I've spoken to." It's so 14-year-old. He cannot date Cho Chang, but he's the heartthrob for this ghost.

**JC:** Little ghost girl who died fifty years ago.

**Lorrie:** With acne.

**JC:** Yeah.

**Lorrie:** It's that something? Sort of. What I love... It was pointed out to me that Moaning Myrtle is a 'Two/Four/Six' character. What does that mean? She appears in Book Two, Book Four, and Book Six. This is according to the ring composition theory of chiasmic structure. There's a whole school of fandom thought devoted to investigating the ways that this author uses ring composition to build her themes around, so everything in this series revolves around the center; then there's symmetry, so things that appear in Book

One appear again in Book Seven. Things that appear at the beginning of each volume appear again at the end of each volume; plots mirror each other around the center of each book and also around the center of the series. This is something that I don't find that Rowling is rigid about. Lots of points don't adhere to this, but it's definitely the structural framework that she uses and she often comes back to, and it's a lot of fun for people to explore. There was a whole podcast, the *Full Circle* series that MuggleNet's *Alohomora* put out with John Granger and Kat Miller, that was devoted to just luxuriating in the fun of deep dives into how this series uses ring structure. So yeah, according to ring structure, here's Moaning Myrtle in the middle book and she appears again in Two and Six.

**JC:** Is there significance to being in Two, Four and Six, then?

**Lorrie:** Just that it's symmetrical.

**JC:** Ah, uh-huh.

**Lorrie:** And if you are going to be plotting out a giant saga full of hundreds and hundreds of characters, you'd think, 'Oh, why don't I just have fun. Wouldn't it be amusing to put this character here at the beginning and then here at the middle and then here at the end?' This happens with such regularity in this series that clearly it was planned, and it was a fun game and a way to organize something that has a cast of hundreds and to organize themes.

**JC:** Interesting.

**Lorrie:** So yeah, it's not something that really interests me a lot, but the amount of fun that I see people having with it is my thing.

**JC:** I don't know anything about this. Are there characters who are One/Three/Five/Seven, or is it just noticing where people pop up and noticing the symmetry of it? Or is there a difference between characters who appeared here, characters who appear here? Is there any of that?

**Lorrie:** Well, there's a One/Four/Seven character who is Ollivander. We only see Ollivander in this book, when Harry first gets his wand, and then when he pops back up in *Deathly Hallows* to explain wandlore, so there's that symmetry. There's a lot of symmetry between books Two and Six, because they're about the power of books from the past and what kind of influence they exert over the present. It goes on and on, like I said. It's not my specialty, but anybody who wants can go down that rabbit hole and not come up for a very long time.

**JC:** Interesting. Okay, changing the subject completely: there's another mention here: Myrtle asks Harry, "Why haven't you come to see me?" and Harry says, "Well, because I'm not supposed to go in the girls' bathroom." There's that again, and it reminded me

that that reads differently to me now than it ever did, but every time it pops up, I'm like, "That's right."

**Lorrie:** Yeah, again. Myrtle says, "You didn't use to care." Right? It used to not be an issue. Well, this bathroom is all gender. Maybe this is where all the non-binary Hogwarts students go to be safe.

**JC:** Mmm. Oh, that's interesting.

**Lorrie:** Yeah. If Cedric is giving out the password, I can imagine him giving out the password to people who have gender misery around Hogwarts' bathroom policing.

**JC:** Interesting, yeah.

**Lorrie:** Myrtle coming out of the woodwork to help Harry with this insurmountable challenge... That also reminded me of *Beauty and the Beast* or Cupid and Psyche, where there's a protagonist who has some problem that there's no way to figure out and then these normally invisible or inarticulate beings materialize to help the worthy protagonist. Lucky for Harry... Oh, the symbolism of the golden egg is just so beautiful to me. This is the promise of life within, other worlds within, other languages and songs; it's golden, so it's a treasure, and it calls back to other eggs and spheres in the series, like the ones that contain Harry's Hogwarts letters (which feel so magical to me) and the Golden Snitch and the prophecies that are in orbs. The golden egg featured in this chapter tells us we are in the genres of fantasy and folklore and myth.

**JC:** I had not made the connection back to the Golden Snitch, which also can hold secrets.

**Lorrie:** Yep, yeah. Well, eggs do hatch -- they do contain life -- but if it's golden, then okay, obviously something really important is in there.

**JC:** Yeah, that's interesting.

**Lorrie:** This one's really big and really loud.

**JC:** I love that he opens it again, and he's trying so hard not to get caught. I don't know if this room is soundproof, but you would think that this egg screaming and echoing around is going to catch somebody's attention. But then Myrtle says, "You should put it under the water." I remember reading through this for the first time and also being clueless. How was going to this bath going to help, right?

