

The long awaited prequel of  
JK Rowling's Harry Potter series



# An Amazing Girl

First year of Lily Evans' Diary

# Lily Evans Diary

Year one

An amazing girl

Lily Evans' Diary - year one

## Titles in the Lily Evans Diary series:

**Year one: An Amazing Girl**

**Year two: Spreading your wings**

**Year three: Broadening Horizons**

**Year four: Choosing is Losing**

**Year five: Painful Confrontation**

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Lily Evans Diary, Year one: An Amazing Girl

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ISBN-13 (pbk) 978-9-0825-6931-5

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Lily Evans' Diary - year one

# Lily Evans Diary

Year one

An Amazing Girl

## Note from the author

### **IMPORTANT DISCLAIMER: “Warner Bros. Entertainment and J.K. Rowling are not associated with this con- tent”**

All rights with regards to people, places, events, that are described in the “Harry Potter” books remains with J.K. Rowling.

The only reasons for starting this writing exercises are these:

-After reading the final part, I was left with an “empty feeling”

-Wondering what caused some events (described as flashbacks in the books)

-Curiosity about Harry's mother, father, grandparents (both sides) Sirius and his family.

-What did James and Sirius really do at school?

-Elaborating on events described as flashbacks in HP 1-7.

-Finally, after starting writing, my head was bursting with possible story-lines

-While elaborating on a story-line, many others popped up.

All names (of new persons) were generated by an application, if people with the same name exists, they have absolutely no relationship with my stories.

FINALLY: I do not (REPEAT: NOT) seek any personal gains by writing this.

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## Intro

Dear reader,

What you are about to read is a girls' personal diary, but it is not MY diary. As it is rather complicated, it seems fit to add an introduction here.

My name is Hermione Granger and you might know that Harry Potter is one of my best friends.

As we all know, his parents died when young Harry was one year old, trying to defend him against the dark wizard known under then chosen name of Voldemort. Harry was brought up by his only living family members, aunt Petunia and uncle Vernon. The only vague recollection Harry had was the moment his mother tried to protect him. Fortunately, Hagrid was able to compile a photo album, so he had, at least, some family pictures. As for the rest, he had to do with stories from Dumbledore and his godfather Sirius.

During the final battle against Voldemort, I briefly visited the home of James and Lily Potter in the small town of Godric's Hollow. We noticed that their house was left unchanged after they died, as a monument and a warning for us all. Much later, after I finished my latest year at Hogwarts and graduated, I returned with Ginny and Ron as a pilgrimage. At that time, we discovered some personal items that were left in the rubles for over fifteen years. One of those, were some small books,



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bounded together. After careful examination, it turned out that these were diaries written by his mother.

Obviously, these have great sentimental value for Harry and we wanted to give them as a present to him, but while reading and reconstructing the pages, I became aware that it could be an important lesson for all of us, both from the magic and non-magic community.

It is the story of a young girl brought up in England during the post-war years by Muggle parents, (just like I was), completely unaware of her gifts, raised up during the “dark period” when Voldemort and his followers started to terrorize the country, found real friendship, lost dear friends, encountered her true love. She was given a much too short period of a happy family life. And finally, Lily paid the ultimate price at the age of 21, for saving her son.

This is the first part of the diary of Lily Evans.

The very first chapter, I kept as Lily wrote them, just to emphasize open-minded, unprejudiced nature of Lily as a small girl. The following chapters we interpreted to enhance the readability. Together with my friends, it started as a fun-project, but as the page count grew and grew, so did our respect for Lily, her friends, Hogwarts staff and especially Professor McGonagall.

We can not bring Harry's mother back to life, but we can revive her memories. I grew very fond of them and just like to share them with everybody.

Happy reading, Hermione Granger.

## Very early years

Dear diary,

My name is Lily and I am eight years old. I have red hair and green eyes. I was born on Saturday, the thirtieth of January 1960, and I live in Cokeworth, Midlands

My daddy's name is Henry (but I always call him Daddy) and my mum's name is Margareth, but my dad often says "Maggy". My sister Petunia is two years older. Last Christmas she got a diary from our granny, but she already got one from mum, so I got the second one!

I don't have any idea what to write or why, but last Sunday I heard that it might be helpful or something like a "source of comfort" when I am older. I really can't imagine how that can be.

Silly me, I forgot to tell that daddy is a doctor, a G.P. Most of the time he cures the people in the village, but sometimes he needs to go to the Hospital for seeing people who are much more sick. Mum is a teacher at the local school. She said that that is probably the reason I can read and write at a much earlier age than other children. She gave my sister some extra lessons at home and it seems I picked that accidentally up.

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Dear Diary,

Yesterday I turned nine.

I still am not sure what and why I should write here.

And I think it's the same with Petunia, I never saw her writing. I think she has much to think about, because she will go to the secondary school, so she has much more to think and write about. Well, I would.

Sometimes I think that Petunia dislikes reading and writing because it took her so much effort to learn it properly, while I sniffed it up while mum tried to teach her.

I really love stories! Even when I was much younger, I adored the time that mum or dad was telling bedtime stories about Merlin. Sometimes I wished I lived in those times, until you hear what they do to each other. Perhaps each era has its own goods and bad things. But I still wonder how much is real truth or fantasy in these stories.

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Dear Diary,

I just have to get it off my chest: Petunia can be SO DAFT!!!!!! It is really unbelievable. If mum or dad, the teachers or our parents friends or whoever, try to explain, try to teach her something they have to explain it over and over and over again. I truly wonder what the stuff is, she got between her ears!

For instance, her bicycle. It took centuries before she managed to ride it for five minutes without falling off! I just can not get it. You climb on it, hold the handlebar firm with BOTH hands, push with all your power on the highest pedal, look forward, and push the other pedal. How difficult can that be? And tending it... If she got a flat tire, she just took mine! Or like last week, her break broke down (English language is funny!) she just left her bike in the shed, waiting and expecting it to be repaired by itself. Who does she think she is, *Morgana the witch*, from Arthur and Merlin? Dad showed us how the repair a flat tire. Simple as can be. Just in general, if you take something apart, remember what you did, and in which order. Putting it back, is just doing the same in reversed order. You do not have to be a professor to do that. Just enough brains to remember where to put the parts.

And this afternoon, I was washing the dishes, and Petunia just had to dry them with a dry and proper cloth.

Instead of placing it all directly into the cupboards, she put it all back on the table. And when there wasn't enough space left over for the plates, she just pushed and make the glasses fall of the edge. That is already stupid enough, but she did nothing to

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prevent them breaking! She just let them fall to the ground, and watched them falling! Isn't that unbelievable?

A couple of weeks ago it happened to me also, falling glasses. But if you put your mind to it, concentrate really, really hard, you can avoid them hitting the floor. What is so hard about it? The only thing you have to do, is that you really want to save them. Put your mind to it and concentrate! That's all. Sometimes I suspect that Petunia likes broken stuff. Only until mum gets back, and THEN she is a professor in making excuses. Most horrid!

Dear Diary,

It is getting worse with Petunia.

Mum told me to have more patience with my sister, because it might have something to do with her becoming a little woman. Mum said the changes in a girl's body also affects her thinking.

I never noticed she even bothered trying to think.

Today we visited a local farm. It was fun! All those lovely animals. They all seemed to like me. They had an adorable back-and-white cat, that I immediately named "Zebra". And after sniffing a bit, she started to lick my nose! So cute! And those little lambs. I wished I could live on a farm. Everything was nice until my bored sister decided to throw a rock to the guarding dog and managed to hit something for a change. The poor creature felt being attacked and responded.

Next she blamed the dog for biting her!

End of a nice day. Grrr.

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Dear Diary,

Hope at last!

Petunia goes to a secondary school.

I fear that some of her teachers will be confronted with a nearly impossible task.

From what I overheard from the discussions between mum and dad, there are two options for my sister. Either the local secondary school, here in the village or a comprehensive school much further away. In the second case, she'll come home only for weekends and holidays.

I truly hope that the teacher can do something for my sister as she is the only one I can talk to and despite of what I wrote earlier, she can be really nice if she wants to.

**NOTE: From here on the diary chapters have been interpreted, in order to make them more readable!**

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On a warm June afternoon in 1971, a girl walked from her home to the nearby forest. The weather had been exceptionally good for those who could play outside, but most farmers were already complaining. The girl, Lily, with deep dark red hair and green eyes, was glad to leave the house and get outside, where a tiny breeze made it a bit more bearable. It wasn't just the temperature, or the humidity, but more, there was something else in the air.

Several years ago, Lily and Petunia made a hut in a tree-top. Their father visited it once, to make sure it was solid and safe. Both girls used it frequently, for observing birds, but after Petunia went to secondary school it was a private domain just for her.

Like many times before, she visited her favorite spot in the forest, but this time she noticed she wasn't alone!

Walking slowly and on her tiptoes, trying to avoid making any sound, Lily walked towards the spot near her tree-house. First, she felt a bit afraid, as her parent warned her of being alone at desolated places with strangers. But soon she recognized the long black hair and the weird clothes: it was the boy that lived some houses down the road. They had seen him before, but never spoke to him.

Lily took another step, without watching. A small twig snapped below her feet and the boy quickly turned around.

“Hi,” he said, pointing at the tree-hut, “Is that yours?”

Lily answered, “Yes, well, my sister's and mine. We made it several years ago but it has been quite a while, since I last came here. I am Lily and I live around the corner in the white house

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over there. You are the boy that live in the huge old house at the end of the dead-end street, near the post-office, not?"

"Yes, that is true, I am Sev."

"Why do you always wear these strange clothes?"

"What do you mean with *strange clothes*? They are quite normal to me! All my family wears such clothes. I could ask you the same question: Why do you wear these dull clothes?"

"Dull? This is what girls of my age usually wear! But I have never seen other people wear clothes like you do. These are quite eh... *different!*"

Lily tried hard not to insulted the boy.

"Do you come here often? This place is sort of mine. My sister and I build the hut in the tree over there, can you see it?"

"I found this spot some time ago. It is nice here, I like it a lot and come back often to lay on my back and watch and imagine things. It is also here the first time that..."

"That what?" Lily asked.

"I am not sure if I should tell it. I never dared."

"Come please, I won't tell anybody else. Promised!"

"OK then, but promise you don't laugh at me when I tell?"

"Promised." said Lily again, getting more curious about the strange boy.

"Here, a couple of weeks ago, I found out that I am *different!*"

Sev waited a while in order to increase the importance of the announcement he made, or so he thought.

"Different who? Different what?"

"I can *do* things, I can make things *happen.*"



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“Like what?”

“If I would say, you won't believe me. I'll try to show you.”

He spread his coat on the grass and lay down on it.

“Please be quiet, I'll need to concentrate. If you also lie down, you'll see it better.”

“OK, but what should I look at? The clouds? The trees? The birds or butterflies?”

“No, just the old leaves on the tree, when they fall down.”

Once in a while, when the wind blew softly, some of the old leaves detached and fell slowly to the ground.

“Now watch!” the boy said mysteriously.

First Lily did not notice anything, but suddenly she realized that the leaves did not fall anymore, but flew from one place to another. Just like a cat playing with a tiny ball of wool.

“How about that! I have been practicing all week!”

“But what is so special about that. Anyone can do that!”

“I don't think so! You have to be special to be able to do so.”

“Nonsense! Everybody can do that.”

“Is that so! Can you do? Show me!” He said defensively.

Lily laid down and thought, “this is about the same as preventing glasses or cups falling on the ground, but then the other way round.” She concentrated on two, three leaves falling.

“To the left,” she said to herself.

“Ohhh,” she heard the boy saying with obvious disappointment in his voice. “I thought I was the only one who could do that.”

Lily asked, “Can you do other things, you consider as 'special'?”

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“I tried moving the clouds, but they are unmovable like trees or stones. And you?”

“No, I am not special! I only noticed that my sister is more clumsy than me, especially with animals.”

“What do you mean?” he replied curiously.

“Just look, don't move or make any sound please!”

Lily saw some butterflies at the other end of the field. She stretched her arm, and imagined she was a huge big flower. A moment later she felt the tickling sensations of some butterflies on the top of her hand.

She smiled and said, “I'll bet you also can do that and even with even bigger animals.”

Sev replied “I have never even tried that,” and a bit timid, “I really thought I was special.”

“My mum says that everybody is special, in their own way. She is a teacher you know.”

“And isn't your father the town's doctor?”

“Yes that is so, but I have never seen you, nor your family coming to my fathers practice. I remember that, because my father found it odd. He had seen all people from the village except yours.”

“My parents are a bit jealous of yours. Your parents are educated people. They know all the people, and all the people know them.”

“That is not always so fine. Sick people calling in the middle of the night and so.”

“I see, we also get strangers calling, my mother prevent them from getting ill.”

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“Preventing is even better than healing, what my father does.”

Sev smiled and said, “It is nice you are saying that. Especially to a weirdo like me.”

“Well try some common clothes for a change.”

Sev thought a while, then said, “You should treat people for what they do, not what they are, or can do or what they wear.”

“True, but these strange clothes creates a distance. And now you know that you are as strange as I am, or anyone else, there is no need for it. Just try it!”

The boy thought for a while, about how parents would respond to such request. He didn't think they would accept it.

He tried to think of something else, “I like you, Lily, can we be friends?”

“Sure, it is good to be able to talk to someone, who is capable of thinking. My sister can be so daft.”

“Be thankful you have someone to talk to. When my parents receive guests, I'll always have to leave the room. And otherwise they never have time for me. I wish the summer was over, by then I can go to my new school.”

## No magic

Sometimes major events cast their shadows ahead.

On Lily mother's birthday, Margareth received the combined works of the author JRR Tolkien. To both girls she said with a funny voice, “Handses of, these are mine. My Precioussss”. It made her father laugh, although Lily could not understand yet why.

A Tuesday afternoon the week after, Lily's mother caught her reading them.

First she frowned, and said, “These books are much too difficult for a girl of your age. Where were you?”

Lily replied, “I am at the attack at Weathertop, for the second time.”

“You mean, you read that chapter for the second time?”

“No mum, I read the book for the second time, and now I am where the ring wraith attacks Frodo with a Morgul blade.”

Not entire understanding, she asked, “You really did the entire book? What did you think of it? A nice fairytale?”

Lily thought for a while, and then answered, “Difficult to say, mum, there is so much in it. Obviously the battle between good and bad, but also friendship and treason, hope and despair, and probably much more that I've missed.”

Deeply impressed by the level of her daughter's reading and interpretation skills, she continued, “I thought you were joking. You really did read it! But it ends well, not?”

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“How can you say that mum? When they have faced all perils, defeated Sauron by destroying the one ring, several times nearly got killed, they get home and find their home devastated. Each year he suffers from the Morgul-wound, never got married, and finally have to leave his closest friend Sam. Also, the power of the elves decay, and they leave our world. You consider *that* a happy end?”

Astound Margareth replied, “That is certainly one way of interpreting the book, Lily. And who might be you favorite character? Who would you like to be, I presume Lady Arwen, who marries the king in the end?”

“No, she does little or nothing. I would like to be Lady Galadriel! Using magic to heal and care for the world.”

Staring outside, she added, “That is what I would really want.”

“Sorry to inform you little girl, that you are not of noble birth, and there is no thing as magic in this world. But you can do a lot of good without magic! Like your father does.”

“I know. But magic makes it easy. And there are so many books with magic in them, and not just these ones. Even from the times of the ancient Greeks, and king Arthur. How about those?”

“I was not there at the time, so I can not vouch for it. But I think it all came from the imagination of all of those writers. Wishful thinking you know. Like 'imagine how the world could be if...!' And each time people tell about myths and legends, they have a tendency of exaggerating each time a little bit more though the essence of the story remains the same of course!”

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“And how about the bible? All what Moses did. Walking on the water, raising Lazarus from the dead, multiplying bread and fish, reviving after three days. Miracles but no magic? Can you explain me what the difference is, mum? And even in the Bible, they wrote about wizards, but always as something bad or evil.”

Margareth stood speechless without any possible answer to such bright question.

“Let me tell you, that you should not repeat that question when we go to church young lady! Your father and I can appreciate good thinking. But there are too many people who would consider such idea's as blasphemy. Saying such things out loud can create enemies for life. Especially adults, can not accept if children appear wiser than they are.“

“But that is not fair!”

“I know, Lily, but life is seldom fair. Actually, on the contrary. But nothing to worry about now. For you, there are more than enough miraculous things in this world to discover.”

## Amazing girl

On a beautiful sunny-Saturday morning, Lily's dad asked at the breakfast table, "Girls, can you do something for me?"

Petunia's face already turned a deeper shade of sour.

"You all remember about the car accident of Mr. and Mrs. Dent, who live some houses down the street?"

Petunia replied resolutely, "Sorry dad, but I still have THAT much homework, and I wanted it to be finished..."

Even though Lily knew it was a little lie, as Petunia hardly did any homework at all, or postponed it as long as possible, she said nothing about it.

"Yes, certainly, dad. Mr Dent helped me to repair a flat tire, and Mrs Dent has learned me all about flowers when I was helping her in the garden"

"Ah," her father said. "That is good then."

"Is Mrs Dent coming home again?" Lily asked.

Her father's cheerful face became serious again. "No, on the contrary. And Mr. Dent is missing her still more every day. He is growing sadder day by day. It looks like he is giving up all hope. I just paid him a visit. You should have seen him at home all alone."

"So what can I do then?" Lily inquired.

"Your mother and I will go to see him in an hour or so, to tidy up his place a bit, and I know that this evening, as always, he will go to the hospital, to visit his wife and sit at her side."

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He continued, “Can you pick a nice bouquet of flowers, that we can bring to the hospital?”

“Sure, when do we leave?” was all Lily asked.

“You can go ahead on your bicycle, so if Petunia clears up the breakfast table, I would say, right now, if it is OK with you.”

Lily smiled, as she concluded that her sisters' white lie had backfired upon her.

Within the blink of an eye, Lily drove her bike through the lane. It was still early, and the countryside was as beautiful as can be. It just felt like a fresh beginning. Lily grinned at her silly thoughts, “Each spring IS the beginning of something beautiful. Just wait and see!”

When she arrived at the house of the Dent's, she went straight to the garden at the other side of the house, and she grinned no more. “Oh – my – God,” she said, while watching in disbelief.

Mrs. Dent had several separate gardens, one special with vegetables, one with flowers, a nice little sitting corner, where grapes were growing, and apple trees, and a big lawn (Something Mr. Dent was very keen on). And Mrs. Dent devoted much of her time to tending all of her gardens. Lily remembered her saying “Throughout the whole year, there is always something to do, nature is constantly on the move, so I am grateful for your help, dear girl.”

“*Everyday something to do*”, and all gardens looked like it had been deserted for months, which actually was, what had happened.

Tears welled up in her eyes, while she said to herself, “Let's start somewhere, and see how far we can get.” She went to the garden shed, picked up protecting gloves and cut some nice,



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but somehow wildflowers. She immediately put them into a vase in the kitchen.

After clearing all the old leaves, she said to the lawn mower, “So much to do, just two hands, and so little time,” and prayed “Dear time, would you please tick just a little bit slower?”

She heard her parents arrive, and calling to her, “Lily, we are here!” and she yelled back, “I am in the back garden.”

She thought: “Dad said he would come in about an hour time, but it feels like the entire morning had lapsed.” She heard her mother giving an acknowledgment, but could not properly understand what she said.

“Well, if the house inside is in the same condition as the garden, they have quite something to do,” she thought.

So Lily went from one chore to another, until she decided that it had to do for the moment. She picked an apple from the tree, moved one of the chairs such that she could sit and watch the result of her labor.

She dozed away until her mother came looking for her, and said: “O, here you are, thanks for putting the flowers in the kitchen-sink,” She looked around and continued, “It seems that either you had some help, or someone else has been tending the garden. Lucky you. You should have seen the house inside, I first thought it was a pig farm. Men alone...”

After some small lunch, they decided that Lily and her father would straight go to the hospital, and her mother went home, “*Enough to do.*”

The city hospital was not that far away, so in an hour time they put their bikes in the shed.

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“Lets go straight to Mrs. Dents' room, and hope we do not get noticed by the staff, this is supposed to be my day off, but if they notice me, I'll know what will happen...”

But at the very moment they turned the knob of the dormitory where Mrs. Dent was nursed, a voice pleaded, “Doctor Evans, Would you please be so kind to have a look at Mr. Brown, his condition is deteriorating by the moment.” He sighed and said, “Oh well then, I'll be back as soon as possible.”

So Lily entered the room alone. Mrs. Dent lay in a bed near the window, her face towards it. Lily looked around, and near a table, she saw a vase in which she put the flowers she had picked. There were some chairs intended for accommodating visitors. She moved one near the bed of Mrs. Dent and looked closely. It seemed that she was just asleep, all the bruises and cuts were healed, there was nothing that would remind her of that horrific car accident.

With her left hand, Lily took the lady's hand. “Oh Mrs Dent, I'm so sorry about your garden, I should have tend to it much much sooner. It used to be a garden of Eden, but now it looks more like a jungle. Will you please wake up? I promise that I will help you with the garden. And Mr. Dent misses you so much.”

Without any thought, Lily started gently to stroke Mrs Dents' hair. Again and again and again, thinking about all of their times together, her and her husband, in the garden.

Her eyes became heavy, and the last thing she remembered that it was so warm in the room. She should have opened the window and let fresh air into the room, before sitting down. But it felt good, so why bother? She decided to remain seated, and slowly closed her heavy eyes and her mind drifted away.

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Suddenly it felt very strange, all the warmth was gone! She knew, sitting motionless without any cover, could chill you to the bone, but still it felt strange.

And where was she? Apparently not in the hospital anymore! But she could not remember leaving the place, how could this be possible? She was standing all alone in, what seems to be, the bedroom of Mr. and Mrs. Dent's house. There were some pictures of Mr. and Mrs. Dent as bride and groom on the wall.

“I can't remember I've ever even been upstairs,” she thought. “How did I get here? And what am I doing here?”

She wondered if she really was in the house of the Dent-family, so she walked to the window. Lily looked outside. It seemed like an awesome foggy cold autumn afternoon. Her heart missed a beat. What had happened there? The lawn, she just had mowed this morning had gone, and where it used to be, a huge maze of buxus hedges, about ten feet height, had appeared.

And in the middle of the maze, stood Mrs Dent! All alone in her nightgown and crying.

Lily looked carefully and imprinted the layout of the maze in her memory. Then she rushed downstairs and went straight into the maze without second thoughts. It did not take long before she got close to the center of the maze.

As soon as Mrs. Dent noticed somebody coming, she said with a weak voice “Help, anybody please help me!”

A brief moment later, she saw and recognized the girl who helped her so often in her garden. “Dear Lily,” her voice suddenly trembled, “Can you help me? I'm lost and feel so weak

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and strange. I'm trying to find my way out for so long.” A horrible thought suddenly struck Mrs. Dent, “Dear girl, how did you come to be here, are you also lost?”

“No, Mrs Dent. I'm not. I know my way. It's easy to get out. I still remember very well finding my way, come, follow me.” She helped Mrs Dent up, and gave her a supporting arm. They went left, right, right, left again ignoring some sideways, and finally right again. Lily felt with each step that Mrs Dent seems to become heavier, like something was pulling her back.

Finally they reached the entrance of the maze. Mrs. Dent stopped Lily, and when she looked into her eyes, they were completely black, when Lily looked into them, she just saw them mirroring the maze. With a strange hollow voice, that didn't sound like Mrs Dent at all, the lost lady asked, “Are you sure, Lily Evens? Are you very, very sure you want to do this, to take the next step? There will be no turning back!”

Lily's only thought was “What a strange question to ask and here at the very end of the maze.” She set her mind to it, took Mrs. Dent hand and turned the knob on the door.

She opened the door, and heard a distant lonely church bell starting to chime sadly and thought “Strange time and place for church bell to ring! They chime normally only, either for warning people for imminent danger, as a departure signal at funerals, or as an inspiration for people to think their lives over again.”

Lily was however totally unaware that the sad bell was chiming for her. Unknowingly, she was at an important crossroad at her life. Whatever road she was going to take, there was no turning back anymore. One bell was chiming for the departure

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of Lily-the-Muggle, the other warning Lily-the-witch. That bell was warning Lily, that living in the magical world wasn't so glamorous and adventurous as might appear from stories. Instead of a relative innocent, carefree life she was on the threshold of far more responsibilities, heartbreaking choices, bottomless pits filled with grief and sadness with only a tiny spark of hope and new possibilities.

She gathered all her strength, took a step, and all went dark before her eyes....

About an hour after Lily's father had left his daughter near Mrs. Dents' room, he returned with a college doctor. A nurse said with a smile to them, "Look at those two." They peeked around the corner and saw Lily holding Mrs Dents' hand, but fast asleep, their heads beside each other on the same pillow.

Lily's father said, "No harm done, and understandably, she has been working in the garden all morning, and also my fault. I promised her an hour ago that I'll be back in a minute."

The nurse added "Well, with this temperature, who would not doze away," and opened the window to let a fresh breeze enter the room.

The nurse turned towards Mrs Dent and Lily and looked at the patient and the girl. "Come!" was all she could say. "Please come quick doctor Evans!" And not without good reasons. Mrs. Dent had opened her eyes!

Both doctors rushed immediately towards Mrs. Dent and started carefully to comfort her while examining her at the same time.

## Lily Evans' Diary - year one

All of the following commotions woke Lily up. First a bit drowsily, but soon very much awake.

“I am sorry, I must have fell asleep. Is something wrong?”

She moved her chair a little back and looked at all the hospital staff that had arrived.

Mrs. Dent pointed with her hand to her mouth, and the nurse first moistened her lips, and finally let her carefully sip a bit of water through a straw.

As soon as Mrs Dent was capable of speaking, she kept on asking, “Where am I? Are we home from the party? And the endless maze, my garden, the maze, how did I ever got in that horrible maze? And why did I ever got in?”

Lily's father, still a bit overwhelmed, replied, no knowing how to interpret her question, “Mrs Dent, you were involved some time ago in a car accident. Your husband is fine and will be here shortly. Do you remember anything of it? Right now you are in hospital where we have been curing your injuries, and where you have slept for quite a while. Your garden looks much much better, lovely as always, but as far as I know, you don't have a maze, the garden isn't large enough for it.”

Mrs. Dent shivered when she thought about all the months she had been wondering all alone in the horrible maze. Suddenly her attention was drawn to the girl next to the window and recognized Lily immediately. “My guide, my rescuer from the maze.”

