

The Rowling Library
Magazine



Answers in Secrets

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WELCOME

December has arrived, the last month of the year, and with it, a new issue of The Rowling Library Magazine. This time, the cover reflects the seven questions that Cameron Werner thinks *The Secrets of Dumbledore* should (and maybe will) answer. These are open questions that were introduced in *Crimes of Grindelwald*, so after four years maybe it is time that we get some answers.

Oliver Horton presents a theory that I personally really like: is the Chamber of Secrets a Time Vault? At least, it behaves like one. Beatrice Groves writes about the Christmas miracles in *The Christmas Pig* and *A Christmas Carol*. We also present the final part of Swarnim Agrawal's *Melancholy and Depression*. Finally, Alan Dell'Oso shows us Minerva McGonagall's Wand, and Fausto Giurescu delights us with a new Famous Wizard Card, this time the card of a famous magical theoretician.

Just a few hours ago, J.K. Rowling confirmed on Twitter that she finished the sixth book in the Cormoran Strike series. It will be published in 2022 and its title will be *The Ink Black Heart*. We didn't have time to write about this for this issue, but we will prepare something for the next month.

I hope you enjoy the magazine! Have a great end of the year and start 2022 in the best possible way!

Patricio

PS: We had the enourmous privilege of interviewing Evanna Lynch, Luna Lovegood in the Harry Potter films, and of talking about her new book, *Harry Potter, J.K. Rowling and more*. You can find the interview on our YouTube channel (and there is a link on page 23).

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DEPRESSION (PART 2). 39. RIDDIKULUS!**

SECRET HISTORY OF THE WIZARDING PHENOMENON

Based on original research and exclusive interviews, this book tells the story of how the Harry Potter books, movies, theme parks, fandom and more were created. Including the creative processes, the marketing aspect, and the legal issues that arose, this publication aims to be a behind-the-scenes of the Harry Potter phenomenon.



Read an excerpt

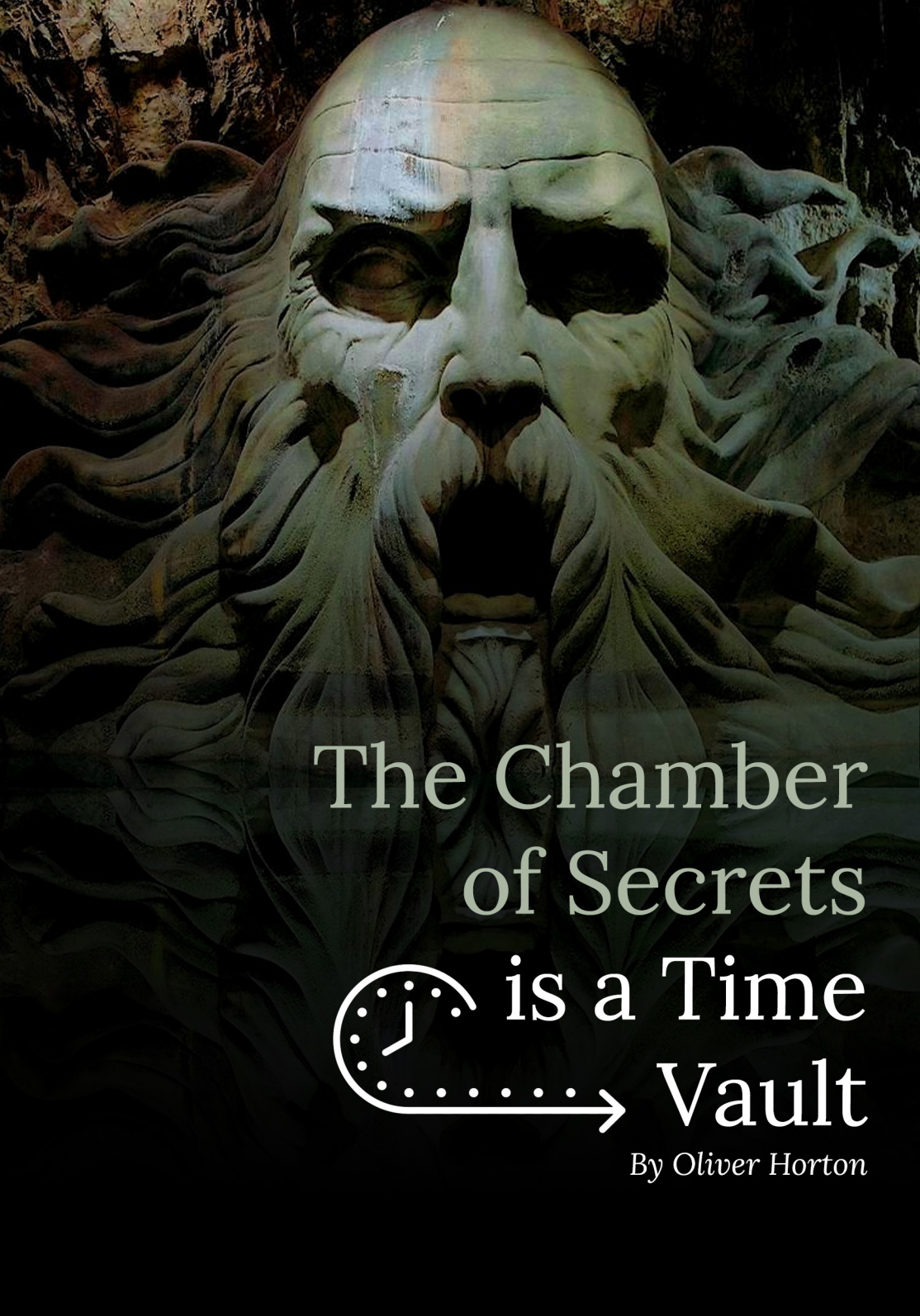


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This is an unofficial book and it has not been authorized by J.K. Rowling or Warner Bros.





The Chamber of Secrets is a Time Vault

By Oliver Horton

Salazar Slytherin, one of the four founders of Hogwarts, created the Chamber of Secrets and there housed a Basilisk. A Millennium later Salazar's descendant Tom "Voldemort" Riddle opened the chamber and set loose the giant snake, which killed fellow student Myrtle Warren, aka Moaning Myrtle. In *Harry Potter and the Chamber of Secrets* Voldemort's first Horcrux, contained in his student diary, possesses Ginny Weasley and the Chamber is opened once more. Her disappearance induces second-year Harry Potter to enter the Chamber, miles below Hogwarts, and confront the heir of Slytherin.

One thousand years is a long time for a snake to live, even a magical one. Yet the snake is always there, dormant. For most of its long, long life, the Chamber of Secrets is closed. Harry must first open the gateway at the broken basin in Moaning Myrtle's bathroom. "Open up," he says, in Parseltongue. Then, after a descent via pipe, a passageway leads to a wall and two carved serpents. The tunnel floor here is littered with the bones of animals and the discarded skin of the 20-foot-long Basilisk. Harry again speaks Parseltongue and the stone serpents part. In contrast to the vestibule, the floor of the Chamber of Secrets is smooth, as if new. Like Cleopatra, age has not withered. The Basilisk is confined to this area until a wizard or witch opens the Chamber of Secrets,

but there are no signs of kills or other debris. The snake occupies a chamber-within-a-chamber within the giant statue of Salazar Slytherin, until summoned.

