HARRY POTTER AFTER 2020
with LORRIE KIM and JC

Transcript

Episode 6.30

Book 6, Chapter 30: The White Tomb

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 Six, Chapter Thirty: The White Tomb.

Lorrie: The White Tomb. Dumbledore is laid to rest. Harry breaks up with Ginny. He decides he will not return to Hogwarts next year. This chapter opens with all lessons being suspended and all exams postponed, and that very painfully reminded me that Brown University did exactly that: at the end of December 2025, during finals, there was a mass shooting on campus, and they did what they had to do before sending everyone home. It is like this. Yeah.

JC: Yeah. Whenever there's a tragic event on a campus, that feeling of, 'How is life going on?' is there, or a tragic event anywhere, to be honest (since we're thinking about schools in particular). I have been in lockdown; I've been on a campus when there was a gunman or some violent person who hurt people, even though I was nowhere near it. That's happened to me because I'm a teacher — and when you're a teacher, odds are good that maybe you're going to have to at least think about how you're going to handle that in the future — but there is this really strange feeling then of walking through a place where something awful has happened and it's just a beautiful, sunny day and everyone's walking around and life goes on. I think this

chapter does a good job of conveying the confusion of that, like when you're experiencing grief and how normal things feel at the same time as they feel like they'll never be the same again. I think this chapter really captures that well.

Lorrie: So their entire world is coming to this funeral. It's an excellent time for the author to show us all the details, all the complexity of the world that Dumbledore held together, which is being laid to rest right now because it's clear that that order has been threatened and disrupted. Now, if they want to ever retain any of it that they love and remember, they're going to have to fight really hard for it. All of the varied aspects of the world, like Madame Maxime and a delegation from the Ministry...

JC: Everyone but Snape comes to the funeral (and Voldemort).

Lorrie: And Harry, Ron, Hermione, and Ginny have been spending all of their time together. It's really good that they have each other to grieve with.

JC: Even though at the same time, Harry has this partially correct, mostly incorrect idea: this is the last of being around his friends he's going to get, and he needs to soak it up. He's right in that it won't be like that ever again, really — not for a long time — and not all of those people are going to be around him, but he's wrong in that he's not going to be alone; he is going to have Ron and Hermione with him on most of this journey. He's not going to be alone.

Lorrie: He knows what's going to happen, what's ahead of them: "…Hour by hour, he put off saying the thing that he knew he must say, doing what he knew was right to do, because it was too hard to forgo his best source of comfort." He is hanging on to time with Ginny. Snape and Draco, and now Harry: everyone who is personally at risk from Voldemort, you have to keep free from romantic entanglements. It's just giving too direct a path for Voldemort to torture you.

JC: Yeah. I did identify a little bit with that feeling, because you and I are both in the situation where we're about to send our babies off to college, so that idea of 'The time is limited and I'm going to enjoy what I've got, and I know things are about to change and things won't be the same...' That is something I'm feeling very much right now, but obviously for completely different reasons.

Lorrie: Yeah. But yeah, you can't know how it's going to change; accepting that is one of the primary tasks. Considering everything that's happened, Harry is not at all excited about the mystery of R.A.B. In the past, when there was some mystery, he looked forward to finding out what it was; no, this is just dreary.

JC: Yeah.

Lorrie: We see him reciting the task ahead of himself. "Okay, fine. Four Horcruxes, destroy them all, then go after Voldemort," and that's also good. That's the author setting the agenda for the endgame that readers will be able to expect from the final book because the anticipation is really high, and there are a lot of hints she was not giving and just saying, "Oh, you have no idea and I can't tell you, but all right. This sets some direction." Oh, I love the line, "His dreams were thick with cups, lockets, and mysterious objects that he could not quite reach…" That is pure Seven of Cups from the Tarot deck.

JC: Oh, uh-huh.

Lorrie: Book Seven's coming… This is predicting not only the Horcrux hunt, but also the feeling from the Seven of Cups card that there's a queasy desire when you're faced with that choice. There's always that urge to go for the choice that you know is going to be wrong, but you want it, and you're going to get a lot of that in the seventh book. Meanwhile, Hermione, who is almost out of character here, says, "I can't find a shred of evidence in the library" who R.A.B. could have been, and I'm thinking the author has done this before. She's using the 'room of hidden things' strategy: if you write a long enough series with enough details in them, maybe readers will just go right past the answer without knowing that that was the thing they were looking for. Times she's done that is when she sticks Arabella Figg's name at the end of Book Four (and either you read that going, 'Figg?' or you just read past it), and then she puts the locket in Book Five in a sack of garbage or we've just seen Harry run past the tiara in the *Sectumsempra* chapter. She just throws it all in there.

JC: But I guess Hermione also has figured out that Eileen Prince was Snape's mother.

Lorrie: Yeah. She's about to come tell Harry that.

JC: Yeah. Yeah, which is really interesting because I'm really glad that in this, Harry is really angry still at Snape and he's really angry at himself for trusting Snape via this book, but he then realizes that Dumbledore trusted Snape. He sees this parallel in both of them trusting Snape, and were they wrong to do that.

Lorrie: Yeah, Hermione, coming in with "I was sort of right about the Half-Blood Prince business," and Harry just snaps at her: "D'you have to rub it in, Hermione? How d'you think I feel about that now?" They're all going through that. As soon as he said "Draco in the Room of Requirement with the Vanishing Cabinet," Ron and Hermione know exactly what that feels like. Oh…

JC: Yeah.

Lorrie: And yeah, Hermione has found the clippings that say that "'Eileen Prince married a man called Tobias Snape, and then later an announcement saying that she given birth to a—' '— murderer', spat Harry.' 'Well… yes.'" The whole regret that Harry feels that he was taken in… "… in spite of the increasing nastiness of the scribbled spells, he had refused to believe ill of the boy who had been so clever, who was helped him so much…" As we've been saying this entire time, that really feels like when J.K. Rowling started liking transphobic tweets and people were thinking, 'Is this really what she feels? It goes so against these other things. Can this really be happening?' The more evidence there was, the more we realized, 'If we have to recognize that this is who she's becoming now, what does that do with all the ways she helped us before?' That's what Harry's thinking: "*Helped him*… It was an almost unendurable thought now," and that has been true. Anyone who loved *Harry Potter* and then renounced it because of J.K. Rowling when they encounter the purity of what they remember of the ways that the series helped them through their childhoods… Yeah, it's almost unendurable.