With tears in her eyes and a look full of thankfulness and understanding towards Lily, she finally said, “Doctor Evans, you have an exceptionally *amazingly* gifted girl.”

## **Magic really exists**

The recovery of Mrs. Dent, was the talk of the town for quite some time.

Many people congratulated Lily's father and the rest of the hospital staff for the good care during many months and the patients recovery. But some gave air to their concern that a very young girl was left alone with a comatose patient.

The mere idea of being there when Mrs. Dent awoke, someone said, "Good enough for a lifelong nightmare!"

Understandably the family Evens and Dent got much closer, and there grew a warm friendship between Mrs. Dent and Lily, besides a secret shared between them.

Some time later, Lily's mother was doing her spring clean, and because all the furniture was moved, it was a great invitation to play hide-and-seek for the girls. First Lily had to search Petunia, then reversed. What exactly happened wasn't clear but one of the girls tripped over a wire connected to the radio set. It fell to the floor. "Bang!"

With a dread in her voice, Lily wondered, "Is the radio broken?" Petunia fled outside. All that loud noises draw the attention of Margareth, "What on earth are you..." Then she saw the radio-set on the floor. She tried the power knob and waited, but nothing: the set remain silent. "We were just playing mum." Margareth turned to Lily, "That is bad, really. During the dark years of the war, it was our main source of hope and the music gave us some consolation, but more important: are you or your

## Lily Evans' Diary - year one

sister hurt? No? At least, that is something to be grateful for. Let's ask Mr Peterson next door if he can do something about it before your father returns home. He won't be pleased when he finds out.”

Lily jumped on her bike, to go to Mr. Peterson. He had a shop selling and repairing all sorts of things, also radio-sets, record players, and other modern things. She hurried in and asked, “Mr Peterson, would you be so kind to come to our home, I fear my sister and I killed the radio.” Mr. Peterson laughed, and replied “*Killed the radio*, that sounds rather drastic, you mean perhaps it is broken? Wait just a minute, as there are no customers, so I'll come to have a look.”

Some minutes later Mr Peterson's car stopped and he came out. Margareth stood waiting at the door, “You're so very kind, Mr Peterson...” but he replied, “I can not promise anything, but I can try. Perhaps I need to take the set to my shop for repairing.”

Lily looked how Mr. Peterson put the radio-set on the table, examined the power cord and removed the screws that held the back plate. He took some parts out, that seemed to be made of glass.

“What are these things?” And Lily pointed towards them. Mr Peterson examined all those things one by one, and said, “These are radio-valves. For most people they do magic, but they are fragile and have a short lifespan when ill-treated.” He put the power-plug in again, and warned, “Let's try again, but be careful. It is dangerous when the radio is opened, it could kill you.”

After a minute, she saw that parts inside the radio started to glow, and she heard a noise coming out of the front. Mr Peter-



## Lily Evans' Diary - year one

son turned the dial-knob, and the noise turned into music! Mr. Peterson started to put the back plate tight again and said smiling “Revived!”

Lily exclaimed: “You are really a wizard!”

Mr Peterson laughed and said, “No Lily, I'm doing what I've been trained for, and just doing my job! Sometimes it is easy, sometimes it takes hours of searching and sometimes even I can not find what is wrong.”

“What do we owe you?” Lily's mother asked, but Mr Peterson shook his head. “Last week your husband helped my wife in the middle of the night. I am glad I can return a favor. Don't mention it.”

One morning, when the Evans' were paying the Dent's a visit, he turned to Lily's father and said, “Henry, I know that you will say that it is all part of your job, but returning Emily to me, when I feared I would never see her smile again, is the greatest gift I ever got. I want to express my gratitude. Please let me do so. You being a doctor, having to make many house visits is difficult, especially now this land is in such a difficult situation.” And continued, “But I think I've got for you. Mind you, it's not new, and still needs a lot of fixing, but I managed to get hold of a proper automobile.”

They all got up and walked to Mr Dents' garage.

As expected, Lily's father said, “That is unbelievable kind of you, and you should not have done that. I really should refuse your gift, but as I can visit much more people with it, my patients, my family and myself are very grateful.”

## Lily Evans' Diary - year one

Lily couldn't see what kind of car brand it was, but did see millions of nuts and bolts and other small parts. Mr Dent noticed Lily's look, and explained, "As I said, it needs a little bit of fixing." Then he turned to Lily's father, "Emily somehow wants to give Lily's something, is that OK with you?"

And after hearing no objections, Emily asked Lily, "Is there anything in the world I can give you, or do for you? Personally, I was thinking of bicycle but you might have other idea's or needs." At that moment, Mrs Dents' cat came in, jumped into her lap and started purring.

That finally triggered Lily's thoughts, and she answered, "If my parents agree, I would love also to have a cat." Lily's father said, "Well, it has been quite a while since our old Tiger died, so I don't mind, as long as she remembers it will HER cat and she must tend to it's needs."

"How fortunately, Lady (my cat) has just given birth to three little kittens, come and have a look."

They went through the corridor, to a small room, and in a warm corner, there was a nest of sleeping young cats. "Would you like a cat or a tomcat?" Mrs Dent asked.

"I dunno, what is that?" While Lily pointed to a tiny black cat, that just opened one blue eye. "That is a tomcat. He is almost completely black, but for the tip of his tail, and two socks."

Next afternoon Lily returned with her father and a warm basket with a blanket in it. After a cup of tea, he said to Lily's father, "Come, Henry, it took me all night, but it was worth it." When the arrived in the garage, all of the parts were gone, and all Lily could see, was a shining, beautiful car.

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Lily asked, “What did you do with all those zillion little things?”

Mr Dent answered, “Curious young lady? OK, come and have a look, I will show you. But remember, looking is an activity you do with your eyes, not your fingers.” Mr Dent went to the front of the car and opened the boot. Pointing to the engine, he told Lily, “All the parts you saw yesterday ended up there!”

Then he climbed on the drivers seat, turned the key, and the engine started running. Mr. Dent turned it off, gave the key to Lily's father, and said seriously, “Thank you, Henry, thank you very very much. I just could not imagine how to go on without my Emily.”

Still remembering all of the countless parts, Lily looked at Mr Dent and said “All of these little things are in here?” and declared, “So you are a real magician!”

Mr. Dent returned, “Perhaps for some people, but for me it was many years at school and many years of work. Healing people, what your father does, that is what I call Magic.”

A moment later Mrs Dent came with two baskets, “As you can drive home now, I think you wouldn't object to these,” she said. “One basket full with apples, because you looked so well after my garden,” Lily got a red gloss on her cheeks, “And the other, well, you know.” Inside there was something black, furry and asleep.

Back at home, the attention was divided between the apples, the car and the cat. Lily's mother said, “That many apples, let's celebrate and make a nice apple pie for Mr and Mrs Dent.”

Looking to Petunia and Lily, “How about a pie contest? You both should know how to bake!”

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Petunia hurried and got six firm apples with no spots on it. The others were red and yellow but had brown spots where birds had been picking at them. Petunia peeled and sliced her apples in a wink and when she rushed her pie in the oven, Lily just finished kneading dough and was still busy peeling and slicing her apples.

Some hours later on, Margareth explained to a sour-looking Petunia, “You really don't know why you lost the pie contest? You wanted to be finished peeling as quick as possible, so you took the biggest, firm, but sour apples and forgot to add extra sugar. Remember you have to be patience. And you put the pie in the oven while it was not warm enough. There are things in life you can not hurry girl, they just need their time..”

That evening, they gave the pie to Mrs. Dent, and when she tasted a slice, all she said was, “Now that is real magic!”

## Strange visits

The house of the family Evans had seen many strange visitors. As both of the parents were part of the slightly higher classes, they were expected to participate in the social life. So meeting with other teachers or hospital staff were often planned at the Evans'.

Because Mr Evans was a doctor, patients came directly to their house in case of emergencies. Normally Lily and Petunia answered the door, but their parents were never so keen about this during evening hours. If patients came during evening or night, it was seldom without good reason. And the sight of gravely injured people is not pleasant.

Almost every day there was a lot of mail, brought to their door by the mailman. Both girls had made a nice arrangement who should fetch the mail and sorted into school-related, medical-related or family.

“Lily, the postman was early,” Petunia cried, “You know today is an odd day, so it's your turn. I only do the even numbered days.”

Today it was not different as from any other day. Most of the letters were addressed to her father and a few to her mother. But today there was a strange letter. Lily read out loud: “*To the parents of Lily Evans.*” This itself was not so very strange, sometimes her parents received mail from the Library or the Pastor. No, it was the letter itself, it seems very heavy, compared with other letters. Curious she felt if something was enclosed to the letter, explaining its weight. “No, that's strange, it

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looks like it is not paper but something else. It looks like it is made from parchment. That is indeed strange, it is months since Halloween, much too late for a party invitation.” Puzzled she kept it apart from the rest. She knew much better than opening it, as it was addressed to her parents, not to her.

She had almost forgotten about it, until later on that evening.

“Lily, anything special with the post?”, her father asked. In a flash, she remembered it again: The strange heavy letter!

“Yes, indeed dad,” she answered. “Wait a moment, I’ll get it.”

Lily turned and got the strange letter that she left in the corridor. She returned and gave it.

“Here dad, isn't this a strange letter?” With a quick glance her dad noticed that the envelope was still unopened, and said “Strange indeed, can you get me the letter opener, I want to open this carefully, it seems to be something official.”

Within an eye wink Lily returned with the pointy, but blunt knife. Carefully he opened it, took the letter out and started reading it.

“Very strange indeed!” he said.

“Who is it from?” Lily asked.

Before he answered, he gave the letter to his wife.

She looked at it and replied, “It’s from the ministry of education.” With a strange look to his wife, he continued, “They want to talk with us with regards to your future education.”

She replied, “I’ve been a teacher for many, many years, but I’ve never heard of something like this before.”

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“Could it be, that some of the other teachers have mentioned that Lily is years advanced regarding reading, writing and so on?”

Henry's remark earned Lily a sour glance from Petunia.

“Don't think so, and even then, I presume some secondary school would write, but why the ministry?”

“Well, we will find out next week, they want to visit us next Wednesday.”

Lily jokingly asked, “Could it possibly be that I won some sort of scholarship?”

Her mother replied seriously, “No, that makes no sense, it is very rare, and they only make such a gift, when youngster goes to University. You are way too young for that.”

That night Lily tried to guess what was that all about, but after a couple of days she forgotten all about it. Until Wednesday came. At seven 'o clock sharp, the bell rang, and Petunia answered the door, just before Lily, who was a couple of yards behind her. A very official looking man took his hat off and gave it to Petunia, who carefully stashed it away. While her sister helped the stern looking lady out of her coat, the man cast an investigating glance towards Lily, who got a strange feeling in her stomach. She felt being examined.

“So I presume, you must be the young miss Evans, Lily, is it not?” the man said.

With big eyes, Lily answered, “Yes sir, but how...”

The lady smiled, and confirmed, “Absolutely, unmistakably.”

Petunia led the two visitors to the sitting room where her parents were waiting. After they got up and introduced them-

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selves, Lily's father asked, "You want my daughter to be present?"

The man thought a moment and replied "No. Not yet. First we would like to speak to the parents alone, perhaps later on."

Lily's mother nodded, and closed the door behind the visitors. Obviously disappointed, Lily turned away.

Petunia asked, "How can they know your name?"

Lily shrugged her shoulders. "How do I know? Perhaps they have photo's of all children."

Many hours passed, and both girls went to bed. Lily could not understand: "If it is about MY future, why am I not allowed the be downstairs, with them?"

Well after midnight she heard vaguely the visitors leave. The sound turned her awake instantly. Quickly, but making no noise that could wake up her sister, she got up and went downstairs.

When she entered the sitting room both parents were sitting on the couch, holding hands. But they were looking at each other with a gaze of utter disbelief like their whole world had been tumbled over.

Even before Lily could ask anything, her mother said, "No nothing is wrong, my dear. Your father and I just heard something unbelievable. Tomorrow evening they'll come back and explain further."

Lily's mother got up and hugged Lily. "No really, big little special girl, everything is alright." She smiled and continued, "We were advised not to tell you and even if we did, you would not believe it either. Your father and I have very much to think about. Tomorrow you will be told, I think."



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Disappointed Lily went back to bed. Seconds later she returned to her absurd dream where Merlin was fighting against ring-wraights. Next morning Lily and Petunia looked at their parents, it seemed that neither of them had enjoyed any sleep but had been talking all night.

That evening Petunia stayed at friends, so she was all alone and she felt like she was one huge walking question mark. As she presumed that it would be a night to remember and would be the center of all attention, she made sure she wore her best Sunday-dress. Again at seven, the doorbell rang, and before she even got the chance to answer the door, her father greeted the two visitors from yesterday like good old friends. Lily heard him say, "Yes, my wife and I discussed it over and over again, we fully understand, and agree, it's indeed a chance of a lifetime."

This time, Lily was allowed to join them, but kept very quiet, just watched and listened.

After tea was served, The lady asked, "Shall I start, or will you Cornelius?"

The man replied, "Well, I'll do the formal part again, and after that, we'll see."

After that, he turned to Lily, "Hello Lily. Have your parents explained to you anything, who we are, where we're from, why we came?"

He looked stern, but not unfriendly.

Lily just answered, "No Sir."

The man replied, "Perhaps for the best, well let me introduce ourselves properly. My name is Fudge and that lady there is

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professor McGonagall.”

He continued, “You do know that I am from the ministry?”

Lily replied “Yes Sir, from the ministry of Education, and it has something to do with my future, I presume suggestions about secondary school.”

Fudge sighed and continued, “Well, almost correct. I am indeed from the ministry, but not from the ministry of Education, another one, quite a different one. Education is just one of the sub-departments.” He looked at the lady and whispered, “This very beginning is the most enervating part, not knowing how children will react.” He tried to take a sip from his empty teacup, and said, “I am from the ministry of *magic*.” And while he said the last word very slowly, they both looked intense at Lily's face, probing and guessing how she would react.

“Excuse me, sir, I must be mistaken, for a moment I thought you said the ministry of MAGIC.”

The lady smiled and reassured, “No, there is nothing wrong with your ears Lily, indeed *magic*.”

Lily just replied “Magic? Like '*hocus pocus*'? Dad, what's going on? Is this a joke, why are you all teasing me?”

But before her dad could answer, the lady continued, “No girl, we are deadly serious. Watch!”

She pointed her finger at her teacup, still half full, mumbled something, and the cup started hovering for a moment. Then she took Lily's hand, let it circle around it and let it gently land on the saucer. “You see, no strings or cheap tricks.”

Lily's eyes almost popped out!

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Then the man turned to Lily again and explained, “No, magic is something very seriously, but also very secretly. Outside our world we are not allowed to speak about it, we all sworn the oath of secrecy. But very, very sometimes, we are forced to do so, as there is no other way. But we have to do this very carefully, we just have no choice. Once in a while, it happens that a child is born with THE gift. Most of the time one, or both parent are also blessed with the gift and the parents can slowly introduce the child to our world. But sometimes, both parents are Muggles and we have to do the initial introducing Not only to the child, but also the other members of the family.”

Lily gasped “Parents are what, Muppets?”

The lady continued “He said 'Muggles', but he meant non-magic folks.”

“But why are you here, you must be mistaken, I'm just pretty good at school, not anything else!” Lily wanted to know.

“Did ever something strange happened, you could not explain? When you are angry or afraid or really desired something?”

“No, never!”

“Are you sure?”

“No, really!”

“And how about Mrs Dent, the woman who was cured miraculously?”

Lily fell silently. “What do you mean? It's my father who cured her, he is a real doctor you know. I only visited her. And I even have to admit, I fell asleep while doing so.”

Suddenly Lily's father joined the conversation, looking seriously. “No Lily. Neither I, nor anyone in the hospital did any-

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thing special that can be linked to the waking of Mrs Dent. You know, Mrs Dent has been in a coma. There is nothing we can do for such patients, no treatment. We can only take good care of there bodies while the lie in bed, and pray. Sometimes they wake, but most of the time they don't and remain so for weeks, months or even years. We can not do anything to wake them. We just don't know how. They just seemed to be lost in their minds.”

Bewilderment overcame Lily. “No, no, I only held her hand and brushed her hair and then I fell asleep.”

The lady smiled at Lily, “No my dear, perhaps you did not do anything intentionally and you were not aware of doing it, but you did do something magically. If anybody uses magic, another sorceress can feel it. Normally where we live, we don't pay much attention to it. But when it happens in *your* world, something special has happened, and people from the ministry always investigate those occurrences. Most of the time it is a witch or a sorcerer doing something silly, but sometimes we can feel the actions of a youngster that comes for the first time in contact with her gift. Sometimes it can be scary.”

Fudge continued, “We first examine with what kind of people we are dealing. In some cases people have experienced happenings they can not explain. And specially with narrow minded folks it can give them quite a fright. In this case with your parents, we were pretty confident that you would all understand in the end. So as we found out that two youngsters are living here, we followed the normal procedure, posed as investigators from a well-known ministry and arranged an interview.”

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There was a moment of silence, to let all this overwhelming news settle down.

“And now?” asked Lily. “Did I break any law that I didn't know of?”

Professor McGonagall smiled, “No, on the contrary. All children with the gift receive an invitation to go to a special school as soon as they reached the age of eleven. Hogwarts is a very special secondary school. All of these children must attend such school (there are others, but our school has been the best for centuries). If they grow up without the proper guidance, awkward accidents can happen as the gift grows stronger by the years. You will be guided and helped with it.”

“You mean that I can go to a school where they can teach me to do real magic?”

“Yes, real magic. Not those silly illusions one sees at fairs. Honestly, I'm one of the teachers over there.” She looked at Fudge for acknowledgment, and after a small approving nod, she said, “This is one of my favorite spells.”

Next she draw a small wooden-like stick and murmured something undecipherable. That very instance, the stern looking lady shrunk into a cat. Duncan, Lily's own cat, seemed to sense that the other cat was certainly neither threat nor playmate, so he ignored the new-comer completely, but Lily was flabbergasted! Fudge said “That's more than enough for now, Minerva!” and the woman returned to her original shape. With a faint smile, she continued, “That always leaves a lasting impression, but calm down just a little bit! Especially first years can be very enthusiastic and there is a serious chance of bitter disappointment when things do not go as quickly as you think. What I

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just showed needs years of studying and practicing and even some graduate students can not reproduce a proper shape-shifting-spell. And mind you, it is very much reading, homework and practicing. You will have little to no spare time and go only back to stay with your parents during the summer holidays.”

Lily started to radiate with excitement. “Yes, yes, please dad, mum?” she said while turning to her parents.

“Well, it is rather obvious what this girl thinks about it,” McGonagall indicates. “Didn't even had to opportunity to ask about it...” and looked at Lily's father.

“It will saves us from searching a proper school. It was already obvious that your sisters' school was not fitting for you.”

He looked thoughtfully, “As it seems to be a private school, how about the costs?”

Here Fudge took over again, and answered, “Well, the fee's are quite low, as most of the school is self-supporting. Furthermore at the ministry there is a special Muggle-fund. Specially if both parents are Muggles, sorry non-magic folks. You should realize that our magic community is very small and all new members are more than welcome. So financially there should be no barriers.”

McGonagall gave a letter directly to Lily.

“Here girl, your official invitation to start the first of September at Hogwarts. Along with it is a list of all the books and other material you require. Of course you can not buy any of these in normal shops, and as neither of your parents have any knowledge of where and how, I will help obtaining it all. That is, if you all agree with it. It's no effort as my own niece will be attending Hogwarts as well, So if it is convenient, I would sug-

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gest to pick you up last Saturday of the month, then you can meet Alexandra and we all three will go shopping in London. Wouldn't that be fun?"

A couple of hours later Fudge and McGonagall left. Fudge said, "That went well, very well indeed, not Minerva?"

"Thank goodness, yes! Do you remember the previous time?"

"Yes, that child was scared out of his pants. I felt sorry for him, with parents that were mentally still somewhere in the dark-middle-ages. Thinking that he got possessed by daemons or devils. They either hated their own child or were afraid of him. No wonder with such Christian-extremist parents."

"Still shame that we had to 'squibify' the kid while pretending to be doing some exorcism ritual."

"Indeed, a wast of talent that might have grown into something good."

"But Minerva, next time you should give those involved, both parents and the child, at least, the impression that it is their choice. And only if they still will not corporate, picture the unpleasant alternative."

"Yes, Fudge. I got carried away by the child's enthusiasm. It reminded me of my own youth."

## Shopping

Next month, Professor McGonagall returned again. Just as the previous time, she was not unaccompanied. But instead of Mr. Fudge, a young girl about Lily's age was standing beside her.

“Hello Lily, this is Alexandra, my niece. Just like you, she will go to Hogwarts. As my brother is out of the country, she was staying with me this summer. And because you are probably clueless where to obtain all your books and other attributes for school, it seemed no more than appropriate to add one and one together.”

Lily welcomed professor McGonagall and Alexandra. The girl had rather short, light blond hair, and intense and investigating radiant blue eyes, that reminded her of her cat, just after he was born.

“Hi Lily,” the girl said, “is it true that neither one of your parents can do magic?” and without waiting for an answer continued, “Wasn't that a great shock to find out about it?”

Lily smiled, and replied, “Shock? No, it was better than the best Christmas present ever!”

Duncan came investigating who was invading his territory, but after he spotted the cat-woman, he seemed satisfied.

Mrs. McGonagall looked at the cat and asked, “Is he yours or does he belong to your sister or your parents?”

“Yes, Duncan is my own cat. Why do you ask, professor?”



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“Well, all students are encouraged to bring a pet along. It helps some against home-sickness. Some choose a toad, or an owl or a cat. So if you like, you can bring your Duncan along.”

It didn't take long to think it over, Lily stroke Duncan's head, that earned her a thankful “Prrrr” and the matter was settled.

Lily's father suggested to give them a ride to the railway station, what they gladly accepted. When he pulled his wallet, Mrs McGonagall said, “In the shop's we are going to visit you can not pay with Pounds.” But still he gave Lily some 50-pound notes. “Books and clothing is expensive. You'll need it for the train fair, and perhaps you can change it into whatever currency you need.”

Some moments later, after the train had left the station, Mrs McGonagall said with a smile, while looking at both girls, “Well let's make it a pleasant day off. Others like Fudge work every day in London, but for me it's been months since a last visited the place.” She looked at Lily and continued, “I have a distinct feeling you want to ask me something, dear.”

Even after all that Mr Fudge and Mrs McGonagall already had explained, there were still thousands of questions. Lily just said “So much to ask, but I don't know where to start... Can you first tell me more about school?”

“Certainly! Hogwarts was formed many many years ago, by four of the most famous wizards and witches: Godric Gryffindor, Helga Hufflepuf, Rowena Ravenclaw and Salazar Slytherin. That must have been over a thousand years ago. At that time there were hardly any schools at all, and certainly not for gifted people, like us. If you were lucky and lived in a village or town where another with other witches or wizards, one

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could learn from another. But most of the time, people weren't so fortunate and had to teach them themselves. Most of the time spells and potions were based on 'make believe' and much nonsense and superstitious comes from that era. The church envied their capabilities and started to persecute people. As a result, people with magic started to hide their gifts and clotted together. Those four I mentioned were well-off and well-respected and decided to form a school, far away from all other people, where they could experiment, divide sense from nonsense and teach each other and new witches. And so it still is up to this day.”

Alexandra asked, “But how about Muggles, what happened when then see and visit that place?”

“Ah, well thought off,” she answered, “You must understand, that Hogwarts can not be found on any map. And it is located far far in the north, where even now hardly any people live. Initially local farmers who strayed too far off, were, simply paid to keep their mouth shut.” professor McGonagall grinned by the thought. “But along with time, the inhabitants of Hogwarts became more powerful, and the place is well protected by all sorts of spells. Even you, with the gift, are not able to find it, not even by accident. That is why all first-years must be accompanied the very first time when entering the area. Not only is the place invisible for others, but in case, you come to near you are repelled by the urgent feeling you have to go somewhere else and change the direction you are heading for. The closer you get, the stronger the feeling grows. And with the passing of the centuries, we increased the protective radius with many miles. Since then we were able to practice flying broom-stick undisturbed.”

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“What?” gasped Lily, “You can REALLY fly?”

“Oh yes, my dear,” she continued, “Some students are very keen on it, but I'll don't have to warn you, that it can be rather dangerous for untrained people. When you fall off, from some heights, the results can be very unpleasant, even fatal accidents did happen. That is the reason that broom-stick lessons are compulsory for all first-years. But I have to be truly honest, many people are not keen on it, and rather travel by other means. On the other hand, some of our sports are based on it. Some try to break the one-mile-record fast flying while others join a Quidditch team. That's a combination of steeplechase, hockey, football and baseball, all flying on a broomstick. If you are really good, you can even become a professional player.”

She waited a moment to let it all settle down.

“That is certainly one of the most pleasant parts, absolutely needed to compensate for all the less exciting lessons,” she warned.

“You should remember, that most of us, adults, live their daily lives in your (non-magical) world, have their regular jobs and thus needing to pass exams in order to gain their diplomas. Otherwise getting a job is absolutely impossible. Just like on any secondary school, you have English, French, German, Spanish, biology, history, physics, mathematics, philosophy, economics, Latin, Greek. Fortunately, for us, those regular subjects are more easily absorbed compared to non-magical people. But the 'other' lessons are extra, that is the reason that you will stay seven years on Hogwarts, just because all of you have so much extra to learn.’

“What other lessons are there?” Alexandra asked.

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“As I mentioned, flying on broom-stick's, spells, making potions, divination, in several grades, and also a combination of subjects. Growing herbs or other strange plants, and in the second year you'll start tending mythical creatures. But do not get scared by the sheer number of subjects, after the second or third year you can choose whatever subject your heart is into, except for some mandatory lessons.”

“And what do you teach, Professor?” Lily inquired.

“This year, I try to teach spells, help first-years, and time permits, try to do some research.”

Lily had so much else to ask for, but at that moment there entered Charing-cross station.

“Ah, not just broomsticks, but also time flies,” Lily sighed.

They got off the train and left the railway station. It wasn't raining, but still it was a grim morning, and many people hurried along. On purpose they kept walking: “No car's or tube's please, I want to enjoy London.”

Suddenly their guide halted. They stopped in front of unattractive looking pub, that seemed to be closed. Lily didn't see anyone coming in or going out. Mrs McGonagal waited for a quiet moment and reached for the door.

“Why are we going here?’ she asked suspiciously, “It does not lookes like a place my parents would like to see me in.”