**Lorrie:** Right. 'What is this... No.'

**JC:** It would not have been obvious to me either to just stick it under the water, so Harry needed that hint.

**Lorrie:** Yeah. No, it wasn't obvious to me either, but then once she says it, it's like, 'Oh, yeah, right.' So he does and we get the song, and the ending of the mer song is: "Past

an hour - the prospect's black, too late, it's gone, it won't come back." It's about how something is really important to you but it's been taken away, and now there's anxiety, there's mortal peril involved; there's a literal deadline. Great. This is exactly the kind of thing that I would hate. This is how it feels to be a parent or some other responsible adult that's looking out for the welfare or the lives of other people. The life-or-death stakes, the tension... Ugh! This is what's so exhausting.

**JC:** Oh, that's interesting, because all I was thinking about... We just wrapped up final exams where I am, and it was more the fact that there's a deadline that I have to give students. "This is the date. Your late work is due by this date and this time, and then it's too late."

**Lorrie:** Yeah.

**JC:** And it never fails that I'm in the process of typing my grades in and I get an email with someone saying, "But can I still turn this in?" It's out of my hands. It's too late. I don't know, my mind just went right to the final exams.

**Lorrie:** Yeah, and that's the feeling that this is evoking. Okay, it's "something that you'll sorely miss." Whatever's been taken for me that you have this hard deadline about is something that you're always anxious or attached to, which I guess your students are about to find out just how attached they are and how negotiation is not an option here.

**JC:** Yeah.

**Lorrie:** And how it feels if they bet wrong on it.

**JC:** Yeah.

**Lorrie:** Oh, there's a play on words here when Myrtle is so happy to be full of knowledge to impart to Harry. "He had never seen Moaning Myrtle so cheerful..." I thought, 'Oh, that's a play on words. She's in her element. Ha!' Okay, this is the water task; she's in water and flirtation, but then she's also super bitter and competitive because the mermaid is so seductive (and Myrtle, not seductive). She says that the mermaid's been giggling and showing off and flashing her fins... The mermaid doesn't even exist; she's made out of stained glass. But wow, competing about looks and beauty really is not easy, especially if you're dead or not real.

**JC:** Yeah. I guess if you're a ghost, you might as well be competing with a portrait. Yeah, Myrtle has about as much chance with Harry as the portrait of the mermaid does. I really find this whole sequence interesting: we hear the mermaid song, and Myrtle says a couple times through here, "Wow, Harry, you figured that out so much faster than Cedric did." Going back to this thing about... We talked about how Cedric's good-looking and he can't possibly be smart, and he's just a pretty boy with nothing in his head, but it seems to be really true that Cedric did not figure this clue out as quickly as Harry just

did, and Harry even needed a lot of help. The moment where Myrtle notes that almost all the bubbles were gone by the time Cedric figured it out is also funny to me.

**Lorrie:** Borderline harassment from this voyeuristic ghost.

**JC:** Exactly.

**Lorrie:** I liked the point that Harry isn't a good swimmer because he didn't have the privilege of swimming lessons.

**JC:** Yes. I was thinking about that, too.

**Lorrie:** Yeah.

**JC:** Because especially -- I'm not sure if it's the same in England, but certainly in the last, let's say, sixty or seventy years, if you were a kid who lived in the suburbs or if you were in a city, swimming was one hundred percent... Learning to swim was a privilege. You had to take lessons and it was a big deal, right? Kids who lived way out in the country, if they had access to a creek or swimming hole or something, they might have learned to swim, but it's not the same as learning to swim in a pool. That's very different.

**Lorrie:** Doing laps, yeah.

**JC:** Exactly. In the time that swimming has become about being in the swimming pool and doing certain kinds of strokes (which is, I don't even know, the last sixty, seventy years, maybe) that is one hundred percent a privilege, and it was a privilege that was denied to a lot of people.

**Lorrie:** Yeah.

**JC:** I'm not sure how that plays out in England versus the U.S., but the history in the U.S. is really clear that they were whites-only pools and all this stuff. Even in my lifetime -- not even in my lifetime; in the last twenty, thirty years -- I know that there are private clubs in the small town that I grew up in that are still whites-only, and they justify it by being a private club.

**Lorrie:** Right, or just by being expensive. Yeah.

**JC:** Right. Swimming is a thing that... There's something about it that's illicit or there's something that people don't like the idea of swimming with people they don't know -- people that they judge as being subhuman or whatever, right? There's a lot of interesting stuff tied up in Harry not really being able to swim.

**Lorrie:** Yeah.

**JC:** As an American from the South, I might be reading things into it that don't actually exist in the English context, but it does make me curious.



**Lorrie:** Well, I think -- definitely, at least -- the wealth is certainly part of him not knowing how to do something that Dudley knows how to do. Oh, my God! One of the funniest things in this whole series to me, I laugh every single time: Myrtle... Her story is tragic, but it's so darn funny when she's crying and saying, "Nobody missed me, even when I was alive." This is one of this author's virtuoso character sketches of a minor character. What she says she used to do to Olive Hornby... As a ghost, she would follow her around, and then it's just this sentence fragment: "I remember at her brother's wedding..." That's the line that gets me every time. That is good writing.

**JC:** It's also interesting to me that after that, Olive Hornby went to the Ministry for Magic and said, "I'm being stalked and harassed by a ghost," and the Ministry was able to stop it.

