

# Witch, Please Book 7: Wrap Up

## SPEAKERS

Marcelle Kosman, Hannah McGregor

*(Witch, Please Theme Music plays) (Dance of the Priestesses by Victor Herbert Orchestra)*

**Marcelle Kosman** 00:10

Hello and welcome to Witch, Please a fortnightly podcast about the Harry Potter world. I'm Marcelle Kosman.

**Hannah McGregor** 00:16

And I'm Hannah McGregor. And you know, Marcelle, since this is our final Wrap Up episode about a *Harry Potter* book, and the final episode we're recording in 2022, and we're mere weeks away from a new year...Let's talk about some things we've left behind in the Sorting Chat.

**Marcelle Kosman** 00:40

Oh, I love this. We're just gonna jump right into the emotional deep end right from the get go. Amazing.

**Hannah McGregor** 00:47

I absolutely love that in the original list of possible things we could discuss that we've left behind you listed exclusively, your list was three things that was: homes, friends, and dreams. And I was like, Cool. So, Marcelle's doing great. **[Marcelle laughs]** What I interpret from that list is that Marcelle is *thriving*.

**Marcelle Kosman** 01:15

Why don't you go first, Hannah? **[both laugh]**

**Hannah McGregor** 01:19

I'm gonna say that one of the things I feel like we are all getting better at leaving behind all the time, but I'm particularly leaving

behind is ideas we had about what our adult lives were going to look like that weren't serving us. The older I get, the less attached I feel to the sort of vague notions of adulthood that used to really haunt me with this sort of uneasy sense that I was doing life wrong somehow. And that at some point, I would click into adulthood and be like, Haha, taxes! And I know I articulated this to you, Marcelle, via text a little while ago, but I had a kind of revelation this year, that its not that we are going to turn into adults, it's that what being an adult means is going to turn into us.

So we're not going to suddenly become baby boomers. Millennial adults are just going to be a different kind of adult, just are a different kind of adult. And that's, and that's fine. So we don't have to hold on to these totally, you know, outdated notions of adulthood that actually are mostly about class performance and access to trappings of class identity that actually most of us will never have access to because the economy's broken.

**Marcelle Kosman** 02:46

*[laughs]* That's so interesting, because if we think about like, the way growing up all of the narratives about turning 30, turning 40, turning 50, they were all-

**Hannah McGregor** 02:58

“By the age of 30, you should have”, remember that meme?

**Marcelle Kosman** 03:02

Yes. And also the anxiety that's always paired with those, you know, and people having crises about turning 40, for example. And I've internalized so much of that. But you're so right, that being a 40 year old isn't going to mean suddenly I stop having fun and wearing pink. Being 40 is going to look a lot similar to what 38 looks like.

**Hannah McGregor** 03:33

Being 40 is going to mean that now 40 year olds are people who are whimsical and wear head to toe purple jumpsuits, like that's

what happens when you turn 40. You change what being 40 means, because now you are a person who is 40 and that's really liberating.

**Marcelle Kosman** 03:50

It is very liberating. Yes, I like that a lot. And you know, that really connects, I think to another thing on the list that is leaving behind conventional understandings of academic knowledge production, because similarly, what we do, while it is very fun, and I would say relatively accessible, is also knowledge production.

**Hannah McGregor** 04:22

I got tenure with this fucking podcast, so...

**Marcelle Kosman** 04:23

Kind of exciting.

**Hannah McGregor** 04:27

This shit's scholarly, turns out. Turn's out.

**Marcelle Kosman** 04:32

*[laughs]* That's actually what I write on all of my job applications is listen this bitch got tenure from this fucking podcast. So could you at least just give me a job? *[laughs]* That's not true.

**Hannah McGregor** 04:44

You write, this shit's scholarly.

**Marcelle Kosman** 04:47

This shit's scholarly, for real.

**Hannah McGregor** 04:50

*[laughs]* But I still remember so vividly when we first started the podcast and we both were like, so this is where it just tanked in our careers. We're just, there's no jobs. The job market is broken, so we're just gonna do something that's absolutely gonna just

tank the fuck out of our careers, right? Yeah, turns out we were ahead of our time.

**Marcelle Kosman** 05:10

Ah, dang. Love that.

**Hannah McGregor** 05:12

Oh my god, Marcelle. I don't want to talk about dreams you've left behind unless they were bad dreams.

**Marcelle Kosman** 05:21

*[laughs]* No, that's okay. That's okay. I also don't want to. *[both laugh]*

**Hannah McGregor** 05:26

Yeah, save that for therapy.

*(Witch, Please Theme Music plays)*

Well, if there's one thing I know we'll never leave behind, it's the certainty that Hermione could have done better than Ron.

*[Marcelle laughs]* Let's talk about it in Granger Danger. *[Sound effect of a thunder dooming]*

**Marcelle Kosman** 06:00

Okay, well listen, I really want to talk about the inevitability, the quote unquote inevitability of Hermione and Ron, because it's really one of those things that this goddamn book series has been priming us for, since book four. And the movies have been priming us for since movie three. And I just want to put a little bit of pressure on how that works, how this is meaningful. So I want to start by talking a little bit about homosocial triangulation, which is-

**Hannah McGregor** 06:36

*[laughs]* Oh my God, your favorite topic.

**Marcelle Kosman** 06:37

It's my favorite topic. It's one of my favorite ways to ruin a beloved series for my students.