“No time for refreshments or so! This is '*The Leaky Cauldron*' It is a famous gateway between your and our world.”

As soon as she touched the doorknob, the door opened by itself. She did not see the Professor either turning the knob nor pushing the door. “Strange” was all she thought. They went in quickly, Alexandra as the last one closing the door behind her.

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It certainly looked like any parents worst nightmare. Much cigarette smoke, lots of people drinking beer. Just imagine, this early in the morning! Professor McGonagall approached the counter, but had to wait for some boys, about Lily's age, ordering pints. Lily noticed an expression of disgust on the professor's face when she looked at it. Suddenly the man behind the counter recognized the Professor.

“Excuse me professor McGonagall, for letting you wait, what can I do for you?”

“Just let me pass to Diagon Alley, Tom, we have to do some serious shopping.”

“No problem, Professor. You know the way.”

The professor took a step but turned back.

“Just a minute. These boys who just ordered beer, they are from Hogwarts?”

“Could very well be, one of them had the usual school shopping list.”

“We'll see,” she said very briefly.

With big steps, the Professor approached the table the boys were sitting and making silly and rude remarks to others.

“Names!” was all she said.

The boys felt the authority the professor was radiating and answered immediately.

“Black, Sirius Black, Madam.”

“Sheldrake, Robert” a boy replied with a timid voice,

“Potter, James Potter.” a black haired boy with a challenging expression on his face,

“Pippeling, Peter.” one said.

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“Houses?”

“We do not know yet, first year, you know.”

“What do you think you are doing?”

A black haired boy replied, “We had to pass though here, and we were considering the opportunity to enjoy and examine....”

The professor cut him off. “Beer. Forget about it. Alcohol at your age! This will not be tolerated at school!”

Without any further word turned her back on the boys. But Lily manage to notice that within a glimpse, she had drawn her wand pointed it over her shoulder towards the boys, whispering something and putting the wand back again. All without the boys seeing that.

The boys were happy enough to gotten away with a simple warning, they thought. But as soon as one took a big gulp from his beer, he spat it out directly on the boy sitting opposite to him. “Beer you said? This is genuine horse-piss!”

Very amused, the professor led the grinning girls towards another door.

“I think it will take a while before they dare to order alcoholic drinks again there. And when they do, they will certainly remember this round of drinks for a long time!”

The professor stopped at a blind wall, drew her wand, and touch some bricks with it, in a certain order. 'Just another precaution. A couple of years a go, a Muggle slipped in this place, accompanied by some genuine wizards and witches, who all thought he was accompanied by someone else. After some beers he fell through this door by accident and entered our world. He could not believe his eyes, and thought he had be

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drinking something very peculiar. After some nasty articles in 'The Daily Prophet' the ministry decided to add this protecting wall.”

The girls looked, and where a moment before there had been a very solid-looking brick wall, there now was an arched doorway to the street. They stepped through it and the difference could not have been more overwhelming. It looked like they were in sort some of open air museum. No petrol burning cars and the streetlights, that were out at this time of the day, seems to be gas-fired. Definitely no electricity here. Alexandra looked amused at Lily, who stared around here.

“Is this real, or am I dreaming?”

The professor turned to Lily and said softly, “Girl, I know it is strange and overwhelming, but it is very real. I do not know if it is possible, but swallow a bit of this atmosphere and try to lock this into your memory. In the rest of your life you will return here thousands of times as many articles can only be bought here, but then it will almost feel 'normal' -or whatever that may be-. But the very first time arriving here, is something worthwhile to remember. Something worthwhile treasuring. Ah, I can still remember my first time...”

Alexandra whispered softly to Lily, “Even when I am trying hard, but I can not imagine my aunt being a young girl. She has ever been old like this, as long as I can remember.”

The professor pointed to a building that was much larger and very much more older than the other shops in the street. “We first have to go to Gringotts, the bank. Please be quiet, DO and SAY nothing at all that might be interpreted as an insult. The bank is run by goblins. Their eyes see everything, and their ears

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and fingers are long, but no way as long as their pride and their toes – proverbially I mean.” In their own language they do not have a word for 'humor'.”

From the look on her face, Lily could see that Alexandra was taking this warning very seriously. They went in, and with steady steps the professor approached one of the counters where a strange looking creature appeared to be doing nothing. Nonetheless, he let them waiting for awhile.

“Yes!” he finally said unfriendly.

“We have come for three transactions,” the professor said politely, “I have come to make a small withdrawal from my own account. Secondly, the ministry should have opened a new account for miss Evans, miss Lily Evans, and it should contain a welcoming-scholarship deposit from the Muggle-foundation. We need some of it, first-year-fee, for buying school books and so on. And finally this girl want to exchange Muggle-money.”

“Identification!”

McGonagall gave him a letter and laid her wand on the counter along the money Lily had received from her father.

The goblin read the letter carefully, quickly cast a glance on the wand, examined and counted the notes and simply replied, “Wait!”

He disappeared behind a curtain. Some time later, he returned with three pouches. He presented them, saying, “Transaction number one: standard amount for first-year students, deducted from your balance. Number two: same amount, from ministerial donation. Number three: five hundred pound Sterling transferred against the current exchange rate. Along with it three in-



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voices with the exact numbers. Read it, count the coins, and sign the receipt!”

The professor did accordingly without saying a word. Signed the receipt and returned it to the goblin.

She gave one pouch to Lily. “You will hardly need anything unless you see something special. Alexandra will explain about our funny coins later on.”

“Thank you, professor. What next?” said Lily.

“Getting out of here, I don't like it here. Let's start with something important and nice: **clothing!**”

The girls looked at the list of items to obtain:

School robes, for daily use and one for festivities. Gloves (protective), hats....

On the other side of the road, Lily noticed a shop with the name “The Haystack”, that apparently sold dresses and robes for all occasions.

“No, not this one, just a bit further there is another one. Better quality, friendly staff and not so busy. Most people tend to rush, but there is no hurry!”

A quarter of a mile down the road, there was a door and a tiny showcase, and above the entrance, it said “The Proper Needle”.

As soon as they entered the store, a woman approached them.

“Dear ladies, can I help you, or would rather look around yourselves?”

The Professor replied, “Hello Mrs. Pinnacle. Yes, you can help us, I've got two new students that needs proper robes for Hogwarts. I trust you still sell better robes than those people from 'Haystack', I presume?”

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Mrs. Pinnacle smiled. “But certainly professor McGonagall. Standard quality for weekly use, and one slightly better for special occasions?” She showed them a large number of different robes. They were almost identical, but the sleeves and cleavage differed, also the material varied.

Lily and Alexandra tried some of them, but not all.

“How many do we need?” ask Lily.

“That totally depends how you treat your clothing,” the lady shopkeeper answered. “I've heard stories of boys always having accidents at potions lessons and playing rather rough outside, who had to change a couple of times each day, in order to remain look properly. If a student look indecent and you come across very strict teachers or head-boys, you can be send back to the dormitory and report for inspection. But as far as I know, that happened only to boys, girls is quite something else.”

“What did you mean by that?”

Mrs. Pinnacle slightly misunderstood Lily's question. “These robes should be seen as a sort of school-uniform. All the same, whatever your background is. But boys normally do not wear robes and some boys make a mess of themselves, whatever they wear. And regarding girls, rumors had it, that last year a Slytherin girl was caught who was only wearing a school-robe and nothing else. I never heard anymore on that subject, whether she was tricked unaware into it, or she did it on purpose to provoke others.”

Alexandra asked “Why don't we try those on?” and pointed with her finger to some robes hanging on a rack.

Mrs Pinnacle said, “Well, we do have them in the store but we hardly sell them, only if people really ask for them, but those

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on the left, they are too cheap and of accordingly quality. I rather sell you less, but something better, hoping we will see you back again. And those to the right, we never sold them to anyone, these are simply too costly.”

That immediately triggered the girls to examine the other robes. And indeed, those at the left were priced half, compared to the ones they had tried. But when they touched the robes, they understood. It certainly felt different.

“When they are new, you hardly see the difference, but after wearing them a couple of times, you will see. And after washing them a couple of times, you will agree with my opinion.”

While Alexandra was still looking at those trash-bags-robes, Lily turned to the other end of the rack. As soon as she looked at it, she could not keep her eyes away from it. It was not exactly black, but very dark aubergine, nearly black.

The professor and Mrs. Pinnacle came near.

“From all the robes, you have a fine eye to pick out the most exceptional one. That one has a very special feature, it change itself while you grow. It is very deep dark velvet, but if you happen to wear jewelry, they got much more attention.”

Mrs Pinnacle got it from the rack, and held it in front of Lily, just pretending she was wearing it.

“Look at that color – you must try it on.” was Alexandra's remark. And Lily complied.

“But remember, I have told you. It is horribly expensive.” Mrs. Pinnacle warned while Lily changed her dress.

When she returned, even professor McGonagall was dumb. Finally, all she said, “That is extraordinary! It almost looks like

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your hair is a deeper shade of red, and your green eyes look much greener.”

When Lily's eye caught the mirror's reflection, she first refused to believe it was hers! It looked like she was radiating. And when she touched the material, there was only one thought left on her mind. “Must have!”

Mrs. Pinnacle said, “Many young women tried it on, but it never seemed right, and certainly not worthwhile, so I never sold any yet. Perhaps I should not say this, but it seems like it has been made for you Miss!”

The professor picked up the price tag and when Lily and Alexandra looked at it she got pale. Both girls knew what the professor was going to say, but surprisingly, the prof stated, “I should not be saying this, but it simply is *your* dress. And you better spend your money on something lasting like this, instead of candy, papers, magazines. As you just can afford it, I can only advise you, do it. You really do look enchanting!”

After measuring up, they left with the promise that all be ready that same afternoon.

Professor McGonagall explained, “This was a special shop. Certainly. But now be prepared for another special shop: Olivander's.”

And indeed, she had not said any word that did not lived up to it's expectations.

Olivander's shop sold only one article, indispensable for any wizard or witch: Wands! Olivanders had thousands of them, all differently.

Alexandra was served first. Coming from a magical family it was not the first time she held a wand. But choosing your own

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wand is quite something different. Or, as Mr. Olivander explained, “It is the wand that selects the witch.” Actually, this was not true. To Lily it looked more like buying shoes, unpacking, holding it, giving it a whoosh and directly packing it and putting it away, heading for the next one. Finally Mr. Olivander said, “That is the one for you!”

That also implied, that it was Lily's turn. Again the same ritual. Sometimes Mr. Olivander indicated that she could skip the whoosh, “I already feel it is unsuitable.”

“Mr. Olivander, you said that the wand chooses the wizard or witch. So why am I trying these all, one by one?”

“Well I meant as a way of saying, not literally. You can compare it with gloves. You can wear some, but somehow it does not feel right. It is more like if the wand will accept it's new master. Trained wizards might use a different wand, but untrained students like you, the 'fitting' is very important.”

Finally, after picking up more than fifty wands, Mr. Olivander said, “Perhaps, let's try this one...”

As soon as she touched it, she understood what Mr. Olivander has meant. She felt like swallowing a huge gulp of warm tea, hovering several inches above the carpet, hearing sounds she had not noticed before and seeing everything much intenser.

“O, very well, ten and a quarter inch is a bit long and willow makes it certainly very pliable. The relationship between a wand and its master is special, yes very special. Some wizards rather change partners than changing wands. So to say at least.”

When leaving the shop, Lily said, “Now I really start feeling becoming a witch.”

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Next stop was at the chemistry, or so a chemistry might have looked like some centuries ago. Nowadays you probably do not have many choices between several cauldrons. Both girls needed a complete potions starters kit, including fermented leeches and pulverized adult bat-teeth.

“Would you be so kind to transfer the whole lot them directly to Hogwarts, dear man.” Professor McGonagall asked the shopkeeper. “You can not expect ladies like us to carry those things on the streets of London. If the Muggles see us with that,” she pointed to both cauldrons, “Those silly people start asking the latest soup recipes.”

After leaving the shop, Lily asked “Next ...?”

Professor McGonagall completed the sentence “...Tea, followed by Flourish & Blots”

“What do they sell there?”

“Books, uncountable books. Books you certainly need, but also, books that might be handy, that can serve as an explanatory source of information. Some of the books do not take into account that there are students without any prior knowledge regarding magic. There are other shops, but when I visited them, I never leave empty handed. And there are no spells involved. That has been checked several times.”

At one hand, the tea-break was much too short, as Lily had rather much to assimilate, but on the other hand she was very curious about her new study books.

Walking towards the bookshop, they saw many students, with their parents having the same objective and equally many youngsters leaving the shop with a cubic yard full of books.

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Alexandra's aunt reassured her, “There are always silly people demanding to leave with ALL books they bought. No need to worry, I will have all normal books sent directly to Hogwarts. I certainly think that you want to have a glance of the other once, Lily. How about you Alexandra, the same?”

Both girls agreed that it was the most sensible thing to do. When they entered the shop, Lily saw over hundred packages. They followed the professor to the dispatch area.

“Hello, these two students want all their non-magical books transferred directly to school.”

“In that case, I hope that they both can identify themselves.”

“Yes, I know the requirements, so we have paid Mr. Olivander a visit previously.”

“That is very wise, otherwise, they either had to return, or carry all books.”

Both girls presented their brand-new wands.

The shop assistant picked up the wands, and touched a form with them.

With a “poof! poof!” two packages disappeared.

“These are now transferred to the luggage area on the Hogwarts express. The staff there will take care for getting them off the train again, and also for getting them to your sleeping area. I wished other people were equally sensible, ladies!”

They thanked the assistant, and went looking for the other books. Especially for this time of year, they had rearranged the shop, so the books for all first-years were on one bookshelf, and likewise were the books for the second year students on

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another bookshelf. Each time a stack of books were taken away by a student, a new stack of copies appeared.

The professor smiled. “Clever thinking, not? I suggested it some years ago. Normally all books are sorted by author, but that caused a lot of walking around, and students ending up with the wrong books at school. This is better for all students and also for the shop.”

Lily looked at the titles. “Book of spells grade I, History of Magic, Magical Theory, A Beginners Guide to Transfiguration, Magical drafts and potions, Fantastic Beasts, The Dark Forces: a guide to self protection”

Lily just opened one, “History of Magic” and started reading. From a Muggle's point of view, it was all meaningless, a fictional history book for children. But for people with the gift it made perfectly sense, although perhaps slightly dry material, according to some. Suddenly someone was shaking here arm. Professor McGonagall smiled and said, “I'm, glad about your enthusiasm, but you might want to wait a bit. This is a bookstore, not a school.”

Unknowingly Lily was already up to page 53 and said as an excuse, “am sort of addicted to reading.”

“No problem with that, actually: on the contrary! I am glad, almost every year I have students in detention-hour who can not set themselves to the minimal amount of reading required for them homework.”

“We still have two things to do. The last thing will be picking up the robes, but before we do that, we will visit the pet shop.” Of course, this trip was not needed for Lily, who would bring her cat 'Duncan' along. But Alexandra did not have a pet. Her



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aunt gave some advice, “Dogs are not allowed, because they need so much attention. Mice, rats and frets I would not suggest, because they might run away, and be taken for experiments. Birds are generally rather safe in this respect. Many students choose an owl because they can also be used for carrying letters to home. In case of students coming from a Muggle family, this is something I also discourage.” Suddenly she remembered she had to do an errand for a college professor. “You two can already have a look. Perhaps they have a nice offering. I’ll be back in a minute or so.”

So they went to the birds-department. Understandably, the price of each bird varied with the species, and the demand for it. Cheapest were doves (Muggle-birds), followed by owls.

An assistant said, “We just got a load of birds of prey, ranging from hawks to vultures, but most of them were pre-ordered by Slytherin students.” With a nod he pointed to another corner, “Those birds there is no demand for. Finding a proper owner for an albatross is completely impossible, just like the other birds in that section.”

They walked along all cages with signs on them: dove, church-owl, snow-owl, parakeet, jay, parrot, hawk (reserved), Vulture (reserved). Next to them were a lot of empty cages.

On the next cage there was an additional description: “Albatross, reduced in price, last a lifetime”

In the final cage was a lonely bird, a note said, “Special, ask only if really interested.”

The girls walked from the beginning to the end, over and over again, each time ending at the “special bird”.

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After the ninth time, the assistant took notice, “I hope you do not mind saying, but it seems to me that you are drawn to the last bird. And as the keeper, it seems it is mutual. Normally the bird does not pay any attention to any humans, but I have never seen him so active. But note, that this special bird also has a special price. But perhaps I can do something about it, as we seems not to sell him anyway. I'll ask the manager.”

Some moments later he returned, “I may do something about the price, It has been dropped from 'unreachable' too 'still way too much',” and named it.

Lily suggested to Alexandra, “I can help, but even then, we have hardly anything left this year.”

“Would you really do that? It is your father's money, not?”

Lily thought about it for a moment, but somehow it felt good, so she said, “Let's do it.”

Much to professor McGonagall's surprise, the girls left the store with a bird in a cage.

She looked at it, looked at Lily with an investigating look in her eyes, then turned to Alexandra: “You realize that you just have bought a phoenix, young lady?”

## No school-bus

Along with the official invitation to Hogwarts and the list of all school books and other requirements, was a train-ticket from London, Charing Cross railway station towards Hogwarts.

Lily had arranged with Alexandra and her aunt to meet at the station entrance that day.

Next Thursday, the 30th of August, Lily, her sister Petunia and her parents traveled to London, the car stuffed with all the normal and peculiar requirements for her new school. On one hand Petunia detested the attention her little sister got, but on the other hand, skipping school for one day and going to London was enough compensation. “Keep that cat away!” she snarled to Lily.

Lily's cat “Duncan” was over excited about the oncoming change, and purely accidentally had wrapped his head against Petunia.

Her father parked the car near Kings Cross' station. Lily and her father went looking for a trolley and returned with two of them. While traveling, they put Duncan in a basket, to keep him from walking away. And Lily's mum put that basket on top of all the luggage, so he had enough to see.

Near the station's entrance they met with Alexandra and her aunt, professor McGonagall. She said, “Perhaps it is a good idea to travel together. Traveling alone, personally, I don't mind. I have always more than enough to read or to think about. But for you, youngsters, it isn't fun. Specially if it is to-

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wards unfamiliar destination. Alexandra has enough to tell you, and perhaps you two can help each other? A familiar friendly face helps to settle down, specially the first few weeks!”

And with these words she led them in the directions of the platforms.

Lily looked at her train ticket, It said:

“Hogwarts Express, single fair, valid on 30th August. Departure 10h00 platform 9  $\frac{3}{4}$ ”

She asked Alexandra, “Isn't that a misprint or so?”

“No,” she replied trying to keep up with professor McGonagall, “No, this is also one of the 'doors' between the Muggle's and the magical world. It is as far as your parents and sister can come along. Only we can pass.”

The professor excused her pace “We are rather late, you see.” And turned left onto a platform.

At one side there was a big sign indicating it was platform *ten*, while on the other side the train to Swindon was just left at platform *nine*. “Now what?” Lily thought. But they kept on walking towards the end of the platform. When they were about ten yards away from the gate, the Professor turned, and said “This is as far as you can come, I fear, this is where you have to say good-bye Lily to your family. Petunia just waved, but the departure of her parent was much warmer. After a hug and a kiss, her mother asked, “The professor has given you information how you can send letters to me, not?”

After a brief confirmation, Minerva placed her hands on the shoulder of both girls and whispered some instructions into their ears. Then she turned, walked to the fence and disap-

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peared. Next her parents saw Lily doing the same, and finally the professors' niece vanished in an identical way.

“They are gone!” Was all Petunia could say. She walk quickly also to the fence, but it was as solid as any fence.

Certainly they weren't gone but slipped through a portal. Alexandra had told her that the very first time it might feel a bit strange in your stomach. “It reminded me of the first time I got on a fast elevator all alone.”

Alexandra said, “Nothing special, you get in here, and get out there. And funny stuff in between.”

“Getting out there” actually happened to be on platform 9¾, a big sign said so. But it also seemed like they traveled in time, or to a museum. Instead of normal diesel engines, a huge steam locomotive was heading a long row of carriages, that very could very well have been used for “The Orient Express” or another classical movie.

Compared to Lily, Alexandra had hardly any luggage at all, just one bag, and a cage with her own bird. She explained: “My aunt have sent most my of stuff ahead. I'll guess that is one of the few privileges of being related to one of the school staff.”

The professor said, “Off you go now, I truly hope you end up in the same house, but you can not tell in advance, statistically there is a 25% chance, but with you two, the odds are a bit better, I think.”

She waved, said, “Behave when we meet tomorrow I am a stern teacher and you two will have no special treatment. And do not forget to put you robes on in time!” She turned and she was simply gone.

Lily stared, “Impressive! Ho did she do that?”

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“Dunno, but the next couple of years I'll guess we will learn quite some interesting tricks, don't you think?”

And with these words they got themselves and their luggage on the train.

They were indeed late, going from one compartment to another, they saw that they were all filled up.

Almost at the end, they finally found one, with only five girls in it, one a slightly more older looking, but the others were also first-years.

“Hi,” Lily said, “We are looking for some free seats, would you mind...”

One of the girls brutally interrupted, “Yes we would mind. This is reserved for our group, if nothing else is available anymore, you can use the next one, where we left our luggage.”

Alexandra was getting angry and was going to say something, but Lily avoided that, by replying, “Thank you ladies, sorry for the disturbance we might have caused you.” with a smile, but a very very ice-cold smile.

It turned out that the next compartment was indeed the only one left to them. “It will have to do, I'll guess.” Next half hour they spend reorganizing all the luggage. But after they put it all into the racks, they had plenty space left for the two of them. Alexandra said, “Horrible girls, they think they are quite something, but that final look on *your* face, magnificent, you must teach me how to do that.”

Lily grinned, “That was one of the lessons my father taught me. In the Muggle's world you see it quite a lot, but it is getting less. People born in certain families thinking they are different, better then others, and are to be treated differently than others.

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Did I tell you my father is a Doctor? He told me that people from the “upper-class” (she pronounced it with a strange voice) bleed the same and ache the same as anybody else.”

“But it is still nothing compared with India, where the caste systems is very rigid.”

“Aunt Minerva told me, that at Hogwarts there is a competitive distinction between the houses, but that is more or less only for encouraging the students. But there are students from certain families, that think differently about it..”

Lily took one of the books out of her bag, “Did you see what is in the book of herbology? I helped quite a bit in gardens but these herbs, never heard of them before. I wonder if I know them under a different name..” and so she continued to discuss some of the subject that lie ahead of them.

Suddenly the door opened, and the girls from the other compartment came in.

“Bad luck for you, but we could not stay there. That Indian girl thought she could bribe her way into Slytherin. Disgusting, eating too much chocolate frogs, and finally a magical-beans with vomit flavor. That stench!”

One of the others said, “Sylvia, these two are probably Huffelpuffs or Ravenclaws.”

Lily replied, “We don't know yet, this is our first trip to Hogwarts.”

Another said “Children that can not keep their nose out of their books have to be Ravenclaws, and those who are so dumb-witted that they even have to study on the train, mostly end up in Huffelpuff.”

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Conny claimed, “We will all go to Slytherin: family tradition.” The slightly older girl inquired “You two, you two remain alone together, you aren't *different*?”

Turning to the others, she said “There are few things I dislike even more than Muggles, and these are know-it-all's, foreigners and queers. Those really make me puke.”

This discriminating attitude made her blood boil, but Alexandra replied tactfully “I do not know what you mean. I got bored and nothing else to read.”

Sylvia, the older girl said, “Bored? Even if I didn't have to instruct new-Slytherins I would not have time enough to get bored. All those boys to play with and practice on.”

Lily answered, “What do you mean by that?”

The other replied, “They don't look dumb, perhaps they are just misinformed. In either world, it is always men against women. Mostly, men win, or so they think. So we have to be prepared.”

Lily asked innocently “Are you from some sort of women liberation front?”

Sylvia burst out laughing. It went on and on, Finally wiping the tears from her eyes. “Women liberation! We are in charge, we decide, we fight! You really have no idea, I'll guess about the ways of the world, you poor girl. Your mother should have told you.”

“Told me what?”

With her wand, Silvia pointed to Alexandra's chest, “What are these for?”

Lily replied, “Feeding babies, the first few months or so!”



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Silvia asked again, more intense, slowly, “And what do you use them for the rest of your live?”

“I do not know, nothing?”

Silvia continued, “Unaware like most girls and women. These are weapons. Means to achieve your goals in live. Just think of it. If we, woman, meet someone where do *we* look at, first? Face, eyes, hands perhaps in the case of another wizard or witch. Not so for boys. They look elsewhere, I was about to prove it to the other girls. Just watch!”

She pointed her wand to her own blouse, which seemed much too wide for her. She whispered a spell, and suddenly the blouse wasn't too wide anymore. On the contrary, it hardly fitted anymore. She looked around the corner, waiting for some to come. When she saw a man approaching, she undone two buttons, and sat down on the seat near the door. When he got near, she knocked on the window to get his attention. He opened the compartment door and simply said “Yes?” Suddenly his head turn as red as a tomato. Silvia stood up, rather close to him, and ask, “Now, would you be so kind to me to do me a favor, dear man? Perhaps I can mean something for you.”

With a red head, the man stuttered “ccccerttainly”

“One of my friends made a mess of the compartment next to this, can you do something about it?”

“Yes, missss,” and the poor bloke was gone.

“Did you noticed where his eyes were focused on, did you see what happened when he realized when his dirty thoughts were obvious?” Silvia grinned.

“Now what?” asked one of the girls.

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“Well if he is a wizard, he will sanitize with his wand with some cleaning-spell, if not, he'll be busy for quite a while.”

The other girls laughed, but Alexandra tried not to show her disgust, and asked, “Where did you learn such tricks?”

Sylvia shrug her shoulders, and said “At home, in our town, we have a circle of witches, meeting every month. I am not allowed to be there yet, but I hear a lot from my older sister. She taught me swelling-spells, how to make moon-tea, to avoid getting babies, and sun-draught for the opposite effect. I know my mother used it to trick the city mayor. And I heard, that one of my mother's friends used it on a foreign prince, when he visited London. After “it”, she was certainly well done: well taken care for, never a day work in her life anymore and no suffocating marriage. But with wizards you have to be more careful, those tricks won't work.”

The man, clearly no wizard, indicated that the other compartment was clean again.

Sylvia stepped towards him, and whispered in his ear, “What were you thinking, you are even older than my father.” and walked straight to the cleaned compartment. The other girls left, giggling and Lily and Alexandra were alone again.