**Lorrie:** They got her a restraining order!

**JC:** I was like, 'Whoa!' That's interesting to me that ghosts can be controlled.

**Lorrie:** Good for Olive Hornby, yeah.

**JC:** Which is, yeah, good. There's a process. There's a legal process; if you're being stalked by a ghost, here's what you do. There's the office you go to, there's a form you fill out. But interesting that then she got banished to go back to Hogwarts, so I thought, 'Oh, I don't know the backstory of Moaning Myrtle,' but now I'm really curious. What happens when ghosts are in that position? Is she confined to the plumbing at Hogwarts? Was that her punishment ("This is where you're going to stay")? How did she wind up back at Hogwarts when she apparently was following Olive Hornby around? And why wasn't she following freaking Tom Riddle around? How did she pick Olive Hornby? Because she was fourteen, I guess.

**Lorrie:** Or because she was her middle school bully. She has no individual specific beef with Tom Riddle. Olive Hornby, though.

**JC:** Yeah. Amazing.

**Lorrie:** But yeah, to put it another way, the resentments that you have at this formative age can haunt you your whole life, right?

**JC:** Yeah. That's the message, for sure.

**Lorrie:** What else do you have to say about this amazing prefect's bathroom scene?

**JC:** I think that's probably it. The one thing that sticks with me, though, is that it's a giant bubble bath and Harry gets out and gets back in a couple of times, but then I'm just like... I guess there's this sensory thing about bubble baths. I hate getting out of the tub and having the bubbles all over me, not being able to rinse them off... I don't know what it is.

**Lorrie:** Yeah. Maybe there's a handheld shower station.

**JC:** Oh, my gosh. I feel like I need a bath after the bath. Though it is funny that later on, Harry notes that he thinks Mrs. Norris knows where he is because he smells like bubble bath.

**Lorrie:** Yeah.

**JC:** As if a cat wouldn't be able to smell you anyway...

**Lorrie:** But yeah, eventually he moves out of enchanted bathroom space and into a completely different section of this novel and the series. He sneaks out under his Invisibility Cloak and Snape re-enters the narrative. Snape has been pretty much gone, and now he shows up because there's a dot in his office on the Marauder's Map and it's not Snape; it's Bartemius Crouch, which is an excellent use of this author's trick of using one name to indicate more than one possible character. Okay, what's happening? "Mr. Crouch was supposed to be too ill to go to work or to come to the Yule Ball - so what was he doing, sneaking into Hogwarts at one o'clock in the morning?" Great, that is a very succinct way to set forth *the* mystery and it's a mystery that makes no sense, and *Goblet of Fire* is written, I think, more as a mystery than some of the other books. This is, I think, a good time to mention that I do enjoy this author's Cormoran Strike mystery novels; this is a genre that she's really adept at, I think. This introduces this new, more sophisticated shift in the series where Harry thinks: "It just didn't seem in character, somehow, for correct, law-abiding Mr. Crouch to be sneaking around somebody else's office this late at night..." Right, because being subtle about using what's consistent in people's natures is an essential part of solving mysteries, and that's just a more developed skill that Harry's going to be using from now on. He is going to have to use this skill to predict Voldemort later. He is going to have to use this skill much more to figure out Snape (who is way harder to figure out), but I would think that Barty Crouch Jr. is *the* hardest; the ultimate challenge for figuring out, working backwards from what you see of this character and what makes that person tick to understanding who they really are on the inside, because wow, the evidence is just all over the place with him. Oh, and then to fix Harry this scene... This is the one time Harry forgets the trick step ever, which I thought, 'Oh, good for the author. This is an excellent time for the one-time use of playing this card.' Trick step. Okay, it pays off here.

**JC:** And we've seen characters making fun of Neville for getting caught by it so many times, but now Harry's not looking. It's interesting that Harry's standing there with the map and he makes the choice to go check this out, but there's a moment when he thinks about it. I feel like this is new for Harry, because so much of the time we've seen him before, he's just acted impulsively, but here he actually weighs it. He's like, 'I shouldn't risk it. I should go back to the tower and go to bed, but also, I'm really curious.' He really thinks about it and makes the choice to go get in trouble.

**Lorrie:** Yeah.

**JC:** He chooses it, which I found really interesting.

**Lorrie:** Yeah. Everything's changing in this chapter. This is one of those moments where, as I was reading, I thought, 'Wow, JC really hates this sort of thing,' where the egg falls, it makes a racket, and then it breaks open and it wails and it won't stop, and Harry is stuck and the map is out of reach.

**JC:** The map falls, everything that could go wrong goes wrong, and then it just keeps getting worse.

**Lorrie:** Oh!

**JC:** First Filch comes, and oh, my God.

**Lorrie:** Right, except no, one thing doesn't go wrong: he still does manage to catch the Cloak.

**JC:** That's true, that's true. He managed to keep the Cloak over him. But it's interesting that all these things do go wrong, but then it's almost charmed after that.