**Hannah McGregor** 06:48

*[laughs]* It should make it better for them, though. Shouldn't it?

**Marcelle Kosman** 06:51

It makes it better for some of them. Some of them need to overcome a little bit of internalized homophobia before they can really embrace the freedom of believing that their favorite characters are actually gay.

**Hannah McGregor** 07:05

The liberatory possibilities of homosocial triangulation. *[Marcelle laughs]* New t-shirt idea? *[Sound effect of a cash machine going cha-ching]*

**Marcelle Kosman** 07:11

Okay, so homosocial triangulation, I actually don't know what the dictionary definition is. Here is how I explain it-

**Hannah McGregor** 07:18

There's no dictionary definition of homosocial triangulation!

**Marcelle Kosman** 07:21

Well, good. Here's mine. Homosocial triangulation is when you have two boy characters who spend a lot of time together and are really close. And you add in a third girl character that one of them is going to be attracted to, so that they can literally spoon all the way to Mordor. And no one gets threatened by their sexuality.

**Hannah McGregor** 07:50

Yeah, yeah. I mean, there's actually famously no homosocial triangulation in *Lord of the Rings*, because there's no women. So it's just-

**Marcelle Kosman** 07:59

That's right. Because the elves are a metaphor for women.

**Hannah McGregor** 08:02

It's just homosocial. The end.

**Marcelle Kosman** 08:06

*[laughs]* But no, but in the movies, they in the movies, they reassure the audience that Sam loves this bartender named Rosie who has zero function except to reassure us that he's not pegging Frodo the whole way to Mordor.

**Hannah McGregor** 08:23

Pegging the whole way. One cannot simply peg their way into Mordor. *[Marcelle laughs]* Anyway, a thing I really like about homosocial triangulation is that it does give us this kind of everything's gay world, which is how I understand the world, personally. My hot take is I don't believe in heterosexuality. And I think anybody who's attached to a notion of themselves as straight, basically, I think being straight is a little bit homophobic. I'm just saying. *[Marcelle laughs]*

But it does, right, it becomes this sort of continuum, where it's like, okay, we've got homosociality and homosexuality. And they're like, neither mutually exclusive nor identical, but they sort of suggest this range of like, everybody's participating in something gay unless I guess you're Mike Pence and are like, no, wait, he's the one who won't be around other women-

**Marcelle Kosman** 09:24

Unless his wife is present-

**Hannah McGregor** 09:25

Continuously homosocial! Anyway, there's a long history of homosociality and the idea that women just hang out with women and men just hang out with men and what does it do behind closed doors? Don't ask. It's all very innocent, we assure you, but yeah, this sort of narrative trope of introducing a woman that it's

like, wow, both of these men are really horny for.... her! **[Marcelle laughs]** Do you have other examples that aren't *Lord of the Rings*?

**Marcelle Kosman** 10:00

Uh, I mean, there's this book series that I've been reading called *Harry Potter*. **[Hannah laughs]** And there's these two boy characters, Harry and Ron, and then they throw in a third character named Hermione and we the audience are reassured that Harry and Ron never fuck because they're both potentially attracted to Hermione.

**Hannah McGregor** 10:23

Mm hmm. **[Marcelle laughs]** And they work out all of those those homosocial tensions-

**Marcelle Kosman** 10:27

They do work out, they get sweaty, but it's okay, because they're, they're getting buff for Hermione. I'm sorry. I know I said no fucking around and I am just unhinged.

**Hannah McGregor** 10:45

**[laughing]** The idea of Ron and Harry going to the gym and just doing some lifting.

**Marcelle Kosman** 10:47

Just doing some lifts. **[laughs]**

**Hannah McGregor** 10:48

Oh my god. Okay. All right, Marcelle, tell us what is radical or exciting about homosocial triangulation other than that it's fun to make everything gay?

**Marcelle Kosman** 11:01

So Hannah, I'm sure you remember giving us an introduction to compulsory heterosexuality way back when we talked about Lauren Berlant and Michael Warner's essay "Sex in Public". And

you talk to us about the way in which we can start to see the world as being constructed in order to reproduce heterosexuality and in order to reward heterosexuality. And so I want to talk about the sort of inevitability of Hermione and Ron because in addition to Hermione's inclusion in the trio as being a kind of homosocial triangulation, it also suggests that like, well, at the end, at least two of them are going to have to pair off.

**Hannah McGregor** 11:51

That is the inevitable conclusion, isn't it? Like, one of the guys is going to get the girl.

**Marcelle Kosman** 11:57

Yeah, who is she going to choose? She's gotta choose one of them. And so much of the seventh book is about reassuring Ron that she's chosen Ron and like, I do want to say that shared trauma is a legit way to bond. And that shared trauma is a very understandable thing that people base long term relationships on. I'm not sure it's always going to be healthy. But that's probably depending on the people and the trauma.

**Hannah McGregor** 12:32

Whomst among us has not done some trauma bonding?

**Marcelle Kosman** 12:38

*[laughs]* So like, I don't think that Hermione and Ron are impossible, I guess, is what I'm trying to say.

**Hannah McGregor** 12:44

Hm. But they are treated as inevitable.

**Marcelle Kosman** 12:46

But they are treated as inevitable.

**Hannah McGregor** 12:47

Like the narrative can't come to a conclusion unless they somehow, she has to end up with somebody, it wouldn't be



narratively satisfying if there wasn't a sort of culmination of a romantic relationship.

