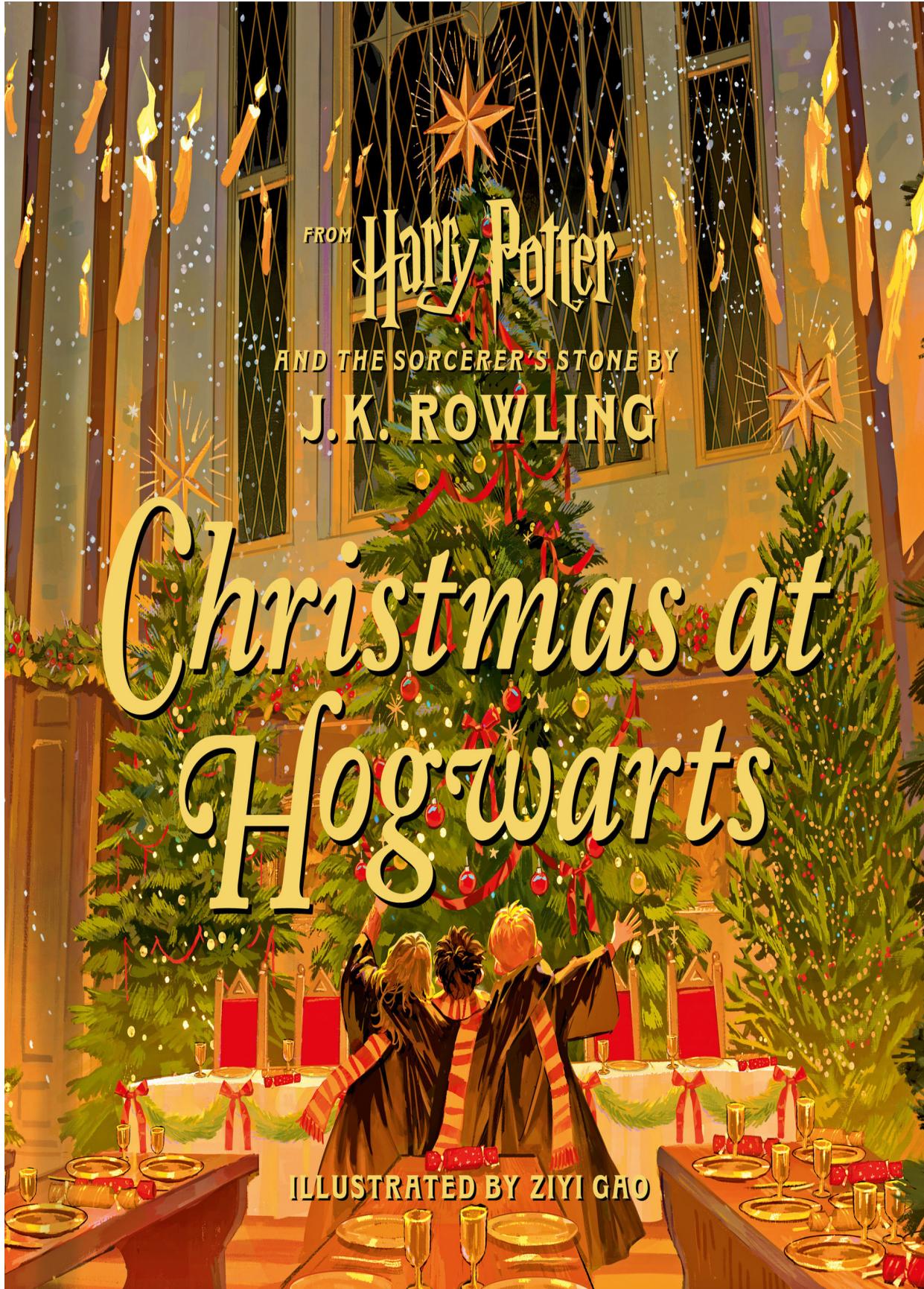


FROM Harry Potter  
AND THE SORCERER'S STONE BY  
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# *Christmas at Hogwarts*