When the chamber is sealed, time stops.

When the chamber opens, time and life resume.

The Chamber of Secrets is a time vault. The snake's chamber is immune to the passing of time. Only when the Chamber of Secrets opens does the snake roam and hunt and eat and grow. Harry does not hear the snake during Book One, because time is suspended in the snake's underworld. Tom Riddle put the snake back to bed [for fifty years] after the death of a student threatened to reveal his villainy. Dumbledore was asking too many questions.

The gateway in Moaning Myrtle's bathroom slides closed after Harry, Ron, Ginny, Lockhart, Fawkes and the Sorting Hat depart in *Chamber of Secrets*. In fact, there is no indication that the Chamber-proper closes, nor the statue of Slytherin. Both remain open during Harry's adventure in Book Two. The Chamber is rendered pointless with the death of its slithering occupant, so the Chamber of Secrets may remain open, and time there flow as normal. But, when Ron and Hermione visit the Chamber of Secrets towards the

end of *Harry Potter and the Deathly Hallows*, they recover fangs from the Basilisk that remain toxic with venom: no deterioration in potency despite five years having passed since the creature's death. Muggle-world snake venom dries up in a fortnight. Hermione uses one of the fangs to destroy the Hufflepuff Cup Horcrux.

Ron speaks Parseltongue to gain access to the Chamber during the Battle of Hogwarts,. Which would be necessary in Moaning Myrtle's bathroom. The book only says the monster was dead. There is no word on the condition of the corpse. Possibly magic keeps the teeth toxic despite decomposition. Possibly the Basilisk and its venom have again been preserved in time.

The subtle manipulation of time in *Chamber of Secrets* sets up time's prominent role in the book that follows: *Harry Potter and the Prisoner of Azkaban*. Hermione Granger, aged twelve, is gifted a Time Turner in order to attend all the classes on her agenda. Near the end of Book Three, Harry and Hermione use the time travel device to return to the story's climactic hours, and rescue Buckbeak the Hippogriff. and Sirius Black Despite Hermione's

warnings about messing with time, whatever happens is bound to happen that way. The story's timeline is stable, immutable. By these rules you cannot change the past, only ensure its consistency. Harry is saved from the Dementors the first time round, then goes back and becomes the saviour. The outcome remains the same.

Time is one of 12 divisions at the Ministry of Magic's Department of Mysteries. Time, death, love, space and thought are the five confirmed

“When the chamber is sealed, time stops.”

zones; the other seven unknown. Luna suggests there is a room of poisons. Wandlore and magical creatures are two obvious

areas of study. Following the example of Marvel Comics' Infinity Stones, we might consider soul, power and reality. The Hall of Prophecy, the gang's destination in *Harry Potter and the Order of the Phoenix*, is an annex of the Time Room; predictions of the future are tied to the passing of time.

The Time Room of the Department of Mysteries sparkles with beautiful diamond light and resounds with relentless ticking. The source is a large crystal bell jar that contains a hummingbird in a timeloop, like an elastic version of the phoenix's fate: birth to death and back again.

In Book Five a Death Eater ends up with a baby head after a close encounter with the bell jar. The room is filled with time-telling devices of every description. Here lies the Ministry's stock of Time Turners. They were presumably invented here. They are destroyed here.

The subterranean Department of Mysteries is on the lowest level of the Ministry of Magic, and pre-exists the Ministry. As does Hogwarts. Salazar Slytherin's secret chamber is not the only Chamber of Secrets in the stories. A pocket dimension enclosed by powerful magic? The Room of Requirement. The headmaster's office. The Lake. The Forest. Hogwarts thinks for itself but, despite Mr Weasley's advice in Book Two, we never find out where it keeps its brain.

Department of Mysteries and Chamber of Secrets are synonymous phrases. Might the Chamber of Secrets have started out as a Department of Mysteries for the north and only later be reconfigured as a kennel for a serpent? Were there Unspeakables at Hogwarts developing magic under the Lake? Did Salazar's "workshop" turn into his panic

room?

Voldemort, who saw inferiority everywhere, corrupted the Basilisk for his own evil ends. But his ancestor Salazar Slytherin had real purpose. Slytherin was paranoid about Muggle attack. And, to be fair, a great many Muggles wanted to kill, maim or seriously injure wizards and witches in Medieval times, and the centuries that followed. Christians got to burn

witches alive; a murderous snake seems a sensible precaution. During the events of 'Prisoner of Azkaban', Dumbledore even talks about dragons guarding the castle. Monsters at the gates are a reality

“When the chamber opens, time and life resume.”

of this world. The Basilisk exists to be a defender of the school, like the statues that are called to fight during the Battle of Hogwarts: "Piertotum Locomotor!" And like the statues, the Basilisk remains frozen in time until called to action. Slytherin lived hundreds of years before the Statute of Secrecy. He never knew peace between wizards and Muggles. The snake was his secret weapon in case he was proved right about a Muggle attack on Hogwarts. School co-founder Godric Gryffindor, more tolerant of all things Muggle, would not have approved.



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And all our patrons also receives The Daily Prophet two times a week in their email inbox, with the latest Harry Potter news and commentary, which means that you are paying less than €30 per Daily Prophet edition.

Our current supports - to which we are really grateful - are:

Dominik Jojko, Sam, Marco Reyes, Paulo Setti, Lisa Shipowitz, Sylvie, Geoffrey Tixier, Dana, Shirley Joyce, Beatrice Groves, Marty Ryan, Anthony Franz, Sean McLennan, John Granger, Annie A., Marlica, Cindi Shannon, Lyn Arey, James Greenhill, Alvaro Palomo Hernandez, JeffJ, Sherri Rawstern, Josephine Glazov, Renjie Fu, Mary Beth Murphy, John Livingston, Stephanie Varnell, Susan Sipal, Kenneth Montfort, Vicky McKinley and Suzanne Lucero.

BECOME A PATRON

SEVEN QUESTIONS FOR THE SECRETS OF DUMBLEDORE

It has now been over three years since the release of *The Crimes of Grindelwald*. While that now seems like an eternity ago, the wait for new Fantastic Beasts content is almost over with *The Secrets of Dumbledore* scheduled to hit cinemas in early 2022. As fans eagerly await their first glimpse of the movie, here are some of the biggest questions you may still have after watching *Crimes*. Needless to say, this article will

include spoilers from the second film, so read on at your own peril!

Just who is the mysterious Credence Barebone?

Credence Barebone has taken centre stage in the Fantastic Beasts series since day one and yet it seems we have more questions about him now than ever before! *The Crimes of Grindelwald* explored his true identity, leaving us with



EZRA MILLER AS CREDENCE BAREBONE,
FANTASTIC BEASTS: THE CRIMES OF GRINDELWALD (WARNER BROS., 2018)

that absolute BOMBSHELL of an ending that potentially changes everything we thought we knew about the Dumbledore family. Will the *Secrets of Dumbledore* reveal more about Credence's past? Is he really Aurelius Dumbledore as Grindelwald claims? Or could he be Corvus Lestrage after all? Might Grindelwald possibly be lying in order to pit Credence against Dumbledore, using him and his anger as a weapon? If not, how does he fit into the Dumbledore timeline? We know Albus' father Percival was incarcerated at Azkaban after attacking some muggles who had assaulted Albus' sister Ariana. Albus' mother Kendra on the other hand, was accidentally killed by Ariana in one of her uncontrolled magical outbursts. Where does Aurelius Dumbledore figure in all of this? Could he be one of the titular *Secrets of Dumbledore*?