“What a bunch of horrible Slytherin bimbo's!” was Alexandra's comment.

“Did you heard what she said, just using other people for their own good, and from what I understand, they consider that to be normal practice. Disgusting. And using magic to lure people.”

“Aunt Minerva told me also some rumors, that a lot of wizards and witches, previously from the house of Slytherin, are admir-

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ers and even followers of Voldemort, a dark wizard, you might have heard about him.”

The rest of the journey passed without anything worthwhile noticing. Near the end of they journey, Lily said, “Look there, up ahead, it looks like a huge bridge!”

“Oh dear,” Alexandra said, “We have to get ready, we are almost there and we must be changed into Hogwarts-robos. My aunt said that there is a spell on the bridge. If you didn't change you fall asleep and wake up on the final stop.”

Lily changed quickly, and opened the window. The evening was already falling but the lights of the steam engine and those from little houses or farms looked like from a fairytale. As they were still traveling at quite some speed, the cold wind in her face and through her hair, made sure she was absolutely awake.

Moments later, the train stopped, and a deep, loud voice said: “Hogwarts, school for wizardry and witchcraft!”

Lily looked outside, and an enormous person repeated “Hogwarts, all students get out, leave your luggage, it will be taken care for. All first-years come to me, all others should use the exit on the left!”

When they all left the train, they were in for a surprise. When looking out from the train, the person already looked huge, but when the got out, and were standing next to him on the platform, they realized just how tall he was.

“Hullo,” he said. “I am Hagrid. I am the gamekeeper of Hogwarts, and my job here and now is escorting you to the ceremonial trip for the new students. Everyone's here. Let's count!”

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After countless re-counting, Hagrid drew the conclusion that all new students were gathered.

“All right, kids, follow me, towards the lake!”

Even as it was not completely dark, the journey to the boathouse was rather cumbersome.

“I am sure glad, that I could leave all the luggage over there,” Alexandra said, after tripping for the third time over a tree root. At the boat house torches were lit, illumination over hundreds of small boats.

“I can not imagine that giant fitting in one of these!” Lily said. Much to her surprise, this was picked up by Hagrid.

“Certainly not, young lady. Actually, this is your first demonstration, lesson and test. You all go shortly in a boat, two by two, and you don't have to do anything, but pledging your trust in our school. If there's no trust, the boat stays where it is. That is all there is to it. Now, off you go!”

Lily and Alexandra stepped into one of the boats and noticed there were no paddles. So they sat down and looked ahead, over the dark, and probably deep lake to the other side. There a beautiful castle drew their attention. From all the countless windows a warm welcoming light shone.

“Home, for the next couple of years, I hope.”

Without anyone saying something or doing anything, their boat started to move.

Alexandra said to Lily, “I sort of knew what lies ahead of me, I have seen pictures of Hogwarts before, heard stories from my aunt, but still I am overwhelmed. But for you....”

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“There are hardly any words for it...” Lily said. “It sort of feels like saying goodbye to the safe and familiar world I have known. And the start of a voyage into the unknown.”

“I could not have said it any better,” which was perfectly true.

Their journey through the darkness lasted just fifteen minutes, but it seemed much longer. When they arrived at the other end, Hagrid was already waiting for them.

“He could not have walked along the shore. But why doesn't that surprise me?”

Hagrid just said, “Please hurry up, all the others are waiting for you,” and led them toward a magnificent door that blocked the entrance to the great hall.

## The sorting

The huge doors were opened by unseen hands, and someone said, “Here at the left are the places for the unsorted new-ones.”

Lily looked at a huge hall, with four long tables in parallel, where lots of other students were seated. All the tables were set, but all the plates and cups seemed to be empty. And at the end, there was a slightly smaller table with elderly people, probably teachers and other staff. And all along the beautifully decorated walls were brightly burning torches. But what impressed her most was the fact that she noticed that there were half a dozen chandeliers hanging from ... nothing! When she looked up she could see all the stars shining from the heavens. Someone tapped her, and she realized that Alexandra tried to get her attention, as she was the only one still standing. She blushed, sat down and heard a voice saying: “May I have your undivided attention for the head of our school, professor Armando Dibbet!”

Lily saw a fragile, old man standing up, but his voice was still vigorously. She listened:

“Welcome, welcome dear students and staff. A brand new academic year lies ahead for us, and it is my privilege to keep you from your dinner for a while.

As always, we start with the selection of the houses for the first-years. As you might have been told, or read from the parchments sent to you, our school is divided into four houses, and these will more or less replace your family while you stay

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here. Each house has its own characteristics, and it is important that you feel you at home, so every one of you is presented and tested in front of the whole school, so there is no doubt about it.

If you are dedicated student, not afraid of long and hard work, Huffelpuf is the place to be.

In case you strive for wisdom and knowledge, Ravenclaw might be better suited for you.

The people in Gryffindor are well known for their courage, but sometimes act against better knowing.

And finally Slytherin, for those who find achieving is the utmost achievable goal.

The selection will be done by the sorting hat, that will probe into your soul and inner thoughts. It makes an objective decision, but if you feel unhappy, an appeal is always theoretically possible. Though, as far as I can remember, it never made a mistake. Each house has its own common room which will be you main living quarters.

During the whole year, any remarkable achievements will earn your house points, and any mischief will cost your house points. At the end of the school year the house with the highest score will win the house cup. Let me remind you, that neither house is my favorite.

There are people who have serious miss feelings considering the house of Slytherin, simply because a wizard, who belonged to that house, is using its power and knowledge in a way that we, the entire staff and the ministry of Magic, seriously disapprove.

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While on the subject, let me remind all of you gathered here together remind you of this: Any tool, craft, knowledge, power or ability can be use for good or evil. Secondly, neither “good” and “bad or evil” are absolute. It is not a binary choice, *for* or *against* it. Good decisions made with a clear conscience can have terrible consequences while actions against better knowing sometimes turn out for the better. In the Muggle-world, I endured the Great-war. The second world war, and now the cold war. In our Magic world, I have also seen terrible things. So let me close on this subject by reminding you that you all have been blessed with an exceptional gift, but it comes with extra responsibilities.

For all of you who will try to escape from those responsibilities, either by use of alcohol, drugs or spells, a firm reminder. The use and possession here at school will not be tolerated at all and will lead to removal from school. The end of a possible magical career.

Also, the dark forest it off limits for any students, just like the third floor, and if you choose to swim in the lake, it is at your own peril. Some of its inhabitants would welcome some fresh meat. Oh, touching the subject, let's get on with it, and start with the sorting ceremony.'

One by one all the first years were invited to come forward, to an empty chair. After the student sat down, a centuries old wizard-hat was put on the students head, and after a small pause a voice that seemed to be coming out of the hat named loudly one of the houses.



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“Sheldrake, Robert” A boy with unbelievable red hair walked towards the chair. A moment of silence, and then “Gryffindor”. Loud cheers from one of the tables.

“Beasley, Angus”, Same ritual, followed by “Huffelpuf”.

“Potter, James.” Alexandra pointed and whispered to Lily, “See, there is one of those silly boys.” “Gryffindor!”

“McGonagall, Alexandra,” Lily just said softly “Good luck,” without really knowing what luck would do any good. All she hoped was that she and Alexandra would be sorted into the same house. She realized that even though they knew each other for just a couple of days, she and Alexandra had something in common, and welcomed anything familiar.

“Gryffindor!” Cheers and congratulations.

“Black, Sirius”. A sluggish young boy walked up forward, and others from the Slytherin table were shouting, “Got an empty place ready for you here!” Again Lily recognized one of the boys from the Leaky Cauldron. This time, the sorting hat seemed to have trouble making up its mind, but after a very long pause, it finally claimed “Gryffindor!” Lots of students started talking and Lily heard, “Can not be true. All the children from the house of Black always go to Slytherin. Must be wrong.” With a strong voice, Dibbet said to the students (and staff) “Silence!” And to the sorting hat he said, “Are you sure?” The sorting hat replied with much disdain, “Gryffindor I decided, and who is the sorting hat, you or me, I am certain; Gryffindor it is and Gryffindor it remains!”

“Snape, Severus.” The weird boy from Lily's town, she knew as “Sav”, stood up, walked several paces, stopped, and said to Lily. “Hope to see you at Slytherin.” And without waiting or

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expecting any reply he walked to the chair. Got the hat on, and heard immediately “Slytherin.” followed by cheers and banging on the table.

“Evans, Leonora,” Lily stood up, feeling slightly sick, and while walking, the thoughts in her her mind were grinding, “What is it going to be? Alexandra was in Gryffindor, but those silly pesky boys also! She did not care as long as it was not Slytherin with those horrible bimbo's”. Trembling she sat down. “Ah, interesting mind we got here!” she heard a voice in her mind saying. “Don't worry, Slytherin is out of the question, you have too much sense of responsibility, although you have strong motivation and a strong character. You are certainly not lazy, so Huffelpuf might suit you well. How about Ravenclaw? Hm, you are eager to learn and want to excel in healing! Hah, you are a stouthearted girl, dare to walk uncharted paths and not easily persuaded. No doubt about you: 'Gryffindor!' “

Lily didn't even hear the cheers and the banging, half daze she started walking to the Gryffindor table where she was welcomed by Alexandra. She felt so relieved, she could almost cry. Even though the sorting continued, Lily wasn't aware of it anymore, she just looked bewildered to all the unfamiliar faces beside her, who all treated her like long lost relatives.

Some minutes later, she heard a familiar voice, and recognized professor McGonagall.

“Dear students,” here she waited till she got everybody's attention, “Dear students,” she repeated, “all students excepts the first years, know that this ceremony is far more that just a simple selection process. Actually, this has been your second les-

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son that has been given to each new student, and also as a reminder for all present students. Before the sorting ceremony you all felt awkward, perhaps slightly anxious or sick: *'what is expected of me, am I up to it, am I good enough, won't I make myself ridiculous, what will the others think of me.'* All those people staring at me. And afterward the feeling of achievement, success, being the focus of everybody's attention.”

She looked at the other teachers, and continued, “We do that on purpose, and even use some of our spells to intensify the feeling. For the rest of your lives, try to remember this feeling! Not everyone is destined for fame and grandeur, raised in a homely home. But let me make absolutely clear: You all are special, though not all of you will receive recognition and rewards later on in your lives. We, as the staff from Hogwarts, recognize and acknowledge you.”

And after these words, she made a small bow to the students. “I believe that Professor Dibbet has something to say to you all.”

Professor McGonagall sat down, and the old schoolmaster got up.

“Yes, I have some final announcements.

Due to the tense situation, I find myself traveling a lot these days, and not only to our ministry so I might be away more than I would like. So with the full agreement of the school directors, I appointed a deputy schoolmaster, the head of Gryffindor and your teacher of transfiguration, professor Albus Dumbledore.

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Although we use delicate spells for increased speedy acceptance of any knowledge and wisdom that is presented here into your upper chamber, no doubt that some of it has 'leaked away' last weeks.

Before any of the classes starts, each of you will be tested by the teacher, in order to find out at what level the course material should be presented to you.

As usual, at the end of last year, a number of Quidditch players have graduated and left school, so when the new season starts at November, we will select new players. Being selected is an honor, but no excuse for missing other lessons. Practice is at the early hours before school, or after. Not during school hours unless explicitly granted by our staff.

All third-year student will have to make up their minds which subjects they want to keep, and which to drop. I would emphasize this is a serious matter, and do not choose only the subjects that yielded highest marks last year. As a matter of fact, the demand for fortune-tellers at traveling fairs has dropped considerably lately. So I suggest to those who it concerns to contemplate doing something useful with the rest of your lives.

Finally within the next couple of days we will have interviews with all first year students. We need to know the range of their magical powers and detect any dormant capabilities.

And now, finally: DINNER!”

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He tipped with his wand to the plate in front of him and suddenly all dishes, bowls and bottles were filled with everything could desire. And the funniest thing about the dishes was as soon as that last piece of meat or fruit was taken of it, it got re-filled by invisible servants it seemed.

Finally the sense of hunger was replaced by sleep.

Lily felt a hand on her arm.

Alexandra said “Wake up sleepy. Final journey for today: the dormitory, I hope.”

However, that was not exactly the case.

Gryffindor's head-boy said, “Please follow me, try to stay together, otherwise, you definitely will get lost.”

Like in a dream they walked through countless corridors, climbed and descendent zillion staircases until the boy stopped before a huge portrait of a fat lady.

“Here we are, near the entrance of the Gryffindor area. Only students from our house can pass. And only if they know the password. You should never share it with anyone from the other houses. It is very secret and can not be guessed.”

Alexandra yawned bored and said, “Sure, fiddlesticks!”

The boy replied in surprise, “Who told you that?”

Martin ticked with his wand against the portrait and repeated, “Fiddlesticks!” and an opening became visible. Behind it was a large common room with lots of comfortable chairs and several fireplaces.

The final thing Lily remembered was someone saying the girls dormitory was on the left.

## Introductions

Next morning, when Lily woke up, she first thought she just had a wonderful dream, about a voyage to a castle filled with students also longing to learn about magic. But when she opened her eyes, she wasn't in her own bed, in her own room at home. No, she was at the girls dormitory! No dream, she really was at Hogwarts, the famous school of witchcraft and wizardry!

Then she remembered the voyage, the welcome, the sorting and way too much eating.

“What time is it?” she asked.

“Time to get up!”

After a quick shower, she was refreshed enough to face the day. And because of the superfluous dinner previous day, Lily was satisfied to have only a glass of fresh orange juice as breakfast, indeed 'break-fast'. As it was a sunny morning she decided to do some exploration with some other newbies of the grounds. With all the moving staircases, it proved already difficult enough to get out of the castle. But as soon as they got a clear view of the castle, it was definitely worthwhile the exercise.

“Yesterday evening, only seeing the lights from the windows, I didn't realize Hogwarts was THIS big!”

“How many students are there? A few hundreds?”

When they returned to the common room, they noticed some time-tables, schedules for the next week. Martin Steward, Gryffindors' head-boy explained.

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“Yesterday evening it was already announced, but I’ll guess all first years had an avalanche of new impressions to absorb. That is also one thing I still remember after all these years, too much to gasp and always getting lost in the building. It might be wise to change classrooms as a group, it is not that you are not allowed to wonder alone, but it is hard to find your own way around here, and maps are of no use as you probably know already. And also, if you think about asking any of the ghosts around here, - they live here long enough to point you the shortest way- some of them have the nasty habit of giving wrong directions, just for the sheer fun of pestering first years.”

A third-year student confirmed, “Yeah, be especially careful with the “Bloody Baron”, that's the ghost from Slytherin.”

Martin continued, “Dibbet said that everybody got tested, but there is nothing to worry about. At the end of each year we all have to do tests on the lessons you follow that year (or are supposed to have followed)” he said with a grin. “At the beginning of each year, one does exactly the same tests, so they can see if you had a bad day the first time. Also, they determine if you need some extra lessons or, Merlin forbids, more homework. As a head boy, I can tell you, learning some extra lessons is bad enough, but having to do an extra piece of work has a serious impact on the little amount of spare time. So my personal advice: better doing it right the first time, and good is good enough, if you over-do one subject, you might run into troubles with other subjects.”

He looked at the first-years and sighed “I'll have to repeat this every year. But for you all, the first time is different. All of the teachers will have a brief talk with each of you individually. They claim that it is to get to know the new faces, but as far as

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I know, they want to limit the amount of paper reviewing.” When he saw some still looking anxiously, he said, “Don't be alarmed by the sheer number of subjects that Dibbet mentioned. Some of them are never given to first years, but if you have a feeling for languages, have Troll-parents, or are already able to speak some French, German, Welch, Spanish, it is just a waste of talent. And wasting talent is something they take seriously. But it also works the other way round. If they find you are ahead of the others, you will be given two options: Either dive deeper into the subject, with the risk of getting even more ahead, or you are excused for attending the classes for a brief period. Among students, the first one is known as 'the nerd-option', and is only chosen by those from Ravenclaw or Huffelpud, ah, Huffelpuf.”

Much grinning. “So that is all about it. Oh no, I almost forgot, there is also an introduction lesson, for Muggles from all houses, but to be honest, considering the attitude of other students, they just might make it mandatory for all, and not just the first years.”

As to be expected, Lily saw that the next lesson on her schedule was “Muggle-Intro”. As Alexandra was brought up in a family with wizard's they got separated as she went directly for small interviews with some of the teachers.

Lily went downstairs somewhat in the direction of the great hall, but halfway she saw a big leaflet on a door: 'Introduction course for first years from strictly non-magical families’.

She went in and got herself a seat on the second row and looked around. About ten girls and boys her age were there already. She didn't recognize any of them. “So all of those pesky



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Slytherin girls and Gryffindor-boys had wizards or witches as parents.” she concluded.

A moment later, Professor Dibbet entered the classroom. His eyes went slowly from one to another, as he was trying to memorize all faces. Then he started speaking,

“Again welcome to Hogwarts. A very special welcome to you. Most students have either a witch as mother or grandmother or a wizard as father, or grandfather. Some have even both magical parents, and that is how the gift has been passed on to them. But not all the children of wizards and witches have the gift. They are known as '*squibs*'. But you, you are all very very special. It might very well that one of your ancestors had the gift, but it still means that you were all raised in a world where 'strange phenomena' are treated very differently. People in our world tend to forget the impact of this. They use magic in every part of their daily life, playing, tidying up, cooking. They simply can not imagine what a world would be like without magic. It is simply woven in the fabric of their lives.

And for you, it is completely reversed. Somehow you have, some more, some less, the gift. But neither of you have ever seen magic being used, its capabilities, its limitation, and the consequences.

These worlds are so unbelievable apart, it is almost incomprehensible for either inhabitants. And for you, Hogwarts is the bridge in between. Let me give you some examples. Just imagine you can not see, and I mean blind from birth, not because of an accident or illness. Those people can surely live a happy life, and you can describe what you see, perhaps explain what 'visible light' means. But the feeling you got, when you rise up

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early and witness a sunrise, a field with sunflowers. The sunlight through the forest. The sheer feeling of joy and thankfulness. This is something you can not pass to any non-magical person.”

While saying that, Lily noticed that Dibbet looked perfectly happy, but then his face turned very seriously.

“Alas, some wizards and witches find in this the excuse for feeling themselves 'better' than others. Absolutely fiddlesticks, utterly nonsense!”

“With all the gifts you have, not just the magical one, you can do either right or wrong!”

The boy next to Lily raised his hand and asked, “But what *is* right or wrong, what is good or bad?”

Dibbet replied, “A true Ravenclaw question!”

He paused and thought for a moment.

“I might have answered, 'good is when you act according to your conscious, and have no regrets', but then again, what is conscious? And some people have no regrets whatever horrible deeds they have done, both magical or non-magical alike. No, we at Hogwarts will try to teach you that everything in either world is precious, either to you or to somebody else in the community you are part of. People, animal, plants, lakes, fields with corn, they are all unique and different, but neither is more valuable than another. That is a tough lesson!”

Dibbet's face turned even more seriously.

“As you might have heard, at this moment there is a wizard practicing dark-art, black-magic. Most, if not all of his actions

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are either for personal gain or esteem, or for a very limited group of people he gathered around him. Mostly at the costs of others, with no respect for lives or environment. Many people fall victim to him or his followers, both from our magical world, but much more from the Muggle world they despise. They are misled, intimidated, scared, hurt, tortured or even killed.”

His faced turned slightly friendlier, when he continued, “Here at school there is little or nothing to fear. When practicing there will always be a qualified teacher, and Hogwarts is extremely well protected against the outside world. Both magical and non-magical. But it's protection ends there. And that brings me to another extremely important item.”

Dibbet stopped and emptied a glass of water, standing on the desk.

“The most important law for all of us, has to do with secrecy. Never, and I really mean NEVER is any wizard or witch allowed to practice magic when he can be seen by non-magical folks. As we fully understand that youngster like you, might not be able to detect the presence of Muggles, you should realize that anyone of you, who are considered to be 'under aged', are not allowed to use magic at all outside the school premises. During the sorting ceremony you got a magical mark, that will detect any use of magical powers. It will trigger the ministry of Magic immediately.”

He looked through the window outside, and said, “I fully understand the implications of these limitations, but the non-magical world keeps on expanding year-by-year. Back in 1705,

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when I was young, one could easily have contests of speed-brooming over the country without the risk of being seen.”

Lily tried to imagine how it would look like: a bunch of old wizards with waving beards on a broom-stick, racing through the sky.

Dibbet caught her attention, when he continued, “This school is as exactly like any other secondary school, *the more you put into it, the more you will gain from it.* That will be all.’

Much of what Dibbet told her, she already expected or heard before from Professor McGonagall, but it gave her food for thoughts while she walked back. Like her parents, she had high hopes of changing the world for the better, and with the gifts of the wizards and witches she could make a difference, but how is that possible if you had to live a secret life, never to perform magic in public? Suddenly she heard, “Lost already?” It was Martin Steward, Gryffindor's head boy. “No, I just returned from an impressive speech from professor Dibbet.”

“Yes, he certainly knows how to leave an impression. Going for the interviews next, I presume?”

Lily tried to remember her schedule, “I start with English, professor... Undertow I believe.”

Steward replied, “So you are scheduled for languages first. Two floors up, then the third to your left.”

She hurried, wondering about its outcome. She looked at the line of empty chairs in the corridor near the classroom, and softly knocked on the door, waited a moment and entered the classroom. Professor Undertow was a middle aged man, not

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dressed as a wizard, just a man she could pass any day on the street at home, without giving him a second glance.

Lily said, “Good morning Professor, my name is Evans, Lily Evans.”

The professor greeted her and invited Lily to sit in the chair opposite his desk. He searched through a stack of files beside him, took one out, skimmed through it and said, “As you might have expected, I have been talking with your teacher at your school. We also talk with parents, but these have a tendency to exaggerate the skills of their own children. I was very pleased this time to witness the opposite. Your teacher declared you as a miracle-girl. So I am very much curious about you. In a letter, your mother described you as addicted to books, so tell me how many books did you read last month or so, can you tell me something about them?”

Right from that moment Lily started talking and completely lost any sense of time, sometimes briefly interrupted by professor Undertow asking a question. Finally Undertow said, “I think I agree with your previous teacher you are far ahead compared to the other first-year students, and I also think I know enough. After an initial test paper, you are dismissed from following English classes for the next trimester, but I will have to discuss it with the other teachers.”

He looked at his watch and said, “Good grief Miss Evans, you didn't use any spell on me? Please sent in the next student! I am way behind schedule.”

When Lily arrived, there was no-one waiting, but right now there was quite a queue of students. Alexandra was one of them. “Giving him a hard time?”, she said.

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“Dunno, it felt like five minutes, but according to the clock, it has been over an hour.”

Next interviews were with the professors teaching foreign languages. Those interviews were much shorter, as they were all completely new to her. Except for the Ancient languages, here the teacher tried over and over again. “I can detect something, but I can not put my finger on it. Latin is compulsory for anyone, but Greek is optional. In your case, I would suggest you take up Greek also if your schedule permits of course. I will discuss it with your other teachers.”

The professor currently teaching Biology was much impressed by Lily's knowledge, “I read that your father is a doctor. Any likewise aspirations, perhaps in combination with magic? We also have hospitals in the magic world, you know?”

Just after lunch all of the students have had all of their interviews.

Gryffindor's head boy came towards them, “Professor Dumbledore wants to speak all of the first years, and said he'll start with those in Gryffindor, Alexandra, can you come along please?”

Fifteen minutes later, she came back and 'red' Sheldrake was escorted to the professor. Immediately Lily inquired, “What was it like, what did he ask, did you have to do something? They probably find out I can not do anything. This all has been a terrible mistake.” Alexandra tried to calm her down, “Don't worry so much. Besides, you are not alone with old Dumbledore.”

“Am I facing several professors?”

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“No, I just noticed that my aunt came along. But because we are related, she did not want to be there, otherwise, people might think I get a special treatment. Having an aunt as teacher is mostly a big disadvantage because other students think otherwise.’

After Robert, it was Lily's turn. Martin escorted her to Dumbledore study, where she found professor McGonagall sitting at the same desk.

“Don't be so very uptight, girl,” the old professor said and pointing to a colorful bird next to his desk, he continued, “Look at him, nothing he can do can influence my opinion about him, and are you not much more brighter than my Parrot? Most of the time people are afraid of fear itself instead of the subject they might fear.” He noticed a tiny tear in her eye. “Let me assure you of at least one thing: if you did not have the gift, you would not be here at all. Please give me your hands, yes, both of them.”

Still a bit trembling she put her hands in the hands of the old professor. Instead of some probing magic, he just continued to talk, “Here at Hogwarts, we get all sorts of first years, with various degrees of magic experiences and capabilities. We distinguish roughly three, eh, types, flavors. How to name it?”

If he was expecting an answer from professor McGonagall, he did not wait for a reply, but went ahead, “You have those who can *sense* things other people can not, you have those who can *understand* what others can not, and you have those who can *do* things that other can not. And for each area, your gift may be dormant, waking up or even slightly developed.”

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Now professor McGonagall joined in. “All of the teachers at Hogwarts we are very much trained in waking up students, even the lazy ones,” she said with a smile. “Actually, even if you do not transform mice in elephants on a daily base, there is something special about you, even among other junior witches. I can not put my finger on it right now, yes, every person is unique, but when we meet all first-year students, their gifts are roughly the same. Not with you, I have never encountered a gift like yours.

Then there is something else. Let me first explain that besides our *normal* potions, incantation lessons (and fun lessons like flying) we also do some research where senior students help and participate. The last couple of years we hear at an alarming rising frequency complaints of people having troubles with their dreams, nightmares. Last year we started a special class or investigation to learn more about the subject. When I realized the nature of one of your gifts I immediately contacted Professor Dibbet and Professor Dumbledore. We want to ask you, Lily, if you would like to participate and help us investigating dreaming. Please!”

The old professor concluded, “If one student ever got a definitive reaffirmation of her capabilities, I would think such invitation would be one of them.”

When Lily left Dumbledore's study, he said to professor McGonagall, “She certainly has the gift, more than average, but I also sensed much more. Joy, sorrow, grief, something ageless. That girl reminded me of a museum, she made *me* feel young!. Something I never felt before with any students. She gave me



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goosebumps. Keep a close eye on here, please. I'm glad she was not sorted into Slytherin: We don't need a 'Dark Lady'. And I don't think that anybody else needs to know, certainly not the girl.”

Lily found Alexandra still waiting for her. It made her feel grateful, she really liked the blond haired girl.