ILLUSTRATED BY ZIYI GAO



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POTTERMORE PUBLISHING

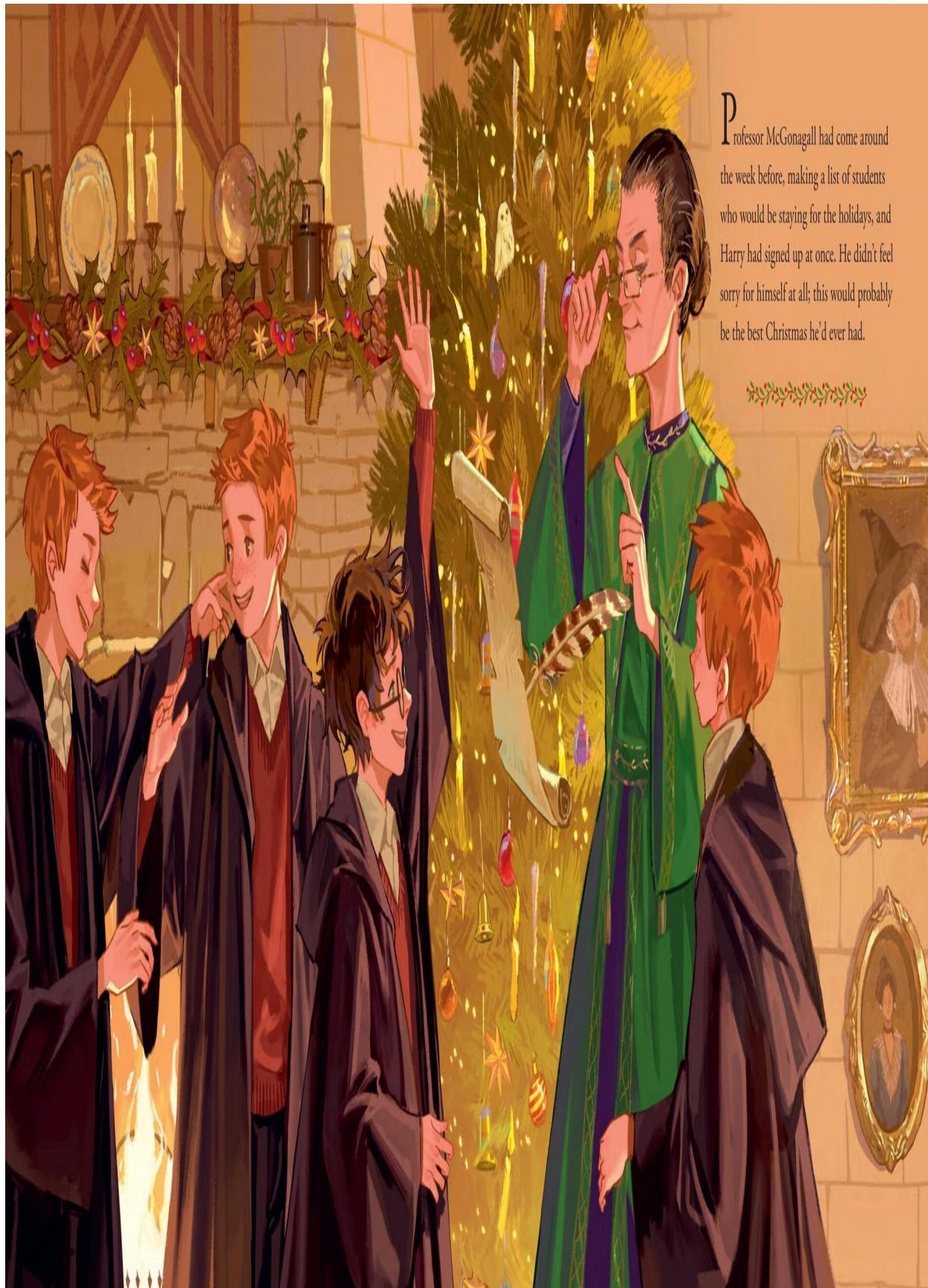


Christmas was coming. One morning in mid-December, Hogwarts woke to find itself covered in several feet of snow.

No one could wait for the holidays to start.

While the Gryffindor common room and the Great Hall had roaring fires, the drafty corridors had become icy and a bitter wind rattled the windows in the classrooms.





Professor McGonagall had come around the week before, making a list of students who would be staying for the holidays, and Harry had signed up at once. He didn't feel sorry for himself at all; this would probably be the best Christmas he'd ever had.

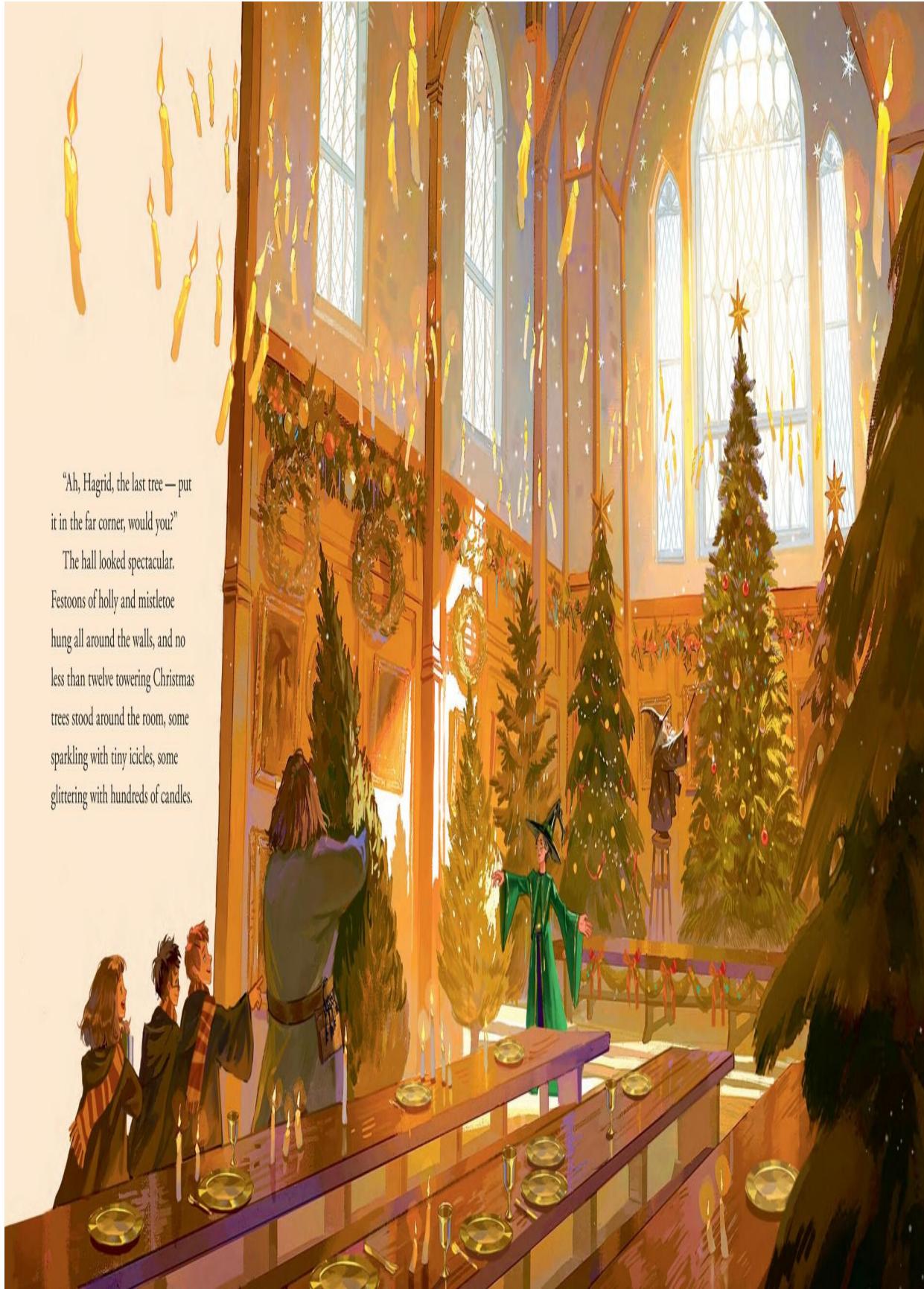


When Harry, Ron, and Hermione left the dungeons at the end of Potions, they found a large fir tree blocking the corridor ahead. Two enormous feet sticking out at the bottom and a loud puffing sound told them that Hagrid was behind it.