What is a blood pact?

Magical promises were one of the themes in *Crimes*. Indeed, Yusuf Kama's primary motivation to track down and kill Credence was revealed to be an unbreakable vow he had made to his dying father. However, it appears it was not just Kama who made a magically binding promise that he regretted making for much of his later life. Albus himself revealed having made a blood pact with Gellert Grindelwald during their fateful summer at Godric's Hollow, with

the two of them swearing not to fight each other. This poses so many questions: what exactly is a blood pact? How does a blood pact differ from an unbreakable vow? Can a blood pact be destroyed and, if so, how? It would seem that there is some way for it to be broken, with producers Yates and Heyman revealing it involves Dumbledore paying a terrible price and that he 'is then committed to doing something, which we will discover in the next story'. Sounds like the *Secrets of Dumbledore* might well be centred around our heroes having to destroy the blood pact!

What next for Queenie Goldstein?

Oh poor, dear, sweet Queenie! One of the most shocking (and, let's be frank, upsetting!) twists in *Crimes* was Queenie Goldstein's turn to the dark side. While *Fantastic Beasts and Where to Find them* showed Queenie's fun and carefree personality, *Crimes* revealed a more troubled side to our favourite legilimens. During the climax of the movie, in her desperation at her situation, she finally joined Grindelwald, leaving her muggle beau Jacob broken-hearted. Will the *Secrets of Dumbledore* involve Queenie seeing the error of her ways? Was it all a ploy to infiltrate Grindelwald's following? Will we ever see Queenie and Jacob reunited and happy again? Please Jo, don't play with our hearts like this!



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What is a blood
pact?

What next for
Queenie
Goldstein?

Will we see Newt
Scamander's
patronus?

What next for
devious Gellert
Grindelwald?

What do the
predictions of
Tycho Dodonus
mean?

Was that Fawkes
the Phoenix we
saw at the end of
the movie?

Will we see Newt Scamander's patronus?

Will Newt Scamander's patronus finally be revealed? In April 2017 a curious fan on Twitter asked J.K. Rowling what Newt's patronus is. Jo responded cryptically, tweeting in response: 'Big Spoilers'. As might be expected, this sent fans into overdrive speculating what creature Newt's patronus might be, and, crucially, how it might constitute a spoiler. Since then *Crimes* released with not so much as a hint at Newt's patronus. Might *The Secrets of Dumbledore* change this?

What do the predictions of Tycho Dodonus mean?

*"A son cruelly banished
Despair of the daughter
Return, great avenger
With wings from the water."*

Crimes also first introduced the mysterious predictions of Tycho Dodonus. Throughout the film various references were made to the prophecies, with multiple characters referring to them as though they were widely known in the wizarding world. This seems very much like it will be significant to the development of the *Fantastic Beasts* saga and has seen fans agonising over the prediction's true meaning! Does the prophecy refer to the Dumbledores? To Newt? The Lestranges? Credence? Grindelwald? A combination of the above? Only time will tell!

What next for devious Gellert Grindelwald?

What dastardly plans will Grindelwald hatch next? *Crimes* showed Grindelwald committing a number of unspeakable acts,



THE PREDICTIONS OF TYCHO DODONUS,
POSTER DESIGN BY MINALIMA (2018)

including murdering innocent muggles, inciting his followers to violence and generally promoting his hateful wizarding supremacy ideology. And yet it seems that many of his actions were laying the groundwork for his grand plan. What else does he have in store? Will he continue to expand his influence over the wizarding world?

Was that Fawkes the Phoenix we saw at the end of the movie?

Throughout *Crimes* we saw glimpses of a small bird Credence took into his care. In the final scene, however, Grindelwald launches it into the air, with the bird transforming into a fully fledged phoenix. Could this be Fawkes the Phoenix? Dumbledore provides a clue in an earlier scene, revealing that a legendary phoenix once belonged to his great-great-grandfather and comes to the aid

of any Dumbledore in desperate need. If so, does this confirm Aurelius' identity as a Dumbledore? Will Fawkes have a greater part to play in the *Fantastic Beasts* series going forward? Perhaps we will see how Albus Dumbledore came to possess the phoenix? After all, we know Dumbledore owned him by 1938 at the latest (the year Tom Riddle started at Hogwarts), since he claimed to have provided the phoenix feather used as Voldemort's wand core.

...

These are but just a few of the questions raised by *The Crimes of Grindelwald*. However it seems *Fantastic Beasts* fans wanting answers may just be in luck, with JK Rowling using the following three words to describe *The Secrets of Dumbledore*: 'answers are given'!



PHOENIX SCENE,
FANTASTIC BEASTS: THE CRIMES OF GRINDELWALD (WARNER BROS., 2018)

DECEMBER IN TWITTER HISTORY



J.K. Rowling ✓
@jk_rowling

...

Replying to @upmeli

@upmeli Writers. Don't. Cast. Movies. Ask. John. Green.

9:59 AM · Dec 22, 2015 · Twitter for iPhone

878 Retweets 4 Quote Tweets 1,918 Likes

AFTER BEING ASKED BY A FAN ABOUT THE ACTORS IN THE HARRY POTTER FILMS, ROWLING EXPLAINED SHE WAS NOT INVOLVED IN THE CASTING PROCESS.



Christmas miracles in

THE
CHRISTMAS
PIG

&

A
CHRISTMAS
CAROL

by Beatrice Groves

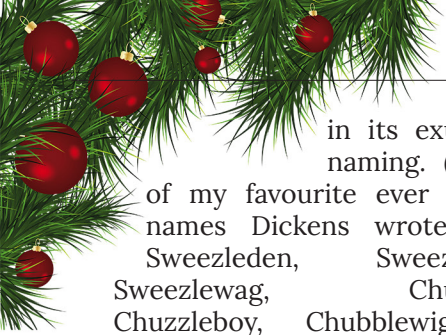
I've always seen A Christmas Carol as utter writing perfection. It's an idea of such pure genius and the very best stories, I think, they have a sort of inevitability about them...