**Lorrie:** Yeah.

**JC:** Things keep going right. Filch shows up but comes to the wrong conclusion, which is actually in Harry's favor.

**Lorrie:** Yep.

**JC:** It's like, 'Oh, okay, Filch.'

**Lorrie:** 'Uh-huh, uh-huh, uh-huh...'

**JC:** 'Keep going, keep thinking that way. Keep going.'

**Lorrie:** I love when Filch arrives and he thinks it's Peeves. The description is, "It was the unmistakable hunting cry of Filch the caretaker." It's so awful and funny. Everything written in this passage has that awful-funny tone, and Filch with his scrawny little cat has this obsession with his archenemy Peeves. It's similar in feel to me to Myrtle's morose crush on Harry. It's the literary sense of the word 'burlesque', which is different from what we think of with dancing. Burlesque in the literary sense means an absurd, comical and crude parody of something that usually has a lot more dignity. Here we have real intrigue going on, and then Filch scrambling around, immediately assuming that Peeves is at fault and getting super bulgy, excited eyes about... This is going to be his chance, finally, to nail Peeves, so that's a burlesque version of this kind of obsession. And the way that Filch is described physically -- "pouchy face", "bulging eyes", "dressing gown" -- this is exhibit A of British manhood in the Dickensian grotesque mold, where you have the contrast between, "This is a British man," and then

you're seeing him through the eyes of this innocent, round-cheeked child. This is the deeply unappealing flip side of adolescence meaning that you're going to go into adulthood. Well, maybe you're going to become a strapping, young, desirable man like Cedric Diggory, or maybe this is your fate.

**JC:** Filch's point of view would be so different.

**Lorrie:** Yes.

**JC:** It'd be all about his never-ending battles with his arch-nemesis Peeves and these damn kids.

**Lorrie:** The indignity of it all... Yeah.

**JC:** Yeah, and the fact he's always roaming about the castle at odd hours and trying to stay on top of everything, and then poor Filch does not get anything that he wants in this scene.

**Lorrie:** No, no. His status is so low (part of that burlesque crude version of everything), but in comparison to him, actually, Snape similarly doesn't have good status in this scene and looks not that much more dignified than Filch in this scene. The stakes are raised next: "The only person who could make Harry's situation worse." Ah, yes, another one of those perfectly dreadful Snape appearances where you just don't want him there. Oh, God, of course he's coming.

**JC:** I wrote that note down, too, that once again, Snape shows up exactly when you don't want him to.

**Lorrie:** Exactly.

**JC:** Who's the worst person that could show up at this moment? And there he is.

**Lorrie:** Oh, there he is.

**JC:** Yeah.

**Lorrie:** And it's one of the two times that there's an association with Snape and his underclothing or personal clothing with the color gray because he's in this long gray nightshirt, which is the most undignified sight that you just don't want to see in any of your teachers ever. I just have to tell you that I once took part in a Harry Potter trivia game on an online baby-wearing forum full of other moms, and the question I thought of (which I thought was so clever of me) was, "What does Professor Snape wear to bed?" I thought, 'unsexy, undignified nightshirt,' and I wasn't thinking. People replied in the comments like, "How are we supposed to know?" because they didn't realize it was canon, and then somebody wrote in the comments in all caps: "DO NOT GOOGLE THIS QUESTION."

**JC:** "DO NOT GOOGLE..." That's good life advice for many things.

**Lorrie:** Oh, and I totally hadn't been thinking that. I just apologized profusely. "I'm so sorry. I wasn't thinking about this answer. The answer to this is on this page. Sorry, sorry. Sorry for going there accidentally."

**JC:** That is funny, though.

**Lorrie:** Yeah, all the innocence lost in that moment. Oh, dear, oh, dear.

**JC:** "Don't Google this." Now I'm tempted to Google it. Wow. I imagine at the time that this happened, there would have been much more activity around that topic.

**Lorrie:** Yes. I did not Google it, but if I had wanted to, I'm sure I would have recognized some of the names of the artists that required brain bleach later.

**JC:** Oh, my goodness. Amazing. So Snape is here and Filch has told Snape that it's Peeves, and at this point Snape has no reason to suspect that Harry is here. Harry is starting to feel like, 'Okay, as long as they don't come this direction, that's going to be okay. Maybe I have a chance here.'

**Lorrie:** Yeah. At this point, Harry just gets to observe the parallels between Filch and Snape, because Snape is saying, "Peeves..." He's totally dismissing Filch's ridiculous obsession because Snape has different concerns, but they're just as obsessive. Snape says he saw that in his office "the torches were lit and a cupboard door was ajar," which okay, that is creepy. All right, here's a mystery and you have to think, 'Okay, the person who lit the torches and opened that door... Where were they at the moment that Snape saw this? Were they still there, or did they leave with the light still on and the doors open?' Hmm... Then Snape looks up the stairs "straight through Harry", and WOW! As a reader, I felt that. That was chilling! Then Snape demands that Filch abandon his obsession with Peeves and come help him look for the office intruder, so that's how this hierarchy goes. Poor Filch is bereft because this was going to be his one chance to get Peeves, and Snape just scolds him. "I don't give a damn about that wretched poltergeist; it's my office that's --" Okay, that's Snape's fixation: he thinks he's going to get Harry expelled, which is what he's wanted to do because he thinks Harry put his own name in the Goblet and it's just as pathetic and comical. He has no more evidence and then... "Clunk. Clunk. Clunk."