"Hi, Hagrid, want any help?" Ron asked, sticking his head through the branches.  
"Nah, I'm all right, thanks, Ron."

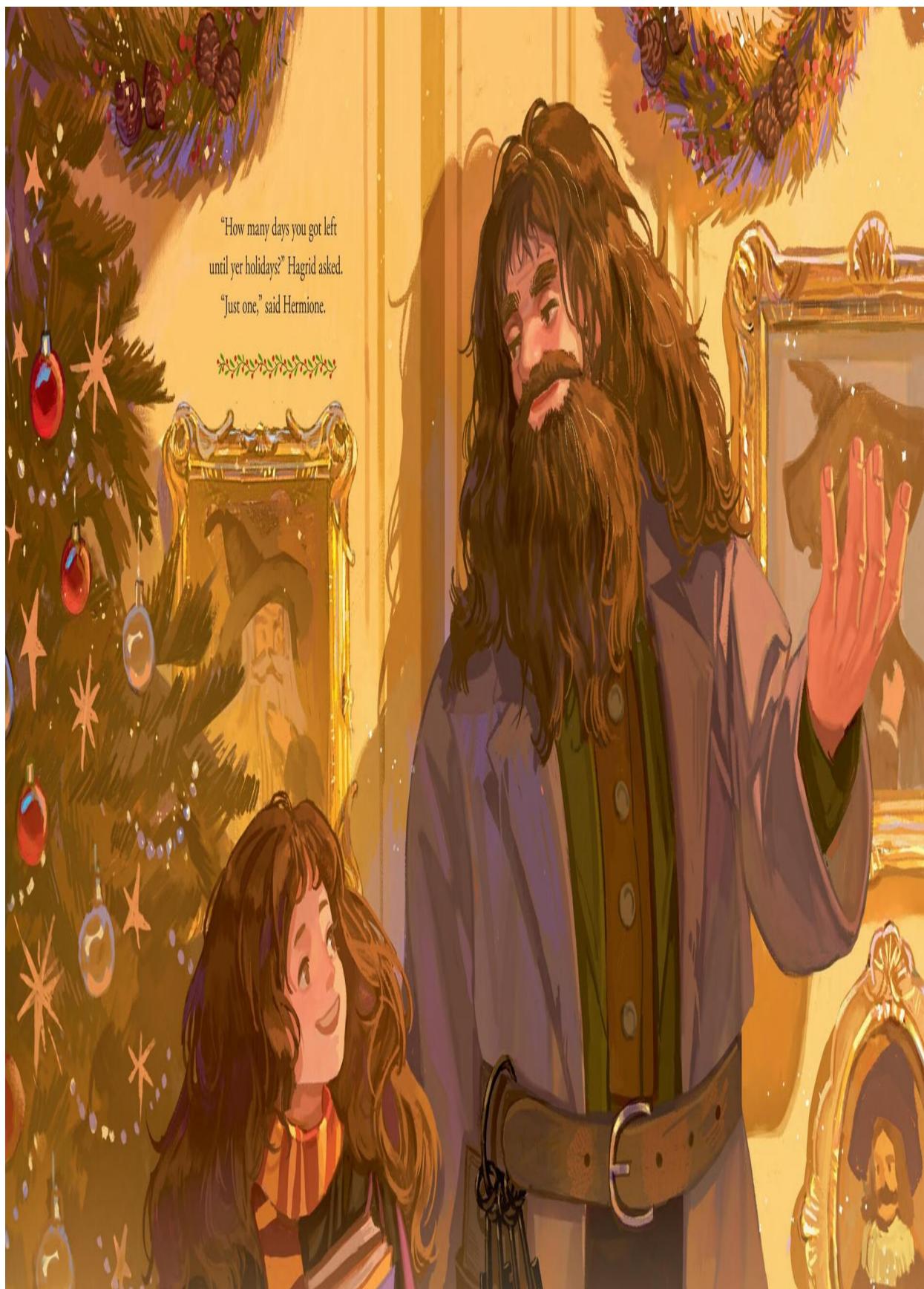
"Tell yeh what, come with me an' see the Great Hall, looks a treat."

So the three of them followed Hagrid and his tree off to the Great Hall, where Professor McGonagall and Professor Flitwick were busy with the Christmas decorations.



"Ah, Hagrid, the last tree — put it in the far corner, would you?"

The hall looked spectacular. Festoons of holly and mistletoe hung all around the walls, and no less than twelve towering Christmas trees stood around the room, some sparkling with tiny icicles, some glittering with hundreds of candles.