**Marcelle Kosman 12:58**

That's right. And it has to be Ron because Harry already gets everything. And he's inherited his father's pension for redheads so like... *[Hannah laughs]*

**Hannah McGregor 13:08**

That's so grim. Heterosexuality is so grim. *[Marcelle laughs]* You've got a personal headcanon that Ron and Harry are, if not fucking, at least sweatily working out beside each other. Okay, any other sexy head cannons opening to maybe challenge this inevitability?

**Marcelle Kosman 13:34**

Ron is definitely hot for Krum. And so his obsession with Hermione is really a way of fantasizing that he gets to either be Krum or be with Krum. But I've also decided that Hermione and Harry probably hooked up at least a few times, while Ron was sulking in shell cottage because you know, it's a stressful time. It's the end of the year, and sometimes you just want to cuddle. And sometimes cuddling gets sexy. So like, yeah, yeah, I just enjoy this narrative, because I really think that the idea that Hermione saves herself for Ron sucks. I think it's very boring.

**Hannah McGregor 14:14**

And that 100% of our protagonists will only ever have sex with one person in their lives. *[Sound effect of a sad trombone plays]*

**Marcelle Kosman 14:25**

Yeah, and that you can't have sex with friends and still maintain a real friendship, you know, like, sometimes friends hook up.

**Hannah McGregor 14:35**

Sometimes friends fuck, listen! I've said fuck in this episode so many times.

**Marcelle Kosman 14:42**

**[laughs]** Coach loves it.

**Hannah McGregor 14:43**

Oh my god. Oh my god. Okay, my sort of thing I really noticed about Hermione and this read through is significantly less sexy.

**Marcelle Kosman 14:53**

Oo!

**Hannah McGregor 14:54**

**[laughs]** Oo! Not sexy. Oo! Which is that for all that, like, so much of the way Hermione is treated narratively in this book is frustrating and disappointing, particularly our revelation that she's basically, since this book being trained to be a wife. **[Marcelle makes a fake vomiting sound]** She is finally and firmly established in this book, as somebody whose superpower is that she's super good at reading. And that is, I was going back. I mean, we've got the obvious one, which is that she brings a carefully curated reference library with her. She doesn't just grab a bunch of books, she actually very thoughtfully curates a library of what she thinks will be useful while they're traveling. But more significantly, I've been thinking again about the fact that Dumbledore leaves her the-

**Marcelle Kosman 15:47**

*Tales of Beedle the Bard.*

**Hannah McGregor 15:51**

Exactly, that Dumbledore leaves her the *Tales of Beedle the Bard*, and that he both wants them to know about the Hallows, but also does not want them to pursue the Hallows. And that understanding of like, we need to know what these are, we need to figure out the relationship between this fairy tale and reality, the

sort of complex way in which history has been rewritten as myth, we need to find the ways of then going back and doing historical research to sort of map these stories against real people. You know, we have all of these ways that we need to sort of quote unquote, solve the puzzle of this book. But as you know, from being somebody who teaches first year English classes, that desire to treat a book like a riddle, or a puzzle that can be solved, and then discarded, is quite a sort of early understanding of how reading works.

And that actually, as we develop our skills, as readers, what we start to do is understand the books are not solvable, but are rather texts that you visit, and revisit and revisit and continue to find the sort of layers within that sometimes enrich other layers and sometimes totally shift your reading and that it's that willingness to to keep revisiting and to keep going deeper, that sort of constitutes critical reading. And what we see in this book is that a particular kind of critical reading is really needed to both solve the riddle, but then also figure out that you're not supposed to be going for the Hallows. And that when Dumbledore chooses somebody to be the reader, the bearer of the text, the interpreter of this very complex situation, it's Hermione who he chooses to give the book to. You know, and at the end of the day, I know that I critique the fetishization of books, etc. But I think the ability to read critically and carefully, this is going to shock everybody. I think it's a very useful skill.

**Marcelle Kosman** 18:03  
*[laughs]* You know what?

**Hannah McGregor** 18:04  
I know I've been keeping those cards close to my chest this whole time.

**Marcelle Kosman** 18:07

Yeah. Yeah, that's a hot take, Hannah. That's an unexpected hot take.

**Hannah McGregor** 18:12

Sure not making a whole podcast about it. Definitely not.

**[Marcelle laughs]** For all that Hermione gets backed into some frustrating narrative corners, she remains our patron saint of critical reading.

**Marcelle Kosman** 18:25

Patron Saint of critical reading. That's another sticker idea. I love it.

**Hannah McGregor** 18:30

That's what I'm doing, just generating sticker ideas. That's what I'm here for.

**Marcelle Kosman** 18:33

Sticker Generator McGregor, over here. **[laughs]**

**(Witch, Please Theme Music plays)**

Well, since we're thinking about things we won't leave behind, I would like to nominate the material history of class *visa vie* fashion as a keeper. Let's have Hannah give us an example in Lewk Bewk!

**Hannah McGregor** 19:00

Okay, so I really wanted to do a Lewk Bewk about wedding dresses, and particularly about Fleur's whole outfit. And what I found out along the way is that actually the history of wedding dresses is pretty boring. Historically, up until quite recently, it was mostly just that people wore clothes they had. **[Marcelle laughs]** They just were like, Oh, I'll put on a nicer dress.