JC: Yeah. Just to follow up on that: I'm not a trans person myself, so I always think about trans folks who read these books as kids or as young adults and for whom these books were a refuge and maybe even helped them along their journey, and then to have the author do that… I really feel for people in that situation, because I think that's very similar to the feeling of betrayal that Harry is probably experiencing here.

Lorrie: Oh, yeah.

JC: Yeah.

Lorrie: I like the conversation that Harry and Hermione have (and Ron) about how Harry says, "Yeah, Snape knew where I was getting the Potions help from," and then says, "Shouldn't have left his old book in the bottom of that cupboard, should he?" which is true. Then Ron's saying, "Why didn't he turn you in?" and Hermione has the answer that I think we're supposed to conclude: "I don't think he wanted to associate himself with that book." Yeah, there are definitely parts of our pasts as humans that a lot of us don't like to think about; you don't have to be extreme like Voldemort and cut it off from yourself and curse anyone who comes near it, but there are things that you would just rather not think about.

JC: This is very true, and I know that the couple of times that I've had the experience of coming across something I wrote as a teenager (or even as a young adult) was just excruciating to read and I had to put it aside.

Lorrie: Yeah.

JC: I'm with Snape on that one, one hundred percent.

Lorrie: Yeah.

JC: His emo notes in his textbook as a fifteen-year-old… Oh, my God.

Lorrie: And even if you wrote something as an adult, your adult self twenty years later is still a lot different.

JC: Yeah.

Lorrie: I think that's something that's hard to recognize when we look at who J.K. Rowling is today: "But how can she say that when she wrote this?" She wrote it a long time ago; the amount of life experience you can have in twenty years that makes you a different person, that has a different perspective…

JC: That's true.

Lorrie: That's a lot. How many noses can you have lost between now and then? Then, of course, Harry… You have to fight the urge to self-blame, and he's blaming himself: "All that time [Dumbledore] was showing me how Voldemort was evil even when he was at school, and I had proof Snape was too," and Hermione says quietly, "Evil is a strong word," and that's such an odd moment,

right? Okay, Hermione has always been Snape's biggest defender among the kids. Is she, right now, keeping open the possibility that Snape might not be evil? I think what's happening here is that the author is (in the text) just leaving that possibility open, but Hermione herself is not making that point, so it's playing a double role. The author is saying he might not be; Hermione says, "I'm trying to say, Harry, that you're putting too much blame on yourself. I thought the Prince seemed to have a nasty sense of humor, but I would never have guessed he was a potential killer…" This is continuing the lesson from Lupin about how you have to impose some limits on how much you can second-guess everything that happened when there's this much loss. Oh… Also, we see Crabbe and Goyle by themselves, without Draco, at the Slytherin table: "Hulking boys though they were, they looked oddly lonely without the tall, pale figure of Malfoy between them, bossing them around." That is a surprising moment to me. Suddenly, they're real to me, Crabbe and Goyle.

JC: Yeah.

Lorrie: Not just henchmen, but no, they're kids that don't know what's going on. They don't know what they're doing. I'm sure they are worried: 'What happened to Draco? What's going to happen to us? Are we okay to be here?' They know something of what happened, not everything.

JC: Yeah, because Draco didn't really tell them what he was doing, right?

Lorrie: Right.

JC: Even that night when the Death Eaters came in, we didn't see mention of them, so I think —

Lorrie: No.

JC: They weren't there. He didn't —

Lorrie: No.

JC: Unlike Harry, who gave his friends a potion to protect them and said, "Go and defend the school," Draco did not tell Crabbe and Goyle (or any of the Slytherins, as far as I can tell), "Come with me. Something's going down." He had separated himself from the other students. I don't think he was protecting anyone. I don't think so; it was more like, 'I'm not part of that anymore. Now, I'm part of this group, and I have to go and be with them instead.'

Lorrie: And when Snape caught him at Slughorn's Christmas party, then Draco was saying, "I don't need Crabbe and Goyle anymore. I have better people." Then, of course, when we see those better people, they're not better; they're just older.

JC: In many ways, they're worse.

Lorrie: Ugh… And then we get this super important Harry point of view: "Harry had not spared Malfoy much thought. His animosity was all for Snape, but he had not forgotten the fear in Malfoy's voice on that tower top, nor the fact that he had lowered his wand before the other Death Eaters arrived." Harry saw something about Draco that Death Eaters didn't see and don't know about Draco.

JC: And that is a sentence I clung to at the end of this book.

Lorrie: Yeah.

JC: Absolutely, because at the end of the scene on top of the tower when Draco lowers his wand and then it's clear that he's not going to follow through, I was like, 'Oh, thank God,' right? Then the fact that even Harry recognizes that Draco was not going to kill Dumbledore there… Even Harry sees Draco is not lost, and I appreciated that as a reader.

Lorrie: And now that Harry has that information about Draco, he knows he can't let the… 'Don't tell the Death Eaters this about Draco. That will be unsafe.'

JC: Right, exactly. When they come down to the Great Hall and they're all in their formal robes, they're about to leave, too; they're going to go straight from the funeral to the Hogwarts Express. They're all in these formal robes because they're going to this funeral, and him looking around the room and certainly noticing Crabbe and Goyle, as you said, but also looking up and seeing the teachers' seating… Dumbledore's seat is empty out of respect, but then the fact that the Minister for Magic sits in Snape's seat is interesting. Okay, okay. It's a little heavy-handed, but I see where we're going with this. 'Don't trust that guy.'

Lorrie: I kind of love how Rufus Scrimgeour is the least socially sensitive person.

JC: He's not very good at politics, for sure.

Lorrie: Yeah, and he doesn't have to be. That's not the job of the moment that he's fulfilling. "Sure. Is this seat empty?" *Donk*. Oh, when Harry's thinking about what

Draco was like in those last moments on the tower, "the tiniest drop of pity mingled with his dislike." That's blood magic; that drop is the same as the drop of Harry's blood that's now in Voldemort's veins. You have that drop, empathy can grow from that, including when you don't want it to, but after that view into what Draco's like, no, he can't ever deny the human understanding he has of some of Draco's feelings.

JC: Yeah. He saw Draco at a couple of the lowest points of Draco's life, just in the last month.