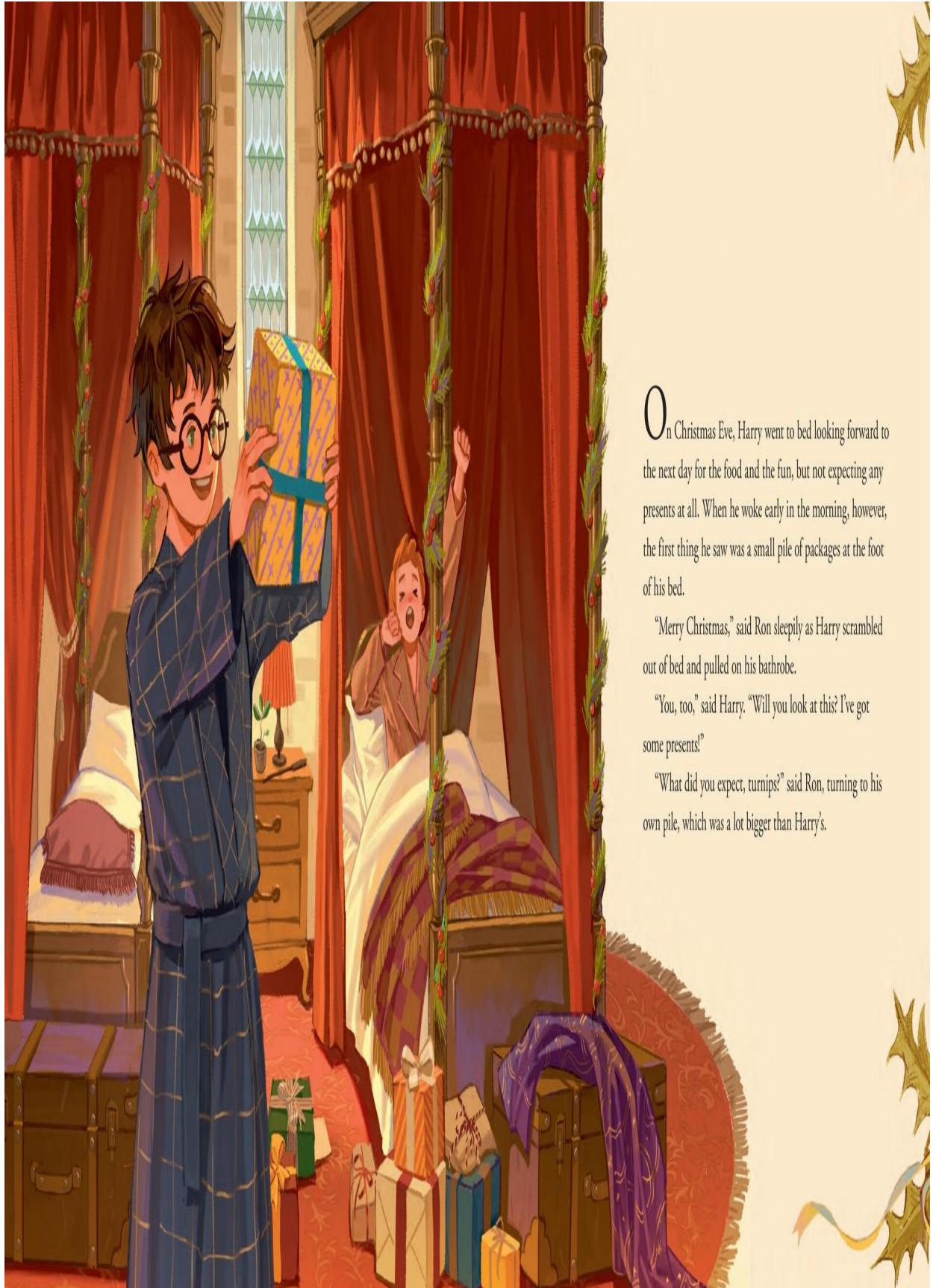


"How many days you got left  
until yer holidays?" Hagrid asked.

"Just one," said Hermione.



Once the holidays had started, Ron and Harry had the dormitory to themselves and the common room was far emptier than usual, so they were able to get the good armchairs by the fire. They sat by the hour eating anything they could spear on a toasting fork — bread, crumpets, marshmallows — and plotting ways of getting Malfoy expelled, which were fun to talk about even if they wouldn't work.



**O**n Christmas Eve, Harry went to bed looking forward to the next day for the food and the fun, but not expecting any presents at all. When he woke early in the morning, however, the first thing he saw was a small pile of packages at the foot of his bed.

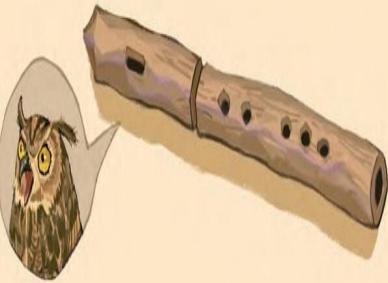
"Merry Christmas," said Ron sleepily as Harry scrambled out of bed and pulled on his bathrobe.

"You, too," said Harry. "Will you look at this? I've got some presents!"

"What did you expect, turnips?" said Ron, turning to his own pile, which was a lot bigger than Harry's.



Harry picked up the top parcel. It was wrapped in thick brown paper and scrawled across it was *To Harry*, from Hagrid. Inside was a roughly cut wooden flute. Hagrid had obviously whittled it himself. Harry blew it — it sounded a bit like an owl.



A second, very small parcel contained a note.  
We received your message and enclose your Christmas present. From Uncle Vernon and Aunt Petunia. Taped to the note was a fifty-pence piece.  
“That’s friendly,” said Harry.



Ron was fascinated by the fifty pence.  
“*Weird!*” he said. “What a shape! This is *money*?”  
“You can keep it,” said Harry, laughing at how pleased Ron was.





"Hagrid and my aunt and uncle — so who sent these?"