**JC:** This is maybe the third time in this book that Moody has shown up to foil Snape (or fake Moody) to Harry's benefit.

**Lorrie:** Yeah.

**JC:** So he's here again. It's like, 'Oh, this is going to get interesting.'

**Lorrie:** Just like Snape showing up can always make things worse for Harry, Moody showing up can always make things worse for Snape. This is such wish fulfillment.

**JC:** For sure.

**Lorrie:** Oh, and there's this great visual: "Harry saw Mad-Eye Moody limp into sight through the narrow gap" between the heads of Filch and Snape. Wow! That's a good shot, right? Moody also has this nightshirt on -- but he has his traveling cloak on over it, so he is way better defended than these two -- and he says that devastatingly funny line: "Pajama party, is it?" He's so dominant. Yeah, never have Filch and Snape looked like such losers.

**JC:** Oh, my gosh, yeah. There's this amazing moment when Moody, with his magical eye, takes in Harry's predicament, and it's like one of those record-scratch meme moments. "You may have wondered how I wound up here." He can't even keep the surprise off of his face.

**Lorrie:** Yeah.

**JC:** It must have been like, 'What the fuck, kid?'

**Lorrie:** Yes.

**JC:** Yeah.

**Lorrie:** Snape in his nightshirt, Filch clutching the egg, Harry and the trick stair...

**JC:** With his invisibility cloak over him, going...

**Lorrie:** Yeah. Moody has to see this, understand that he has to pretend not to see it, and try to comprehend all at once what is happening...

**JC:** Right.

**Lorrie:** And keep his act up. He says slowly, "Did I hear that correctly, Snape?" Somebody's in his office... Okay, he's doing that thing that characters do (usually Snape) in this series where you have to keep track of all of these things at once and you have to keep your act up, and you have to just talk really slowly. 'Don't lose any of these lines.' It's a great scene.

**JC:** I think one of the things that... As we get into this scene, it reminds me of a lot of the conversation back in Book Three in the Shrieking Shack, when everybody was misunderstanding everybody else.

**Lorrie:** Yeah.

**JC:** In this scene, we also have that. Everyone has a secret and everyone's having a different conversation.

**Lorrie:** Yep.

**JC:** And it's really fascinating to follow the threads of what conversation did each person think they were in.

**Lorrie:** What guilty secret is each person afraid that the others are fixated on?

**JC:** Yeah, and each person's got one.

**Lorrie:** Yeah, and that thing you're protecting, which other people don't even care about.

**JC:** Yeah. And they're protecting it so hard that they're not paying attention to what everybody else's secrets are.

**Lorrie:** Right.

**JC:** Yeah. Wow.

**Lorrie:** And Moody, being so dominant, can use this to distract people away from his own guilty secrets. He presses that advantage with Snape, where he says, "Not hiding anything else in your office, are you?" He is totally betting on all people having a guilty conscience, but he knows with Snape that it's super easy to put Snape on the defensive because they have that history; they have some history. Snape... He's so caught out with this. He will later on get a little more used to this, but right now this is one of the early times that he is being thought worse than he really is. It's really difficult for him to tolerate -- it's difficult for anyone to tolerate -- and that's when we learn that Moody has searched his office. Ooh, my -- wow!

**JC:** Yeah, and Snape is not happy about it.

**Lorrie:** No, and Harry's learning about this. Then Moody takes this amazing gamble. He says, "Dumbledore told me to keep an eye --" He's guessing that Snape has not had enough access to Dumbledore to know for a fact that this is a lie, so Snape has to respond to that with: "'Dumbledore happens to trust me,' said Snape through clenched teeth. 'I refuse to believe that he gave you orders to search my office!'" It's a matter of belief; he doesn't know for sure. He's gambling, and he has self-doubt on his standing with Dumbledore, which is something that he's going to use later in a couple books on Bellatrix, this self-doubt; when Bellatrix is out of favor with Voldemort, he teases at that lack of security. But yeah, here Moody knows perfectly well that Snape doesn't stand on firm ground with Dumbledore, and he's not sure if the thing that he's using as evidence is true. My friend Irvin Khaytman, who wrote the Dumbledore book, thinks this is evidence that Snape is out of favor all year because Dumbledore is mad at him for outing Lupin, which I don't agree with. I think it's just that Snape is outranked by Moody and Moody has Dumbledore's attention this year, but I do think that's a really strong argument from Irvin. At any rate, Moody knows that this is a decent gamble to take, and Snape gives himself away left and right here. Moody says, "He's a trusting man, isn't he? Believes in second chances." That's the author bringing up Hagrid's words again

from a previous chapter to signify that this is a major theme going forward, and that's when Moody just sets up the dunk shot and says to Snape, "...spots that don't come off, Snape. Spots that never come off, d'you know what I mean?"