It's as though they were found complete and entire; the writer just took this fully-formed thing and embellished it. I think A Christmas Carol is the perfect Christmas story. (JK Rowling) [1]

The astonishing success of A Christmas Carol transformed Charles Dickens into the 'man who invented Christmas.' This phrase was itself invented by a critic over a hundred years ago to express the 'Dickens effect' whereby A Christmas Carol was believed to have re-enthused the British public about celebrating the feast. William Makepeace Thackeray (author of Vanity Fair) even wrote that Dickens's story 'occasioned immense hospitality throughout England; was the

means of lighting up hundreds of kind fires at Christmas time; caused a wonderful outpouring of Christmas good feeling; of Christmas punch-brewing; an awful slaughter of Christmas turkeys; and roasting and basting of Christmas beef.' [2]

On Blue Peter, Rowling was asked if she had a favourite book to read at Christmas and she replied 'definitely A Christmas Carol by Charles Dickens, I think is the ultimate – the best Christmas story of all time.' [3] A Christmas Carol, indeed, has been a ubiquitous presence in Rowling's promotional interviews for The Christmas Pig - which is hardly surprising as it is not only the most famous Christmas novel, but also written by one of Rowling's favourite authors. Harry Potter is indebted to Dickens in a number of ways – for obviously, perhaps, in its choice of an orphan for a hero and



in its exuberant naming. (In one of my favourite ever lists of names Dickens wrote down Sweezleden, Sweezleback, Sweezlewag, Chuzzltoe, Chuzzleboy, Chubblewig and Chuzzlewig before hitting on the name of the eponymous hero of *Martin Chuzzlewit*.) Harry Potter is likewise influenced by Dickens's plots - the idea for Snape's heroism springing from his unrequited love, for example, was inspired by *A Tale of Two Cities*. [4]

In *The Christmas Pig* Rowling has written her clearest homage to Dickens yet - a redemptive Christmas story in which someone who has become lost finds their way again. In both stories this transformation occurs via a journey into an Otherworld on Christmas Eve night, a journey in the which the protagonist learns to revise his understanding of what it is that truly has value. For Jack, as for Scrooge, an ability to embrace the change of perspective brought to him by this magical Christmas Eve journey will transform his happiness in the real world.

Rowling has spoken about how 'I always wanted to write a Christmas story, but the best Christmas stories are so good that I was a little bit intimidated. And when I had the idea for this story I thought "That's it. This story can only happen at Christmas"' [3] One reason that the idea for *The Christmas Pig*

could 'only' in Rowling's words, 'happen at Christmas' is that it is about Things that come alive:

'We can only talk in the Land of the Living tonight, because it's a special night,' said the Christmas Pig. 'You know what night it is, don't you?'

'Christmas Eve,' said Jack.

One of the most famous children's books about toys coming to life is Margery Williams's *The Velveteen Rabbit* (1922), which opens with the Boy being given the Velveteen Rabbit at Christmas. The Skin Horse explains to the Velveteen Rabbit what it is to be real: 'Real isn't how you are made... It's a thing that happens to you. When a child loves you for a long, long time, not just to play with, but REALLY loves you, then you become Real... Generally, by the time you are Real, most of your hair had been loved off, and your eyes drop out and you get loose in the joints and very shabby.' (DP, of course, has grown shabby in just this way - even to the detail of having eyes that have fallen out.) Christmas does not return explicitly in *The Velveteen Rabbit*, but the final magic that happens - the fairy appearing from the flower that grows where the Rabbit's tear falls the ground - links with a Christmas story. [5]

The idea behind *Velveteen Rabbit* - that being loved enough can make you real - is, of course, the structuring principle behind *The*





THE VELVETEEN RABBIT, BY MICHAEL HAGUEN (HOLT, RHINEHART & WINSTON, 1983)

Christmas Pig. In the Land of the Lost the more a Thing is loved, the safer it becomes, until – if it is loved enough – it will live safe on the Island of the Beloved.

The Christmas Pig combines two strands of toy-based fiction – the ‘toys which are alive’ genre (of which *The Velveteen Rabbit* is probably the best-known book) and the ‘toys which are lost’ genre (of which Shirley Hughes’s *Dogger* will always reign perpetual monarch). When Mum washes DP in *The Christmas Pig*, it is a replay of Mum washing Dogger, and DP buried in the sand could recall the Velveteen Rabbit who gets ‘quite earthy from diving into the burrows the Boy had made for him

in the flower bed.’ *The Velveteen Rabbit* also involves a replacement toy and when the worn out Velveteen Rabbit is discarded (in case he has become infected with the Boy’s Scarlet Fever) and the Boy is brought a new bunny: ‘all white plush with real glass eyes’ (like the Christmas Pig with his ‘shiny black eyes and perky pink ears’).

In modern culture, of course, the *Toy Story* franchise is the best-known example of the ‘toys which are alive’ genre – and there are lots of echoes of these films, from the terrifying fiery conflagration of the toys in the incinerator at the climax of *Toy Story 3* to one of the series’ central plotlines in which Woody’s attempts to rid

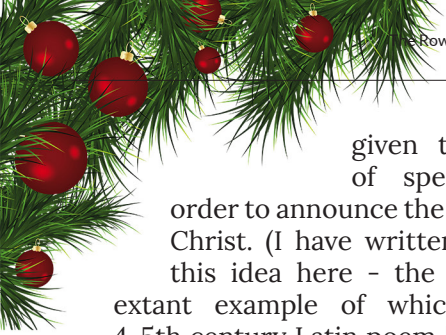
himself of Buzz, transform into an understanding that this annoying toy has become his best friend. *Toy Story*, like *The Christmas Pig*, also toys a fair amount with the 'toys which are lost' genre. Woody and Buzz spend much of their time being lost in the early films, and indeed DP being lost out of a car window replays a bit of a *leit motif* of the series. *Toy Story 4* then begins with a jokey version of the lost toy (Forky the spork who is constantly trying to become lost by throwing himself away and realising his destiny as trash) but ends by holding that fear, the fear of becoming a Lost Toy, as a positive existential choice. Woody finally decides to pursue a meaning in life independent of being owned and embrace life as a Lost Toy (with perhaps an echo of the Velveteen Rabbit becoming Real in a new, and more liberating sense, at the end of his story).

Rowling has spoken in interview of how 'there is magic around Christmas Eve'[6] and the blurb for *The Christmas Pig* explains what this magic is: 'Christmas Eve is a night for miracles and lost causes, a night when all things can come to life... even toys.' And the reason that toys can come to life on Christmas Eve – the reason that *The Velveteen Rabbit* starts at Christmas – is that this is the festival of a miraculous birth. And this miraculous birth was symbolised in both ancient stories and classic fairy tales, by the idea of other things coming to life – in particular flowers blooming in midwinter and animals being able to talk.

Sepp Bauer's *Die Christrose* (1920), for example, is a German fairy tale in which Fritz and Gretl are aided on their journey by talking animals. Folktales like this draw on the ancient legend that the night before Christmas animals were



TOY STORY (1995)



given the gift of speech in order to announce the birth of Christ. (I have written about this idea here - the earliest extant example of which is a 4-5th century Latin poem [7]) And allied to this idea is that of plants flowering at a time when they should be dead. One of the most important of these is the Christmas rose - whose mid-winter blooming has made it an important symbol in many Christmas folktales and carols,[8] - while probably the most famous is the Glastonbury Thorn. The tradition of this tree's mystical mid-winter flowering was first recorded in the sixteenth century:

The tradition began when Thomas Cromwell, chief adviser to Henry VIII, sent a Dr Layton to Glastonbury in 1535 to investigate rumours concerning the tree. The doctor sent back to London 'two flowers wrapped in black sarsnet, that in Christmass Mass, at the very hour Christ was born, will spring and burgeon and bear blossoms'.

The legend of the Holy Thorn concerns Joseph of Arimathea who cut a staff from the same tree the Roman soldiers used to make the mocking crown of thorns they placed on Christ's head. Later, Joseph led a party of merchants on a tour of tin mines in Somerset. He carried the staff, and when his party climbed a grassy hill on the

Isle of Avalon, Joseph is said to have stopped, stuck the staff in the ground and sat down to rest saying, 'We are weary all'. When they moved off, Joseph inadvertently left the staff in the ground, where it took root and eventually grew into the original Glastonbury Holy Thorn. [9]

These stories - tales of animals who can talk on Christmas Eve, and of the Christmas Rose that blooms at the first Christmas, and of the Holy Thorn that blooms each time the celebration of Christ's birth takes place on the night of Christmas Eve - are all stories about the birth of Jesus bringing abundant life to his creation.