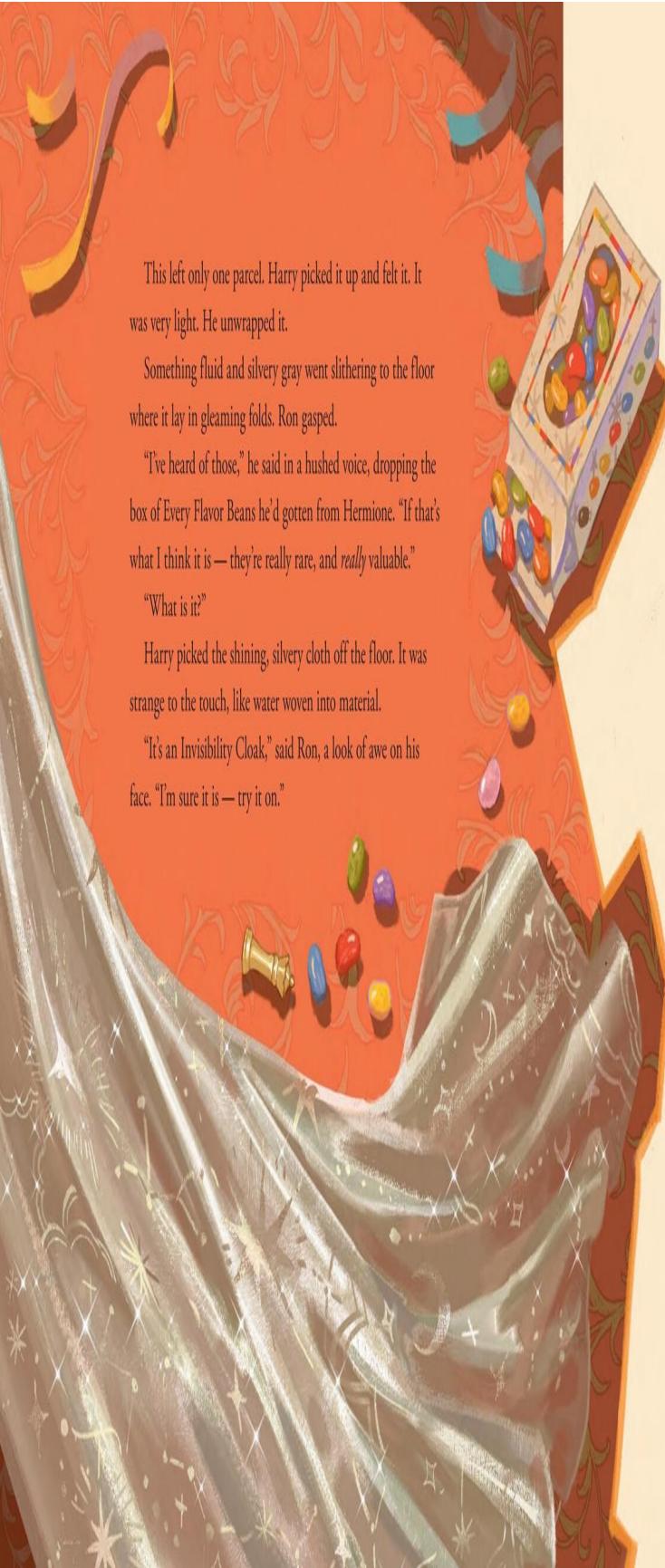
"I think I know who that one's from," said Ron, turning a bit pink and pointing to a very lumpy parcel. "My mum. I told her you didn't expect any presents and — oh, no," he groaned, "she's made you a Weasley sweater."

Harry had torn open the parcel to find a thick, hand-knitted sweater in emerald green and a large box of homemade fudge.

"Every year she makes us a sweater," said Ron, unwrapping his own, "and mine's *always* maroon."

"That's really nice of her," said Harry, trying the fudge, which was very tasty.

His next present also contained candy — a large box of Chocolate Frogs from Hermione.



This left only one parcel. Harry picked it up and felt it. It was very light. He unwrapped it.

Something fluid and silvery gray went slithering to the floor where it lay in gleaming folds. Ron gasped.

"I've heard of those," he said in a hushed voice, dropping the box of Every Flavor Beans he'd gotten from Hermione. "If that's what I think it is — they're really rare, and *really* valuable."

"What is it?"

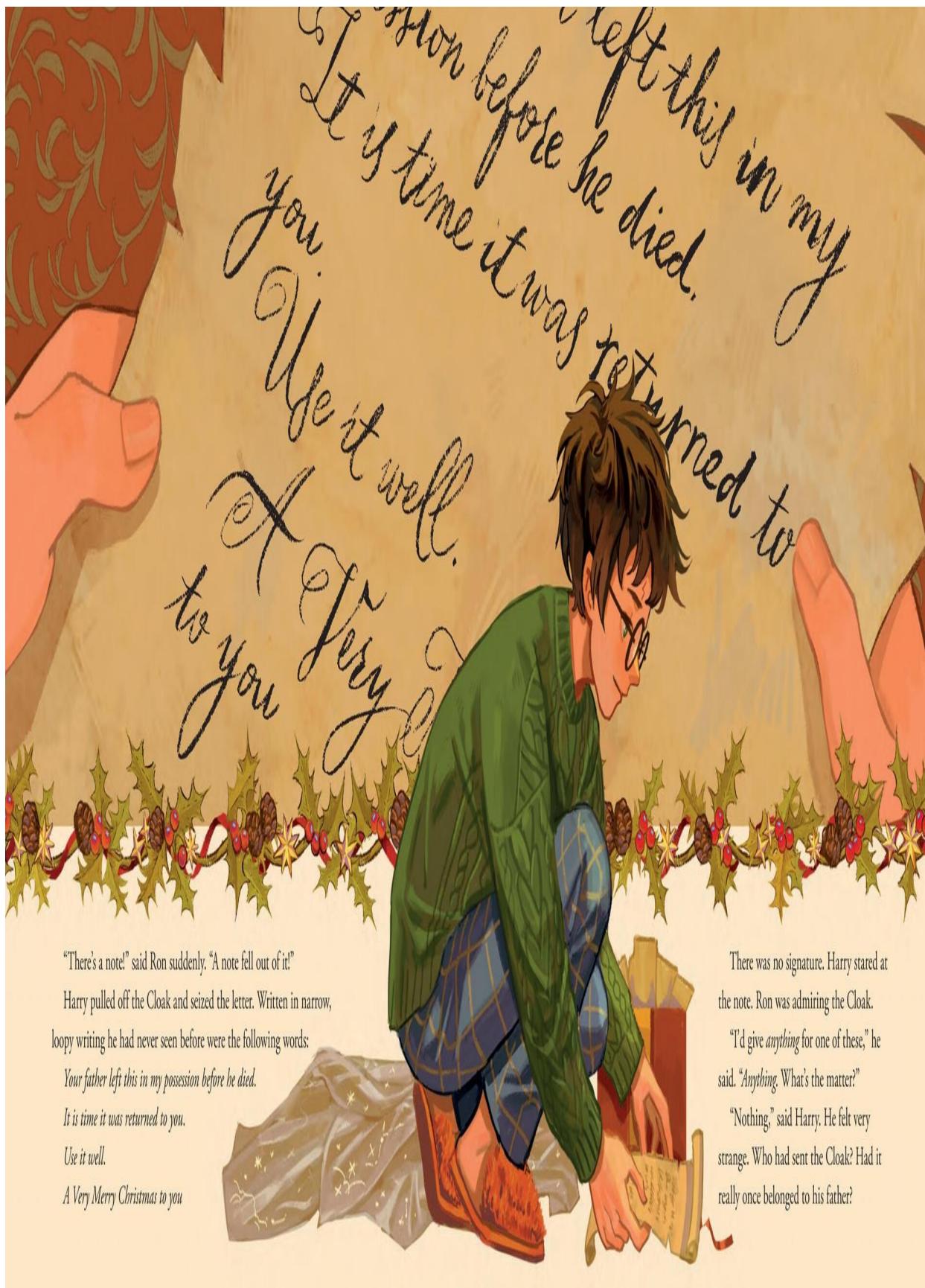
Harry picked the shining, silvery cloth off the floor. It was strange to the touch, like water woven into material.