**Marcelle Kosman** 19:37

I've got a nice dress I can wear for this occasion. It's my wedding.  
*[laughs]*

**Hannah McGregor** 19:41

Yeah, yeah. Yeah, absolutely. And then I tried I was like, Oh, well, you know what if I look up, like the sort of significance of the goblin made tiara and then but like you try doing a history of shit the English Empire has stolen, *[Marcelle laughs]* We'd be here-

**Marcelle Kosman** 19:59

Who am I? Edward Said?

**Hannah McGregor** 20:00

We'd be here all day. And so I am going to, as my way, focus on a color. I love talking about the history of colors. And so we're going to talk about specifically the history of the white wedding dress, and the sort of significance of white as a color, particularly for clothing. So, I want to start off by just quoting the one sentence where we hear about Fleur's wedding dress. Because I think it's really interesting what is noted about it. "Fleur was wearing a very simple white dress, and it seemed to be emitting a strong silvery glow." That glow is coming from her, it is established. And because it is her wedding, it has the remarkable effect of like, normally her glow makes other women look uglier. But on her wedding day, it makes the women around her look more beautiful.

**Marcelle Kosman** 20:49

Fuck, I hate these books so much sometimes.

**Hannah McGregor** 20:51

*[laughs]* I know! *[Marcelle laughs]* Every once in a while you read a sentence and you're like, Oh, you hate women. Wow.

**Marcelle Kosman** 21:00

Oh, my God.

**Hannah McGregor 21:03**

But I was really struck, you know, not only by the whiteness of the dress, but also by its simplicity. And that's gonna come, that's gonna come back. So let me start with this, Marcelle. Do you know where the tradition, the contemporary Western tradition of wearing white on your wedding day comes from?

**Marcelle Kosman 21:19**

Assuming that I haven't looked at the script my answer-

**Hannah McGregor 21:21**

Don't read ahead!

**Marcelle Kosman 21:22**

I know, I would never. I would have assumed that it came from some kind of archetypal figure. And I probably would have guessed Queen Elizabeth the second.

**Hannah McGregor 21:36**

Oh, the second, not the first?

**Marcelle Kosman 21:38**

Yes. Not the first. She never got, the first never got married. *[both laugh]*

**Hannah McGregor 21:45**

That was kind of her whole thing, wasn't it?

**Marcelle Kosman 21:47**

That was her whole thing! *[laughs]* She wore white every day.

**Hannah McGregor 21:51**

Fine. Okay, well, I mean, good guess, very solid guess. It's not Queen Elizabeth a second, but it is a queen. It's Queen Victoria. And a lot of contemporary Western traditions come from the Victorian period, both because of the way that the monarchy was very deliberately sort of framing Victoria as a celebrity, in order to

sort of increase the popularity of the monarchy amongst the British public, but also because of the particular sort of print culture moment that aligned with Queen Victoria, right, because we know that Victorian Age is also a sort of major historical moment of print expansion, particularly the expansion of cheap print.

So we get lots and lots more magazines and newspapers. And we are starting to get cheaper ways to reproduce images as well. And so we've got a real surge of mass print culture during this period, that allows for trends to sort of catch on and spread in a way that they really hadn't previously. So Queen Victoria wears this white wedding dress, and it gets represented all over the place. And it very quickly becomes a trend. And then it just catches on. And like, like I said, like so many things, from the Victorian period, it catches on and then we all just keep doing it forever.

**Marcelle Kosman** 23:20

We just do it. *[Laughs]*

**Hannah McGregor** 23:23

Like Christmas trees, right? That was like Queen Victoria and Prince Albert. Like it was a tradition in Germany. And so they did it. Prince Albert was German, they brought a Christmas tree into the palace, and then everybody was like, Oh, Christmas trees, Oh, a tree and your home for Christmas? Novel! And then we all just do it forever. It's amazing. And I'm sure somebody has written some fascinating book about explaining why the Victorians had such a sort of outsized historical impact.

My theory is the way that it aligned with this particular print culture moment. But if there's other Victorianists out there who would like to fill in some of those gaps, you know I love to hear about it. You know I want to hear about it. Anyway, before I found this little, you know, little nugget of history, Queen Victoria white wedding dress, the narrative I had in my head, which is, I think a narrative lots of

folks have is that you were white on your wedding day to signify that you're a virgin.

**Marcelle Kosman** 24:23

Yes, yes, I would definitely have assumed that.

**Hannah McGregor** 24:27

And that is definitely one of those retroactively applied narratives, like white caught on as a trend. And then later on, people were like, oh, yeah, no, it's the Virgin color. It absolutely wasn't a virgin color. Queen Victoria was not advertising to the world that she was a virgin.

**Marcelle Kosman** 24:42

Unlike Queen Elizabeth the Second who-

**Hannah McGregor** 24:45

Who was, but didn't for the most part, do that by dressing and white. She wasn't famously dressed in white. In fact, probably the color that was associated with virginity during this period would most likely have been blue, because that's the color of the Virgin Mary.

**Marcelle Kosman** 24:59

Oh, Oh, okay, okay.

**Hannah McGregor** 25:01

Yeah, but white was certainly associated with purity and with cleanliness. So that history of white, like sort of the significance of white, in general, and white clothing in particular is really complicated. So, I'm gonna give us sort of a little overview in the segment. So I'm drawing here in particular, on an article in Nautilus magazine by Courtney Humphries called, "Have we hit peak whiteness?" that opens with some very interesting anecdotes about bleaching your teeth, and the sort of cultural shift where it's like people now want their teeth to be a color that truly no tooth has ever been in nature.