**JC:** Then Snape puts his hand on his arm. Is this the first time that we've been basically told that Snape has a Dark Mark?

**Lorrie:** Yep.

**JC:** I thought so.

**Lorrie:** Yep, because we have Karkaroff coming and saying, "Look at my arm, surely you've noticed." We have these hints, but we haven't really been told yet what the Dark Mark is -- where it shows up, who has it -- but obviously something is happening, and Moody is reminding Snape it doesn't matter. Whether or not you change on the inside, there are choices you've made in your past that you cannot run away from, and there are people who remember that commitment you made and were in it, too. You can try to change, but you can't disavow this. Snape seizes his left forearm as if "something on it had hurt him," and that's one of those rare moments when we get to see the real Snape. His conscience is so bad; it's hurting him so much, and he's going to be so mad at himself. He lost control; he betrayed himself. Then he says this childish thing, where he says, "I have as much right to prowl this school after dark as you do." Yeah, growing up is not easy. The author is laying bare her agenda here. Okay, we're doing this. Then Moody points out the Marauder's Map, and then Snape has one of those moments: "a horrible expression of dawning comprehension..."

**JC:** It's like the meme with all the math floating in the background with Snape's face.

**Lorrie:** Oh, my God, and Harry's dread mounting!

**JC:** And Harry, under his cloak, gesturing wildly, like 'No!'

**Lorrie:** 'No!' Yep. There's an egg, there's a map...

**JC:** But yeah, that moment of Snape puts it all together... Harry can just see the wheels turning. 'Oh, no, he's going to figure it out.'

**Lorrie:** And of course, as usual, Snape is completely correct and can't prove it. But he is right, and then wish fulfillment again: at the last second, Moody Summons the map.

**JC:** Yeah. That snatch! Oh, boy. Oops!

**Lorrie:** "'My mistake,' Moody said calmly," and he claims he dropped it, which, of course, Snape totally knows is a lie; once again, there's a Defense teacher who, for some reason, is covering up for Harry Potter. It's a conspiracy again. This is just like last year with Lupin. Moody is a much better liar than Lupin. Unlike Lupin, Moody does have a terrible secret, but people knew Lupin's secrets; Snape knew Lupin's secret. But now



Moody is a much cooler, more collected liar here, and that's when Snape is purely terrifying and turns into a zombie and starts stretching out his hands to catch invisible Harry with his hand.

**JC:** Right. He's like, "I just need proof. I just need proof!"

**Lorrie:** And his nostrils are dilated and sniffing... Oh, this is so monstrous and terrifying! By the end of this series, we will see that Snape has developed perception skills that are so much more advanced and completely dignified. They're not going to be scary and they're not going to be funny, but here he's just at his least dignified. Moody gets Harry out of it by distracting Snape again and accusing him of targeting Harry too much at a time when everybody wants to know: Who is this person who's trying to get Harry in danger? As he's doing this, "The torchlight flickered across his mangled face..." I remembered I was so thrilled with this chapter the first time I read it, and every rereading since has only gotten better and better. I remember the phrase "high convergence of ugly" came into my mind as I just pictured this stuck little boy and these three men snarling at each other. Snape is completely dominated; he lowers his hands and loses.

**JC:** The fact that he seems to give up... It felt like, reading this, he gave up more quickly than I expected him to. The scene needed to end -- Harry had been tormented enough - - but it was like someone pulled the plug and all the air went \*deflating sound\*.

**Lorrie:** Yeah.

**JC:** It felt a little bit like he just gave up.

**Lorrie:** Well, Moody had mentioned the thing, the spots that never come off.

**JC:** So do you think that part of it is that Snape, realizing that if Harry is there, Harry now knows something about... has a big hint about something about Snape that Snape doesn't want Harry to know, and that the longer Snape stays there, the worse it might get? Is that part of it?

**Lorrie:** I think it's less about Harry and just more about how it feels when you have a terrible failure in your past, and the person who made you suffer the most about it is standing right over you, doing it to you all over again. He can't really be worried about Harry right now. Then Snape claims to be concerned for Harry's safety, and Moody says, "Got Potter's best interests at heart, have you?" Yeah, that's the paradox of this, all right: accidentally that's true, and that summons up this author's mystery about this character. Moody orders Filch to give him the egg; this is totally his victory. Filch shuffles off, Snape skulks off, and then Moody faces his biggest challenge of this scene (even though Harry is starting to relax at this point), but now he has to get a plausible cover story that can deceive Harry and starts with, "Close shave, Potter." Oh, God... Harry now owes him what is almost a life debt. That was bad.

**JC:** Yeah. Moody just got him out of some serious shit here. Yeah.

**Lorrie:** Ugh, yeah.

**JC:** This whole scene is very interesting, because the second time through, it was 180 degrees different. The second time through, it was terrifying...

**Lorrie:** Yes!

**JC:** Because you have this moment at the beginning when Moody is testing, 'Does Harry know who he is,' and Harry doesn't know. 'Okay. All right. Cool. All right.' Then we have this fun little back and forth where Moody asks questions about the map, and Harry's like, 'Oh, no, I'm going to get in trouble.' Then it turns out that Moody wants to borrow it, and Harry's like, "Oh, phew. Yeah, of course you can borrow it."