Scrooge, of course, fails to celebrate the abundance of Christmas and hence it is suitable that the first bit of Christmas magic that happens to him should reflect these folk tales. Tales in which the birth of Christ brings life even to that which would usually remain dormant. In *A Christmas Carol* Scrooge returns home on Christmas Eve and has his first magical experience:

Now, it is a fact, that there was nothing at all particular about the knocker on the door, except that it was very large. It is also a fact, that Scrooge had seen it, night and morning, during his whole residence in that place; also that Scrooge had as little of what is called fancy about him as any man in the city of London, even





A CHRISTMAS CAROL, BY RON EMBLETON (1985)

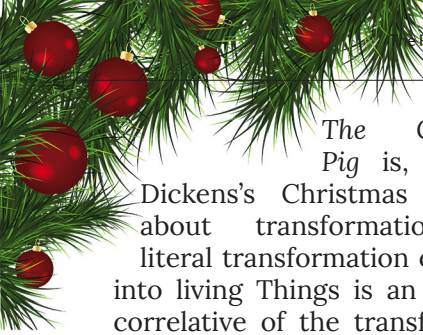
including—which is a bold word—the corporation, aldermen, and livery. Let it also be borne in mind that Scrooge had not bestowed one thought on Marley, since his last mention of his seven years' dead partner that afternoon. And then let any man explain to me, if he can, how it happened that Scrooge, having his key in the lock of the door, saw in the knocker, without its undergoing any intermediate process of change—not a knocker, but Marley's face.

(It is a moment, perhaps, recalled in *The Christmas Pig* when Jack too finds faces in the furniture on Christmas Eve: 'the wardrobe had big brown eyes where there'd been knots of wood, and a mouth instead of a keyhole'). Scrooge dismisses his vision (and the hearse he thinks he sees going upstairs) and sits down:

As he threw his head back in the

chair, his glance happened to rest upon a bell, a disused bell, that hung in the room, and communicated for some purpose now forgotten with a chamber in the highest story of the building. It was with great astonishment, and with a strange, inexplicable dread, that as he looked, he saw this bell begin to swing. It swung so softly in the outset that it scarcely made a sound; but soon it rang out loudly, and so did every bell in the house.

Bells are an important Christian – and Christmas – signifier throughout *A Christmas Carol*, so a bell coming to life and finding its tongue is a fitting symbol of the transformative visitation which Scrooge is about to undergo; just as it is pealing of the bells that promise that Scrooge's transformation has not come too late for Christmas: 'Golden sunlight; Heavenly sky; sweet fresh air; merry bells. Oh, glorious! Glorious!'



The Christmas Pig is, just like Dickens's Christmas tale, all about transformation. The literal transformation of objects into living Things is an objective correlative of the transformation that Jack's heart and understanding will undergo as he travels into the Land of the Lost. The discovery that it is the disregarded Christmas Pig, not DP, who is the hero of the story also takes us back to another one of Dickens's tales. Rowling's formative experience of reading *The Tale of Two Cities* is still influencing her and its story of the sacrificial love of an anti-hero lies behind *The Christmas Pig*, just as it lies behind *Harry Potter*. But by centring self-sacrificial love in her Christmas story, Rowling is calling up not just Dickens, but the narrative that lies behind Dickens's own Christmas story.

The Things that come to life on Christmas Eve in *The Christmas Pig* recall the transforming magic of *A Christmas Carol* but also the folk tales of animals and plants that come to life in honour of the season. *A Christmas Carol* does not labour the point, and *The Christmas Pig* makes no explicit reference to it at all, but there is a theological reason why both writers have written these stories as Christmas stories. Stories about new life at Christmas will always be stories which find their ultimate origins in the renewal of creation at the First Christmas. For, as Dickens puts it

in *A Christmas Carol*:

"It is good to be children sometimes, and never better than at Christmas, when its mighty founder was a child himself."

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- [2] <https://dickens.ucsc.edu/resources/faq/christmas.html>
- [3] <https://www.bbc.co.uk/cbbc/joinin/bp-as-jk-rowling-anything>
- [4] <https://www.amazon.co.uk/Literary-Allusion-Potter-Beatrice-Groves/dp/113828467X>
- [5] <http://www.the-leaky-cauldron.org/2018/12/23/carols-in-harry-potter-and-the-myth-of-the-christmas-rose-part-1/>
- [6] <https://www.therowlinglibrary.com/2021/10/11/the-daily-mail-qa-with-j-k-rowling-and-she-reads-and-extract-from-the-book>
- [7] <http://www.the-leaky-cauldron.org/2019/12/24/christmas-in-chamber-of-secrets-or-why-is-the-crowing-of-the-rooster-fatal-to-the-basilisk-part-2/>
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- [9] <https://www.historytoday.com/archive/glastonburys-christmas-tree>





Watch our interview with
Evanna Lynch, where we discuss her
new book, Harry Potter, J.K. Rowling
and more!



“Jo had told me that Rolf Scamander was originally in the [seventh] book, [...] he was supposed to have delivered them the information that Xenophilius ended up giving in the book.”



Mona's Vintage Corner

Dive deeper into the Harry Potter TCG, card strategy, deck building and some other Harry Potter vintage merchandise from Mona's vault at Gringotts!

In this issue: A Quick Glimpse at what the Official Harry Potter TCG League Was Like

At the peak of the Harry Potter Trading Card Game, both children and adults were ecstatic to play and find other wizards and witches to duel against. Wizards of the Coast recognized this and similar to other trading card games, they created a league where people could come together to play the game, participate in activities and make friends.

When you found a trading card shop that is your go-to for TCG related items, you would inform the patron that you were interested in the league and from there, they would get started by issuing League materials to you and informing you of how the league works. You would be provided a league folder that has the famous checkered pattern in dark blue and maroon colors. In the very center of the folder is an image of Hogwarts students getting ready to board the Hogwarts Express

on Platform 9 3/4. On the back of the folder there are empty spaces for you to put stickers that you would receive as you advance in the league. We will go over those advancements later on.