"It's an Invisibility Cloak," said Ron, a look of awe on his face. "I'm sure it is — try it on."



Harry threw the Cloak around his shoulders and Ron gave a yell.  
"It is! Look down!"

Harry looked down at his feet, but they were gone. He dashed to the mirror. Sure enough, his reflection looked back at him, just his head suspended in midair, his body completely invisible. He pulled the Cloak over his head and his reflection vanished completely.



"There's a note!" said Ron suddenly. "A note fell out of it!"

Harry pulled off the Cloak and seized the letter. Written in narrow, loopy writing he had never seen before were the following words:

*Your father left this in my possession before he died.*

*It is time it was returned to you.*

*Use it well.*

*A Very Merry Christmas to you*

There was no signature. Harry stared at the note. Ron was admiring the Cloak.

"I'd give *anything* for one of these," he said. "*Anything.* What's the matter?"

"Nothing," said Harry. He felt very strange. Who had sent the Cloak? Had it really once belonged to his father?

Before he could say or think anything else, the dormitory door was flung open and Fred and George Weasley bounded in. Harry stashed the Cloak quickly out of sight. He didn't feel like sharing it with anyone else yet.

"Merry Christmas!"

"Hey, look — Harry's got a Weasley sweater, too!"

Fred and George were wearing blue sweaters, one with a large yellow F on it, the other a G.

"Harry's is better than ours, though," said Fred, holding up Harry's sweater. "She obviously makes more of an effort if you're not family."

"Why aren't you wearing yours, Ron?" George demanded. "Come on, get it on, they're lovely and warm."

"I hate maroon," Ron moaned halfheartedly as he pulled it over his head.

"You haven't got a letter on yours," George observed. "I suppose she thinks you don't forget your name. But we're not stupid — we know we're called Gred and Forge."



"What's all this noise?" Percy Weasley stuck his head through the door, looking disapproving. He had clearly gotten halfway through unwrapping his presents as he, too, carried a lumpy sweater over his arm, which Fred seized.

"P for prefect! Get it on, Percy, come on, we're all wearing ours, even Harry got one."

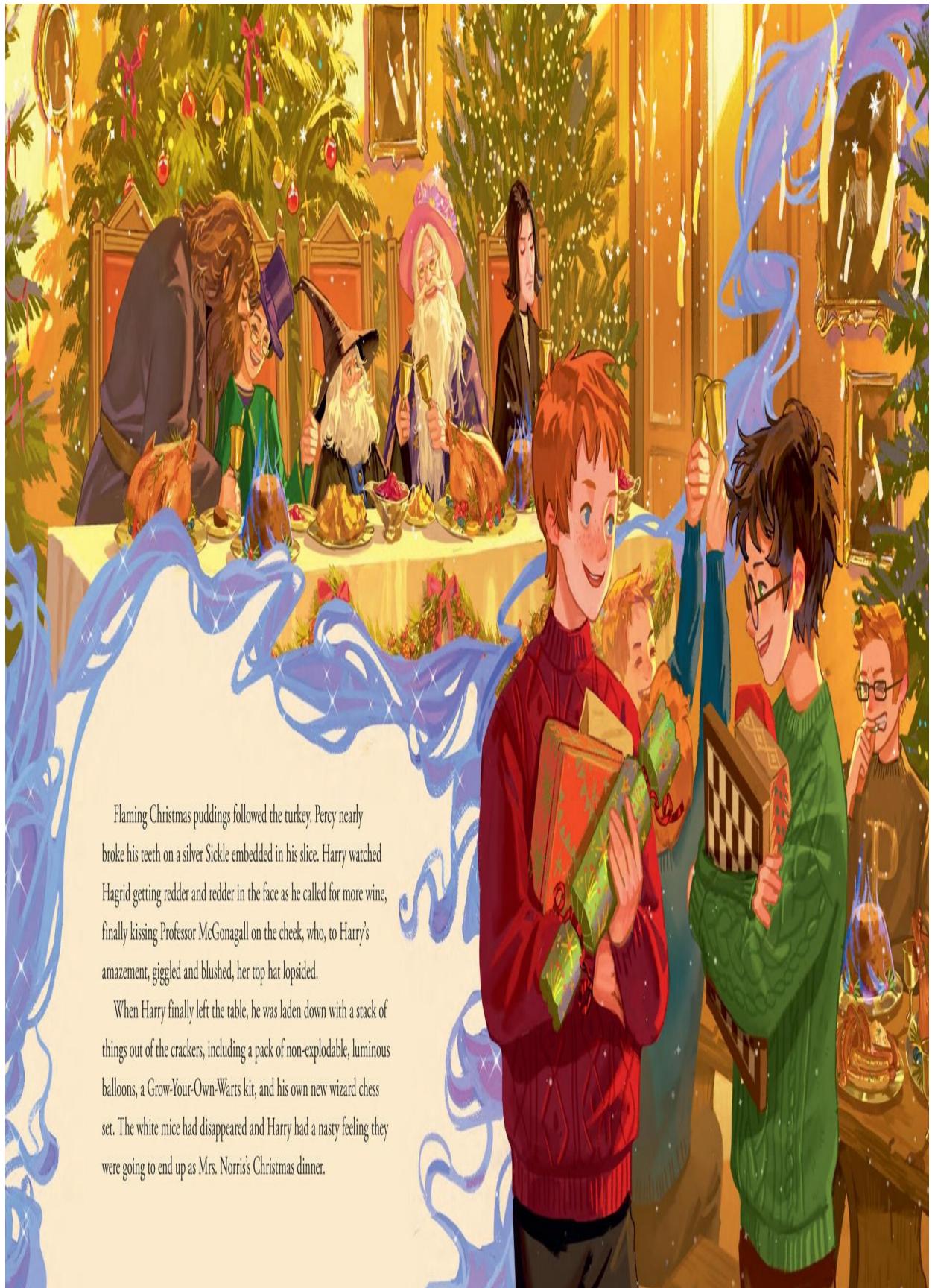
"I — don't — want —" said Percy thickly, as the twins forced the sweater over his head, knocking his glasses askew.