“And, how did it go? Still got all your fingers? Not eaten alive by the hungry professors? Still doubtful?”

A sigh of relief and a simple hug told the most important part, and Lily explained the rest while walking to their common room.

## Wandering

When finally all students were evaluated, the schedules for the first trimester were created. Next day they all started with a Muggle subject, English.

Professor Undertow started with a general introduction. “As you come from different schools and have different backgrounds, the first trimester is mostly used for getting you all to the same level of understanding. To prove your writing capabilities, please write an essay about yourselves. The results will help me to form an opinion about you. Sheets of parchment are... here. I presume you all have your own quills?”

Lily and some other students looked slightly lost. Undertow noticed. “Those coming from a strict Muggle background, here I also have some sheets paper, just a tiny bit, so you better get used to our way of writing.”

Slightly to the professors' surprise, Lily stayed as long as any of the other students. He was expecting her to be the first ones to leave. But at the end of the class, he understood: most of the other students had not even produced a quarter of the amount Lily had written. “We have discussed this before, miss Evans. For the time being, you are excused. I'll let you know when a next test is scheduled.”

Not only Lily but all the students had looked very much forward to the next lesson: charms. This year it was given to the first years by Alexandra's aunt, professor McGonagall. After

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they all sat down, she started. “Throughout the ages, all of the youngsters coming to Hogwarts, have high expectation about this first lesson. I hope you will not be disappointed too much. First an administrative message. You are all aware that one of the students is my own niece. For those who might be thinking that it might be to her advantage, that won't be the case. On the contrary.”

She looked very strict at her niece. “I presume you all brought your wand with you, and the book 'Standard-Spells, level one', please put them on your desk. Those who fail can expect a five point reduction.”

Clearly, by the nervous response, some had left book or wand at their dormitory. One of them was a girl with blond hair and very blue eyes.

“As this is the very first lesson, it will be the first and the last time that I won't be executing this penalty. As Alexandra should and could have known this, she still gets her reduction.”

Immediately all knew that she would keep her word, no favoritism during the class.

“Well now, here we have three major components for doing magic, a person with the gift, his -or her- wand, and a source of information how to perform a spell.

First about you. You all can do magic, but with different degree of success. People without the gift would have never had received the invitational letter for Hogwarts, and uncertain cases should have been filtered out at the initial interviews with the heads of the departments. Those of you, coming from a background where magic is practiced on a daily basis at home, are

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in a clear advantage. You have heard several spells and seen the casting of it hundreds of times before. Regularly you all will be tested, and if you have mastered the expected level earlier, ahead of others, you may pay your attentions to other subjects in your common room. But those exemptions can not be expected for the near future, I presume.

Secondly about wands. There is a huge amount of facts that can be told about them, see the second chapter in your books. What they do, is concentrating and channeling magic being performed by the one that holds the wand. They are long, thin and made from two components. Who can give me some examples of the material that is commonly used for wands?”

“Always wood, from oak, yew, willow.” a student answered.

“Almost correct, the book list them as “holly, sycamore, ebony, hawthorn, fir, hazel, pear, oak, cherry, vine, rowan, cedar, ivy, rosewood, blackthorn, willow, elm, ash, mahogany, yew, birch, aspen, and elder although it is possible to make wands from bamboo or even reed. Does anyone knows why that is not usually done?”

“No? That is because strength is needed to protect the inner core, the magical part. Who knows examples?”

“Blood, hairs or feathers of magical creatures!”

“Indeed and each different creature personifies different aspects of magic. The sheer number of combination is countless. Just like the character of the one holding the wand.

For your information, this aspect is the primary aspect for our subject '*Tending Magical Creatures*'. Most people consider it a

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horrible and dreadful boring subject, but without them, there could not be any wands.

Without the magical core, wands are just simple pieces of wood, which is exactly how real wands should feel in the hands of non-magical people or squibs. Note that I deviate from the official textbook, that I emphasize on the word SHOULD. There are exceptions.

“Any other aspects of wands you know of?”

“Its length and flexibility, professor.”

“Very well. I was looking at the boxes in front of you, you all obtained your wand from Olivander's. I remember that he measure several aspects of the intended holder for selecting them.”

“He still does.”

“I suspect that it is partly a bit ceremony. Until you reach the age of 21, most of you will still be growing. And personally, I can not accept the fact, that after ten years time, you should have selected another wand.”

“Professor, can you tell us something about the selection procedure at Olivanders?”

“You were all told that the wand chooses the wizard and not the other way round. That might be so, but still, under the disclosure spell from the wand-shop, you had to try many, I presume, until you found one that gave you the best match.”

Lily remembered the glowing feeling inside when she bought her wand.

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“Did you noticed I mentioned the best available match? There might be other combinations that could have worked even better.”

“Who of you ever touched or even tried someone else wand, from a parent, brother, sister?”

“I wooshed once before, and made a bowl of porridge explode.”

“I set accidentally the curtains on fire.”

“Indeed, it can produce unexpected results. It sorts of works, even for me. Olivander describes that very well, it is the same when buying gloves: the two has to fit. One will grow and the other could wear.”

“Next point I must bring to your attention, is that you are not yet allowed to wear your wand outside school. Only after you master your Ordinary Wizardry Level exams after the fifth year here, you are allowed, but still, you are only allowed to practice magic until you reached the age of seventeen. If you leave before that or sent away because of misconduct, your wand is kept here, and the ministry gets informed, so you can not buy another one.”

“But I could steal one!” James said.

“True, but you still get the same unpredictable results. A wand will not easily accept a new master.

Only if you kill, defeat another wizard in battle, or disarm him, it will accept you. How would you accomplish that without a wand? And even then, a serious mismatch may still exists.

Besides that, a wand can also be inherited.”

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“Can you tell us something about the making of wands?”

“That too is rather vague. Those who make and sell wands keep much of their knowledge to themselves. It is more art than clear cut knowledge. When magical material is presented to them, they start making wands until nothing is left over. Until the next shipment, they just cut the wood into practical lengths, and sometimes reduce their diameter if they are too thick and improve their flexibility. So they are all hand-craft, there is no factory. This means that they are never being able to produce the same one ever again. All are unique.”

For a moment, she let her own wand roll between her fingers.

“So, we talked about the wizard and his wand. Obviously, that is not all there is to it.”

McGonagall pointed to the book. “This book contains all spells you are required to learn and to master in the first year. All subsequent years have their own book. Only if you master the basics, it makes sense to follow this year's other subjects, like transfiguration and DADA, Defense Against the Dark Arts.”

It was clear that it made an impact. “However, for a successful spell, there are attributes invisible to the eye. Does anybody, besides Alexandra, knows what I'm talking about?

No? Well then: MoPeD. Motivation, Perseverance, Dedication. Soon you will find out that it is a subject just as hard as any other subject.

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You might be as talented as professor Dumbledore, but without a moped, you'll get nowhere.”

After a sip from a glass of water, she continued. “Because I'm getting a sore throat of all the talking, let's switch to something practical.

As we all struggle against dark arts, it is always handy to be able to shine a light on things, in order to find one's way. You find it handy in the rest of your life, I can promise you that.

In a moment time, I said a moment time, Mr. Black, we all take our wand in our wizardry hand, come forward to my desk, keep your wand still, concentrate on light, become one with your wand, think and say: 'LUMOS'!

Let me stress that I do not expect all of us, specially those raised by Muggles to succeed.

After that we will see if we have to spit the class and who goes to which half.

I presume most, if not all, will have to keep on practicing on this elementary spell, but perhaps one or two can continue with the second spell.”

One by one, all the students approached the professors desk, most holding their wand in their right hand, lifting it and after casting the spell the end of their wand started to glow vaguely, or shone a white light.

Much to Alexandra's relief, she was able to let her wand shine brightly enough to let her pass to the next level.



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When she was finished, it was up to Roberts turn. Initially, nothing happened happened at all. The second time it was clear for all to see that he became rather nervous.

“I told you that this is difficult for those raised by Muggles!”

He tried for a third time after they all closed the curtains, but still the professor had to look very hard to detect a tiny glimmering spark. “I presume you understand you need to practice a bit, young man.”

Next Lily's had to come forward. She simply hoped that it would take her less than three times to produce a tiny spark. Lily noticed the teacher smiling encouraging, but with a pounding heart, she closed her eyes, concentrated deep on something very bright, let her consciousness slip into the wand and spoke out loud: “Lumos!”.

Next she waited on the verdict, and waited a bit longer.

“Lily! L-I-L-Y E-V-A-N-S!”

With a shock, she opened her eyes and almost let her wand drop. “Sorry professor.”

The professor looked hurt, taken by surprise.

“Lily! I said light, not *lighthouse*. You nearly blinded me fool. Pass.”

But when Lily walked back, the professor had difficulty with suppressing a smile. This girl was living up to the professor's expectations, though she was determined not to say a word about it to Lily. At the end of the hour, some students had to practice a bit more but most of them could note down in their workbook, behind the lumos-spell “Succeeded”.

## **Disappointment and satisfaction**

The next day was also going to be special. After the normal history and Latin lessons, they would have their first potions lesson.

The whole group of Gryffindor students arrived at the classroom of Professor Peatery, the acting head of Ravenclaw. Much to their dismay, they found also the Slytherin students.

“What are THEY doing here?” Was heard from both sides.

The professor simply stated, “There are never many first years students, so we always combine two or more houses. And traditionally for potions, it is Gryffindor and Slytherin. And who am I to change that tradition?”

He looked at them as to imprinted their faces into his memory.

“My name is Peatery. I not only teach potions, but also chemistry in the second year and thereafter.”

Peatery pointed towards the new potions books they put on to their desks. “You can put those away now, before doing any theory, we start with practice!”

Unbelievable gasps from the entire class.

“Now, come on, don't tell me you are afraid? If so please tell me now, then we can make some arrangements when the Hogwarts express is returning.” A deafening silence followed.

“You all should know, that making a potion is very much like working in the kitchen. Just like there, you have ingredients, a recipe to follow, patients and a lot of practice. Who of you has

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ever been active in the kitchen at home?” Just a few hands rose. Someone from Slytherin said, 'Servant business'.

The professor smiled and replied, “O well, just like every year, it seems like this is becoming also a tradition.”

Peatery looked at the Slytherin student, “Servants work? Don't you have any idea how essential this is? Obviously not!

What if you end up in a place or a positions without servants? Or the goblins from Gringots replaced your gold with leprechaun-gold?”

Someone just simply waved with his wand.

“Wrong again!. Shortly you will learn about Gamps law of transfiguration. You can not, I repeat clearly NOT create nutritious food, neither transform something into food. You might fetch some existing with a summoning spell, if you can master that one. But that is useless in the presence of Muggles. You know why. Now of you go, here are the recipes.”

He pointed towards a pile of recipes and said “If you are not able to do this, I have little faith in whatever you may create later on. He gave the pile to Alexandra and instructed, “Choose one, and pass the rest on.”

Lily and Alexandra looked at all of them, and without hesitating Lily grabbed one of them.

Its title said “apple-pie”. Alexandra confessed, “Cooking is not one of my hobbies!” But Lily assured here, “neither mine, but I show you, it a real piece of cake.”

Some boys thought that that their fast grabbing of one of the cards would make it easy for them, but they were heavily disappointed. “I noticed that some of you have selected the card with coffee or tea. Let me assure you that they are the most dif-

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ficult ones. You have to roast several different beans at the correct temperature. And tea leaves have to be fermented in the time accelerator. Very tricky indeed!”

Most of the others kept fooling around, especially the Slytherin boys, making a horrible mess.

Lily told Alexandra, “The most important part is preparation, we have to make sure that all ingredients are here, of good quality -I'll show you- and weigh them properly, so you don't have to waste time later on.”

Even though some of the others were supposed to be making chicken soup it smelled more like horse manure, both girls continued making a dough, peeling apples using lemon juice to avoid the sliced apples coloring. Almost at the end of the lesson, when Lily's pie was cooling down, professor Peatery instructed James Potter to fetch madam Pomfrey. As soon as he left, the professor walked through the classroom looked at all the tables, and said “You all had more than twice the amount of time you all needed. Some of you apparently found it beneath their dignity to follow my instructions.”

Suddenly the jovial looking professor became very frightening. With a thundering voice that would not except refusal he shouted: “Now taste whatever you made yourself!”

Some time later madam Pomfrey entered the room. From her clothing, it was clear that she worked at the school hospital.

“Oh dear, is it the traditional Gryffindor-Slytherin poisoning contest again, professor?”

Together they looked at all the students, either convulsing in pain, gasping for air, vomiting or turning all shades of the rain-

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bow. “Just imagine what would happen if they were using really magical ingredients.” They stopped near Lily's and Alexandra's table. Without any hesitation, he cut another two slices, gave one to Madam Pomfrey, tasted it and simply said: “It's been one of the very first times I did dare to taste a first years result, well done! Ten points awarded to Gryffindor!” After that, the rest of the students were escorted to the sick-bay.

Lily and Alexandra also left the classroom, with mixed feelings. They both realized that none of the students would ever dare to provoke the professor, although its methods were, rather harsh.

She asked, “Alexandra, would you take the rest of the pie to our common room as proof? I have to tend your aunt's extra lesson.” and yawned demonstratively.

After she finally found Professor McGonagall's classroom she entered and found beside the professor, about a dozen other students, at least three years or more older than her.

McGonagall said “Though it is still early, why not start, now everybody is here. Before doing an introduction round, let me make the rules for these lessons absolutely clear.”

She looked at all the students one by one, “We are continuing the subject of sleep and dreams in particular.”

“What you might hear or see or experience, should never, I repeat: NEVER leave the room unless I agree about it. With dreams, we are dealing with the sub-conscious, and we might say things we would normally not even dare to think. Don't be

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pleased, offended, flattered or scared if you happen to be the subject of such thoughts or dreams, also the context of the dream might not mean anything to you personally as or waking conscious governs are actions.”

She paused a moment and said, “For instance, I could dream about dropping a cream-pie on Dumbledore's head, or becoming the next schoolmaster. But that does not mean that I'm thinking or planning to do such a thing. And with boy's and girls of your age, well, it is not hard to guess what some students dream about. So again, at one hand, I expect all of you to be open, frank and honest, but secrecy at the other. And even more difficult, it that implies that you may never treat people otherwise, once you know what he or she has been dreaming about. Do you all understand what I mean, and do you agree with the terms?”

McGonagall waited for a positive reply of each of them.

Next each of the students introduced them selves, simply “Martin Steward, Gryffindor, last year and house boy”,

“Robin Stansbridge, fourth year, Ravenclaw,”

“Robert, I'm in Ravenclaw, last year”,

“Angelina, Gryffindor, last year, I think,”

“Peter, Gryffindor, sixth year”

“Mary, Gryffindor, sixth year,”

“Synthia Killbride, Gryffindor, fifth year.”

“Ginger, Gryffindor, fifth year”

“Annabel, Ravenclaw, final year' and so it continued until:

“Lily, Gryffindor, first year.”

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All of the students stared at Lily. So Professor McGonagall immediately said: “Minerva, Gryffindor, as always. You might wonder how I got the nerve to bring a first-year student along, but I can assure you all, we might be in for a surprise. Treat her like any other student. Having said that, I would very much appreciate if you would have some consideration with her, it's been quite a while since you were all first-years.”

Mary asked, “Is it a coincident that again we all are all students from Ravenclaw and Gryffindor, not any of the other houses?” To that, Professor McGonagall simply said without any further explanation: “No, it is not!”

“Now we know each others name, and I think we will get to know each other rather well. And I would appreciate if you would also call me by my first name. But ONLY here, please.”

“Professor... I mean Minerva, what are we going to do, continue with what we did last year,” Peter asked.

Minerva thought for a moment, and explained to Lily, “Last year, we made some potions and experimented with spells. Some to deepen your sleep, others to be able to remember your dream completely.”

“You should understand, that we just started this extra-class last year after the Christmas-break. Throughout the whole magic community we get signs that people have unusual vivid nightmares, people are scared to go to bed and as a result, they hardly function when then are arriving at work, school or university. Dreaming is slightly mentioned during the new subject of divination in the fifth year, but we decided to give it more attention. Robin, can you give us a starting summary?”

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“Certainly. We know as close to nothing, which is slightly more than doctors in the Muggle world. Dreaming is thought to be a way in which the mind deals with situations from the waking world. This could be a way to digest unpleasant happenings, or preparing with forthcoming difficult situations.”

He ordered his thoughts for a while, and continued. “So regarding the aspect of *time*, it can be the past, present or future. With regards to *place* we still have not got the foggiest idea, it could be a reflection of real places, but not not where you could meet or interact with people in the waking world. Finally, with current drugs or potions, we do manage to influence to some degree the way you are dreaming. We can prolong the amount of time you are dreaming, and the degree in which you can remember what you have dreamed about.”

“And how about influencing the subject you dream about?”

“Near to nothing. Greatest obstacle is becoming aware that you dream inside your dream. Actually you have to be careful, it can turn your head upside down. How can we be sure that we are awake, we might be dreaming that we are awake. Pinching your arm as is done in books or movies? Rubbish! You still might be dreaming about pinching. Papers talk about what they call *lucid dreams*, but the problem is that there is absolute not control mechanism. Some people can not be relied upon, it could very well be that they are just making it up. But even with reliable persons, there is, as far as we could find, no objective way to verify claimed results. Sorry.”



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The professor looked at all the students. “Last couple of months I did not get any new reports of people who were tortured in their dreams anymore. Did any of you hear any other reports I am not aware of?”

Minerva looked at Angelina, “I think at this moment, after the summer holiday, I would like each other to share their experience (if any) so far.

Before anything else, I want you to take notes. And I want you *all* to take notes of what we hear and what we see. Why not a single person? For that, I've got two good reasons.

Firstly, we all hear and see things from a different perspective. What might be circumstantial or irrelevant to one, might be considered of importance to another.

Secondly, it will be the base of some homework. --Sorry, you won't escape from that.--

To be sure your notes don't wonder around, I've got a number of magical books. If you write in those, only you can read it. If someone else tries it, he'll see only undecipherable text, gobbledygook. “

Martin cleared his throat and began, “I've been able to remember one particular dream, it is not much, but it re-occurred four times, perhaps that might be significant.” Minerva gave him an encouraging nod. Martin grinned a little, “Perhaps I should tell you in advance, that after graduation this year, I am invited to start working at the ministry, OUR ministry. But in my dream I am a teacher, the whole classroom is filled with students, and believe it or not, they all listen with full attention. I haven't the

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foggiest idea which subject I was teaching. Might be math. And after explaining a difficult paragraph, I look at the children in the class, and I see myself sitting on the first row. That's all.”

Minerva commented, “Good, very good. We should study it in more dept to find its meaning, it seems at least two symbolism's, interesting!”

She looked around, “Anyone else?”

Mary blushed, “Well sort off, I've been dreaming romantic stuff about Peter. Getting married.” Immediately Peter chimed in, “Most of the school knows that we are an 'item', so understandably, but still flattered.”

After a moment silence, Robert started, “I dreamed that I was a Navy officer, and we were at war with Turkey. And believe it or not I was in a rowing boat on the Mediterranean with a dozen or so crewman that did the rowing. I felt bored and started fishing. But the strangest thing was that I didn't catch fish, but wristwatches, and they were perfectly on time. Of course I felt as flabbergasted as my men were, but as an officer I just pretended that it was all quite normal. Then we row into a thick fog, I hear my men screaming and one by one they all disappear. When I'm finally left alone I sort of feel someone or something getting near to me. I scream and wake up!”

Peter commented, “That's deep man! Wonder what this all might mean..”

Angelina tried, “I think being at sea means something, but can not remember now, and being a C.O. means that you are firm in

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control but are afraid of loosing it. But those watches, that beats me!”

Martin inquired “Being at war, should we take literally, or just as a conflict in general? With yourself, with others?”

Mary gave it also some thought, “But that ending, the fog. Spooky.”

After a moment, Minerva looked intense at Lily, “I think you also have something to share with us, not?”

“Yes, but that is totally different, totally unlike yours!” she started rather nervous, not knowing how it would be received by the far more senior students. She found she was in the center of everybody's attention and decided not to go too much into details.

“I dreamed I was in my neighbors house. I looked down through the window, and where the garden used to be, there was a huge maze. And my neighbor was crying in the middle of it and lost. So I got down and helped her out of the maze. That's about it. I remember some of the details, bit those are probably not relevant.” There she stopped.

Peter started “Well, Lily, that sounds like you are a nice helpful girl, wanting to help people out of their trouble even when the don't see a way out themselves.”

Minerva said softly, “Probably. The special thing about this dream is however, that after her neighbor woke up, she remembered exactly the same dream. She, being lost in a huge maze forever, and the next-door girl helping here out.”

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Total confusion. Mary gasped, “You mean that two people sharing and interacting in the same dream? That is unbelievable. Sorry, I don't mean to doubt you. This sounds like one of the old tales. We have to do some research in the library. Can you give us some more details?”

And Martin, “This sounds like a break-through we have been waiting for! Whatever we think we are dreaming, Lily can verify us if she can do it again. Now I understand why you brought a first-year along. The mere thought of something like this will certainly keep me awake!”

Minerva continued softly, “You should know, there is even more to it.”

Everybody stopped discussing, you could hear a pin falling. “You must also know, that when that fortunate woman woke up, she was in a hospital, in a coma for over six months!”

All of the students gazed at Lily with open jaws.

While Minerva gave a very emotional Lily a firm hug she said, “Now you all understand why I invited Lily, a natural talented dreamer, even knowing she is only a first year student. I need her, we all need her. I hope I can learn from her! If we can repeat this, we are years ahead.”

## Not just roses

Not all classes were what Lily might have hoped for.

For instance, the history class from professor Binns was not exactly full of excitement. On the contrary, some students classified his lessons as “D&D”, Dull and Dusty, and nick-named the teacher as 'Dust-Bin'.

On the other hand, after the history lessons, all first-years, from all houses combined, had to gather in the courtyard, for broomstick lessons. When all students, also those from Huffelpuf and Ravenclaw, finally arrived, they still had to wait on professor Transgrassia, a temporarily teacher from Italy.

Most of the boys from Gryffindor and Slytherin were bragging how good they were and were actually considered these lessons a waste of time.

When he finally joined them, one of the gamekeepers brought a huge stack of broomsticks along.

All looked eagerly towards them, but they first had to bare a demotivating speech.

“Ah, dear boys and girls,” he looked around the circle of students around him, gazing slightly longer at the female students, “I have been chosen among the many to introduce you to the magnificent art of flying. And I mean, really flying, what Muggles do with wings attached to a bus, makes me puke!” After these words he acted as he had to throw up.

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“My name is professor Transgressia, professor Pronto Transgressia with “G” in it. I live in the beautiful country of Italy, where I am a test-pilot. Yes, I test flying objects from all over the world before they allowed to be sold. I have flown on more broom-sticks than most of you will ever see in your entire live. Most of these objects are utterly worthless, hence my well-earned handle or nickname is Professor Transcrashia. You are allowed to use either name, I won't listen to any of them.”

With a sarcastic look on his face, he continued.

“Most of you are capable of lying. Not everybody is capable of flying. How many from you come from Huffelpuf, Ravenclaw, Gryffindor, Slytherin?”

After each house was mentioned, the students raised their arms.

“For those from Ravenclaw, I have bad news. No matter how deep you dive into your books, you can not learn flying by studying, you will only end up diving into the ground.”

“Practicing is what you need, and those of Huffelpuf, do not get overjoyed, you can practice 25 hours a day, if you do not have the feeling, you can shake it. You better get used to traveling by bus.”

“That leaves us with the 'go-getters' and the 'dare-devils', I have seen Slytherin students that after a crash ended up with a broom in their ars, and neither the student nor the stick could be saved.”

Still looking fouler by the minute, he continued, “And actually, it was from Gryffindor, that some students had such a high opinion of their flying capabilities, that they took-off, and that was the last anybody has ever seen of those two anymore.”

## Lily Evans' Diary - year one

Lily thought, “I had until now the idea that flying was fun, but I am not sure anymore.”

Professor Transcrashia, counted the noses, “At least we have enough wood to carry you.”

He pointed to the heap of broom-sticks and explained, “As you might have noticed, those brooms are not exactly the state-of-the-art, but they will do for now. They are bundled and grouped, each their own color. Red is advanced, blue is quite-good, yellow for those who have tried it before, and green, well, you can still use them for sweeping.”

Again he looked at them all.

“Who of you think that they can fly because they got flying lessons from their parents or others?”

All students with Muggle-parents kept their arm down.

Some of the others raised them reluctantly, not knowing what would be the consequence.

“OK, all the honest ones, grab a green stick and group over there, in the middle of the field, far away from trees and walls. It is better for them, and the hospital-ward can pay their attention to the other patients.”

“The rest of you, depending on how many minutes you really sit on a stick, you can choose one of the others. If you are wise, take a yellow one, but it is up to you. Stay here AND STAY ON THE GROUND, until I have given the greenhorns their first instructions.”

## Lily Evans' Diary - year one

Lily and some others, walked to the heap of magical objects, and took one with a green label.

“Even if I make a fool of myself, I won't go to Madam Pomfrey's hospital ward,” she promised herself.

She noticed that the Gryffindor-pesky boys all reached for the blue-ones. Sneep, one of the Slytherin boys said scornfully,

“Play it safe, Black, Potter? I thought you said five minutes ago you could fly before you could walk, that you were such a natural talent. So your talent is actually bragging!” and while saying that, he grabbed a stick with a red-label, mumbles something like “firewood quality”, and walked away.

Potter threw his stick away, and also grabbed a red one. She heard Black saying, “Are out of your skull? I'm already overdoing it by getting a blue one. Yes, I did get some lessons by from brother, but that was only twice or three times, while on holiday.”

But James could not be persuaded to be sensible.

Meanwhile, she walked away, and heard another girl just commenting, “Boys!”

When they arrived at the center of the courtyard, as instructed, professor Transcrashia asked them to line up in such way he could keep another eye on the other group.

“At least, you all got the common sense to admit you have never done it before, but are still willing to learn. Good.

What is the main difference between an ordinary Muggle broom-stick and these?”

“They can, eh, fly?”



## Lily Evans' Diary - year one

“Wrong! With the proper spells I can almost turn any broom-stick into a flying one. Or more precise, I could turn any subject into a flying vehicle: carpets, automobiles, you name it: I'll fly it!”

“The cross-beam, near the end?”

“Very well! These are meant for your feet, and serve a couple of purposes. It keeps you from falling off, it keeps your balance, and you need them in case you want to make a turn.”