Inside the league folder, will find an acceptance letter that introduces and explains to you some of the functions of the league. The letter opens thusly:

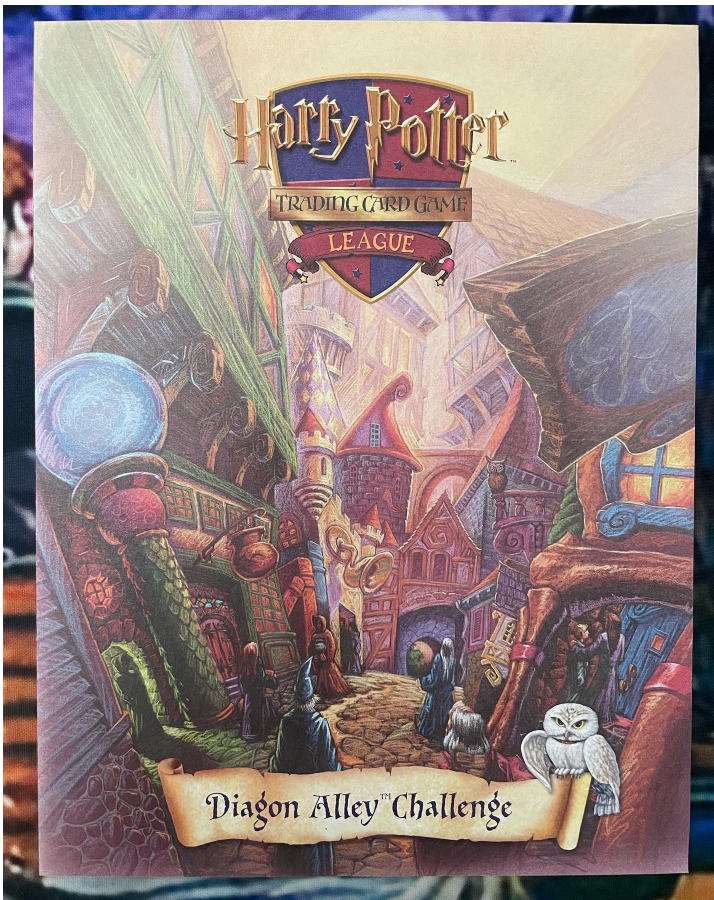
"Welcome to the Harry Potter Trading Card Game League! Here you will take on the role of a student at Hogwarts School of Witchcraft and Wizardry. During the league's eight seasons, you will take some of the same classes as the famous Harry Potter and possibly participate in some of the same adventures."

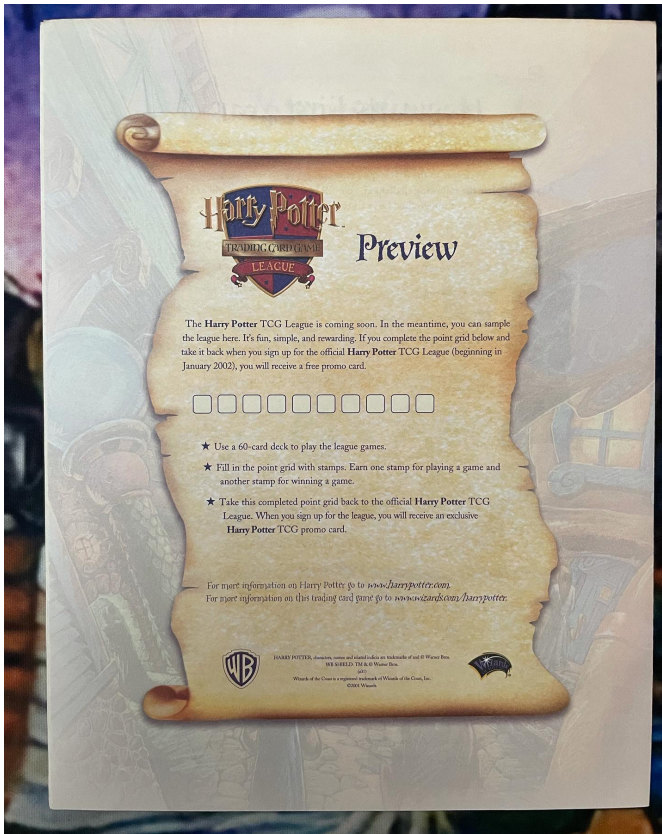
This league was superbly set up in such a way as to not only allow for game play, but for interactivity with

others, socialization and abilities to earn promo cards and stickers. There were “challenges” that were provided to the members of the league that would require them to answer Harry Potter TCG related questions, card identification, drawing some cards and writing abilities related to the game. Each season had a different set of activities and once these activities were completed, the members of the league would receive a class certificate and a promo card.

For example, one such challenge type was called the Diagon Alley Challenge. Inside of the Diagon Alley Challenge, there is an activity that the players are required to complete. “Hogwarts First Year” is a section of the activity that challenges the student/player. There are 3 challenges, the first one reads:

- The Uniform: Basic Training*
 - Find a Wizard or Witch card
 - Find a Lesson card





- Find another type of Lesson card
- Find a Creature card that does 2 damage
- Find a Spell card that needs 6 power to play
- Find a Spell card that allows you to put a Creature card from your discard pile into your hand.

Once you've completed this, you are now ready for the Harry Potter Trading Card Game and will be "drawn into the world of Hogwarts." By completing these activities, it allows you to be familiarized with the different types of cards that

are involved in the Harry Potter TCG and allows you a chance to familiarize yourself with them before being asked to build a deck.

For the second challenge, you are prompted to gather "Other Equipment", the challenge looks like this:

Before the game:

- Choose which deck you want to play with
- Remove the Character card and place it in front of you
- Shuffle your remaining cards

- Draw 7 cards
- Randomly determine who goes first

You are asked to choose which deck you'd like to play with, this might be from the starter decks or from decks that you have built with the cards you've opened from your booster packs. You are now ready for the game and once you complete your first game in the league, you earn two promo cards.

The various promo cards that exist in the Harry Potter TCG league that students/players were looking to collect are: Diffindo, Forest Troll, Hufflepuff Match, Unusual Pets, Moonseed Poison, Ollivanders, Hover Charm and Forbidden Corridor. The promo cards all had a gold "promo" stamp in the corner with a lightning bolt symbol underneath it. There were other promo cards that came out through the card games' duration but not all were given out in the league.

The League was a place for kids and adults to socialize, learn the game, become immersed in the Harry Potter Universe and feel as though they were transported to the world of Harry Potter and his friends. This was a place for all to be welcomed with a commonality, a love for magic, adventure and building friendships for a lifetime. The league unfortunately met its demise the same time the card game did. Even though there

were plenty of cards to go around and many decks to be built, card shops didn't feel it was worth their while to continue the league of a dead game. After all these years, there are small groups of people worldwide who disagree and they keep the game going and are ready for the next duel with a fellow witch or wizard from any corner of the globe!

Although you may not find an official League at your local card shop, if you are interested in playing the Harry Potter Trading Card Game and joining a league of fans and friends, then please consider joining the *Into The Floo* Harry Potter TCG League, where we play over discord with people all around the world using our physical decks over WebCam. The discord link can be found below along with other ways of getting in contact with me for any questions you might have. If you don't have a deck, don't worry as I could provide one to you if interested. If you would like to see more promo cards then please visit my YouTube channel where I have a video of them or my Instagram where I've got pics as well.

Have fun, be safe and maybe I'll catch you in the league!

You can also find out more about Mona on her YouTube channel called *Into The Floo* or by following her on *Instagram* and *TikTok* (@harrypottermorsy).

WAVE A WAND

BY ALAN DELL'OSO

M. MCGONAGALL

Minerva McGonagall is one of the most iconic Hogwarts professors in the Harry Potter series. She is the Head of Gryffindor House and skilled at Transfiguration.

According to the infographic “All about... Minerva McGonagall” (published originally on Pottermore.com and now available at the Wizarding World website[1]), her wand is made of fir wood with a core of dragon heartstring, 9 ½” (24.13 cm) long and stiff. By this description, it would be a rather short wand by the average canonical measurements in the books (let alone compared to the prop used in the films). Fir, according to the article “Wand Woods”[2], is ideal for

transformations, and favours those who are focused, determined and intimidating (three very McGonagall-like characteristics). The fact that it is a rigid wand clearly reflects the severity and determination of Minerva, who is known for not hesitating when she has to make complex decisions.