Lorrie: Yeah. "Where, Harry wondered, was Malfoy now, and what was Voldemort making him do under threat of killing him and his parents?" Ugh… Draco had been so close to getting asylum for his family. So close… I'm very glad the author just put that there because, as a reader following along with this story (which is going everywhere and has so many details), you might not realize at this point what a terrible situation Draco is in. We don't even know where he is — we haven't followed him out of Hogwarts — but wherever he is, he's really in danger. So yeah, we get more of a crowd shot. Madam Pince and Filch do actually spend time together, it turns out. The castle ghosts show up, and I thought, 'Oh wow…'

JC: I didn't know they could leave the castle. That's interesting.

Lorrie: Right.

JC: Yeah.

Lorrie: Right, and a funeral might be a sensitive topic for them, too.

JC: For sure, yeah.

Lorrie: But Dumbledore would have known all of these people, and that is a well-drawn part of his personality: his memory for individuals was phenomenal. Not everyone who's like that is an educator, but educators have more of that type of personality — the kind of person where you don't know how they could possibly know so many people well — and you think, 'Are they just interacting with a whole bunch of people all the time? They don't really know them.' No, they actually remember stuff — they know what that person's interests are, they can recall things for real — so yeah, he was extraordinary.

JC: This whole scene reminded me I'm very fortunate that most of the funerals I've been to have been for grandparents and people like that — people who had lived a long, fulfilled life and passed away at the end of their life and not tragically too early — so that's kind of what this is feeling like to me. The fact that when Harry goes out, it's a beautiful summer day…

Lorrie: Yeah…

JC: I think every funeral that I've been to was a beautiful day in that the sun is shining, there's a breeze, birds are tweeting… Just the dissonance of that — someone whose life has ended, but around me, life is going on — that's always such a strange feeling. It's comforting, but it's really also disconcerting, right? There's that bit of it, and then all the people that are there… Like you just said, almost everybody that Dumbledore knew…

Lorrie: Everybody, yeah.

JC: That made me wonder: how did they get them all there? Mrs. Figg is there. How did Mrs. Figg get there? Some people could probably Apparate to outside of the grounds and then walk in. Maybe Portkeys? I was just imagining: how did they get everyone there? What kind of behind-the-scenes coordination had to happen to get all of those people to Hogwarts? Even Dolores Umbridge is there…

Lorrie: I know.

JC: Which is wild to me that Umbridge is there, but that also says something about the role she's now playing at the Ministry (as we'll see in the next book), but oh, it's just so interesting to see all these people. The trolley witch from the Hogwarts Express…

Lorrie: I know, I know. I love her.

JC: Oh, my gosh. Then we see other people that we know that we'll get into here in a moment, but that piece of it, too, also reminded me of being at funerals for my grandparents where there'd be people who would come up to me and say, "You probably never met me, but I used to work with your grandpa" or "your grandma and I taught together" or whatever, those opportunities to connect with people for whom your lost loved one was important in their life.

Lorrie: Yeah. Harry has that extremely real moment where he's seeing that the merpeople have shown up, and then he realizes he doesn't know where on Earth did Dumbledore learn to speak Mermish.

JC: Yeah.

Lorrie: And that is such a good example of the kind of thing Harry never thought to ask him.

JC: Yeah. That's so real, too.

Lorrie: When you see the entirety of somebody's life, you see how broad it could have been and might have been. Most people are not as majestic and far-reaching as Dumbledore was, but I'm realizing (from what you're saying), yeah, that the beautiful day aspect of this gives a feeling of peace and safety to this funeral. When I read it, I get more of a sense that it was a very old, accomplished wizard dying at the end of his life as opposed to a terrifying assassination and a world on the brink of open war. I'm not worried that a fight is going to break out here.

JC: Yeah.

Lorrie: We get some peace.

JC: Also, we don't know it at this point — or not on the first read (the readers don't know) —that Dumbledore went on his own terms.

Lorrie: Yeah.

JC: It looked like an assassination, but it actually wasn't; it was carefully planned. "Before things get too bad, you're going to do this for me, Snape, to protect Draco," and it was planned. I think that it's nice to come back to this scene understanding what really happened there, because that really reinforces that this is a celebration of life and not everyone freaking out about their beloved leader being assassinated.

Lorrie: Yeah.

JC: Maybe they are, but still.

Lorrie: It doesn't feel that way, though, does it?

JC: Right. It doesn't feel that way.

Lorrie: They are shocked and they are upset and they are grieving, but he did get chances to do what he had to contribute. Oh, when you mentioned Dolores Umbridge, I got a memory of Jimmy Carter's funeral.

JC: Oh, my God. Yes.

Lorrie: You know what I'm thinking of?

JC: I do.

Lorrie: All right. What am I thinking of?

JC: All the presidents sitting there — all the living presidents, including Trump.

Lorrie: And the photo… the photo that the Carter Center put on social media afterward of all of those presidents, but because of the angle of the photographer, the only one you can't see is Trump because the photographer stood so that Trump was obscured by a pillar.

JC: Oh, what a beautiful snub.

Lorrie: Yeah, and people noticed. 'Oh, what a good angle for that photo.'

JC: Pulitzer Prize-winning photo right there.

Lorrie: Yeah. When the merpeople sing their funeral song (which is shocking but not bad) and Harry can understand what it's saying, it “spoke very clearly of loss and of despair.” Wow, despair! Grief is one thing, but we all eventually go; despair… it feels like the merpeople know that this is the end of an era that was just barely hanging on to peace and that this is the aging architect of that peace, and that him being gone means a lot of disruption coming.

JC: Because who left even speaks their language that lives on land? Yeah. What's going to happen to them?

Lorrie: Yeah. Then, of course, we see the centaurs; they come in, they pay their respects. Centaurs only pay their respects when they want to.

JC: True, true.

Lorrie: This is Dumbledore's diplomacy that has accomplished that.

JC: I do like the idea of Dolores Umbridge sitting there and seeing all the respect that Dumbledore is getting.

Lorrie: Yeah.

JC: It's a little bit like Trump seeing all the respect for Jimmy Carter and knowing deep down that that would never be for him. He has to know or maybe he's that delusional, I don't know.

Lorrie: No, he's not.

JC: Yeah. I'm putting Umbridge in the Trump position there.