But in that article, Humphries explains that as European colonists started encountering other groups in America and West Africa, white started to indicate cleanliness and racial refinement and civility. So way before we had these sort of virginity associations, it was a color of civility linked to race and Empire. And she points out that we can see this in 17th and 18th century portraits depicting European settlers, particularly women, who in the words of historian Kathleen Brown, looked like weird white ghosts.

**[Marcelle laughs]** Which is great because they made them so unsettlingly pale, as a way of signifying their sort of distance and difference, particularly from Black people. Right? So this idea of racializing color and linking purity and the white race to the color white is linked to this concept called Chromophobia. Have you heard of this before?

**Marcelle Kosman 26:53**

Yeah, the fear of Google.

**Hannah McGregor 27:03**

That's a good joke. I really like that.

**Marcelle Kosman 26:58**

Thank you. **[Both laugh]**

**Hannah McGregor 26:59**

Wrong! It's the fear of color!

**Marcelle Kosman 27:02**

Oh, okay.

**Hannah McGregor 27:03**

And there's a really great book by David Batchelor called *Chromophobia*, where he basically argues that this fear of color lurks in a lot of Western thought. And that we see a lot of, you know, particularly in the world of design, for example, a lot of anxiety around color and a tendency towards like, we want clean,

simple lines, we want minimalism, we want white walls, we want what, like, this is all part of this complex Western anxiety about color.

And he says that one of the ways that Western thought tends to sort of purge color is by attributing it to some kind of foreign body. So like, the Oriental, the feminine, the vulgar, the mad, right? So color becomes sort of associated with something that is other in a pathologized way, or by making it cosmetic and frivolous. Color is unserious. So we've got this sort of long history of suspicion of color in Western culture. And we also have an interesting history of it being linked to purity and cleanliness, which again, these things are all so entangled, right? Like, you just can't divide them. For example, take a look at 19th century Ivory soap ads.

**Marcelle Kosman 28:29**

Well, I mean, to begin with, the fact that it's called ivory is significant.

**Hannah McGregor 28:34**

It sure is, right? And that ivory links it both to whiteness and to colonialism, right, the extraction of goods from the African continent, and we have ads from that period, where the soap is literally depicted as like cleaning the Blackness off Black people's skin. So this association of Blackness with dirtiness and whiteness with cleanness, like it's very, it's very, sort of, say the quiet part out loud, like it's an extremely explicit white supremacist ideology, linking whiteness to purity and cleanliness. And there has often been a similar meaning and white clothing. So it's a way of showing off your ability to keep your clothes clean. Right?

So if you're very fancy, you can dress all in white, you don't have to worry about immediately spilling a whole jar of mustard on yourself. Or if you're not talking about just me and my personal anxieties, it's a way of showing that you're not doing dirty physical labor, because you can keep your white clothes white. And then of

course, we see an intensification of white clothing as linked to white supremacy through the 19th and 20th centuries, particularly via the visual iconography of the Ku Klux Klan, where white becomes explicitly linked to white supremacy. Interestingly, though, white clothes historically weren't only an outward sign of purity or cleanliness, like it wasn't just like, Oh, I'm wearing white. And then you can tell I'm like, able to keep myself clean. Actually, it was, I'm wearing white and the white clothes are making me clean. They are cleaning me.

**Marcelle Kosman 30:14**

Oh, weird. Okay.

**Hannah McGregor 30:16**

Yeah. So historically, and I don't, I'm being sloppy with dates here. Apologies to the historians in the audience. But people used to wear white linens against their skin. And then they're sort of over-dresses over top, right? Over clothes over top. And so you'll often see that sort of like, you know, Renaissance outfits, where there's like some white coming out at the top of the neck and some white coming out at the bottom, so you're wearing all of these white linens against your skin. And part of the idea was that those white linens drew the impurities out of your body. So like they got dirty, but they made you clean.

**Marcelle Kosman 30:56**

That is some pseudo science cuckoo bananas nonsense.

**Hannah McGregor 31:01**

Well, what's really interesting about it is that it is pseudoscience cuckoo bananas nonsense. And also, it does explain why people historically didn't bathe this much. Because that's actually a pretty good way to stay clean. Because if you wear linens, like natural fabrics next to your body, you sweat into them, they absorb sweat and dirt. You take those off, you clean them, your body is still relatively clean, because the sweat and dirt got absorbed into the

clothes, the outer clothes are still clean. So it's just the linens that you need to clean.

**Marcelle Kosman 31:39**

Okay, like when, if you wore a uniform in high school, you would often wear a T-shirt underneath, because that way your uniform shirt wouldn't have yellow armpits, because your T-shirts absorbed the yellow armpits.

**Hannah McGregor 31:54**

In the military, right? You would wear a T-shirt underneath your, like you were under clothes so that the underclothes absorb your body's various excretions and of course, the ability to like own a whole bunch to keep those whites white basically to like, own multiple changes of linens, and then have servants who could wash them for you on a regular basis, that was itself also a sign of wealth. So we've still always got this association of cleanliness with wealth and cleanliness with whiteness, and white clothes with all of these things.

**Marcelle Kosman 32:30**

Wow. Wow.