"And you're not sitting with the prefects today, either," said George. "Christmas is a time for family."

They frog-marched Percy from the room, his arms pinned to his side by his sweater.

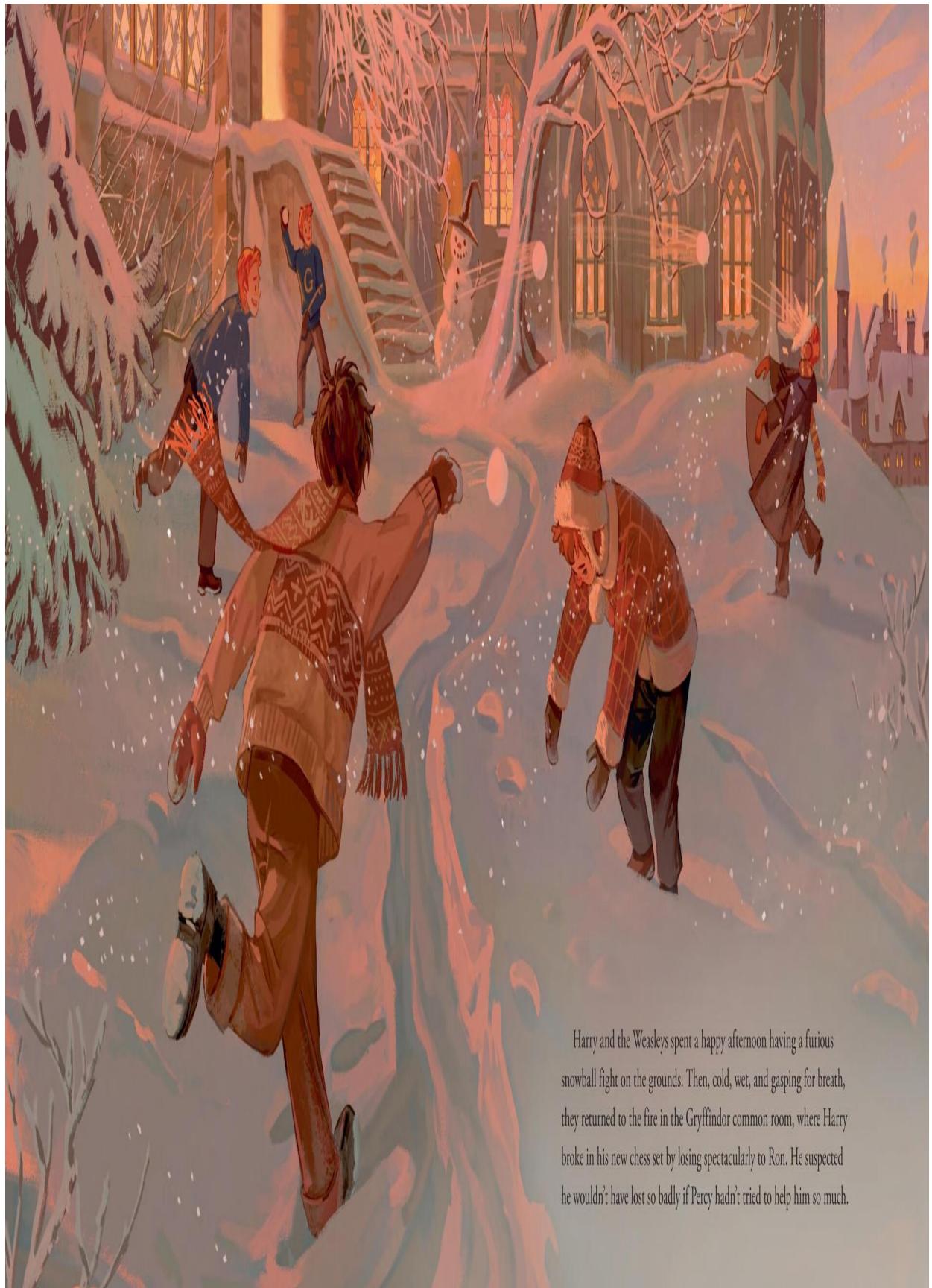
Harry had never in all his life had such a Christmas dinner. A hundred fat, roast turkeys; mountains of roast and boiled potatoes; platters of chipolatas; tureens of buttered peas, silver boats of thick, rich gravy and cranberry sauce — and stacks of wizard crackers every few feet along the table. These fantastic party favors were nothing like the feeble Muggle ones the Dursleys usually bought, with their little plastic toys and their flimsy paper hats inside. Harry pulled a wizard cracker with Fred and it didn't just bang, it went off with a blast like a cannon and engulfed them all in a cloud of blue smoke, while from the inside exploded a rear admiral's hat and several live, white mice. Up at the High Table, Dumbledore had swapped his pointed wizard's hat for a flowered bonnet, and was chuckling merrily at a joke Professor Flitwick had just read him.