He pointed at one of the green brooms, and explained, “These are indeed classical starter-sticks. Their maximum altitude is about eight feet, so even you will not be able to get injured. No guarantees however.”

“We start with a basic exercise, it does not look difficult, but without it, forget about the rest. For some this will already prove too much.”

He walked towards one lying on the ground. “Try to do the same,” he raised his arm slightly about at his middle, and said, “UP.” The stick immediately got up, at exactly the same position as his hand. “Don't make yourself ridiculous by holding your arm that high,” he shouted to a Huffelpuf girl holding her arm horizontally, “Next hold it firm with your right hand, if you are right-handed, then TRY to put your right feet at the other side of the cross-beam.” While demonstrating it, he said with a sneer, “Rather difficult, if you keep your broom five foot high, not?”

“For those who lack any feeling of balance, or have a fear of heights, you can put your other hand about one foot from your other on the broom, and finally, place your other foot on the cross-beam.”

## Lily Evans' Diary - year one

He demonstrated it with an ease like he was born on a broomstick.

“If, and it will already prove hard enough, IF you manage to get in position, try to relax and hold your position. That is all, nothing more, for now.”

As easy it had seemed for the professor, that difficult it was for the students. Getting the broom up at three feet, was obtainable for all. But even getting the first foot on-board seemed impossible for all. Some tripped over it.

In disgust he looked away, simply said “Keep practicing!” and observed the other group.

None of them had left the brooms lying on the grass. Some had it hovering, others were even mounting it.

“After you all mounted, feel it, sense it, try to become ONE with the broom.” He nodded to the other group, and said “I’ll not try to tell any nonsense about steering with the cross-beam. The yellow brooms have a ceiling of hundred feet, enough to get your neck broken. I’m not sure if the others are limited with regards to its height. Some of them have a speed limitation. Unfortunately, it proved necessary.”

He got himself up, and hovered at about ten feet.

“With spells we manage to trick gravity. However, we still have to obey ballistic rules. The more you are one with your broom, the more steep curves you can make. We will form a line formation, and you all try to follow me. I get to the end of the courtyard, and make twice a shallow 90-degree turn. When

## Lily Evans' Diary - year one

back in position, we do the same but making the turn each time sharper. If the angles become too difficult, return here.”

The instructions were simple, but the professor had failed to instruct that while flying in a square, there were all sorts of object in their way, like trees and walls. And when getting near to an obstacle, they try to provoke each other in postponing an evading move. After the third round, Snee almost hit the courtyard wall, but it was a while later, it really went wrong.

Potter was heading for a tree halfway the courtyard, he had to choose to evade it either on the left, or on the right, but on either side was a Slytherin student flying. Potter chose the only path left for him: He dived! He missed the tree by an inch, but unfortunately, there were other obstacles he wasn't aware of.

Meanwhile, Lily and the rest of the “green” class tried to master the simple art of just sitting on a tiny broom-stick. Soon she found out that, if you should stay low enough, at “mounting altitude”, most of the boys and girls manage to remain on the broom, but as soon as it moved just slightly to or fro, they got nervous, lost their balance and fell down. Suddenly she remembered what Martin, Gryffindor house head-boy had said some time ago. *“Don't look down, whatever you do, don't look down, unless you feel absolutely confident. Focus on the horizon!”* And as he played in their Quidditch team, she was pretty confident that he wouldn't play a practical joke on her. Lily bit on her lip, whispering to herself, “Try again, nothing to lose.” And it worked, it really did! She felt the broom she held at arm's length below her, was as steady as if it lay on the ground.

## Lily Evans' Diary - year one

And from the angle of perspective, she could deduce that she was twice as high as the others. “Yes!” she said to herself.

There was no time left to think of anything else, because suddenly she was hit by something, and felt to the ground where every around her turned black.

Next thing she remembered she was lying on her back, on the grass. She tried to get up, but such a pain flamed through here left arm, that it make her feel sick. That was good enough reason for Lily to stop trying. “What on earth?” she said. But looking up, she saw only the worried faces of the classmates.

Next she heard the voice of an elderly lady speaking bitterly with professor Transcrashia.

“Well done professor, well done indeed, and even within the first lesson! Besides that girl breaking her arm, you must also have broken a Hogwarts record!”

A moment later Madam Pomfrey gave Lily something against the pain and escorted her to the schools hospital bay.

“Aren't you one of the two girls that survived the introduction lesson for potions? She inquired friendly, Miss Evans, not?”

Because of the happy thoughts, Lily managed to produce a faint smile. “Yes that is so, I am Lily, but it seems my destiny lies here in your hospital anyway.”

Madam Pomfrey laughed, “Well don't worry, your arm will be back again as new in no time, but I also understood you passed out for a moment? It must have been quite an accident!

## Lily Evans' Diary - year one

Each year with flying lessons accidents happen. But that mostly happens much later down the year, when the students get over courageous.”

She drew her wand, said something, but it seemed nothing had happened.

“What did you do, it does not feel any different.”

She explained, “Because of the potion against the pain, you don't feel the difference. Your arm is completely mended now. You could very well continue your classes, but due to regulations I must, and I really want to keep you here overnight, you lost your consciousness and might have a slight concussion. Although some professors are fond of playing with students brain's, it's a part I leave the body to heal itself, if possible. Now rest for a moment dear.”

That seemed a very good advice, so she closed her eyes.

A moment or so later, someone coughed slightly to draw her attention. “Are you awake?” she heard someone asking. Lily wanted to say, “By now I am.”, But when she opened her eyes, she exclaimed “YOU!” And looked in the face of a very timid James Potter, one of the pesky boys from the “Leakey Cauldron”.

James hesitated and said simply, “I am so sorry, really.” And he gave her a bouquet of flowers he picked that afternoon.

“He really should be sorry.” On the other side of her bed, professor Transcrashia stood up.

“It might be true that some of the Slytherin boys were pestering him out of the air into an accident, but Potter flew far too fast. I'm glad you are OK, girl.” And with these few words the professor left.

## Lily Evans' Diary - year one

James said, "I heard he has some explanation to do, to Dibbet, our school's headmaster."

Lily asked James, "What happened to you, at flying?"

"I was cut off by some Slytherin smart-asses. I had few choices, either a direct head-on hit into a tree or dive. So I choose to dive, but failed to get up again in time. And then I 'met' you."

"Did you get hurt? Any consequences?"

"No, just my pride a bit, I got a thunder-sermon from professor Crash-it-all!"

He turned his head and noticed that madam Pomfrey was attending one of the other patients.

"Can I get you anything, tea perhaps?"

"Why not?" and he dashed away.

A moment later, James and madam Pomfrey sat beside her bed. "I wouldn't try any pie or anything solid yet, perhaps a bit later."

James noticed a copy of "The Daily Prophet", the newspaper specially for the wizardry world. On the main page there was an article debating the merits of "squibifying"

Madam Pomfrey said she was definitely against it.

Lily asked, "Could you explain me in simple terms what that means?"

"Squibs feel the presence of magic, but can not do anything with it. Squibifying on a wizard or witch is taking away the ability to perform magic, well actually blocking it, permanently."

## Lily Evans' Diary - year one

“But why would anybody do something like that?” Lily wondered.

“In the Muggle-world, not everybody understands and appreciate magic. Some are frightened and think it has something to do with Satan, the devil or so. So the people from the ministry dress up like clergy man, perform an exorcism ritual, and put a block in their head.”

Lily was still not satisfied, “But what is so wrong with that? As they are content with it and go on with there lives as they know it?”

Now James answered, “Last week we had to to a calculation exercise. If wizard and witches (both magic) marry and get children, the chance of passing on the gift is about 90 percent. If either of the parents is a Muggle, the chance is reduced to 10 percent. If only one of the grand-parents has the gift, the chance is about a half percent. If the gift was lastly detected by a much more ancient relative, the chance of getting a kid with the gift is about .... naught. So as far as I can understand, it was more about wasting talent. And within our world, that is bad, very bad.” James was talking with much conviction in his voice.

And Lily looked with hidden admiration and concluded that separately those boys were perhaps not so pesky after all.

## **Dream on!**

Next day Lily was well enough to attend her lessons again.

The day started with a double lesson potion making.

Last week you found out yourself how important it is to follow instructions, and don't mess up.

Each year it is the same, although there were exception in the positive and negative meaning of the word. I still consider the exercise priceless. As priceless as this!" And a lifted a small bottle.

"Heavy water! You'll learn later about it."

Pointing at cauldrons, test-tubes and other glass ornaments, he continued, "The basic techniques are comparable or even equivalent when looking at Potions, Chemistry or Cooking. So I will repeat this exercise once a month. At the end of the year you must know the essential properties of cooking, boiling, simmering, evaporating, condensing, melting, freezing, distilling, filtering centrifuging. These basic techniques are so elementary, that it is decisive for being accepted to your second year."

The silence following the professor's statement made clear that it had made its impact.

"We now start with exploring and recognizing the ingredients for potions and how the might be used."

A too careless sniffing over one of the bottles, caused Potter to sneeze in such way, that carefully placed tiny amounts of valuable powders to be mixed or blown of some of the desks.

"Detention, Potter, Black!"



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After a much too short break, another long and for some, dreadful hour class of potions lay ahead of them. Although it began slightly differently. Lily noticed a look in Peatery's face, the same she had observed minutes before they class had to swallow what they had created the first lesson. A dangerous look.

“Professor, may I ask a question?”

“You already did, but go on...”

“Thank you. We understand that we need to train basic techniques, and are not yet ready for making real, potions. But why did we have to buy all of these ingredients in the first place?”

“The year has just begun. Some people selling ingredients would welcome you spoiling it away.

Some are cheap and easy to obtain, or can be found yourselves. Others are not. Some may know the difference between dried and fresh herbs. Fresh or frozen ingredients. Look here!”

He pointed at a glass tube, “Someone's finger nails. Not so special. But somewhere else, we have the left thumb nails of a murderer. Not so easy to obtain. In years gone by we had an arrangement with an undertaker in London. Even more valuable is the sweat of an executed mass murderer. Taken from him immediately after he was hanged. Impossible to get hold of nowadays. Priceless. Just like this, heavy water. Does anyone know what it is?”

A Ravenclaw girl raised her hand.

“It is water made from an isotope. Not Hydrogen but Deuterium. Not H<sub>2</sub>O but D<sub>2</sub>O.”

## Lily Evans' Diary - year one

“Very well! Unexpected result, ten point for Ravenclaw. Things made from isotopes react just like their common parts, they look the same and they taste the same.”

Much to their astonishment, Peatery filled a glass with it and drank it all.

“If this had still been heavy water, instead of normal water, this drink would have costs me millions of galleons. However we have a comic among us, not? I'll find out who that is.”

After a extra long double hour potions ended, some became mellow. It yielded its weekly mantra: “Potter: Detention!”

At the end of the day, there was another session of the experimental-dream-class.

First, Minerva wanted to discuss the previous lesson.

“Well, Lily. What did you think of Martins' dream.”

“Dunno, eh, maybe a secret aspiration to become a teacher?”

“Perhaps, but I expected slightly more depth. Anyone else?”

“Although you have a career planned, there might be other options, not just teaching, but perhaps, you would like to be able to express yourself, a creative artist, a performer with an audience?”

“Yes, that's more like it.”

“I was thinking in completely other directions. I think your sub-conscious is trying to tell you that you should listen more to yourself in general, and to your body specifically. And if you disregard yourself, who can you expect to listen anyway???”

“Splendid!”

## Lily Evans' Diary - year one

“Now how about the Roberts' one, that one is much harder to analyze!”

“Indeed, it must be metaphorical, as we were never in war with Turkey, nor will we ever be. If we will ever go to war, the only candidate is the USSR. So I was puzzling about the Turkey-part. Do you dislike Turkey as food for instance?”

“From the library, I learned that turkey means: 'doing something silly'.”

“How about the fact that you are a commanding officer, not just a crew member. Shouldn't that point to admiration of being in charge?”

“And the fact that you, as an C.O. Happens to be in a rowing boat, at sea? There are quite some explanations for water and sea, but in this case, I should guess that the sea points to your sub-conscious. And the rowing boat means there is progress, but not fast enough.”

“Wristwatch in generally says you should be more open, relaxed. But fishing up working wristwatches might mean something totally differently.”

“And saying goodbye, departures, means changes.”

“Fog generally means a blockade or so.”

Minerva stated, “All good remarks, but putting it together, is quite something else. You all have now a fair number of jigsaw pieces. I would very much appreciate if all of you try to work out a broader picture. If it is good enough, it will compensate for failed regular examinations.”

## Lily Evans' Diary - year one

“I think we all agree that Lily's dream should be treated completed differently? I even wonder IF it is actually a dream altogether. Perhaps there is an uncharted area that our mind can visit, that we can travel with our consciousness. Remember the tales about native American medicine man, or shaman. I mean: HOMEWORK! “

Robin stated, “Actually what Lily told us contains two separate lines we should investigate. The first one being the aspect of sharing one dream, or one person entering somebody else dream. I think that comes close to the original purpose of what we are doing. On the other hand, the mere idea that you can heal anybody, open horizons we never dare to dream about, sorry for phrasing that way.”

“Very well observed Robin!” Minerva said with appreciation. “Martin and I already made some plans for testing one aspect of it, the sharing of dreams.”

Minerva turned to Lily. “Remember that I completely believe what you, your parents said, and what Fudge and I have sensed. But we have to rule out any coincident. Just in case others might not believe what has happened.”

All the students wanted to know what Lily did the first time to make the connection.

Minerva asked to try with Martin while the others would watch carefully. She said she had chosen Martin because he was Gryffindor's head-boy and one of the few students Lily know slightly better. They placed to chairs opposite to each other and put all other chairs in a ring around them. Minerva put Martin

## Lily Evans' Diary - year one

in one chair, telling him to relax and concentrate on a happy thought he would like to share, but he should keep it to himself and Minerva, but not tell Lily about it, so to be absolutely sure Lily was not aware of it. Next she brought Lily to the other chair and asked, “Is there any special condition you require, should it be dark, cold, warm, do you want one of our potions?”

Lily replied, “I am not sure, but the previous time, I was tired after working in the garden, it was a warm afternoon, and the lights were not so bright.”

With a simple wave of her wand, professor McGonagall made it so.

Lily took Martin's left hand in both of her hands, and tried to let her conscience slip away. She was imagining she was as light as a feather, drifting away and falling into a long and dark pit. She tried to remember when she was traveling on “the Hogwart's Express”, sticking her head outside the window, feeling the air on her face. Falling and falling deeper and deeper and deeper.

After dropping many miles, it seemed, the falling stopped, but she still felt the wind fierce blowing through her hairs. And it was not dark anymore. She was really flying on a broom-stick, at full thrust, through and around the clouds. Although she had never traveled by airplane she remembered her father describing some of it. Above the clouds, above all the people with their silly unimportant bickering, in abundant pure and warm sunlight. This was sheer delight! After a deep dive she noticed a circus ground, and inches above the tents she raced over them, all the people turning their heads to see what happened.

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Lily's heart pounded with joy, finally the broom slowed down, and she heard from behind, "Now Lily, that is something I always have wanted to share with someone, this is how flying should feel." She turned her head and looked into the smiling eyes of Martin sitting on the same broom-stick.

Next she opened her eyes, and was back, sitting in the chair. Minerva inquired, "Didn't it work? Something wrong with the conditions? For us, it looked like you might just have taken a small nap!"

All Lily said was: "So that is flying!"

Relieved Minerva asked again, "You mean, you succeeded?"

Martin answered, "It was unbelievable, we both flew on a broomstick, like an airplane through the clouds."

And to Lily, "Mind you, this was pure imagination. Flying that high! It is freezing cold that high. Flying over a village on a broad day, everybody seeing us, just imagine!"

Robin looked at Minerva, and said "Well, I presume that we can conclude that the sharing-part is really genuine and reproducible. The other part will be much harder, I guess."

Minerva agreed. "Indeed, I don't want to be over enthusiastic, but do you think you are able to try that other part again? I mean, are you up to it?"

"Sure, right now I feel I can face the whole world! What did you had in mind?"

"Nothing special. I would just like to know if you can see what is wrong with this boy. You should see it as diagnostic."

## Lily Evans' Diary - year one

She took Lily by the hand and said, “The first time, you were not aware of your gift, and you did not intent to do any sort of healing. So even if you can find out what is wrong, doctors and parents would be immensely grateful. But remember, I consider this session already a huge success so far!”

Martin asked, “So who is the patient, and what do you know so far?”

Minerva doubted a moment and then replied, “I have a boy next door in a wheelchair, that is as much as I will tell right now. We are not playing the magical-magician here. Lily should try to make contact without any prior information. What I know could be completely wrong, in which case I would send her in the wrong direction. Do you understand, Lily?”

“Sure, no guarantees, If I don't try you surely get no answers. But to be honest, I am getting a bit nervous.”

As agreed upon, Martin went to the classroom next to them, where madam Pomfrey was waiting with a boy, about fifteen, sixteen years old in a wheelchair, just as Minerva had said.

When they returned, Martin said, “All I was told, that he is kept asleep by a powerful potion, so you will not be able to wake him up anyway, so don't waste your time or energy on that.”

Lily took position in a chair opposite to the wheelchair. She took both the boys hands in here own and noticed they were rather warm, while she had expected them to be cold. She closed her eyes and visualized one of the wheels of the chair in her mind and let it turn slowly around and around.

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When Minerva noticed that Lily did not respond to her anymore, she said softly to the others, “This is the son of professor Transgrassia, you know him, he teaches flying lessons. He came to us as his son suddenly crumbled with pain. Neither Muggle doctors, nor the colleges at Sint-Mungo were able to do anything. They don't even know what is wrong. Pain killers do not work at all. They keep him in deep sleep to avoid him suffering anymore. I sincerely hope she can find out what is wrong, so others may find a way to help him.”

Meanwhile, Lily turned and turned and turned again. She started feeling slightly light in her head.

“You better watch out, girl, or you tumble to the ground,” she suddenly heard.

Lily looked up to see who spoke to her. It wasn't a voice she recognized.

She was still in the same room where she was a moment ago with the other students and Minerva. But they were all gone. She was alone with the boy in the wheelchair.

That had not changed. What had changed, was the fact that the boy was very much awake. All she could see, was that he had long black hair.

'Hello!' said Lily, 'I am Lily, who are you?'

“Ciao,” said the boy “I am Michelangelo, but everybody call me Mikey.”

He was still looking down.

“Where am I? I still feel strange but how come that my head does not hurt anymore?”



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He lifted slowly his head, so she could see his face. A face that looked familiar, but she could not remember if they had met previously. But what startled Lily most, was a huge nail in his head, about one foot long from the left side of his temple up to his neck.

“Doesn't that hurt a lot?” Lily asked, pointing to the nail.

“No, I can feel it is still there, but my head does not hurt like before, like it used to do.”

“May I touch it? Tell me if it causes any pain.”

“Sure” he answered.

Lily touched the long nail. It just felt like any nail she had seen and touched in her father's shed. A heavy piece of metal, but much longer than she had ever seen before.

“How did it get there, did you have an accident or so? Do you know if it is stuck? Haven't they tried to remove it?”

“How should I know?”

“Well, it is your head, not mine!”

“Will you let me try to find out if it's stuck?”

“Careful with my brain please,” he said with a smile. “It is the last one I got.”

Lily touched it again with her right hand. She tried to turn it around and watch closely at the boy's face to see if it hurts, but he kept on smiling at her. Very slowly she pulled and millimeter by millimeter she could pull it out.

Overconfident the boy said, “Can you please hurry up! I was not able to comb my hair for a long time, you know.”

Lily grinned, and some time later she had the whole nail in her hands. Without realizing the absurdity of it, the boy did not

## Lily Evans' Diary - year one

have any wounds left, at the spots where the nail had entered and left his head. Lily had seen her father removing a small wooden splinter from her leg, that bleed much and left an ugly wound for many months. But here? Nothing!

She put the long nail into his hands. When she let it go, it started to vaporize into thin air.

“How you feel now?”

“A bit strange. I feel something is gone, but I could not describe the feeling, just odd! Some blocking is gone.”

Mikey lifted his head, so Lily could look into his eyes. She could see that they were dark, brown, but she also noticed something strange.

“Tell me, what is wrong with your eyes?”

“Nothing special, why do you ask?”

Lily looked more intensely, “Well, they seems to be, I don't know how to describe, sort of clouded. Don't you have problems with looking far-away, or nearby during reading or so?”

“No, not that I am aware of. Something not right?”

“Let me try this...” And Lily picked up a small piece of wet cloth and gently cleaned his eyes. First his left eye, secondly the other.

“Any difference?”

“Holy mother Maria!”

“Did I do something wrong? Did I hurt you, please tell me!”

Lily asked worryingly.

“No! On the contrary. The whole world is so bright, so sharp and all those colors so intense. Never in my life I knew the world was so beautiful. I feel like I am dreaming..”

## Lily Evans' Diary - year one

At that moment, a horrible thought struck Lily. She was aware she was dreaming, but Mikey obviously not.

The mere idea of telling him that all of this could be gone in a moment was more than she could bare, so she changed the subject.

“Mikey, can you tell me how long you suffered from that thing with your head?”

“Funny you should ask. Let me think. It must have been for years. The first time I just had a light headache for some hours, but it just went away. I must have been eleven or so. But as I grew older I never told my parents, they already had enough to absorb, but it returned more often, stayed longer and became more painful each time, until the last time when the pain started to absorb everything. My entire world became just pain.”

“And all of that time your parents or your own doctor never knew what it was?”

“No. Well, my mother also had often migraine, so I presumed it is, or was, the same.”

Mikey looked around with an investigating look in his eyes.

“Pardon me, but where am I? And aren't you much too young to be a doctor?”

At that point Lily started to feel a bit less comfortably. What could or should she say?

“If you can not recognize it here, that is understandably. You were given strong medication against the pain, and were brought here, half asleep. Or probably more than half I think. I am in England at Hogwarts, a famous school.”

“Oh!”

## Lily Evans' Diary - year one

“And regarding the other aspect, my father is a G.P. I am no doctor. Not yet, at least, but I am a witch,” she said hesitatingly.

“Don't be afraid of telling it to the wrong ears! I know about both worlds. My father is a wizard. But neither my mother nor I can do magic. We both are squibs.”

Lily only dared to tell it, because they were dreaming, and in dreams all sorts of unrealistic events can happen. Still she thought that she had learned more than enough and wanted to share here findings with the others.

“Mikey, it is time for me to leave.”

“Will you come back to visit me?”

“I can not promise that I will, but I do promise that I will try if I can and if I am allowed to.”

“OK then, thank you Lily. Ciao bella!”

Lily realize she felt very tired. She closed her eyes and sighed deeply. She had to order her mind, there was so much she had to tell, and even more she was guessing at.

When she opened here eyes again, she was back again among the other students and Minerva. And the boy in the wheel-chair.

“Glad you are back, we were getting worried. You were gone for over two hours. And?”

“It was worth it, I hope. I succeeded in making contact, but I wonder about the rest. Was it real, or am I making things up. Can someone fetch me something to drink, I feel exhausted.”

Now Minerva really looked worried again. “Martin, tea for us all please.”

## Lily Evans' Diary - year one

“Can someone please take notes, before I start to forget?” Lily asked.

“Sure!”

“This boy,” and she pointed to Mikey who remained sleeping the whole period, “He is familiar with our world, his father is also a wizard and the boy's name is Mikey. He said to me that he and his mother are squibs.”

“He had a nail of about 20 centimeters in his head, so he had quite a headache.”

“Understandably. How can you stay alive with such an object in your head?” Robin asked.

“No, I am not sure if he really has a physical object in his head, if so, any doctor would have noticed it, it could have been, eh how to use the right phrase, eh”

“A symbol, a metaphor? Being pinned!”

“Yes, he said it started since he turned eleven. First once in a while and for a short time, but getting worse as time passed. Until it became unbearable. Perhaps the age of eleven is relevant, if that is the same age in other countries for attending schools like ours.”

Minerva's jaw dropped. “You mean, as his father is a wizard, the boy might also have the gift, but it got blocked inside his head!”

“Exactly! But it is pure speculation! I might be completely wrong about it.”

“Merlin's beard! Indeed suppression of the gift can cause horrible effects. In either case this is an unprecedented achievement! We must get Mikey – you did get his name correctly, as soon as

## Lily Evans' Diary - year one

possible back to the hospital ward. And tell Dumbledore about it. He can take care your findings and send it safely to the proper people without revealing the source of it.”

Martin had returned with tea and sandwiches. “What?”

Minerva just replied, “Robin will inform you. I'll bring the boy back and inform Pomfrey and Dumbledore. Anyone coming along with me? Not you Lily, you've done more than enough for now, I should say.”

Angelina got up, and pushed the wheelchair with the still sleeping-boy towards the door.

After Angelina, Minerva and Mikey left, Robin explained all what Lily had told them to Martin.

Suddenly Lily got up. “I forgot to say something. It might be important.”

“What do you mean?”

“In my dream I did not only see the nail, and talked about it with Mikey, but...”

“But what?”

“But I also removed the nail, well at least in my dream. Perhaps I shouldn't have done that. And there was something with his eyes.”

“That is indeed something worthwhile mentioning, I say.”

But Robin said, “There is no point in rushing downstairs. The boy is still sound asleep. If Lily did more than making a diagnose, they will notice it right away. Perhaps it is even better if we don't tell them, and wait for the results, sort of double blind test. All the things that Dr. Lily said remain still true, and will help with the diagnosis.”

## Curious events

The spectacular events that occurred during the special class were in thrill contrast with much of the other classes.

Perhaps at the potion-lessons, Lily was slightly ahead of the others, but with much of the other lessons, it was just as hard as for the others. Only two exceptions were the lessons for the English language and biology. As agreed with professor Under-tow, she was excused from attending the normal lessons, but still had to do all the tests. One of Lily's other favorite subjects was biology, Lily once said to the professor, "When I read a chapter of the book, it feels like I've read it before. It all seems so familiar." Subjects like history, economy and maths seemed to be extra difficult for Lily. Also, the modern aspects of Physics seemed hard. Alexandra, just like the other students she had problems with other subjects while History and Greek were a proverbial 'piece of cake' for her...

In contrast with most other students, Alexandra started to like the history lessons by professor Binns. Most of the students classified the lessons given by a ghost as 'ghastly', but she seemed intrigued by ancient Egypt, Greek, and Romans.

After the students woke up after a double dose of dust, it was again time for broom-stick practicing.