Lorrie: Yeah, because he threw himself that stupid June 14th birthday parade in 2025 that cost a lot of money (that hauled military tanks that were too heavy to be on roads) and he thought he was going to get an authoritarian spectacle, a love fest; instead, he could barely keep the boredom off his own face. Nobody was into it. You can't make it happen; you can't just build it all, and then wonder why the emotion isn't there. The whole way that Harry is at the funeral thinking Dumbledore… 'Wow, he's really dead. He's really gone.' That, plus how old Dumbledore was… I don't think about Joe Biden very often, but that really did make me think of him, partly because right now — in the middle of August 2026, as we're recording — we've heard that Biden's cancer is extremely advanced and extremely painful, which that sense of aging and obviously dying certainly tracks with Dumbledore's hand showing us all year that he doesn't actually have that much time left. Also, the way that Biden, because of his age, was the last remnant of a certain kind of 20th century idealism that I'm very sorry to see go… There are two examples: he believed in unions — during his very brief presidency, he strengthened the unions, which really needed it — and he believed in public transit.

JC: Yeah, yeah.

Lorrie: Oh… ouch. Yeah, once that's gone —because Dumbledore is very 20th century greatness, just as these accomplishments that I'm talking about are; it's the same era. It's the post-World War II infrastructure era, and they were the end of that.

JC: Okay, there's a song that I just want to recommend here. There's a jazz singer named Claire Martin who does a song called "So Twentieth Century," and it's a

number about how all these things that we hold dear are just so twentieth century now, like freedom of speech and people having rights, and the things that you were saying just now really made me think of that song. I heard that song today on the radio, and I was like, 'Oh, wow, I love this song,' but the whole thing is like, 'Oh, yeah, remember back when we used to have equal rights and this and that? Oh, but that's so twentieth century. It's out of style.' So yeah, we had all these ideals and things that we valued in the twentieth century, and these books are of that time…

Lorrie: Yeah.

JC: And it's interesting to see how a lot of that looks like it's in the past now, and that is really tragic. Saying goodbye to Dumbledore means saying goodbye to an era in the Wizarding World, and it's not going to be like that again unless everybody fights really hard to get it back, and that feels like where we are in the world right now.

Lorrie: It's not that it can't be like that again; it's that it will have to be built from scratch, and there are people who never experienced it and don't remember it and don't know that it's possible.

JC: Yeah.

Lorrie: This is the kind of think piece that shows up online periodically, addressed to people who are Millennials and older, saying Gen Z and younger do not expect anything to be good ever again.

JC: Right.

Lorrie: How would they know?

JC: Yeah. That also extends to things like climate.

Lorrie: Yeah.

JC: The fact that people who are Gen Z and younger don't know that having the country — having multiple continents — on fire annually is not normal, and don't know that it wasn't that long ago that there were places where it snowed so much in the winter that there was always snow on the ground or ponds would freeze over enough for people to skate on… That doesn't happen anymore, or that multiple giant storms a season are not normal. All of that… Watching that change — being

old enough to see that not only has society changed tremendously, but the climate has changed in my lifetime, and that my child doesn't really know that what we have now is not normal — that's kind of terrifying just to know what we've lost…

Lorrie: Yeah.

JC: And to know that people who are younger aren't really even completely aware of it.

Lorrie: Some things you can get back, some things you can fight for and rebuild; some things, it's too late.

JC: Well, something that was not too late, it turns out, is the relationship between Tonks and Remus, which I was like, 'Well, that happened quick.'

Lorrie: Yeah.

JC: Was it just yesterday that they were still fighting? Now, they seem to be together.

Lorrie: Now, they're holding hands.

JC: And her hair's pink again.

Lorrie: This is one of my favorite paragraphs in this series. This is the kind of writing that I like from this author that I don't think we get from just anyone: "Harry saw very clearly as he sat there under the hot sun how people who cared about him had stood in front of him one by one, his mother, his father, his godfather, and finally Dumbledore, all determined to protect him; but now that was over. He could not let anybody else stand between him and Voldemort; he must abandon forever the illusion he ought to have lost at the age of one, that the shelter of a parent's arms meant that nothing could hurt him. There was no waking from his nightmare, no comforting whisper in the dark that he was safe really, that it was all in his imagination; the last and greatest of his protectors had died, and he was more alone than he had ever been before." This is one of my favorite themes from this author: the desire — the crying out, painful heartache desire — that this world can have adults who are there for kids. Sometimes, there are moments when you have to realize, 'That's just a dream; there are not. There are no adults anywhere; they will just let kids be destroyed,' but the desire is always there, and the crying out for it is so full and sad. Also, as I've said before, that's what makes *Harry*

Potter a children's series, regardless of how adult some of the themes are: sometimes, the kids do get the adults that they need. That feeling of safety… the series does eventually bring you back there.

JC: Yeah. I love that Harry has had that all this time, right? He's realizing that now he's no longer a child and that it's gone; he's going to be an adult — legally, an adult in the Wizarding World — very soon and then he won't have those protections anymore, but I'm so grateful that he did have them.

Hosts: Yeah.

Lorrie: Also, if he wanted to and went looking for them, it wouldn't even be right. Of course, as a Snape fan, I'm reading this thinking, 'There is still one protector left, but you don't know who it is. You don't know that.'

JC: He doesn't know, yeah.

Lorrie: Yeah. He is correct: he is more alone than he has ever been.

JC: Speaking of alone, when we're watching the people file in, Harry notes Luna helping Neville into his seat, and then he thinks about the fact that Neville and Luna were the only D.A. members who came to help; he thinks that maybe it was because they were the only ones who were lonely enough that they kept checking their coins just to see if maybe something was going to happen.

Hosts: Yeah.

JC: I didn't even think about that until he said it. There was so much happening in that chapter. Thinking, 'It was only Ron, Hermione, Luna, and Neville? Those are the only students…' I didn't even think of it.

Lorrie: Yeah, and Ginny.

JC: And Ginny, but just the loyalty of those characters. Oh…

Lorrie: Yeah.

JC: Neville was in the common room, so he had a chance for someone to say something to him, but Luna wasn't, right? Luna got the message and came. My little Luna/Neville shipper heart was very happy at that moment.

Lorrie: Yeah. I know, I know. They're compatible.

JC: Oh, another surprise guest at this funeral is Grawp.

Lorrie: Uh-huh, yeah.

JC: Hagrid was right about Grawp, that he could civilize him (for lack of a better word), acclimatize him to humans. The fact that Grawp can wear a suit and attend this funeral is pretty stunning, considering what we saw of him in the previous book.

Lorrie: Grawp is there for Hagrid and is comforting him. That's true: no matter how different life with the giants was, they definitely knew loss and sorrow a little too much.