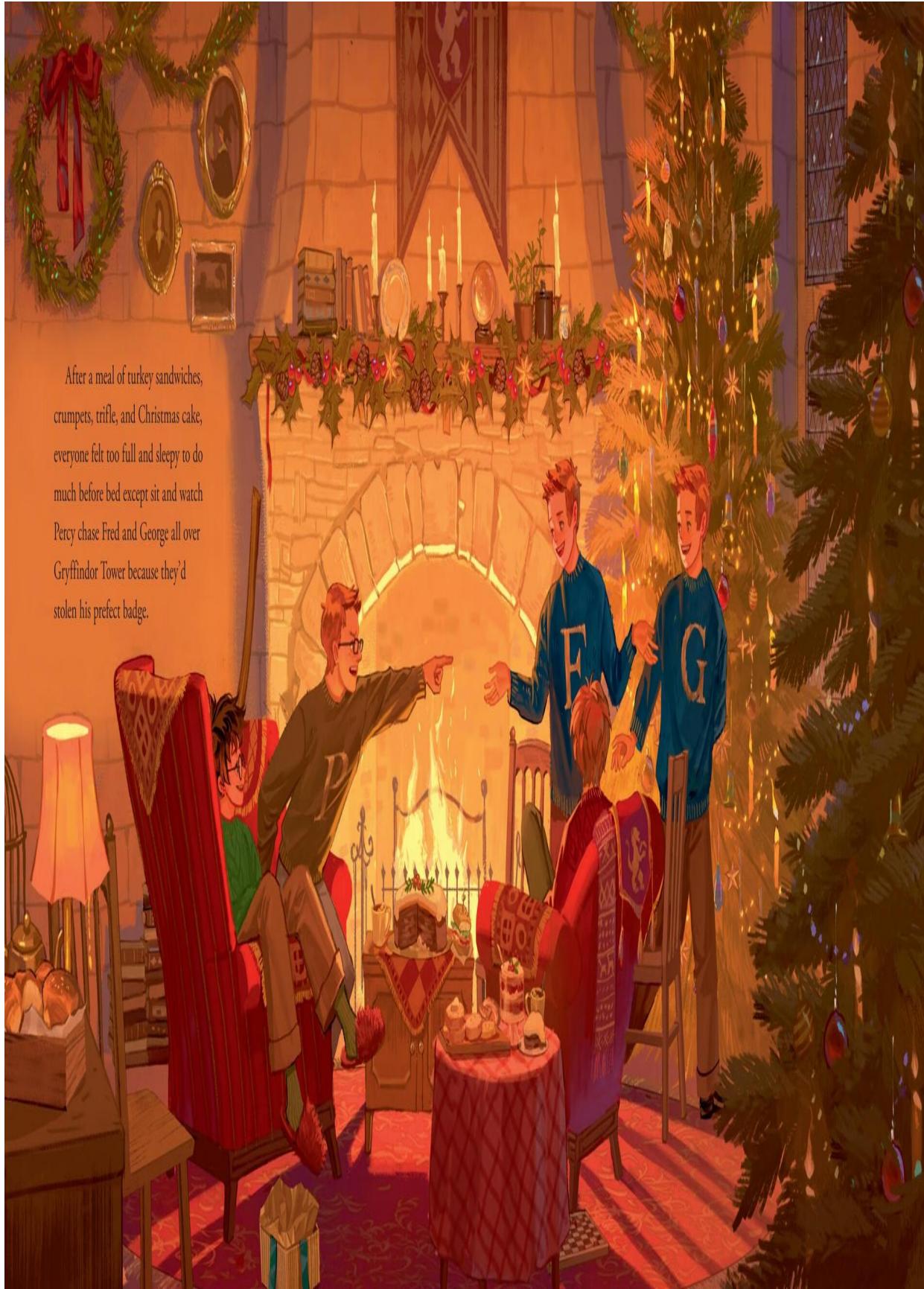


Flaming Christmas puddings followed the turkey. Percy nearly broke his teeth on a silver Sickle embedded in his slice. Harry watched Hagrid getting redder and redder in the face as he called for more wine, finally kissing Professor McGonagall on the cheek, who, to Harry's amazement, giggled and blushed, her top hat lopsided.

When Harry finally left the table, he was laden down with a stack of things out of the crackers, including a pack of non-explodable, luminous balloons, a Grow-Your-Own-Warts kit, and his own new wizard chess set. The white mice had disappeared and Harry had a nasty feeling they were going to end up as Mrs. Norris's Christmas dinner.



Harry and the Weasleys spent a happy afternoon having a furious snowball fight on the grounds. Then, cold, wet, and gasping for breath, they returned to the fire in the Gryffindor common room, where Harry broke in his new chess set by losing spectacularly to Ron. He suspected he wouldn't have lost so badly if Percy hadn't tried to help him so much.



After a meal of turkey sandwiches, crumpets, trifle, and Christmas cake, everyone felt too full and sleepy to do much before bed except sit and watch Percy chase Fred and George all over Gryffindor Tower because they'd stolen his prefect badge.

P

F

G



It had been Harry's best Christmas day ever. Yet something had been nagging at the back of his mind all day. Not until he climbed into bed was he free to think about it: the Invisibility Cloak and whoever had sent it.

Ron, full of turkey and cake and with nothing mysterious to bother him, fell asleep almost as soon as he'd drawn the curtains of his four-poster. Harry leaned over the side of his own bed and pulled the Cloak out from under it.

His father's . . . this had been his father's. He let the material flow over his hands, smoother than silk, light as air. *Use it well*, the note had said.

He had to try it, now. He slipped out of bed and wrapped the Cloak around himself. Looking down at his legs, he saw only moonlight and shadows. It was a very funny feeling.

*Use it well.*





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