As for the prop of the wand used for the films, the situation is a little different. According to the book “Harry Potter The Wands Collection” the prop is 40.6cm, almost 17cm longer than the canonical length, and for good reason, as 24cm is slightly longer than the size of a Muggle pen.



It is one of the few wands that kept its design almost intact from the first film to the last. With this in mind, it is logical to expect a sober design without much detail in the wood and symmetrical in its circumference.

In this case the handle (which is considerably long) is made of reddish wood with grain. It has an aesthetic similar to that of a Victorian furniture leg, with a sphere as the main piece, and small cylindrical and conical ornaments worked in the same wood above and below it. Most striking of all

is perhaps the knob, which in this case is a small piece of conical-shaped amber stone, apparently quite prone to breakage in the prop designed for the films. Maggie Smith, who plays Minerva McGonagall on the big screen, developed wide movements with the wand to avoid breaking this small piece of amber (or imitation in the case of props made of resin and other materials).

The shaft of the wand is smooth and in black wood (possibly ebony), and creates a slight contrast with the reddish handle and the amber



MCGONAGALL WAVING HIS WAND,
HARRY POTTER AND THE DEATHLY HALLOWS - PART 2 (WARNER BROS, 2011)



stone of the pommel. In this particular case the shaft section varies very little from its beginning to the tip of the wand, giving a slightly more robust appearance in contrast to the simple and delicate details found on the handle.

The resin replica available from The Noble Collection has an approximate size of 40 cm, which is very close to the size indicated for the film prop (40.6), and also has the amber conical piece of the pommel, which being separated

from the main structure and not having any internal support, it is also very fragile and it is common to see this type of replicas with that piece broken or directly without that piece due to careless treatment of the wand.

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- [2] <https://www.wizardingworld.com/writing-by-jk-rowling/wand-woods>



NOBLE COLLECTION PROMOTIONAL IMAGE
FOR MINERVA MCGONAGALL CHARACTER WAND.



Adalbert Waffling

Adalbert Waffling

Magical Theoretician, known as the father of “Magical Theory” and author of several books.

1899 – 1981

#7



The Rowling Library
Famous Wizards Cards Collection

MELANCHOLY AND DEPRESSION IN *HARRY POTTER* AND *THE RAPE OF THE LOCK*

By Swarnim Agrawal

INTRODUCTION

Alexander Pope's *The Rape of the Lock* and J.K. Rowling's *Harry Potter* include vivid representations of the emotional and psychological consequences of depression.

The Rape of the Lock, though a mock-epic, contains various reflections and comments on serious topics too. Canto IV of the poem contains one of the most graphic descriptions of melancholic state of mind. The "Cave of Spleen" with features such as migraines, ill-nature and hysteric fits, gives a peek into the mind of Belinda, who is undergoing a melancholic state. *Harry Potter and the Prisoner of Azkaban* introduced the readers to Dementors, the guards of Azkaban prison, who are one of the closest representations of depression.

Though written centuries apart, both *The Rape of the Lock* and the *Harry Potter* series contain evocative descriptions of depression and its effects. This article analyses and identifies the representation of melancholic and depression-like state of an individual in two texts.

PART 3

(Read Part 1 and 2 in issues #58 and #59 of
The Rowling Library Magazine)

After Harry's first encounter with the Dementors, Professor Lupin gives Harry a large piece of chocolate to allay his condition. This mood-enhancing property of chocolate is similar to the research studies that have found that "eating dark chocolate can

help reduce anxiety and improve symptoms of clinical depression." ("People") Despite this, chocolate isn't a permanent cure for the Dementors or for depression, as stated by Rowling herself:

"Chocolate can only be a short-

term remedy, however. Finding ways to fight off Dementors – or depression – are essential if one is to become permanently happier. Excessive chocolate consumption cannot benefit either Muggle or wizard.” (Rowling, “Dementors”)

The anti-Dementor Patronus charm is indicative of the counseling and therapy sessions for dealing with depression wherein the individuals are asked to recollect and focus on their happy memories and past achievements. The Patronus’ shape being unique to each individual refers to the fact that the ways of fighting against depression can differ for different persons. The manner in which Harry balances his school classes, Quidditch practices, homework and anti-Dementor lessons, is also a reference to the people with depression who constantly try to balance their personal and professional lives, while undergoing counseling and therapy for depression.

It is evident that both Pope and Rowling have been successful in capturing the effects and symptoms of melancholic disorder and depression. There are some commonalities in both the descriptions. The bag and vial from the Cave of Spleen and the Dementor’s breath and Kiss – represent some of the mechanisms that bring about a psychological disorder. The disjunction from reality and hearing sounds in the

case of the Dementors, is similar to the delusions and hallucinations caused in the Cave of Spleen. Both the Dementors and Spleen result in the isolation of individuals from the society.

The misconceptions and perceptions towards psychological disorders are also referred to in both the texts.

During the eighteenth century, Spleen was regarded as a fashionable malady that affected mostly women. The common notion that a person suffering from a psychological disorder was just putting up a show for seeking attention and sympathy is ridiculed by Pope in the following lines:

“On the rich Quilt sinks with becoming Woe,
Wrapt in a Gown, for Sickness, and for Show.
The Fair-ones feel such Maladies as these,
When each new Night-Dress gives a new Disease.”

Pope also takes a jibe at the people who associated creative genius with melancholy. He also refers to the idea that melancholy can be treated by writing plays.

“Parent of Vapours and of Female Wit,
Who give th’ Hysteric, or Poetic fit,
On various Tempers act by various ways,
Make some take Physick, others

scribble Plays;”

Thalestris, in her speech, mentions how the society is reacting to the lock incident and to Belinda's melancholic state.

“Already hear the horrid things they say,

Already see you a degraded Toast,
And all your Honour in a Whisper lost!”

This may refer to people's general reaction to depression or any other psychological disorder. A person with depression is isolated from the society and there are rumours and gossips floated about the person. Some people even look at the individual as a degraded being. The loss of honour or reputation is also a stark reflection of how when individuals, after successful treatment of depression, go back to their personal and professional lives and mingle with the society, are always seen as someone who were “depressed”, thus allowing the disease to define the person.