**Hannah McGregor 32:32**

So in the 1840s when Queen Victoria, you know, wore this white wedding dress, white didn't necessarily mean virginity, but it probably meant cleanliness and purity. But another thing, another thing that commentators of the time noted was the dress's simplicity. So at other formal occasions, she would often wear silver and gold, like metallic threads in her clothes as a sign of her royalty. But she didn't wear fancy metallic clothes. She didn't wear her royal robes. She wore a very simple white dress with just a few key details including British made lace, it was very important. She made sure that all of the sort of, you know, frills on it were made by British artisans.

And historians have argued that her desire to wear the simple white dress was part of a deliberate public relations strategy on the part of the monarchy to position Victoria as a wife first and a queen second. So on her wedding day, she dresses like a simple modest woman, not like a queen.

**Marcelle Kosman** 33:51

I actually don't know this. Is she Queen before she gets married?

**Hannah McGregor** 33:55

Yes. And because she is Queen, she has to propose because a monarch can't be proposed to. So she proposes to Albert. And so you know, her presence as a monarch, the only previous long reigning English Queen we have is the one who just never got married, as established. And so there's this problem, right, with Victoria is like what do we do with this woman who's in charge, when as a culture, we think that women naturally cannot be in charge.

And so this is one way of managing that, sort of this outfit on her wedding day, not as a queen, but as a wife. And I think that that is really interesting in light of the fact that the only details we get about Fleur's gown are that it's white. And it's simple, right? She's still radiant, but it's a radiance that no longer makes her stand out above other women. She's got a simple gown, which suggests to me that this is the moment where she's shifting from the sort of, you know, semi mythical objective collective desire to wife. Because the next time we see her, she is wearing an apron and making casseroles.

**Marcelle Kosman** 35:21

Oh my god.

**Hannah McGregor** 35:24

The end. This book is all about teaching women to be wives.

***[Marcelle groans]***

***(Witch, Please Theme Music plays)***

To be honest, I'm not super committed to this next segment, we can probably get rid of it. It's called Orchideus. ***[Sound effect of chimes]*** The one where we each note, something that we were delighted by in this final read through. And you know, Marcelle, delight is not our strength.

**Marcelle Kosman 35:56**

We're not good at it.

**Hannah McGregor 35:57**

But for this final Orchideous, I want to go first.

**Marcelle Kosman 36:01**

Okay.

**Hannah McGregor 36:02**

So I'm going to read you a short passage from this book:

““The idea that Gryffindor might have stolen the sword was unpleasant to him. He had always been proud to be a Gryffindor. Gryffindor had been the champion of muggle borns, the wizard who had clashed with the pure blood loving Slytherin.

“Maybe he's lying”, Harry said, opening his eyes again. “Griphook. Maybe Gryffindor didn't take the sword. How do we know the goblin version of history is right?”

“Does it make a difference?” asked Hermione.

“Changes how I feel about it.” said Harry.”

So when I first read the scene, I found it really disappointing. Right? That Harry finds out this difficult piece of history, and that he's like, Well, maybe Griphook is lying. Yeah, I should probably, Griphook is lying. We can't trust goblins. But on this read through, I find it a really fascinating moment of both doubt and possibility. So it's this moment in which he says, maybe. Maybe he's lying.

We see Harry struggling with this revelation, a revelation that, you know, it's then going to play out in his revelations about Dumbledore and his larger revelations about realizing that people who he has tended to worship as heroes are actually just humans who have done imperfect things, like all people do imperfect things, because we're just people.

And in this moment, what we see is not him deciding not to believe Griphook, but questioning. And yeah, he's questioning Griphook, but he's also equally questioning the history he has received, right, this sort of mythos of Godric Gryffindor as this unvarnished hero. And it doesn't resolve. You know, Hermione says, does it make a difference? And Harry makes it clear, you know, she means does it make a difference for the decision we're about to make? The practical decision that we have to make about Griphook. And Harry makes it very clear that for him, it's an ethical question, right? It changes how I feel about it, it changes what he thinks will be right or wrong in this moment. And that, for me, it's not resolved by the end of the book. He hasn't decided how he feels about Gryffindor. You know, our terrible epilogue suggests some sort of resolution. But I think we've at this point established pretty clearly that we consider the epilogue non canon.

**Marcelle Kosman** 38:38

*[laughs]* Yes, yes, the epilogue is fan fiction, written by the author.

**Hannah McGregor** 38:41

Just rip it out of all my copies. But it opens this possibility. And that possibility gets more fully realized in terms of his exchange with Dumbledore. But it still lingers there in the text as this beginning to realize that just none of these divides are as simple as you thought. That actually, oh, maybe wizarding culture was built on the theft of goods from oppressed people. And that is, you know, a moment of political consciousness. And we don't know

which way it's going to take him. A lot of people experience that moment of political consciousness and push it way down. They push it into the oubliette, and they never think about it again, but for a lot of people, these moments are the beginning of something really transformative.

And, yeah, it just caught my attention as I was rereading this time as this unresolved moment of potential. That tells us that like, actually, maybe this is a generation of people who aren't going to simplistically receive those narratives. Maybe Harry's gonna become somebody who advocates for the repatriation of stolen cultural goods.

**Marcelle Kosman** 40:01

Maybe. I love that. Yeah, maybe he'll stop being an order because he realizes that it doesn't bring him joy, and instead become the opposite of a museum curator.