This time the class, gathered again in the school courtyard, noticed that professor Transcrashia was not alone. He was accompanied by a final-year Gryffindor student. Lily heard the whispering: "Isn't he the seeker from the Gryffindor Quidditch team?"

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The professor instructed Lily and James to come forward. He spoke softly to them, “After any accident it is important to practice again as soon as possible. After some discussions with Dibbet and Dumbledore, we have decided that you two, involved in the unfortunate accident will get some private lessons by the current top-student, Martin. As he is also the current Gryffindor house-boy, you probably have met before. It means I can pay my attention to the less fortunate *Aces*.”

Turning towards Martin, he continued, “I've got clearance from Dumbledore, you can practice before or after regular lessons, any day, and you can use these brooms or the spare ones from the Quidditch field. As you are one of the team, you have access to all material over there, I presume.”

Nodding his head in Lily's direction, he instructed, “She has little to none experience, try to give her some self-confidence,” Then looking at James, “He might be a natural talent, or had years of secret practicing. Try to do something about his overconfidence and his technique. I've got a feeling he can be of value to your Quidditch team in the future.”

And to both of them, “For the time-being, you all got extended practice-clearance. With Martin, you are in very capable hands. The only warning I give is that flying can be extremely addictive, be careful you don't overdo it, and Martin, if it interferes with their schoolwork, we hold you accountable.”

And with these words he trodded of towards the disappointed other students.

“Let's go to the Quidditch field,” Martin just said. “More space, fewer eyes and better material.”

Lily noticed that James started smiling from ear-to-ear.



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First they had to find them a better broom-stick, “Here, these are unrestricted, and were not repaired a thousand times before.”

To James, he said, “Most boys got chills from fast accelerating. You start practicing the opposite: braking from any speed to hovering. Here in the center of the field is a dot. Fly off to the corner and come back towards here. Keep your speed constant and reduce it at the very last moment. If you miss it (brake too late and fly over it) do the same at a lower speed. Understood?”

James confirmed, “I presume if I manage a couple of times, I may increase my speed?”

“Yeah, or break later, so be off!”

Martin held his personal broom in his hand and showed it to Lily. “Recognized it?”

“Sort of...” Lily said.

With a small spell, Martin added the extra cross-beam and increased the broom-length. He said, “You take the front 'seat', I'll take the rear one, so I can keep an eye on you.”

And with these words he raised the broom to three feet, and mounted, inviting Lily to do the same.

“Try to remember the dream. Keep your eyes on the horizon, don't look down.”

Lily had placed both feet on the cross-beam, so she could not tell if they were still three feet high. But she noticed the different perspective of the Quidditch field-poles, so they must be flying at a very slow speed. “Everything OK?” she heard. With her free arm she did a “thumbs-up”, meaning to indicate everything is OK, but not realizing that among flyers this means

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something completely differently. Martin replied to her signaling and started to climb. Keeping the forward speed at a minimum, the rose to ten feet, twenty, thirty feet. When Lily grabbed the stick with her other hand he hovered for a while and returned to ground level. When Lily turned her head, Martin was wondering about the expression on her face. People might say they are feeling fine, but their facial expression seldom lies.

“Wonderful, that view! It really did feel the same as in the dream. But why did you stop ascending?”

“Oh, I thought you knew! Thumbs-up mean: 'go up!' Thumbs-down or fingers down mean reduce altitude while the numbers of fingers indicate the involved speed.”

“But how do you signal 'OK'?”

Martin smiled and said apologetically “You make a circle with your thumb and one of the other fingers. The 'O' of OK, remember.”

“Sometimes, when you are up, you can not speak or shout, to avoid drawing attention. I learned most of the signal from an uncle.”

“Is he also a wizard?”

“No, a professional diver. Underwater no-one can speak, hence the symbol-language.”

Pointing to a broomstick on the ground, “Dare you to try yourself?”

Lily replied by signaling “OK”, Martin grinned and signaled “UP!”

## Lily Evans' Diary - year one

Rest of the hour they were cruising side by side at about four feet high.

Finally, he said to James, when he joined them again, “Now you know, how difficult it is, dropping your speed. When playing, speed could be the difference between winning or losing. But knowing when, where and how to stop might be the difference between serious accidents and avoiding them.”

James answered, “Point taken. What for next lesson, if any?” looking very eagerly.

Martin grinned, “To be perfectly honest, if it was only to do what Transcrashia asked for, I would have to say 'no'. But I'm so blunt to think I can teach Lily much faster than our prof. And with regard to you James, you realize that I'm in my final year at school, and we are scouting for Quidditch-talent. So if you are both in for it, we can continue the private lessons.”

Twice the dream-sessions were skipped. Professor McGonagall had other duties to attend to and refused to let the students continue unsupervised. After asking permission from the professor, Lily wrote to her father and told him in general terms that she had been able to reach others in her dreams.

A couple of weeks later, they were in for a surprise.

When they gathered together in Minerva's classroom, they found also professor Dibbet, the Head of the School and a woman of about 28 years old.

Angelina whispered to Mary “The headmaster, this looks seriously. I hope it's not the end.”

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“Dear students,” he started, “Again I got messages from horrible nightmares, it is still spreading. But I also got encouraging news.”

With his finger, he pointed to a magnificent painting.

“Yesterday we received this, as a token of his gratitude. Any idea?”

“Not even the faintest..”

“Minerva, would you be so kind to inform your special students?”

The professors changed her normally stern look for a broad smile.

“Some weeks ago I asked Lily to TRY to find out what was wrong with professor Transgressia's son, Michelangelo. I presume you all still remember. After the session, I returned him to the ward and informed his father, madam Pomfrey and professor Dumbledore of our findings. They decided to stop with the sleeping potions and change it for a strong pain medication, that only works locally. It gave us the possibility to wake the boy up and speak with him. He told us he felt no pain, we carefully we reduced his medication step by step. At one point we replaced it with a completely non-functioning bitter tonic, something we call a placebo medicine. But even then, he still felt no pain anymore. The pain is gone and has never returned since anymore.”

Peter asked, “And the professor bought that painting for thanking us?”

“Uh, no, not exactly. It was painted for us.”

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“You mean hidden qualities of the prof? His handwriting is hardly decipherable!”

“No, but getting closer. Mikey painted it.”

“That is great, fantastic.” And they all congratulated Lily.

Minerva continued, “Yes, but also a reason for concern. This class is not an additional ward.”

They noticed that professor Dibbet was feeling a little bit uneasy.

“What do you mean?”

“Lily, you have grown spectacular since you came to Hogwarts, but it seems unfair to ask you this again.”

Not getting any wiser, she asked again, “What do you mean, professor?”

With an unsteady voice, they've never heard before, Dibbet said, “It is about my granddaughter, Miranda. She is ill and deteriorating rapidly. The illness is spreading. I fear you are our last hope...”

Lily turned to the young lady and noticed how fragile and ill she looked.

“I presume you are Miranda? Please understand I am no miracle-maker, no matter what you have been told. I am just a first-year-student, nothing more.”

The following silence with the pleading look said enough.

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“I'll try.” Turning to the others, she said, “can you please try to sense anything, so that perhaps others can learn from it?” And to Miranda, “Please make yourself comfortable, try to relax.”

When they both sat together, she tried to forget all the people and soft noises around them. The only thing she noticed was a sense of urgency and a vague soft sickening sweet smell, that reminded her of something long ago, but was not sure what it was...

When she looked up, she and Miranda were alone in a round white room.

Miranda lay on a hospital bed.

“So tell me, what is wrong with you?”

“Much, too much, let me show you!”

Miranda removed the blankets and pointed toward her left foot. Strangely, there was a door in her foot, and she opened it. A moment later Miranda and Lily climbed through the door opening in her foot, missing the absurdity of it, and walked through a huge corridor that seems to have no ending. On both sides of the corridor, there were countless identical doors that all were closed.

Miranda said to Lily, “Please look for yourself.”

Lily stopped at a door, opened it and took a look around the corner.

Behind the door, there was a small room with a desk and a woman behind it. The woman did not look up as she was very busy doing something. A closer look learned that she was cutting onions. Without saying anything Lily closed the door.

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A couple of doors further down the corridor, Lily opened another. But as soon as she opened it hundreds, perhaps thousands of onions streamed out. Without a moment hesitation, Lily closed the door again.

“What is going on here?”

Next couple of doors it was the same situation over and over again: A woman, a desk and a huge pile of onions.

“Let's find out a bit more!” and Lily went in the room.

“What are you doing with all of these onions?”

“Don't you see, I'm cutting them. I must get rid of them. It is the only way I know.”

When the lady looked up, Lily was in for a surprise. The woman behind the desk was Miranda herself!

Lily also noticed something else impossible: As soon as Miranda cut an onion in two pieces, both halves transformed within seconds into two whole onions again.

Miranda cried, “Please help me, the onions are killing me, they are everywhere, there is hardly any space left inside me anymore!”

Lily replied: “In that case, we have to take drastic measures. Cutting is not the proper way to get rid of those onions. Stop cutting right away. You are just making it worse!”

Without hesitation, she took a couple of onions and put them in front of her on the desk.

“BENG, BENG!”

With her fist, Lily splattered them into pieces. And the pieces remained little pieces. Lily squashed a second one, a third...

## Lily Evans' Diary - year one

“So, what can we do with them? Ah, I got a good idea! Let's turn them into soup!”

About an hour later Lily and thousands of Miranda's were all enjoying an invigorating bowl of soup.

“There were more than enough squashed onions, but I wonder where the bread, cheese, and the pepper came from?” was all that Lily was wondering....

After everything was cleaned up, Lily and Miranda took another stroll through the corridors, but whichever door they opened, there wasn't a single onion to detect anymore. Only Miranda-figures eating soup or still cleaning up.

“So,” Lily said to Miranda, “Now you know, that also something good can come from onions, they can produce more than only bitter tears. We are done, so let's leave here!”

A moment later they both left through the magical door in Miranda's foot.

When Lily looked up towards Miranda, she noticed that she had started crying.

“Aftermath of the onions?” she asked.

“No Lily, these are tears of joy.” she replied and Lily a firm hug.

During that moment, overloaded by emotions, Lily noticed that the strange weak sweet odor was gone, just like the sense of urgency. And when she let go of the lady, she noticed that they were back in Minerva's classroom.

Robin immediately replied, “You two gave us quite a scare! For a moment we feared something went awfully wrong. Mi-



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randa got paler and weaker every moment and at one moment the profs feared she didn't make it. But thankfully all worked out well in the end. And even better, Martin did detect some sort of echo of a spell while you were 'away', perhaps we can investigate that route."

Meanwhile, Dibbet was holding his granddaughter in his arms. He said, "You look good, No, let me correct myself, you look much better since months."

"That is so! I also feel better, much better!"

With a wave of their arms they left. "Thank you all. We'll speak later."

Some moments later, Dibbet and his granddaughter Miranda, and madam Pomfrey were near Dibbet's office. Alexandra was walking in the opposite direction, heading towards professor McGonagall's room. She didn't mean to listen into others people conversation, but when she heard them mentioning her friends name she automatically paid more attention.

"Why wasn't anyone able to do anything for her, just like Lily did?"

"Well, Muggle doctors are good at cutting people open, and poison them with drugs..."

"No, I mean in our world, you, and all of the people at St-Mungo?"

"To put it very crude and rude, most of what we do is treat the consequences, like healing broken bones, burns, poisoning after the facts."

"So, and?"

## Lily Evans' Diary - year one

“Lily has managed to treat the cause, the disease itself, instead of the consequences. We are absolutely not able to do such a thing!”

“Can't you do the same?”

“She somehow managed to control a completely new, or forgotten, area of magic. I would not dare to confess to anybody else, but witnessing what she has managed to do so far, make me feel like a first-year student.”

She hesitated a moment and said. “From a personal point of view, I am glad for you and your granddaughter. But...”

“But what?”

“But when I look at it, as a healer and a witch, I am scared. Just think of it, a first-year student doing this. First year! If not mistaken, I think we are into for some more surprises from her, and I just hope they are pleasant surprises. Just imagine someone could influence her, with other objectives, less altruistic aims. We should be cautious and careful. That's all.”

## Evaluations

Dibbet and McGonagall had decided, that they only information they would secretly leak was that they were experimenting with “learning while you sleep”, a safe and acceptable choice, and that they had made some remarkable findings, but much too premature to talk about it.

The students of the first-years flying lessons from professor Transcrashia might have seen a difference if they were keen enough to spot it. A girl, who had never seen a broomstick before in her life before coming to Hogwarts, now suddenly flew without any hesitation along with James Potter and Martin Steward, a Quidditch team captain and Gryffindor's head-boy.

Shortly after the first periodically tests, Martin, Gryffindor's head boy, draw their attention.

“Please have a look at the board with all the school notifications. Some of the professors do want to have to talk with you. Test results are usually either 'Good', 'Bad' or 'Average'. If your results fall into the last option, they are not going to spend any time on you, unless you really want so. Anything not strictly related to a specific subject falls under Dumbledore, Gryffindor head.”

Most of the students got up to have a look whether they were invited to one or more interviews, but Martin held Lily back.

“Lily, James, do you have a moment for me?”

“Sure.”

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“You know I am in my final year, and spend not enough time on potions and still have to redo economics, so I am getting behind on my schedule.”

Turning to James, “I am aware that the prof did ask me for aiding Lily with flying, but I was wondering, or actually hoping, that you might step in for a while or even take over from me. Just slowly one step at the time increasing altitude and speed. Increase her confidence, learn her to enjoy flying. Can you do that?”

“Probably. May we still use the Quidditch brooms any time?”

“Yes, that is, before or after school, and of course, players from the game will go first.”

“Fine by me, how about you, James?”

“OK.”

“If you change your mind, no problem, but next couple of weeks I'll need my time.”

When Lily got to the notification board, most of the other students were already gone.

Alexandra notified Lily, “We both have several sessions, Greek and History for me, and English and Biology for you.”

“So nothing to fear, it seems to me!”

“We can either postpone or try to get over it as soon as possible. What do you think?”

“OK, I'll have a look if Undertow is busy. You'll go for Greek, Alexandra?”

And within minutes, both girls arrived at the language section of the huge Hogwarts castle.

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“See you soon,” Lily said to Alexandra and knocked on the door.

“Yes, come in!” she heard and opened the door.

“Hello miss Evans. Eager to find out about the evaluation?”

“Eh, yes, professor.”

Undertow searched through a pile of files and picked the one with Lily's name on it. A file considerably thinner than most others.

“Ah, I see. You were excused from attending most regular lessons. But attended all tests, never missed a single one. Very good results. If you want, we can continue this arrangement for the next trimester, but I have one request to you.”

“Thank you for your confidence, what can I do for you?”

“I remember you were rather keen on reading, hence your large vocabulary and knowledge of many idioms. I informed the other students that they should read books, literature, make a report and give a presentation about it. As always it is difficult to find a volunteer as the first candidate, would you like to have the honors? It will earn you ten bonus points for the house cup.”

“Certainly, when would you like to start, any suggestions regarding books?”

“About two weeks time. What are you currently reading?”

“I just finished Swift's Gulliver travels, and thinking of starting Thomas Hardy's Tess.”

“Dear girl, these are books that students in their fifth year ought to be reading. Please do not over-do it, or you will demotivate the other students who are not ready for such books.”

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“Very well professor.”

“If you don't mind asking, what do you do with your free hours?”

“I spent them on extra biology lessons, sir. And reading”

“Alright miss Evans, see you next time.”

Lily left the room and waited a while until Alexandra also appeared.

“And?” she asked.

“He appeared to be angry, I thought at least. But I'm too much ahead compared with the others. How about you?”

Lily grinned “I am still excused, for the next trimester.”

“Now what?”

“Binns' history for me, and Biology for you?”

“Yeah, exactly the opposite end of Hogwarts, nice walking-exercise.”

Lily found that her biology teacher was not alone, but was discussing with Gryffindor's head.

“Come on in Lily. We were just talking about you.”

“Thank you, professors. Anything wrong?”

“You are not trying to break a speed record or so?”

“What do you mean by that, Sir?”

Pointing to a file containing her test-papers and lab exercises, which was much thicker than any other file, he said, “Normally

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we don't mind if students work ahead of their schedule. But this is absurd! You are too far ahead compared with others.”

“Sorry Prof, but it seems like I just have to refresh my memory. Like it is already there.”

“But I also noticed, you are present at some of my lessons intended for other groups, why so?”

“To be honest, the learning part, and doing the test papers take no time at all, but I found I can not continue unless I also complete the lab exercises. And I am not able to speed up plants and animals.”

Both professors looked at each other, “Not by you, at least not now yet. But are you aware of the consequences if you go on at this pace?”

“Of course, but I could begin earlier with the next years material, not?”

“Certainly, but that implies that you will be working completely on your own. You can not expect any help from any of your classmates!”

“They cannot help me now either, most of the time I am helping them. And if I am really stuck, I can always ask any of the senior students...”

“You seem to have an answer ready for everything Lily?”

Now Dumbledore inquired, “Could it have anything to do with your father's profession, him being a doctor? Do you have any aspirations in that direction?”

“Perhaps, but that is a long way from now. Why?”

“As you know Hogwarts is registered as a normal secondary school, and after passing all exams it will grant you access to

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all universities, just as all schools. However, as Hogwarts is located far in the North, we, as a school, are granted extra privileges. So we are allowed to teach material that goes deeper and further than normally given at schools, and is actually the same material given at Oxford or Cambridge. We are no university, though, unfortunately. That is the price we have to pay for remaining hidden for the Muggle world. But it will certainly shorten any follow-up study.”

“What do you think, Slughorn, considering the quality of work and motivation, could this young lady be up for an intensified program?”

“Well headmaster, to be honest, I have never done it before. It only occurs once in twenty, fifty years?”

“Indeed. But you can find assistance with your colleague teaching classical languages. It seems that we have a second candidate. Also a first years student. After a couple of months education here, she already speaks more fluent Greek than many fifth-year students.”

He looked sideways to Lily, “I presume you'll have a vague guess who I am talking about, Lily?”

“Δεν έχω ιδέα”<sup>1</sup>

“So you are on speaking terms with her.”

“But under no circumstances, it may have any impact on any of the other subjects. If so, you switch immediately back to the normal program. - if there is any normal program here to found-.”

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1 “No idea”



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This time, it was Lily who had to wait for Alexandra to appear again.

“And?”

“Binns wanted to know why I am in Gryffindor and not in Ravenclaw. And how often I was reincarnated. And also how often I visited Greece or whether I had Greek blood in my veins. Ridiculous. How about you?”

“They were offering me extra lessons biology.”

“Are you that bad, needing extra lessons? Ha, got you! Your expression is priceless. He was mentioning your name when talking about intensified classes. They offered me the same. I'll think I will do it, it is a nice challenge and nothing better to do.”

Lily looked at her wrist-watch, “Oops, I'm getting late for my extra session with your aunt.”

“You have a good excuse.”

When she entered the dream-class, they had a surprise for Lily. On the middle of the desk was medium size bottle, filled with a fluorescent liquid.

Minerva explained with much satisfaction in her voice, “I think we did it at last Lily. We combined one of the potions we previously made and subjected it to a new spell. As Martin said the previous time, while you were 'away' we detected a reminiscent echo of a spell, that you unconsciously cast. As it is never described in any books we found in the library, we have baptized it at 'Simul Somnia', and I expect the Ministry of Magic will not object to the name. This is just a part of what

## Lily Evans' Diary - year one

we made. The rest we gave to the head of the school and the heads of Gryffindor and Ravenclaw, understandably.”

Martin said, “They were all extremely enthusiastic, even recovered spells earn our school much esteem in the wizard-world, so a new spell much more so. Before we will try it ourselves it will be examined end test of course, but they said that the reproducible production of this potion will be considered as a master test for my final examinations.”

Lily replied, “I am very happy for you, Martin, both with the potion, the spell, and that it helped with your exams. But..”

“But what Lily? It also means that you will be famous. It was you, who discovered it, I only fitted the final pieces of the puzzle.”

“No I don't want to be famous, that is not what I am worried about. I was thinking about any other consequences.”

“What are you talking about? The whole idea was trying to be able to help people with those horrible nightmares. Now many other people can join in and help!”

Lily sighed and replied, “You are probably right. I feared someone is going to misuse it, but it is too late for that now, it is known and can not be stopped anymore.”

Peter asked, “What are we trying today?”

Minerva said, “I would like to share a dream with Lily. And meanwhile I want you all to verify Martins' finding so far. Check, double check over and over. OK with you Lily?”

“As long as I don't need to heal for a change...”

## Lily Evans' Diary - year one

The usual preparation were made, and moments later Lily and Minerva let their consciousness slip away.

Almost immediately she felt something had changed.

She and Minerva were still in the same room. But something did not feel alright.

Just a moment before Lily felt happy with the progress and success Martin had made.

She looked at Minerva, "Something is wrong."

"Yes, I arrived here with goosebumps. Are you alright?"

"Nothing wrong with me. By the way, do not be alarmed by the fact it is just the two of us here. It has always been like that. When we wake up, the others will be back."

"No, that isn't the thing. I feel something else, some sort of urge like we are running out of time for something."

"Yes, but I also feel something I have not felt before like we are not alone! Wait a moment! Those bottles with the new potions, they are kept safe?"

"I believe so, does it make sense to check on Dibbet while we are here?"

"Can not say for sure, but we can try, can not do any harm I would say."

"How do we get there, can we just walk?"

"Why not run, or hover. Think of Sir Nicholas!"

A moment later they were racing through the castle like they were chased by a ghost, or like they were ghosts themselves.

A heartbeat later, they were in Dibbet's study, not hindered by any doors or protecting spells.

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As expected, the headmaster was in, and sitting in his chair. But he was not alone. A dark shimmering figure was also in the room, holding Dibbet's head firmly against the back of his chair and trying to pour the content of a small bottle with the other hand.

Minerva tried a separation spell, but it didn't work. She was as powerless as any other Muggle.

Lily smashed the little bottle and wrestled with the dark hooded figure.

“Look after him,” Lily simply said.

The figure tried to hit Lily, but she was prepared and ducked, but it was an invitation to Lily to do the same. She tried to hit, but the figure stepped backward, stumbled, hit the wall hard with its head and fell to the floor.

The same moment Lily approached the vague figure, it dissolved in thin air.

She turned and asked gasping, “How is he, how is the headmaster?”

Minerva said, “He is lucky to have a fair amount of bezoars in his study. And us around.”

“That is fine, but there is still one serious problem..”

“What?”

“Did you forget that we are still dreaming! None of this have to be real.”

“I see! How can you wake yourself in the middle of a dream? Dream that you wake up?”

“Can you slap me?”

“Are you sure, professor? I never hit a teacher!”

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“Unless you know an alternative, let just do it together. One of us should wake-up!”

The pain in her cheek woke Lily up. Peter was standing over her.

“Sorry for such rude wake up. We have an emergency.”

Minerva also arrived back in the land of the awakened.

“Sorry too, professor.”

They noticed that besides the other students, Professor Dumbledore was with them.

“What is going on?”

“Against better judgment, Dibbet wanted to share this new knowledge and potion with all houses, including Slytherin. I came to him to change his mind, but he sat motionless in his chair with a cup full of strong sleeping potion near him. But when I tried to wake him but failed and I noticed he was dying under my hands. Something else was going on. But there was no-one else in the room, and the potion he drunk was strong but harmless. And a moment later he just whispered your names.”

Minerva quickly explained what they just had seen.

“But why would anyone do something like that?”

“In the corner of his study we found this parchment, it reads:”

*“Prophecy number #86755440953.*

*The head of the institute of all knowledge will pose a serious threat to the New Order.*

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*The new lord of the other side will not rule as long as the head sits firm.*

“It looks like an official prophecy. Someone must have fetched it from the ministry. But who?”

“I presume that it means the head is the school's headmaster of Hogwarts, professor Dibbet?”

“What else can it mean?”

“But just wait a minute, how is he?”

“Your dream-world bezoar was a good-enough antidote for the dream-word poison. He is recovering right now.”

“But it certainly was a narrow escape. But unfortunately, these events learned us something new.”

“What then?”

“That when you share the dream world with someone, you can do more than just healing. That cloaked figure tried to kill Dibbet. And you must be en-garde, in case you have to defend yourself.”

“And also that there are other rules for magic. All my spells did nothing. I felt magic, but could not do a thing. Now I know how squibs must feel.” Minerva said uncomfortably.

Dumbledore remarked, “I have just sent Filch to examine the Slytherin area, as he has access to all rooms. Perhaps he can discover anything.”

Some hours later, Filch reported, “Could not find anything, no traces left of that bottle. But I heard rumors of a Slytherin girl who bumped her head and was taken unconsciously to the hos-

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pital ward. Of course, I went to see madam Pomfrey. It was correct, but the girl had already left.”

“Who was the girl?”

“McCunningham. Synthia McCunningham, second-year student.”

“Doesn't ring a bell, how about you, Albus?”

“Just cunning, no high-flyer. She obviously was used by others.”

Next Monday classes started as usual.

The first two hours were canceled, as the minute animals from the class for mythical creatures had escaped. Some complained that it meant two hours of lost sleep, but most used it as an opportunity for catching up with homework.

Next of their schedule was the class “Spells and incantations.”

Sirius raised his hand.

“Yes, Mr. Black, you wanted to ask something?”

“Professor, can you explain why all spells are in some sort of Latin? It is not my favorite subject, you know.”

“You are not the only one! Hardly anyone one is familiar with ancient languages. Hence, we started with them straight in the first year.”

“But why are they in Latin and not in English?”

The professor sat down on his desk.

“That short question comes with a long answer.”

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He looked at his watch, thought for a while, and continued, “Perhaps it is important enough to give the subject some attention, although you could also have asked it at history lessons.”

He looked through the class and indicated that they should make notes.

“This you will not find in the books. As you might expect, Magic exists all over the world and has been since the beginning of time. Through the centuries, many 'spells' were lost. In the old days, when schools like Hogwarts and others were founded, around the fourth, fifth century, Latin was the Lingua Franca of the world. All known spells were translated from local languages and shared among all schools over the whole world. Well, at least, that was the intention. In Western Europe, Christian extremists were more obsessed with wealth and power than the original idea of compassion. The mere idea of sharing power and influence to others was unacceptable for emperors, kings, czars, presidents, popes and so on. The downfall for us came around the Middle Ages. Wizards and witches were already in hiding. But not just in Europe! In southern America, with the Inca's all priests were deliberately murdered, just like in central America. All caused by Christian extremist. In China, during the “cultural revolution”, anything that looked like religion was eradicated.