**Lorrie:** Right.

**JC:** "Thanks for helping me out!" But then it's like, 'Oh, fuck...'

**Lorrie:** Yes!

**JC:** 'Fake Moody has the map.'

**Lorrie:** Yes.

**JC:** Ooooh... Yeah. It's pretty terrifying, because if Moody had thought that Harry had any idea who he really was...

**Lorrie:** Oh, boy...

**JC:** What would have happened, right?

**Lorrie:** Yeah. Harry would not have had a much longer life.

**JC:** Yeah, so when you know what's happening here and what secrets Moody is hiding, it's like, 'Damn. This is really tense and terrifying.'

**Lorrie:** The close shave. Yeah.

**JC:** A real close shave. Yeah.

**Lorrie:** Because even the first time around when you have no idea, this scene is still riveting, and then it just gets more and more and more terrifying.

**JC:** Right. It's scary from Harry's perspective that oh, he's just been found with this powerful magical object.

**Lorrie:** Yeah.

**JC:** Moody, being the paranoid Auror that he is...

**Lorrie:** And the awful high comedy of these three people all mad at each other...

**JC:** Yeah.

**Lorrie:** And that you're stuck there and you're invisible. This is every bit as suspenseful as the scene in the previous book when Lupin discovers that Harry has the map. It just raises that question: what on Earth do adults have going on in their lives that they're not letting kids know about, that they can't let kids know about? What?! And yeah, Moody is so panicked, he almost forgets that he's supposed to care about Harry being stuck. Harry has to ask him, "Can you get me out of this stair?" "Oh, yeah. Yeah, yeah. I have to care about you." Yeah, he's so taken by surprise finding out what the map does. He says, "Did you see who it was?" and Harry says, "Bartemius Crouch," and Moody says slowly, "He's not here anymore. Crouch, that's very - very interesting." Okay, he's thinking so quickly. Meanwhile, Harry's thinking Moody scared him slightly, yet Moody has just helped him avoid an awful lot of trouble. This is building on and reversing the contradiction that he had about Snape in the first book. 'How do I make sense of this?' Oh, *the* brilliantly worded reply: "They say old Mad-Eye's obsessed with catching Dark wizards, but I'm nothing -- nothing -- compared to Barty Crouch." Okay, Barty Crouch Jr. here is looking through the eye -- Mad-Eye Moody's eye. He's answering Harry's question as himself and also as Moody and also as someone who is both, and he's thinking how he appears to Harry; he's remaining true to all of his personas (including the real one) and managing to cast suspicion on Snape with this little throwaway, which is a super convenient distraction. So convenient Snape's snooping around, right? Meanwhile, Harry falls for it because he's worried about Sirius. Everyone has secrets. Sometimes I just think about that line -- how that's worded and how it switches from third person to first person, and the doublespeak with the name -- and I'm just so impressed. Meanwhile, Harry is also no slouch at doublespeak himself, because when Moody's looking at Harry all scared -- 'What have you been thinking?' -- Harry says, "...odd stuff's been happening..." "Moody's mismatched eyes widened." 'Oh, okay.' Maybe this child is on to something, does have some clue what Moody's been up to, so he gratefully takes the hint from Harry. "Yeah, yeah, yeah, blame it all on Snape. Thank you, Harry." That's when this series really commits to centering Snape for the rest of the series. "Oh, if there's one thing I hate, it's a Death Eater who walked free," and Harry... his mind is blown. That really could only mean one thing: 'What? Is that what Moody is saying? What?!' So yeah, that's the turn in this series. That's the commitment.

**JC:** This is the first moment that Harry has suspected that Snape was a Death Eater?

**Lorrie:** That's what this guy seems to be saying.

**JC:** So Harry hadn't really thought about it before? He just thought Snape just 'has it in for me, blah, blah,' but he hadn't really... This is all the hints for Harry to point at Snape as a Death Eater.

**Lorrie:** 'Why would somebody let somebody like that teach? Someone who's so obviously just about almost evil anyway... What?!' Right? Here's Harry with his head spinning and worrying that if there's too much inquiry into the Marauder's Map, it'll get his father implicated and Lupin and the twins. Moody calls in that life debt and borrows the map, and brilliantly does the final distraction to give Harry something else to think about and not himself and says that he should consider being an Auror -- remembering, 'Oh, yeah, I'm supposed to act like this teacher who cares about Harry Potter' -- but it's also a really respectful thing to say. To me, it feels like Barty Crouch Jr., the Death Eater underneath it all, is respectful of this teenager as a worthy adversary (this kid... don't underestimate him) and then enables Harry (just like Lupin used to) to break rules by saying, "Nothing like a nighttime stroll to give you ideas, Potter." No wonder Snape is annoyed when these horrible teachers keep just egging him on.

**JC:** Is this the point at which Barty Crouch Jr. was in Snape's office to get the gillyweed? Is that what he was doing in there, or was he looking for something else at this point?