JC: It's interesting, too, that throughout this (as Harry notices people and things happen), he keeps having these urges to laugh and he tamps them down because he's not sure if it's appropriate, but that is so the way it goes. When your grief is wild like that — it's just all over the place — something will remind you of that person (something they would have thought was funny in this moment) and you will laugh and then you'll feel bad for laughing, but then you're like, 'No, they would have wanted me to laugh.' I think that this whole scene — this whole part of this chapter — just really captures what it's like to have that grief be so raw.

Lorrie: Also, he's so full of grief that he's not that annoyed by all of the official speak and all of the people pretending to be sad about Dumbledore when they didn't really know him. He sees them and he's annoyed, but he just doesn't really have time to be that annoyed with them. They don't matter; it's okay. The magic for the moment that Dumbledore is entombed is beautiful. It's very mythic, the flames and the Norse mythological hero's ascendency; the flames and the smoke... Oh, this little fragment: Harry thinks he sees a phoenix "fly joyfully into the blue." That is so hopeful and really makes me think Dumbledore is at peace. He's happy with what he did.

JC: So, a phoenix… Was that Dumbledore's Patronus?

Lorrie: Yeah.

JC: So that idea that the Patronus is being released there, I think, is something also that kind of sticks with me.

Hosts: Yeah.

Lorrie: He's done. He's happy. He's complete. And then the flames vanish, nothing was on fire; you just get this white marble tomb. The shower of arrows from the centaurs… Love! It's so not clearly safe. Is that a threat? No. It's respect, but there's tension, right? What is keeping these beings from turning on everyone? Why did the U.S. have allies? Did it just happen because they liked the U.S. and decided to be allies? No, it takes work! You stop doing that maintenance work or you insult them, they're not your allies anymore. Are they dangerous? Well, do they have reason to respect you or not?

JC: Also, that image of Hagrid walking down through the center of the crowd with Dumbledore's body wrapped in this purple velvet shroud is interesting, because that's so different from… I've never been to a funeral where the body wasn't in the room in a casket before everyone even came in, right? Again, Hagrid is the one who carries people through the portal or through the boundary.

Lorrie: Yeah.

JC: I don't know a lot about funerary practices, really, cross-culturally. It's not something I know a heck of a lot about, but I thought that was really creatively done here.

Lorrie: I guess if you're going to be a fantasy writer building a world, this is one of the areas where you think this is something you get to do after having created such an enormous universe as Rowling did with Potterverse. 'Okay, now let's see your version of what would a really respectful, loving funeral look like…'

JC: Yeah.

Lorrie: Because we're getting a wedding. We have the promise of a wedding coming; we haven't seen one of those either, so how does this universe celebrate the big passages? That's the funeral, and then as it's ending and many people are quite understandably weeping, Harry sees that Ginny is no longer crying. They are such a good match. "She met Harry's gaze with the same hard, blazing look that he had seen when she had hugged him after winning the Quidditch Cup in his absence…" She knows. This is a purposeful moment; everything from here is hard, and it's right to fight. He has to do it: he has to tell her, "I can't be involved with you anymore. We've got to stop seeing each other. We can't be together," and, of course, she knew this was coming. The beautiful, sad thing he says: "It's been

like… like something out of someone else's life, these last few weeks with you," which they kind of always knew, right? Okay, totally borrowed time… The thing we're going to find in Book Seven is what he had with Ginny in those few weeks is going to be enough to hold him — what I missed — and in such a huge and embarrassing way. Harry has an easier time breaking up with Ginny than Lupin has had holding off Tonks because Harry is choosing to fight; he's going towards something. Lupin's situation is completely undeserved, unasked for. He didn't ask to be a werewolf, he doesn't get anything out of sacrificing; he only yearns for connection and companionship. Lupin's personality is that his birthright (that he craves the most) is human connection (friendship or love) that was really stolen from him by Greyback, just like Harry has a birthright that he craves and is angry about having stolen from him, which is different. Harry's birthright that he wants back is his own family and his own story, but when you have that birthright, it's always going to be the thing you crave more than anything else. Okay, then how can you try to be noble and abstain just because of some principle that isn't as all-encompassing to you as this craving (your biggest motivator, the thing you want most)? I was missing that about Lupin, because the difference then with Snape… Snape has a much easier time than either Lupin or Harry in choosing some sort of abstinent life because he is atoning for something that was his own fault in the first place. Right… Right, because unlike baby Harry and five-year-old Lupin (who never asked for any of this), Snape chose to be a Death Eater and to betray Lily, and he is now atoning; it will take a lot of sacrifice to repair the damage he did. That's his choice, so any sacrifice is going to be in the service of something that he very much wants to achieve.

JC: I have not thought of any of this, and I think that's a really fascinating insight, that that's the difference there.

Lorrie: Yeah, so here I'm feeling very stupid and exposed. What it says about me that I didn't see the major difference why Lupin would have a harder time saying no to romance than Snape saying no hypothetically, in case anyone might ever want to be involved with him...

JC: Fanfic that exists in the world aside, I don't see Snape as a character who is at all pursuing anything romantic ever. Not that I see him as ace, but more like he's

just beyond that. It's so far out of the realm of something he could safely do that in my head, he doesn't even go there.

Lorrie: What my take on him as a Snape fan is, and I think is pretty common among Snape fans: the nature of Snape as a fictional character is that everything is as difficult for him as humanly possible. He obviously has never had romance and is never going to have romance. Is that because he doesn't really care? Is it no big loss for him? No! This is Snape we're talking about; for this character, it is the worst. He desperately, probably wants it more than almost anybody. Does it hurt him? Yeah! However much it hurts most people; for Snape, it hurts the most, and he still has to do it because he has only himself to blame, right? And then the indignity, on top of that… The awfulness and the indignity of knowing that he's not physically attractive. That's the rule for writing the Snape character when I'm doing beta for people: when you're wondering, 'What should I have Snape's inner life be about?' whatever the truth is, you have to make it the most difficult to endure. Most people wouldn't be able to, but he just has to, and he can't whine to anybody because it's all somehow his fault originally.

JC: It does make me think about when we saw *Cursed Child* back almost a year ago now — last December on Broadway — together, and we talked about this afterward. One of the things that we talked about in there was how all the little clues that you certainly identified as like saying, "None of this is real. It's not happening." One of the big ones for me was that there's a scene that Snape is in when Scorpius goes back in time and he's by himself and the Death Eaters are running Hogwarts and all this stuff, and Snape is so not Snape; he's so out of character, he actually is good-looking and well put together, and he speaks in this way that is so not Snape, and that was when I was like, 'This is not real. This is like some kid's fantasy fanfic version of Snape. This is not happening.' That's just making me think that there's no timeline in which Snape gets to have that. Yeah.