Sometimes magic is dissolved in 'normal' life, Australia, Africa, native North America. But as soon as they come in contact with so-called 'Enlightened Western people' much get eradicated.

Though the use of magic in normal life seems ideal for people living here, few of those spells are real and many are just 'make believe.'



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But still tiny spots linger Mesopotamia, Egypt, Crete, Greek, Norway, Ireland, here in the north of Scotland, and tiny villages in France, Germany. But is extremely difficult to get in contact with them for outsiders, even for wizards or witches from other areas. Distrust became, unfortunately, a necessity of life.

So, now for ages, we try to get in contact with others around the world and try to achieve the original goal of exchanging wisdom and spells.

With the current state of affairs in the outside world, one might suggest using English, Chinese or Spanish as a common language. But there is much resentment. Therefore, it was decided to stick with a dead language, to favor no-one, such as Latin. That is also one of the reasons why biologists and physicians still stick to Latin. Does that make any sense to you now?"

"Wow, Impressive! It explains a lot, but it does not make it any easier."

"Perhaps, but as a consolation, remember that many of those who now teach here at Hogwarts had to learn simple spells like 'Wingardium Leviosa' in eight different languages."

He looked around and noticed that his explanation made to expected impact.

"Which reminds me, it's been a long time since we did an unannounced test. Here are, for each, five objects of increased weight. I want to see how many of you have been exercising the levitation spell."

When they left the classroom they were heading from the lessons in transfiguration, now sometimes given by professor

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McGonagall. At the end of a double hour, she asked Lily to wait a moment, until all other students had left the room.

Minerva: “Lily, can I ask you a favor?”

“You can certainly ask, Professor. I will do my best, but I can not promise anything unless you tell me what it is.”

“I understand that you and Alexandra became good friends?”

“Absolutely! I would do anything for her, and she likewise.”

“You should know, that during the summer holidays, there is hardly anyone around here at Hogwarts, and certainly no students. It is not against the rules, but normally they all go to their parents.”

“So?”

“Point is, this is a bit difficult for Alexandra. Not because of herself, but the situation with her parents. She is more than welcome at my place, just like previous summer, but I was wondering if she could stay with you during the summer...”

“That would be lovely though I will have to ask my parents of course. Perhaps they have different plans that I am not aware of. I'll send an owl right away.”

“Thank you, of course, I will explain it in more detail with your parents.”

## School years end

Weeks of hard studying passed almost undetected.

The end of the school year started with, for some in their fifth, sixth or seventh year, nerve-wracking final exams, but for most it was the third trimester's tests. They also were important, but they all knew that at the beginning of the next school year, everyone was re-evaluated, so for them the pressure was considerably less.

The official end of the year, was traditionally composed of the school banquet and inevitably speeches.

The head of the school professor Dibbet started:

“Dear students and staff, here we are again, much wiser and experienced, I hope.”

He looked at the Slytherin table.

“This year, like the previous year, the Quidditch cup has been won by Slytherin. My congratulations. We all were witnesses to some unbelievable perseverance and some air-acrobatics that, I sincerely hope, is restricted to the Quidditch playing grounds and not beyond. Nerve-wracking, but it paid off in the end. To sum it up: totally according to the spirit of Slytherin, bravo!

Considering the house cup, we have the usual adjustments.

It seems to be traditional, but the Gryffindor house was the one with most rule breaking. This will earn you a twenty point re-

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duction while Huffelpuf was the house that did the least rule breaking, so they get an additional twenty points.” Rumors on the Gryffindor table. Dibbet noticed and said, “The line between heroes and offenders is very thin. They both break rules, but only one gets away with it, while the other has to pay the price for being reckless or careless.”

“Huffelpuf managed not only to look our gardens exceptionally lovely, but they also to grow so much surplus weeds, that we can sell them to Durmstrang Institute. It means our school is earning money and Huffelpuf a well deserved fifty points, well done.”

Dibbet took a long look at professor McGonagall and Lily.

“Next, the combined effort of Gryffindor and Ravenclaw under the supervision of professor McGonagall, earns fifty points, to both houses. No further details

One student has probably saved my life. There is no way to reward that in house-cup-points. She knows how grateful I am.

Finally, all students performed this year very well, but there are some exceeding by far.

History, Gryffindor young Miss McGonegall: ten points

Mathematics, Ravenclaw, Colegrave: ten points,

Physics, Ravenclaw, Mcguirk: ten points,

Economy, Huffelpuf, Kerridge: ten points

Biology, Gryffindor, exceptionally well-done miss Evans: fifty points,

Potions, Ravenclaw, Griffith: ten points

Spells, Slytherin, Skingle: ten points

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Greek, Gryffindor, exceptionally well done Miss McGonegall: fifty points

Gym, Gryffindor, Potter: ten points.

Let me explain the two deviations: These two students managed to absorb much more material.

My sincere congratulations, and I hope they will be examples and no cause of envy.

So, correct me if I am wrong, but this years colors will be Gryffindor's red-with-golden Lion.

Next year all students and all houses can compete again in a sporting manner.

But for now, let the feast begin.'

Dibbet pointed with his wand onto his plate, and the next second all the dishes on all of the tables were filled with all sorts of foods.

Alexandra looked at all the Gryffindor fellow students, some were eating, like they have missed dinner for several days, but not everybody. On Lily's plate was just some fruit, nothing else.

“Not hungry, Lily?” she asked.

“No, not really. I just realized how much I will miss this all for the next couple of weeks.”

“What do you mean, the company of friends?”

“Yes, that also, but as we are under-aged, we are not allowed to practice any magic and can not fly either!”

“Yes, you are right, let's borrow the broomsticks for the last time.”

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“Good idea, I don't think we will get a special treatment next year, so it might be the last chance. And, they can not take any points away anymore!”

In order not to draw any attentions the girls left with a couple of minutes interval. But when Lily met Alexandra in the Gryffindor's common room, she was in for a surprise. She was not alone, but one of the teachers was talking to her, professor Transgrassia.

“I was told that I would probably find you here Lily. Dibbet likes to do all in the open, but Minerva and I think it is not always proper, and might cause envy and jealousy. And as I am also bound by secrecy vows, I should say no more. As my son is now healed, I am returning back to Italy. I could take these two with me, but I would rather give them to you. We have noticed that after a false start, you have a taste for flying. As first-year students are not allowed to have their private broom, so I presume you don't have one yet.”

And with these words he pointed with his hand to two broomsticks that lay on the table.

“Thank you, prof!”

“Small word of caution, these are Nimbus, prototype-b and prototype-c, and not for sale yet. It will take probably some years before the can be made in production. The first one excels in maneuverability, but disappoints with regards to speed, while the other one is totally the opposite. Very fast but you can hardly make any turn. It was created with just speed in mind, so even I found myself flying over Muggle territory unexpectedly. With these can make any boy jealous. I know my son already gave you something. Mikey can paint well, but this is

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probably more to your likings. If you ever come to Italy, visit us, we live near Monza, near the factory I work for perhaps you would like a guided tour. Ciao!”

And with these words, the professor left them.

Alexandra just said, “What did you...”

But Lily cut her short “Remember those special classes? Professor McGonagall made me and a dozen other student promise not to speak about it.”

Looking at the brooms, she continued, “There are two of them, and I can not fly on both of them, so..” and made an inviting gesture with her hand.

“Are you serious?”

“No I am not Sirius, but I am your friend!”

“Let's fly!”

“Automatically they walked towards the Quidditch material shed, but when they arrived there, Alexandra started to laugh, 'Silly us! We never have to borrow brooms anymore. We have our own.’”

When she stopped laughing Lily heard something else, they were not alone!

“Different minds, but same thoughts!” she heard James saying.

And some moments later they were cruising over the lake two-by-two until the moon set and it was too dark to fly.

## Home again

Next morning, Lily said to Alexandra, “That was a better 'good-bye' than any banquet can ever be.”

“Yes, a pity we have to leave the brooms here.”

Their words were overheard by one of the professors.

Minerva said “Better safe than sorry! Where we are going to, there is no possibility of flying, it is the heart of Muggle territory.”

“What do you mean, professor?”

“It means that I received an answer from Lily's father. Remember you staying there? My luggage is already home, but I will come along with you. It has been years since I traveled with the Hogwarts Express. The way home takes many hours, but that is good for adjusting and it gives time for clearing your mind and reading. The Hogwart-Express-staff should know about it, so we will have the comfort of a staff-train-compartment; so good seats with refreshments.”

Lily's father was waiting at the train station, and with his car they were at Lily's house in about an hour.

Margareth opened the door, looked at Lily and hugged her.

“It has been so long. And you have grown too much. Taller and wiser. But let me welcome our guests.”

“Welcome, professor, it has been quite a while. How was your trip?”



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Turning towards Alexandra, “Hello Alexandra, as soon as we received the owl, we were looking forward to your arrival. Welcome, let me help you with your luggage. Our guest room is upstairs, opposite to Lily's room.”

“Please, I'll show you to the living room, tea is ready, I made some of Lily's favorites pies.”

Obviously, the refreshments from the train didn't measure up to the quality of freshly baked pies, so they were gone in an instance.

Minerva started “I think I have some explanation to do. Would you like the girls....?”

In contrast, what Lily was expecting, he said “Yes I think it is wise to let the girls hear what we have to say. Let there be no secrets between us, as far as my wife and I are concerned.”

The professor looked at Henry and Margareth and agreed. “Well, they talk enough, but let them hear it all at first hand then.”

She turned toward Alexandra and asked, “You don't mind letting them know the whole story?”

The girl shrugged her shoulders, “I have not done anything to be ashamed off, so why would I?”

Minerva paused a moment to order all her thoughts and started: “Firstly, let me thank you for having Alexandra during the summer holiday. As I wrote before, normally all the students go back to their families and Hogwarts is almost deserted.”

She placed a hand on Alexandra's shoulder. “However for her, it is not exactly in her best interest. Her father was always

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much away for his work and I understand it is uncertain when he will come back -- if he ever comes back. I believe the official phrase is: "Missing in Action". For her mother it was the final drop, she snapped and is submitted to a mental hospital."

Lily's father waited a moment and then replied, "When we received your letter I remembered that I wonder if I might get some more information. You should know that as a G.P., I know quite a lot of people. Among them is a previous squadron leader with the RAF. Through his connections I learned some other details. It is not much and very much *unofficial*." Here he paused for a moment, "I understood his airplane was brought down in Soviet territory, no report of captured airmen, nor the discovery of any remains, so the future looks bleak."

Margareth, Lily mother, stood up and gave Alexandra a firm hug. "Poor girl, you are more than welcome. If there is anything we can do for you, just let us know. We have plenty of space around here, so we will do our best to make you feel at home. If you want to talk, we will be there but if you want to be left alone, we understand."

Despite the cause, professor McGonagall looked very pleased.

"Thank you so much, this is far more than I could hope for."

"Naturally, we are glad we can do something in return for our daughters friend."

But while you are here professor, we also have some questions for you, with regards to Lily..."

"Naturally."

"Can you explain some parts of Lily's grade book. For all the followed subjects there is a periodical evaluation. But for biol-

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ogy, I presume that is a misprint?" And he handed the paper with all the evaluations over to McGonagall.

She looked it over, studied the biology evaluations and said smiling,

"These are even better than your daughter probably expected, Mr. Evans."

"So it is correct what I read?"

"Yes, at our school the students absorb most of the subjects more quicker compared with other schools, so pupils working ahead is not something exceptional. For instance, our Alexandra appeared to do miracles with the Greek language, she is on equal terms compared Lily's results on biology. And with your profession, we sort of expecting this more or less. But seeing this, well I have to admit that even I haven't seen such achievement for a long time."

Lily said nothing but was just grinning. "Doing all the practical exercises was the most difficult part," was her sole comment.

Lily's father still looked at the paper in utter disbelief.

"Margareth, our daughter managed to pass all the evaluation tests for biology with honors."

"Yes, I understand you are proud of your daughter, but..."

"No Margareth, Lily managed to squeeze three years of biology into one single year!"

"What?"

"As parents, you have nothing to worry about. It is very common that children are attracted to their fathers' or mothers' profession. We have more than enough extra material to keep her occupied."

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“Dr. Evans junior?” Lily's mothers joked. “You can take over your father practice in twenty years or so.”

Lily's father looked a bit uneasy. “Professor, you know that my wife and I are aware of the magical world, and your school, and that we are not allowed to speak about it, at the risk of not being believed. We presume that there are other people, parents like us, who live and work in our world, but are aware of yours?”

“Certainly. There are other muggle-parents. Besides those, the best example is the prime minister, although his memory is wiped at the end of his term in office.”

“And there is no way to get into contact with them?”

“That is a bit difficult, but can be arranged if needed, via the ministry of Magic of course.”

“Something else, do you recall the event that led you the first time to us, the thing with our neighbor, Mrs. Dent?”

“Certainly! The awakening from the coma caused quite a stir, even among wizards and witches, I can tell you.”

“You know, that our daughter wrote us, that you asked her to continue with that. Can you tell us a bit more about it? I presume there is a lot she can not, or should not write about..”

Minerva looked at Alexandra, who was suspecting to be asked to leave.

“Do you want me to go?” she asked.

“No, perhaps it is better not. I think it is also better for Lily if she doesn't have to keep anything for you.”

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And towards Lily's parents, she explained. "You should know, that even at Hogwarts there are a couple of things that are kept secret from most students. These studies are one of them. Just for the protection of the students involved."

Looking at her niece, Minerva said, "Don't blame Lily for not telling anything, all students involved all swore an oath of secrecy. You should consider it a prove of the reliability of your friend."

Alexandra jokingly said imitating Minerva's voice "*Ten points for Gryffindor.*"

But Minerva continued, "I, we, asked Lily to participate in one of our advanced student studies. Her magical capabilities reach into the world we all enter when we are dreaming. I'll leave it to that for you, for now. Lily can explain it all to you now. But I will have to inform the other students, and you will be bound the same oath also."

And to Lily's father, she said, "There are many things I can tell you, but any specific direction you are interested in?" she said, in order not to reveal too many details.

Lily's father said, "I wonder, was she involved at Hogwarts in some miraculous healing?"

"Why do you ask?"

Very slowly he took two letter's from his jacket and lay them on the table.

"The daughter of a friend of mine, who happens to be my patient, was cured without any doing of me, or by any of my college's, as far as we know at least. I know, things like that happen sometimes, mostly because of a drastic change in their lifestyle or so. But considering her illness that is hardly possible.

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About a year ago, it was the last time she visited me, she was diagnosed with Hodgkinson, last phase, spread throughout her whole body and a lifetime expectancy of months or less. Some weeks ago she wrote for an appointment for a check-up. She came and I examined her. Nothing to be found, completely clean. I was on the brink of saying that miracles do happen, when she gave me this letter. Perhaps I should tell you, that this woman works at Oxford University. Like you, she also is a professor and teaches psychology. Along with this letter is an invitation for a summer class she gives and a full Oxford scholarship. Very exclusive, very rare. The letter is written by a person overwhelming with gratitude, lust for life and the desire to repay for a second chance in life. That lady's first name is Amanda and she explicitly thanks Lily for a second chance in life.”

A deafening silence fell, broken by Lily, apologetically she explained, “Yes dad, it is true, I was involved, but like the previous time, I am still not sure how it works. It is completely different from everything else I learned. Much symbolism is involved. That is probably also one of the reasons for my extra interest in the subject biology. Not only I want to help other people like you do, dad, but I also want to understand HOW and WHY. Now I just follow my intuition.”

Lily's mother summarized, “In which case, it is for the best that you all go to Oxford next week or so, and visit your healed patient. As a former student, your father will be keen to visit his university again.”

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“Professor, you must have an extraordinary life, even with as little as we know!”

“Oh no! We do have some students who we pay extra attention to, but for most of the time, at least for me, it is just preparing lessons, reviewing papers and trying to motivate students. And meetings, meetings and even more meetings”

“Sounds exactly like my job.” Margareth replied.

“Major difference is that our students are all far from home, and we can not do any excursions to interesting places.”

“We got the impressions that Hogwarts is interesting enough. It is a pity that we can not visit it.”

Professor McGonagall said to Lily's parents, “There are strict rules, but I have heard that complaint or wish before, also from other Muggle parents. The only thing I can promise, is that I will raise the topic again at the next meeting.”

Lily's mother looked at the clock, and stared for a while, “Professor...”

“Please, call me Minerva!”

“Thank you. Minerva, I fully understand if you have other plans already, but I would like to invite you to share dinner with us, if possible.”

Minerva looked surprised.

“You caught me unprepared. But yes, thank you very much. I would love to. It's been a while..”

“Since what?”

“A really homely meal. At school, we try to imitate home, but it is still not like the real thing.”

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“All meals are prepared for us, very well balanced with all proper nutrition’s in them, there is always more than enough but there seems to be something lacking: a touch of home.”

“That magical ingredient, is only available at home!” Lily's mother reckoned.

“Aunt?”

“Yes, dear?”

“If you don't mind me asking, but how long ago is it since you went to school?”

Minerva hesitated for a moment and blushed even a bit, “That was about 99 years ago.”

“What???”

“We don't make a big thing about it, but last week was my 110 birthday.”

“In that case, we certainly will not let you go! You must stay overnight to celebrate.”

“I am truly honored.”

Lily's father said, “Lily, can you show Alexandra around up-stairs? I will help with the luggage.”

When they arrived on the second floor, he continued, “Perhaps we can persuade your aunt to stay overnight. In which case she can stay in the guest room, and I will put an extra bed in Lily's room.”

“Perhaps you two can help, preparing for dinner? It is still lovely weather, so perhaps we can have our dinner-party in the garden.”



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Minerva said, “At school, the house-elves prepare our meals and during the summer break at home, I lack inspiration and motivation for much cooking while I am alone. So forgive me for not being much of a help.”

But with four pairs of hands, all preparations were finished rapidly and as conventional cooking needs its time, Minerva looked at the menu:

- Voodoo Bruschetta,
- onion-soup,
- roasted-turkey,
- Greek Yoghurt, walnuts & honey,
- Coffee & Irish Mist

Lily's mother confessed, “I have to admit, it is not much of a structured menu around a specific theme, but I skimmed through my books and my own notes, but these just appeared by themselves. I hope you do not mind.”

Minerva laughed, “Lily, somehow I have the feeling that you have been dreaming about last year and about food. With each of these menu items, there is a nice story you can tell the others...”

And softly she added, “When you are finished in the kitchen, I think it would be nice if you would dress-up. Your parents have not seen your special robe. I'll ask Alexandra to do the same.”

A little later on, Minerva told Lily's parents, “The girls will join us in a moment, they have to prepare themselves. And trust me, it is worthwhile waiting every minute.”

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Alexandra helped Lily with her aubergine dress, while she helped her friend with her snow-white robe.

Lily's father had just finished setting the table, and her mother brought the plates with the first course when the two girls re-appeared.

Margareth stood still incapable of excepting what her eyes showed her.

Looking at her daughter, she whispered, “This must be magic.”

Minerva was satisfied with the intended effect, “Actually not. But it certainly helps to make you believe in magic. Enchanting, not?”

**END – year one**

## **Sneak preview – year two, chapter: The 'other' end**

....

Looking at Minerva, she asked, “How about trying a 'circle exercise' in which we all participate? I am not sure if it will work, but can't we try?”

Minerva was slightly taken apart, “Aren't you rushing now? I'm not sure if it possible, where would you focus on? The previous time I asked Martin to hold on to a happy thought or feeling he would like to share with you. But on the other hand, I would love to experience something like that.”

Then Peter said, “It is indeed a wonderful feeling, a once in a lifetime event Martin said, but I think as a precaution, at least, one should not participate, just in case. I am not so experienced as Minerva, but I think of all here present she should be at least one of us to go along with Lily. If I stay here, and something goes wrong, I can get help.”

“Very well thought of!” Minerva concluded. “Very well then! Let's make a circle, keep the chairs close together. Otherwise it is not so comfortable for your arms.”

Because many of the students were too excited about the prospect of sharing their dreams, it was decided that those too eager, would use a sleeping-potion to calm down.

Minerva sat at the right hand of Lily, and Mary on her left. They were complaining about the potions taste, one of the naming it a mild version of “living-death”, and suggesting to ask the aid of a certain first-year student at potion making.

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While she still heard the grinning, Lily tried again to concentrate and to clear her mind. Still some vague thoughts crossed her mind, “Wasn't it dangerous? What was 'living-death' anyway, a joke, something serious?” She tried to let it all go, and tried to remember a summer holiday.....

It was so warm, it reminded her of a garden-party, no so long ago.

But this was not the garden at home, no this one was huge.

She looked around and there were hundreds of tables with drinks and food on it, and she heard far away music, wasn't that a band playing? She neither knew, nor care. There were thousand or more people around, all unfamiliar faces but in a jolly good mood.

Suddenly she noticed some of the students. “Nice party Lily, any idea what the occasion is and have you seen Minerva yet?” When she looked at all the other people, she suddenly realized, most of them were old. Their group was the odd one out. As soon as she realized this, it felt, strange, like they were party crashers and didn't belong here.

They could not find the professor among all these old people, actually it was Minerva who found them. “Glad to find you all, strange place. Strange bright light, though no sun. And did you notice that despite all the parasols, there are absolutely no shadows here! And have you seen the entrance?”

None of the others had, so Minerva led them away.

All the people around here seemed very content, Annabel, the sixth year student from Ravenclaw, said, “Wait a moment, I want to know how real this is.” She walked towards one on the

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tables and return with a tray full of glasses. She took a little sip from it, and thought for a while. “Seems safe enough, certainly not wine or cider, wait a moment, I have tasted it long, long ago, it is ambrosia!”

Robin tried to get the attention of Minerva, “Prof, I know it sounds silly, but I think I recognize one of the people here. I must be mistaken, it is probably a look-a-like, but that woman over there, in the green dress, is just like my mother. But it can not be so, as she is ill, and in a wheelchair for over more than fifteen years. But the resemblance is scary. And also that woman keeps on looking at ME and a moment ago she whispered in my ear: “Murdered, Voldemort”. This place plays tricks with your mind, for sure.”

They continued to walk toward the perimeter, it looked like there was a half height fence all around the party, with neither beginning nor ending.

A short moment later on, they found the entrance Minerva spoke about. The entrance was formed by a long dark tunnel. How long that tunnel was no one could determine, neither where it came from.

Suddenly Mary remarked, “Did you notice that there are constantly people coming in, but I've not seen anybody leave.” And indeed, once in a while people came out of the tunnel, blinking against the very bright light. All of them were welcomed by other people.

“Perhaps there is a separate exit...”

Minerva and her students decided to remain at that position for a while and analyze the constant stream of arrivals. Each one of them looked happy and surprised and was welcomed as a long-

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missing relative. “I wonder, if they can see us, either they can not, or they don't pay any attention to us.” Angelina looked closely, and said, “No, I do think they do see us, but simply disregard us because they are looking for familiar faces, and once they found them they seem to vanish into thin air.”

She hardly finished speaking, or a rather odd, old looking lady came directly towards them. She examined each of them intensively, one by one, until she was standing in front of Lily.

“Ah, finally! I am glad I have found you.”

Lily managed to say “Excuse me for saying, and I certainly do not want to be disrespectful, but have we met before? If so, I am afraid that I can not remember that anymore.”

While saying, a feeling of some familiarity grew, but Lily thought that the lady was mistaken, and recognized her as somebody else.

“No, Lily, certainly not, it was a bit hard, but I recognize you from the photo's your mother sent to me. I have waited such a long time, but I knew that one day, sooner or later, we would meet in this very place. It turned out to be later, much later.”

At that moment Lily was absolutely dumb-struck. How in heavens sake could she know her name? What could she say? As she had guessed her thoughts, the granny said, “Perhaps if you think at home, try to remember the old photo's there. I am ... your grand-grandmother!”

Without waiting on any comment, while looking around she continued, “I have always thought and hoped it would be like this.” Suddenly a small group of other party-residents came towards the old lady. At least *they* seem to know and to recognize each other.

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The old woman spoke again, “Oh Lily, just look who are here, my own parents and uncle Gustav.”

Lily thought she heard one of the others saying to the woman, who believed she was her grandmother, “What took you so long, lost your way?” The old lady turned instead, looking straight in Minerva's face and said. “No, I had to wait, until I was sure Lily found here way here. I know she is dreaming, but I am ... not. Please Minerva, take good care of my granddaughter, she will definitely need all of your help. And remember, no joking I am dead-serious!”

She turned again saying, “Now I can continue, at last! A new generation that can take over the burden,” and walked away talking and laughing with others and a moment later they were indistinguishable melted into the huge amount of people or might even have vanished all together.

Lily and Minerva looked at each other and said simultaneously: “Time to leave!”

That very moment, as they opened their eyes, most of the other students were also awake, or half way. Most of the students were talking about the strange party and were excited to be together in such a strange place.

Minerva sat silently, winked Peter, and said softly “Fetch Dippet and Dumbledore: Immediately, no excuse, highest priority.”

Within (it seemed seconds) Peter returned with both professors looking very much alarmed. 'Is it THAT seriously, Minerva?’

“Absolutely headmaster, it is way much more we ever have contemplated.”

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She turned around looking at the still exited group of students.

“Have you any idea where we just came from?”

“No, absolutely no idea, probably an imaginary place, nice party though. A pity I didn't ask for the address.”

“A grand opening of a home for the elderly, perhaps? Plenty of good food and drinks.”

Facing Dibbet, she said “Professor, let us all be thankful we found Lily first in stead of the dark Lord. She has dormant powers and capabilities that might have been described in myths and legend but were never taken seriously. She must be properly guided and protected. I can tell you she is the first true dream-walker in about 1500 years or more.”

Looking at the group she said with a broken voice, “Dear students, where we have been, is one of several places we will all go, once. And I hope, depending on what you do with your lives it will be *this* option. I think we've got a glimpse of heaven. But never in recorded history did someone go there and returned, let alone bringing along some witnesses. You all have seen the other end of the tunnel that dying people talk about. We have visited the after-life, but without dying. And are able to return to our normal lives. I very much understand that what I ask of you is hard. But please keep this to yourself, while we are trying to find out what the consequences and possibilities are. Just imagine what will happen if other people find out.”

She looked at several students. “Robin, Lily and I found out that 'others', not part of our group here, can speak to us while



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we were there. And say sensible things. Just imagine what other dead people might say to us. But also, is a trip to this 'destination' reproducible? Is it safe to do so?"

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ISBN: Paperback 9789082569308

ISBN: eBook-pdf 9789082569315