**Lorrie:** I think what we find out later is that he's running low on Polyjuice. Gillyweed does show up very soon, but he hasn't stolen it yet.

**JC:** Okay.

**Lorrie:** In fact, it ends up... He puts the bug in Dobby's ear, so Dobby is the one who steals the gillyweed.

**JC:** Oh, okay. I think I'm confusing movie canon.

**Lorrie:** Well, it's his idea to get the gillyweed...

**JC:** Yeah.

**Lorrie:** So he sets up Dobby.

**JC:** So Dobby brings it? Okay, because doesn't Neville bring it in the movie anyway? I can't remember.

**Lorrie:** I don't know. I've seen the movies so few times, although maybe it's time for a rewatch.

**JC:** Oh, I know. I keep thinking that, too. I need to rewatch at some point.

**Lorrie:** Yeah, we could get Cecilia's Binge Watcher's Guide.

**JC:** I really love that the chapter ends on this much lighter note of Moody suggesting to Harry that he consider being an Auror. I'm trying to remember: have we heard anything about Aurors before this?

**Lorrie:** I think the introduction of Moody at the beginning of this volume is where we hear...

**JC:** Is when we first hear about it. Okay. There's this great... He's playing a role, like you said, but he's also recognizing Harry as a worthy adversary. But this idea of, "Oh, I'm an Auror, and yeah, I think you've got the right stuff, kid." Right?

**Lorrie:** Yeah.

**JC:** That's such an important -- from a teacher perspective. I had someone do that for me when I was actually -- not even a graduate student -- when I was an undergraduate...

**Lorrie:** Yeah.

**JC:** A professor, who actually after... I was taking a class in modern algebra and got a 98 on the first exam and everyone around me failed. I was like, "What? How did y'all fail this test? It wasn't hard." Then the professor kept me after class and said, "Hey, you're really good at this. Have you ever considered going to graduate school in math?" and I laughed. I was like, "Hahaha," and he said, "No, really, you should consider going to graduate school in math," and I never thought of it until that moment.

**Lorrie:** Wow!

**JC:** I remember for the rest of the day, I walked around, like, "Graduate school?" and I did. I ended up getting a PhD. These moments always stand out to me, and I always think about the moments when I've done that for students. I've said, "You should really consider this..." or "I think you would be great at this..." and to see their faces go, 'Huh?!' Seeing that moment in Harry's life here... This is the moment when someone says, "You should be an Auror," and that's the direction that he ultimately goes -- even though there's this one little wryly-noted moment in the end, where he thought he'd wait and see what other Aurors look like before he makes the decision -- but it becomes the thing that he's like, "Yeah, this is what I'm going to do," and he hasn't really thought about what he's going to do as an adult until this point. Yeah. Anyway, that moment just stands out to me because it's...

**Lorrie:** It's huge. Yeah.

**JC:** I find it very meaningful and ironic that it's Barty Crouch Jr. who says it, but still...

**Lorrie:** A good example of things not necessarily being poison just because their source is poisonous, which, of course, brings us back into TERFpocalypse.

**JC:** That's true. I thought you're going to say Snape.

**Lorrie:** No. It's much more insidious and relevant to our lives than that, because that's what we're doing for this entire podcast: tip-toeing back, going, 'Well, we know for sure that there is actual malevolence coming from this author now, in the present day, toward our loved ones and ourselves. Is that in everything that we got from her?' So far, I'm

finding, 'Is it or isn't it?' What I got is still valid to me. It's still sound. I like, at the end of this chapter, Harry's asking himself: "Why was Crouch pretending to be ill, if he could manage to get to Hogwarts when he wanted to?" Good, we have the summation again. This is the mystery; that's the question he should be asking. "What did he think Snape was concealing in his office?" He's wondering that about Moody; that's the question Moody wants him to be thinking. "And Moody thought he, Harry, ought to be an Auror!" We have one thought from Harry that's on target, one red herring, and then one idea that Harry's going to retain. This is really a chapter that needs a summation at the end.

**JC:** A lot happened.

**Lorrie:** So much has changed in this one chapter, which is good because now he's set up for the next chapter, which is called The Second Task.

**JC:** Oh, oh, oh... We're about to go swimming!

**Lorrie:** Yeah. It's not going to be as warm.

**JC:** It's funny, because, yeah, I was just sitting here thinking about that cold lake and the fact that in the previous chapter -- I think it was the previous chapter -- that Harry, Hermione, and Ron were walking by the lake and saw Viktor Krum out there jumping into the lake, and it was really cold.

**Lorrie:** Yeah.

**JC:** 'What's he doing?'

**Lorrie:** "What's he made of that he can do this?"

**JC:** Yep. We're about to find out, all of us, that we have to do it.

**Lorrie:** So yeah, Harry went into the deep pool of water and emerged a slightly changed man.

**JC:** Yup. There's no Christian allegory there or whatever.

**Lorrie:** Well, I'm going to recover from this and talk to you next time when we're at The Second Task.

**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](http://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.