Lorrie: Nope. The Snape of *Cursed Child* is what you might imagine if the Snape you grew up hearing about was the one who saved your dad and your whole family. "What was he like?" "Well, he did this, he did that," and everything he did was so raw and brave and decent. It would be a real rude awakening to meet the real Snape, who is cranky and insulting, or the reverse. People who didn't live through the release of the *Harry Potter* books in real time looking at people who

did live through that, going, "Why can't you just give it up? It's just a book series…" In order to understand how much this series permeated popular culture to a degree that is just almost unprecedented, it would have to be the story of the entire time that we lived in.

JC: Yeah, that is true. Extricating the casual parts of that from my life has been a challenge. It took years to get those little pieces out of the way I spoke and things that I did at work; it was everywhere. When you look around and you go, 'Wow, it permeates the culture,' it also has permeated my life, and what parts of that am I going to put away in a box? What parts am I going to throw out?

Lorrie: Yeah.

JC: What parts am I going to keep in my heart?

Lorrie: Just before TERFpocalypse, it was in the comic series *Check, Please* where they're talking about the scary, filthy objects you might find lying around a boys' locker room that hasn't been cleaned in a while. There's one that was an athletic cup or something (or just some sort of piece of boys' underwear that's been lying there for a really long time), and one of the character says, "We think it's a Horcrux."

JC: Yeah.

Lorrie: That was so funny and so apt and it really requires you to know the series. The past several years, it's been a process of erasing all of that kind of casual reference to *Harry Potter* from conversation in case, if I let it slip out, I might be talking to somebody who, unbeknownst to me, is trans and now wonders if I'm going to be prejudiced against them and somehow be violent and awful.

JC: Yeah.

Lorrie: 'Okay, no, you've got to purge.' Harry spells out what he and Ginny both know — that Voldemort would try to get to Harry through Ginny — and with a pang, it reminded me, 'Oh, that was part of why Dumbledore wasn't talking to Harry or looking at him throughout Book Five,' but there is a difference between being somebody's romantic partner and being a caretaker for a child. That's the thing: that's the judgment call you have to make as an adult taking care of a kid. 'Am I going to be endangering the kid, or do I have to just make this executive

decision and overcome that and just take the risk anyway because they need it?' If you're wrong in any way, of course it'll be bad.

JC: Yeah.

Lorrie: Yeah. I guess I always do want Dumbledore to get the same grace that most other characters and most people in life deserve, which is there's only so much you can second-guess yourself and blame yourself for decisions you did wrong. Honestly, what would have been better if you had gone the other way? There was no way to know.

JC: Yeah.

Lorrie: If Harry had run to Dumbledore with the Potions textbook with Snape's writing in it and showed him — because right now, he's thinking, 'Oh, I had evidence that he was evil' — Dumbledore, I can only imagine, would treat it the same way he treated everything else about Snape's past when talking to Harry, which would be to keep the secret that he and Snape had about his past. 'Harry, it wouldn't even have helped.'

JC: Yeah.

Lorrie: 'It's okay. Stop blaming yourself. It's okay, it's okay,' or 'it's not okay. It's all equally not okay.' Here's some foreshadowing: Harry feels like "moving felt much more bearable than sitting still, just as setting out as soon as possible to track down the Horcruxes and kill Voldemort would feel better than waiting to do it..." Oh, so that's what he's got to look forward to: a lot of sitting still and waiting. Okay… Oh, no, Rufus Scrimgeour!

JC: Oh, yeah. He's been avoiding Rufus Scrimgeour for days now, and he just lets his focus slip a little bit. He's like, 'I just need to go off for a walk.' Of course, that's when Scrimgeour's going to pounce. Yeah. Well, before we move on to that, I love how Ginny understands and responds to Harry there. She doesn't get upset; she says, "Yeah, I knew this was coming, and yeah, you're right. You're right." Oh, that's… yeah.

Lorrie: Yeah, no, they know.

JC: Again, Ginny's the perfect partner for Harry here.

Lorrie: She knows the whole fight, too. She's been there the whole time. She knows; he doesn't have to explain. Scrimgeour comes up and says, "Do you mind if I walk a little way with you?" "'No,' said Harry indifferently." I love how Harry's inability to care about Scrimgeour and his lack of feeling threatened by Scrimgeour really put Scrimgeour in his place. Not only is it like, 'Oh, God, you again?' but you don't even have to be in full possession of your concentration if Scrimgeour's around; you can put him off with anything. He's not going to scare any information out of Harry that Harry doesn't intend.

JC: I also love that you see at the beginning of this (and you see it throughout this brief scene) that Harry's just like, "Nah, you're not getting anything. I'm done. No, no." He's locked it down in a way that shows a lot of strength. No one's going to talk him out of this.

Lorrie: Yeah. In a moment of grief like this, it's very clear to Harry what is important and what isn't, and Scrimgeour is so far out of the realm of important. Scrimgeour starts with the flowery language, trying to be the politician, and Harry just interrupts him and says, "What do you want?" Love that!

JC: Yeah.

Lorrie: Scrimgeour, seeing the losing battle he's fighting, says, "Okay, we know you were on top of the tower. We saw the second broom," and Harry's like, "Yeah, I'm not going to tell you anything." Scrimgeour has to check everything off of his list (since he's got Harry finally) and says, "The Ministry can offer you all sorts of protection, you know, Harry. I would be delighted to place a couple of my Aurors at your service —"

JC: Wow.

Lorrie: That's… That's cute.

JC: Yeah. There's two things in my head: number one is 'They can't… what, really? No.'

Lorrie: Yeah, right.

JC: The second thing is, 'Oh, and who will those Aurors be reporting to?'

Lorrie: Yeah. Oh, my goodness.

JC: Yeah. "Harry, we really want to be able to keep an eye on you."

Lorrie: But Scrimgeour… it is his job to do as much as he can in this direction.

JC: To interfere, yeah.