In the aftermath of Harry's first encounter with the Dementor, Madam Pomfrey makes the following comment about the creatures:

“...Terrible things, they are, and the effect they have on people who are already delicate —”

This reminds the readers of the misconception in society that only the weak-minded and delicate

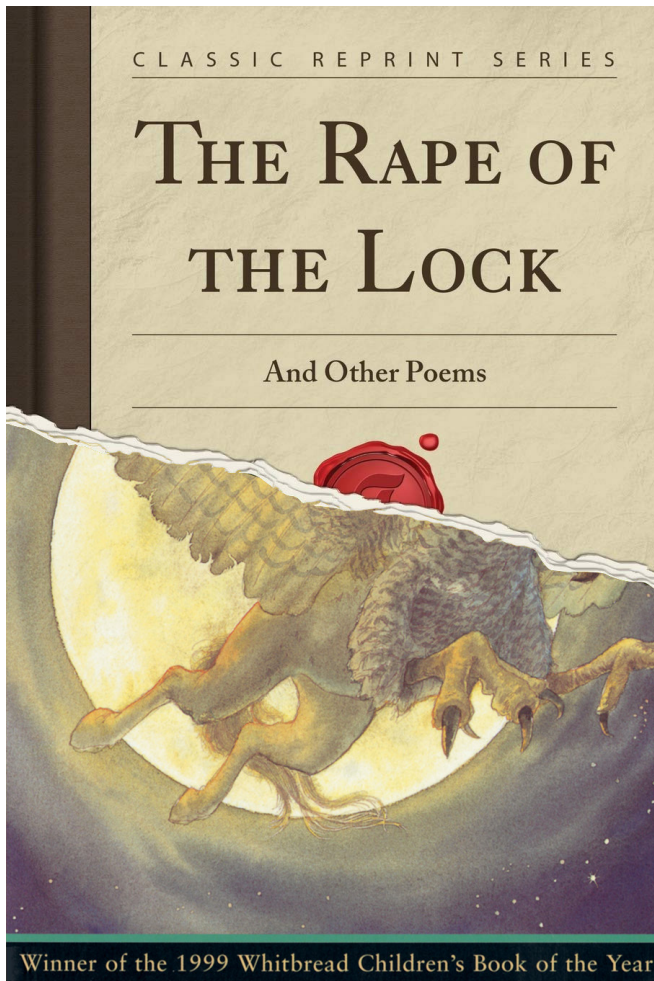
persons get affected by depression and psychological disorders, and those who suffer from depression are weak-minded. Draco Malfoy's act of constantly teasing and attempting to frighten Harry by imitating the Dementors, to the extent of dressing up as Dementors and trying to sabotage Harry's Quidditch match, is a grim representation of how society diminishes a serious illness such as depression into a stupid and funny thing that can be used for prodding others.

In the fifth novel of the series, after the Dementors attack on Dudley and Harry, Uncle Vernon isn't capable of understanding the concept of Dementors and Dementor's Kiss and uses terms such as “dementoids”, “dementy-whatsits” and “demembers”. He asks Dudley if he “fought ‘em off” and “gave ‘em the old one-two”. He perceives the state of depression brought on by the Dementors as just another of the school kids whom Dudley can bully and beat. He doesn't even understand the fact that Harry's use of the Patronus Charm helped save Dudley's life. This is akin to a layman's approach to psychological disorders and the beliefs that depression is just a smidge thing that can be removed easily just like a cold or a fever. It also points out their prejudice and disbelief against seeking help from medical and psychological professionals for the treatment of depression. During Harry's

hearing at the Ministry of Magic, Fudge refers to the Dementors' attack as a "figment of this boy's imagination". This is a direct reference to the typical attitude of people towards depression who refute the substantiality and seriousness of a mental disorder, and instead say - "it's all in the head".

Another point of similarity between the two texts is the character that gets most affected by melancholy and depression. In *The Rape of the Lock*, Belinda is presented as the "Fairest of Mortals". Umbriel refers to her as:

"A Nymph there is, that all thy
Pow'r disdains,
And thousands more in equal



Mirth maintains.”

He points out to the fact that when Belinda is untouched by Spleen, she is a source of happiness for all the people around her. She belongs to the upper class, is popular for her beauty and charms, and has many admirers and suitors. Similar to Belinda, Harry Potter has also been given epithets such as “The Boy Who Lived” and “the Chosen One”. He has his share of popularity in the Wizarding World, with students and even grown-up witches and wizards being enraptured by his life history and skills. He’s the center of attention and reports about him are a constant feature in the Wizarding newspaper, *The Daily Prophet*.

Umbriel asks the Goddess of Spleen to

“touch *Belinda* with Chagrin;
That single Act gives half the World
the Spleen.”

He emphasizes the fact that if Belinda, who’s the source of delight for the world, suffers from melancholy, almost half of the world, at least those around her, would experience a melancholic state – as if the whole society will fall apart due to Belinda’s melancholy. They’ll also become unhappy and full of despair.

Similarly, the effects of the Dementors on Harry have an effect in his immediate surroundings. When Harry faints onboard the

Hogwarts Express, the entire school gets to know about it. Professor McGonagall and Madam Pomfrey especially try to check if he’s well. The Dementors’ attack on Harry during the Quidditch match in *Prisoner of Azkaban* leads to Gryffindor’s defeat against Hufflepuff. After the match, Dumbledore is also furious with the Dementors entering the school premises and takes strict measures so that no Dementor enters the school. He does this to protect Harry as well as the other students from the harrowing effects of the Dementors. Ron and Hermione, his best friends, are also affected by Harry’s gloomy state and remain anxious to protect him and prevent him from going anywhere unsafe. Professor Lupin also understands the severity of the Dementors’ effect on Harry and teaches him the Patronus Charm to fight against them.

It is as if the effect of melancholy and depression on a microcosm (Belinda and Harry) in turn affects the macrocosm (Belinda’s society and Hogwarts).

Both Pope and Rowling articulately capture and creatively produce the effects, symptoms and misconceptions associated with melancholy and depression.

During Pope’s time, there was no term such as depression – it was just ‘melancholy’ and ‘spleen’. The age, though aware of the existence

of the disorder, wasn't aware of the harmful effects and need for treatment of mental illnesses. Despite this, Pope articulately describes the psyche of individual undergoing a melancholic disorder. Pope might also have drawn from his own experience of living with the Pott's disease. Being a Catholic, he wasn't given a place in the English society, and his poor health further alienated him from the society.

Rowling created the Dementors from her personal experience of undergoing clinical depression. She had even contemplated suicide. Having experienced depression, Rowling has spoken about her experience several times:

"It's so difficult to describe depression to someone who's never been there, because it's not sadness. I know sadness. Sadness is to cry and to feel. But it's that cold absence of feeling — that really hollowed-out feeling.

[My depression] was characterized by a numbness, a coldness and an inability to believe you will feel happy again. All the color drained out of life." (Lenker)

She has effectively envisioned and characterized all the feelings described through the Dementors.

It is also interesting to note how Pope, a man, perfectly captures the psyche of a young girl and her

experience with Spleen. On the other hand, Rowling, a woman, wrote the series about a young boy Harry Potter, and in this specific context, coherently presented the effects of the Dementors, who are a personification of depression, on him. This also touches upon the fact that mental illness affects anyone and everyone and both men and women are almost equally affected by it.

Thus, *The Rape of the Lock* and the *Harry Potter* series – both considered masterpieces of English Literature, though written centuries apart, contain lucid descriptions of the emotional, psychological and social aspects of melancholy and depression.

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A QUOTE BY JO

“”

“Children often ask me how much of the magic is "real" in the books, in the sense that did anyone ever believe in this? I would say - a rough proportion - about a third of the stuff that crops up is stuff that people genuinely used to believe in Britain. Two thirds of it, though, is my invention.”

WAMU Radio Washington D.C., 1999



RIDDIKULUS!

Erik (@[knockturnerik](#) on Instagram) plays with original artwork from the Harry Potter books!

Follow @[knockturnthepages](#) on Instagram for more humour!



ORIGINAL ILLUSTRATION BY MARY GRANDPRÉ FOR
HARRY POTTER AND THE SORCERER'S STONE
(SCHOLASTIC, 1998)



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