**Hannah McGregor** 40:15

A museum de-curator. All right. Marcelle, what about you?

**Marcelle Kosman** 40:19

I mean, I think that we've talked about this before, in one of our book seven episodes. I can't remember which one specifically. But I just really want to read-

**Hannah McGregor** 40:30

I think the first one. I suspect.

**Marcelle Kosman** 40:31

That would make sense. Yeah, I just want to reiterate the fact that this was very much the first time that I read this book and knew what was going on the entire time. And so it was able to, like, follow the Hallows versus Horcruxes dilemma, understand what the stakes were, understand why Dumbledore had opted to weave the most intricate of webs instead of just saying to Harry, listen, I did this thing. It was bad. You can do better. And you know



what? I'm not saying that the book could have been simpler. I am saying that I experienced a tremendous amount of pleasure, finally understanding it.

**Hannah McGregor 41:17**

Oh, yeah. And that's on rereading.

**Marcelle Kosman 41:19**

Yeah, it feels good to feel like I understand what's going on. And I think also, that it makes the events of the novel feel less predestined. And more like Harry really has to make a choice and that he chooses the brave choice.

**Hannah McGregor 41:38**

Aw, Harry.

**Marcelle Kosman 41:41**

Harry.

**Hannah McGregor 41:42**

He does choose the brave choice. And now I'm thinking about Harry dying and that's not good, because we're about to go into the saddest segment. *[Marcelle laughs]*

*(Witch, Please Theme Music plays)*

Okay, well, a segment I'm ready to let go up forever is Devastating Fun Facts. *[Marcelle gasps]* Because I'm really done with crying over your so-called "Fun facts about Hogwarts students and staff not mentioned in the books because these things were not part of Harry's journey."

**Marcelle Kosman 42:20**

Hannah, I had no idea.

**Hannah McGregor 42:22**

They're too sad, Marcelle!

**Marcelle Kosman 42:23**

Well, hold on to your hats. *[laughs]* All right, okay. Okay, okay. Hmm.

Fun fact: Dudley graduates high school while still in hiding and contrary to Petunia's wishes, he does a gap year in France, and finally free from his parents' emotional manipulation and abuse he finds himself incredibly shy and unsure how to make friends. Also, it's important to add that his French is terrible. So he mainly hangs out in these English speaking enclaves. But as a result of this, eventually, he stumbled across this community of North American wannabe revolutionaries who like to hang out late into the night smoking hash and drinking and yelling about capitalism, you know, as we do, and Dudley is thus exposed to all kinds of new ways of thinking about the world and about his place in it as a white man. And he learns about anti racism and feminism and revolutionary Marxism. And it's very important to note that he's too embarrassed to admit how little he knows about anything.

And so he spends his afternoons reading books by the philosophers that his acquaintances just toss around, like it's no big deal. And this is how he gains all of this knowledge. And so when he returns home, he really wants to go to university and study philosophy, but Vernon will not hear of it because Dudley has to take over Grunnings when Vernon retires, and so Dudley apprentices at Grunnings and eventually becomes the senior manager. But unsurprisingly, he and Vernon grow very distant.

Dudley goes to things like poetry readings and art house cinemas, and Vernon just isn't interested in trying new things. But after Vernon passes away, Dudley sells Grunnings and opens a used bookstore, and he adopts a cat named Derek, and he and Harry get together and play bridge with Petunia and Mrs. Figg every Wednesday evening. And it's nice.

Fun fact: There's absolutely no way that Lupin and Tonks would have named Harry the godfather of baby Teddy if they had known how soon Harry would become the child's caregiver. Harry is truly unprepared for the responsibility of raising a baby at the tender age of almost 18, fresh out of a war. He makes a lot of mistakes. And number 12 Grimmauld Place is an absolute disaster zone for months. But Harry's community is there for him and for little Teddy. Andromeda, Teddy's grandmother, moves in for a while until Harry and Teddy have figured out their routine. The Weasleys take turns babysitting during the day so that Harry can finish his last year at Hogwarts by correspondence.

And, you know, parenting doesn't come naturally to Harry, whatever that means, but he really, really loves it. He is totally enchanted by Teddy's curiosity and his stubbornness. He loves to get on the floor and play with his godson, and he, you know, very quickly starts to think of Teddy as his child. And in this way, Harry really gets to have a bit of that childhood that he lost when living with the Dursleys you know, and it's hard being a dad, but being a dad is the absolute happiest he's ever been. So that's nice.

Fun fact: Argus Filch decides to retire instead of cleaning up the demolished Hogwarts. **[Hannah laughs]** And good for him. He and Mrs. Norris move to a flat in Hogsmeade, where he opens a little studio restoring magical paintings. And now that he's retired, Filch finally has time to paint, which was once a passion of his, and he finds quite a bit of popularity among the British magical community. His ability to depict the magical world in a style that eventually gets named Still Painting is widely considered to have established a new genre. Good for him.

**Hannah McGregor** 46:44

That one actually was fun. Congratulations, Marcelle. You did one fun one.

**Marcelle Kosman** 46:48

I decided to delete the part where he paints a picture of Fred.

**Hannah McGregor 46:53**

Shut up, you monster!

**Marcelle Kosman 46:58**

*[laughs]* But speaking of Fred, fun fact: George never stops joking around with Fred. Even though Fred went on instead of coming back as a ghost, George can feel his twin's presence everywhere he goes. Sometimes the joke shop employees can hear George chuckle, most likely at something clever that Fred would have said.