Lorrie: Finally, when Harry decides that he's going to end this silly conversation, he sends Scrimgeour away by saying, "Oh, have you released Stan Shunpike yet?" and that was so upsetting to read. Scrimgeour actually turns red. He is ashamed of them for using an innocent citizen as a scapegoat; he's ashamed, and it's only one person. They haven't even killed Stan Shunpike; they're just holding him on false charges and imprisoning him, not like what the U.S. government is just randomly doing to U.S. citizens that they pick up off the street and just…

JC: Right.

Lorrie: And feel no shame about.

JC: Yeah.

Lorrie: We are so far past that now.

JC: Yeah.

Lorrie: Can you imagine if there was one person that we knew about that was being unjustly held, and mentioning that could actually cause shame?

JC: Yeah. No.

Lorrie: No.

JC: No. In fact, it's how we have a government who will just lie and make up new shit to justify what they're doing, and no one seems to be able to call them on it. Yeah, yeah.

Lorrie: Harry gets rid of Scrimgeour.

JC: He tells the Minister that he's "Dumbledore's man through and through," which I love. I think he'll say that again in the next book, right?

Lorrie: Yeah.

JC: He's keeping Dumbledore's secrets.

Lorrie: Yeah, which is also good foreshadowing that of course, in the hero's journey somewhere around the middle of the next book, he's going to have to go through a long, dark night about that, but right now, Dumbledore's barely dead and all of his protectiveness and information and sheer genius are still holding Harry. Harry tells Ron and Hermione what he has known he has to tell them: that he's not coming back to Hogwarts. First, he's going to go to the Dursleys', because that's what Dumbledore would have wanted, and then he thinks he's going to start with the origins of his own story at Godric's Hollow. Then he says the thing that turns out not to be his mission: he says, "… and I'm the one who's going to kill him." And then the sentence: "If I meet Severus Snape along the way, so much the better for me, so much the worse for him." Meanwhile, I'm still remembering their duel, where Snape just shrugs his shoulder and Harry can't even finish thinking a spell.

JC: Right. I think the next time Harry and Snape are facing each other, that is what happens: the better for Harry (he gets information that he absolutely needs), and the worse for Snape (because he gives that information at the cost of his own life), but that's a whole book away.

Lorrie: Yeah, and that's when Ron and Hermione inform him that they're coming, too. They talk about how, before any of this starts, they have to go to Bill and Fleur's wedding at the Burrow or Molly Weasley will be much scarier than Voldemort. Then we get this line that's a reminder that we (readers who have read and reread this series) know that there will be an end to Harry's sufferings in this war, but he doesn't, and at the time we first read this book, we didn't either: "… in spite of the final meeting with Voldemort he knew must come, whether in a month, in a year, or in ten…" Yeah, we had no idea. Is the final book going to cover a span of years? We don't know. She's already indicated, by saying that Harry's not going to be at Hogwarts, that it's going to break pattern. How? It could break pattern in any way. The author is giving him, with this wedding, one last golden day of peace left to enjoy with Ron and Hermione.

JC: And Harry really spends a moment wondering how anything as normal as a wedding can happen at a time like this, and that really hit me, too.

Lorrie: Yes.

JC: I feel like we have said that over and over for the last few years about how interesting it is (and how strange it is) to be sending our kids off to college at a time when no one really knows what the future is going to be. Are they going to be able to get a degree that they'll be able to do anything with? What kind of a country will we live in? How can we do something so normal like sending our kids off to college, but we've talked a lot about how holding on to things like that is part of the way that we keep ourselves moving forward?

Lorrie: Yeah.

JC: You just have to. You have to keep doing the important things. You have to celebrate the important milestones in life.

Lorrie: We don't even know if college is going to be a thing for the whole time that they're supposed to be there. They could be going to Hampshire College and be told, in the middle of their education, that the college is shutting down right now. What if the department — the subject that they've wanted to study their whole lives — is going to be outlawed?

JC: Or made obsolete by AI?

Lorrie: Yeah.

JC: But then here, they're going to have this wedding, and they're going to celebrate that these two people are going to start their lives together in a very different world than the one they thought they were going to live in just a year ago, but here we are.

Lorrie: Not naively, and the importance of a celebration like this is much more concentrated now. The most literal way that this hit home was a time recently when I was talking to a bunch of friends who were very directly affected by legislation restricting rights and freedom for trans people. One of them said, "Well, if you want to talk about something good," and then they started talking about the wedding; they were about to get married, and they were thinking about clothing for the ceremony and parents flying in and flowers. I very much felt like, 'I can't believe we're talking about something so normal as a wedding. Yes, yes, yes, let's talk about that.' "What kind of food are you going to serve?"

JC: Yeah.

Lorrie: Knowing that people flying in for a wedding… that's going to be dangerous, and that everything is worth doing that's this emotionally important.

JC: Yeah, that there are things that we should celebrate and we should celebrate them loudly.

Lorrie: And that's actually the point of being alive and the point of resisting people who want to make sure that you don't get to live the life that people are born to. So, JC, that was Book Six. What do you think?

JC: It ended in a way that I turned the page and I was like, 'Wait, wait, wait… What?!'

Lorrie: Welcome to the two-year hiatus!

JC: Nooooo!

Lorrie: I remember thinking there's only one book left in this series, but she has so many open plot lines. How on Earth is she going to park this thing? Then the scrutiny and the pressure globally with what was now an extremely profitable movie franchise, also… It was astonishing to watch the world become the *Harry Potter* era. But yeah, it all depends on a single author writing a story, and as anyone who has ever written knows, you're pretty sure if you've written before, you can do it again.

JC: The amount of pressure, I can't even imagine. The entire world is waiting to read this book.

Lorrie: I went back to the first episode that we recorded on this book and looked back at what was I saying to you then about looking forward to discussing it, and here is a quote from the transcript: "To me, this book feels like a symphony. There are so many themes and different timelines running through it and different characters' points of view that are happening all at once, not always from the same decade. These all seem separate, but they collapse into each other and they influence each other. More than any other volume, this volume uses 'show, don't tell,'" which I think at that time I might have been thinking about 'Does Draco have a Dark Mark or not?' "This book shows characters pushing themselves to their absolute limits where they're not sure if they have the character to go that far, but they have to find out." I don't know if I was thinking then about Harry and

Dumbledore and the cave, or Slughorn going, "I don't have the courage to answer you, Harry." There are so many different things happening with the Half-Blood Prince's textbook and whatever Slughorn is up to, and Dumbledore's secret trips…

JC: And Draco sneaking around the Room of Requirement.