**Hannah McGregor 47:21**

I'm just straight up crying.

**Marcelle Kosman 47:26**

*[Marcelle laughs]* Okay, fun fact. This is the last one before Creature Report. Fun fact: After the Battle of Hogwarts, once it seems safe to do so, Hermione takes a port key to Australia to find her parents. After a few weeks, oh sorry, I know that coach is muted, but I just saw her sob, after a few weeks, she finds them near a small town outside of Perth. They live on a lavender farm and they keep a roadside stand where they sell bunches of dried lavender and fresh pressed lavender oil. It's a specialty of theirs because for some reason they have trouble sleeping and this is one of the only things that helps. Crookshanks, bless him, sleeps all day in a sunny patch of catnip by the front door.

And they seem really really happy. And Hermione visits them every day for about a week before deciding whether or not to lift the enchantment.

And now it's time for Kreacher Report.

**Hannah McGregor 48:33**

**[Sobbing]** Why are you like this? Why? She left.. She left it uncertain so we don't know. That way it's more devastating! Coach! She leaves us forever in uncertainty. Maybe she does and maybe she doesn't! They sleep because somewhere in their hearts they know they lost their daughter. But also they are really happy.

**Marcelle Kosman 49:01**

**[laughing]** I don't know why I'm like this.

**Hannah McGregor 49:06**

**[sobbing continues]** I need a minute before Kreachers Report. I gotta get a kleenex.

**Marcelle Kosman 49:16**

**[laughs]** I don't know if this counts as a fun fact. But now a little fan service to all our listeners with toddlers. I present to you Kreachers Report! Coach, activate Kreachers Report.

Kreachers Report. Kreachers Report. Kreachers Report

We finally hear the tale of Regulus's epic sail  
In a teeny tiny boat that with two wizards could not float  
And Kreachers along for the ride,  
Traumatized by watching his favorite human die,  
Dance break

Go house elf, go house elf, go house elf!

**[laughs]** We're done with the fun facts!

Witch, Please at ease!

Till our appendix wrap up!

**Hannah McGregor 50:24**

**[laughs and sobs]** God, I am in physical pain. Wow.

**Marcelle Kosman 50:33**

**[laughs]** Oh my god, I'm sorry that I'm like this.

Thank you, witches, for joining us for another episode of *Witch, Please*. If you want more of us, which you obviously do, we're on Twitter and Instagram at @ohwitchplease and, of course, on Patreon, at patreon.com/ohwitchplease, where you can get all kinds of unbelievable perks, like movie watchalongs and bloopers that we pull out of these episode recording when everybody loses their shit, and then there are comics inspired by the bloopers and interviews with incredible people with incredible thoughts. It's a truly shocking quantity of bonus content. Also, you should read Hannah's book! It's the first physical book I've read in years and it's wonderful. Totally worth the wait. It's called *A Sentimental Education*, and if you prefer to listen to Hannah read it to you, she also made the audiobook.

### **Hannah McGregor 51:48**

I did. I made it for you. *Witch, Please* is produced in partnership with Wilfrid Laurier University Press and distributed by Acast. You can find the rest of our episodes at ohwitchplease.ca, along with transcripts! And our newest team-member Gaby has been creating exciting new website content, so if you generally listen on a podcatcher and haven't checked out our website in a while you should go check it out. It's looking very sharp. Also, exciting recent addition, we have our own merch store now. So go check out some of our beautiful, beautiful merch. Special thanks AS ALWAYS to our team-player of a producer, Hannah Rehak, aka COACH! **[Soundeffect of a sports whistle blowing]**, to our Witch, Please apprentice Zoe Mix **[Soundeffect of record reversing]** and to our sound engineer Erik Magnus! **[soundeffect of chimes]**

### **Marcelle Kosman 52:43**

At the end of every episode we shout-out everyone who left us a 5-star review on Apple Podcasts, so you've gotta review us if you want to hear me  
**[singing] take a bow,**  
*the night is over,*

*this masquerade is* - I think this is not the right key- *getting older*,

**Hannah McGregor** 53:05

I don't know this song.

**Marcelle Kosman** 53:06

Oh, it's Take A Bow by Madonna.

*The curtain's down,*

*there's no one here,*

And then Babyface comes in and he's like—

*there's no one here,*

*There's no one in the crowd*

It's a great song. It's an absolute ballad.

**Hannah McGregor** 53:20

Incredible. I'm gonna go listen.

**Marcelle Kosman** 53:21

Thanks this week to:

Mish Invisible, Els, Nick Stephani (whose review is titled "Owls owls oWLS OWLS"), Mermanda! (who would like us to turn the whistle down just a bit bit), GargoyleInTheLibrary (who apparently knows Coach), and Snapdragon1975.

**Hannah McGregor** 53:52

We'll be back soon to begin our eighth season, which we have lovingly entitled the appendix season. We're so excited about this next season! It will be similar in structure in terms of episodes but they won't be looking at a specific Harry Potter book, instead we'll be looking at the series as a whole! That means Coach can't yell at us for jumping between books anymore. Because we can talk about all of them at the same time! Still — we want to take a moment at the end of this 7th season to say thank you so much for going through this whole series with us, one book at a time.

We're excited to try something a little bit different this season, while still talking about Harry Potter. But until then:

**Marcelle Kosman** 54:36

Later witches!