Lorrie: And they all comment on each other. Understanding the emotions behind one of those things helps you understand the emotions behind all of the others. The shame… The shame of Slughorn remembering his past and how that's (in this book) super, super pointing to the shame of Snape not wanting anyone to know why he's spending all this time trying to repair some damage he's done; buried much farther beneath that is Dumbledore's shame at his own past (which we barely get to see in Book Seven, and it won't be until the *Fantastic Beasts* series that we really get into it), and that's why Dumbledore would understand what a hard time Slughorn is having confessing his guilt.

JC: That was quite an intro to this book, and it's interesting to return to it.

Lorrie: You are coming at it from 'This is the second time you're ever going to read it after twenty years.'

JC: Yeah.

Lorrie: We have seen you stick with that perspective the whole time. This book in particular is really set up so that there are mysteries that we cannot possibly understand until we go digest all the information to come in Book Seven and then come back and reread it here.

JC: Yeah.

Lorrie: It is not possible to understand this series on one reading alone.

JC: What was the fandom take, then, on this book? Were people looking forward to seeing how it was all going to be wrapped up? Was there a lot of confusion, a lot of dissatisfaction with this book? I don't really remember.

Lorrie: I don't actually remember a lot of dissatisfaction. I remember craving knowing what was coming next. Absolute craving... I remember a huge outpouring of emotion about the loss of Dumbledore.

JC: Even though, I think, after it happened, it was like, 'Yeah, of course that was going to happen.'

Hosts: Yeah.

JC: It was a shock, but not a surprise.

Lorrie: Right. As we saw, no matter what was happening in his life, he enjoyed the heck out of it. He liked being himself, even though he knew his worst flaws and had some self-hatred there, but no, generally being Albus Dumbledore was fun.

JC: I think that's goals (hashtag goals) for getting old: knowing who you are and what you want to get out of life, and then doing it, being able to do it.

Lorrie: Yeah. It's also hashtag goals for being genius, because he sure had fuel to be tortured about his genius if he let that happen.

JC: I think also knowing that Harry's going to get to see him one more time is a bit comforting here, too, I guess. Yeah, you're right: the knowledge of the seventh book completely changes the reading of this one. One of my favorite kinds of stories is the kind that you have to read it again because then you understand it, or a film or anything. I love that.

Lorrie: Which is a strange juxtaposition with you not feeling like a re-reader.

JC: With me not doing it again, yeah. I know. I tend not to reread things weirdly, even though I just said that. I do that a lot with films, though; I'll go back and watch a film again, or if it's something short, I'll read it. I'm busy. That's my excuse: I'm busy. It takes a long time to read this book.

Lorrie: Okay, I'm totally going to take a different take on what you just said.

JC: Okay, interesting. Ooh, let's find out.

Lorrie: You are not too busy to go back to this story; you were doing it in community. If you lived in a world with no internet and just your own copies of books, that would be one thing; instead, there were people you had never met, in countries very far away, who were pouring out their own feelings about this that you could engage with.

JC: That's true.

Lorrie: You could see what they thought, and sometimes they were off in a direction that didn't make sense to you at all, so you could think about that, and then you could find somebody else who took it into a completely different direction. There was no shortage of people who, like us, turned the page and went, "What?!"

JC: And then went on the internet.

Lorrie: And then said, "Fine, I'll write something if you write something."

JC: Right, yeah. I do remember — yeah, no, you're absolutely right, because I remember going online instantly and looking for people's reactions, and then people were already writing these incredible essays linking back to previous books and talking about —

Lorrie: Yeah.

JC: Yeah. It was that I didn't have to reread it, because other people were doing that work for me and then just telling me what they found.

Lorrie: Yeah. We were feasting.

JC: The crushing feeling of, 'Oh, God, that was it,' and having to close the book, but then… Now, we can go get online and see what people are saying about it.

Hosts: Yeah.

Lorrie: This moment was when I went from being a fan to being in the fandom: just the thought of 'What is Severus Snape doing right now? What are his options? How alone does he feel?' Harry's going on about how alone he is while he's surrounded by his best friends and people who think he's a good person and he's invited to a wedding; he sees Luna and Neville and feels filled with love for them, and he's brushing off the Minister for Magic.

JC: He's going to be the hero and figure all this out in the end, and yeah.

Lorrie: Yeah. He's heroically breaking up with the soul mate of his life; meanwhile, you think you're alone, Harry? No, no, no… Draco is pretty alone, but he still has his parents, right? Snape is alone.

JC: Okay, so when you got online, it sounds like you hadn't really been in fandom discussions until after you read this one. Were you surprised? How were people talking about Snape, and was it in ways that surprised you? How did that go for you? Were you alone in your interpretations of Snape?

Lorrie: No. No, no, no… There was so much, I could not read it all; it was far more than a single person could read. If you were going to engage with *Harry Potter* fanfiction at all, one of the first skills you had to learn was how to choose what you were going to read. Finding recommenders that you trust or sites that had pretty much the take you were looking for… all of that was an early investment that you had to make in how to be a fan. Then I found, for example, that there were fests where people would say, "Okay, write about this character from this particular point of view." If you wanted to read Lupin but only exploring his relationship with Tonks, then you could go there; if you wanted Lupin but only he's gay, that's somewhere else. If you wanted it to be like 'Tonks is actually agender or pangender,' or that is actually how they're together is because Tonks is a man with Lupin, you could go there. So many people were doing so many things that you could instantly feel like there is room here, and if you're the only one who has a super weird idea, chances are if you start something, other people will say, "You know what? That's really interesting." One of the forms of fan creativity was "Come up with a good prompt that will get people's imaginations going. Let's see what else we can collectively come up with and explore," and that was part of the fun of it.

JC: Yeah.

Lorrie: So no, I wasn't surprised. The thing that made me proud of my guy Snape is that, more than any other character, it was possible to have every single possible take about him.

JC: That is true, yeah. Posting many takes on Snape over the years, for sure.

Lorrie: Any wild story or character read or anything that you could come up with, he is so versatile, and you can fit him because he is an exceptionally written fictional character.

JC: He's also the character that I remember there were famous cosplayers who went to cons and played Snape, and they were very good. Their attention to detail

was incredible, almost more than any other character; the people who cosplayed Snape did it very seriously and thoughtfully.

Lorrie: Because there was so much scope for improv. The next chapter, the first chapter of *Harry Potter and the Deathly Hallows*, is called The Dark Lord Ascending.

JC: Oh, ho!

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.