***Harry Potter and the Sorcerer’s Stone***

***Chapter 15***

***Summary and analysis***

***Brief Summary:***

Filch immediately takes Harry and Hermione down to Professor McGonagall's study. They assume that they are in very serious trouble for being out of their rooms and in the Astronomy tower after midnight. McGonagall enters her study with Neville in tow; she has found him out of his dorm as well. He was looking for Harry and Hermione to warn them about Draco Malfoy trying to get them expelled.

McGonagall takes 50 points *each* from Gryffindor for their escapades. This puts Gryffindor in last place in the competition for top school house. The rest of their house is very angry with them for this indiscretion. They are also to serve detention with Filch. Malfoy who was also out of his room trying to catch them has to serve detention with them.

When Harry, Hermione, Neville, and Draco show up for detention with Filch, they find out they are to go to the Forbidden Forest with Hagrid. They are left in the care of Hagrid. Filch tells them he'll be back at dawn to retrieve them all. Their detention involves helping Hagrid to find a unicorn that has been injured in the forest and try to help it. They are told they will be safe as long as the stay with him and his dog, Fang.

They split up; Harry, Hermione, and Hagrid go one way while Draco, Neville, and Fang go the other. The first group encounters Ronan, a centaur who is friendly with Hagrid. A second centaur named Bane also appears. The centaurs speak with Hagrid for a bit and then go on about their business. Hagrid fetches the other group, and he teams Malfoy, Harry, and Fang this time while he, Hermione, and Neville search in the other direction.

Harry and Malfoy hear a noise and follow. They see a hooded figure crawl toward a dead unicorn on the ground and being drinking the blood. Malfoy and Fang bolt in fear. The figure heads toward Harry and his scar starts to burn. Suddenly, a centaur jumps over Harry's head, saves Harry and chases the figure into the forest. This centaur's name is Firenze and seems to know Harry; he offers him a ride back to Hagrid.

Harry and the rest go back to the school. Harry realizes that the figure could be none other than Voldemort. Weak and barely alive he is drinking unicorn's blood to stay alive in the forest. Harry goes to bed exhausted and worried. Under his blankets he finds the invisibility cloak with a note that reads "Just in Case."

***Brief Analysis:***

Voldemort is apparently still alive. He is not able to do much and seems very weak. But the pieces of the puzzle are starting to come together. Harry's cloak is returned to him by the mysterious person who seems likely to be Headmaster Dumbledore.

***Summary in Detail(14 and 15):***

During the next few weeks, Harry, Ron, and Hermione make an especial effort to be kind to [Professor Quirrell](https://www.gradesaver.com/harry-potter-and-the-philosophers-stone/study-guide/character-list#professor-quirrell), hoping that their support will encourage him to keep resisting Snape. Hermione also begins to worry about final exams, which are only ten weeks away and must be passed in order to become a second-year student at Hogwarts. While they are involved in an intense study sessions in the library, the three friends are interrupted by [Hagrid](https://www.gradesaver.com/harry-potter-and-the-philosophers-stone/study-guide/character-list#hagrid), who invites them to have tea with him at his cottage.

During their visit, Harry, Ron, and Hermione ply Hagrid with questions about the Sorcerer’s Stone. He refuses to give them any details but does tell them that each of the professors has placed a protective spell over the Stone. Moreover, Hagrid assures them that he would never reveal how to get past [Fluffy](https://www.gradesaver.com/harry-potter-and-the-philosophers-stone/study-guide/character-list#fluffy). Changing the subject, Hagrid shows the students the egg of a Norwegian Ridgeback dragon that he won in a recent poker game. Breeding dragons is highly illegal, but Hagrid is firm in his intentions, revealing that it has been his lifelong dream to raise a dragon.

A few days later, Harry gets a note from Hagrid telling him that the egg is hatching. He, Ron, and Hermione rush to Hagrid’s cottage to see the birth of the dragon, which Hagrid names [Norbert](https://www.gradesaver.com/harry-potter-and-the-philosophers-stone/study-guide/character-list#norbert). Just as the dragon as hatched, they hear a sound outside of Hagrid’s cottage and see Malfoy running back to the castle; he has seen the illegal dragon. With Malfoy serving as an omnipresent threat to Hagrid, Harry, Ron, and Hermione convince Hagrid to send Norbert to Ron’s brother, Charlie, who works with dragons in Romania. If they can bring Norbert to the tallest tower of Hogwarts at midnight on Saturday night, some of Charlie’s friends will be able to smuggle the dragon out of the country.

The situation becomes more complicated when Ron is bitten by the dragon, and the bite becomes severely infected. While he Ron in the hospital wing receiving treatment, Malfoy visits him and finds Charlie’s note that details the escape plan for Norbert. Harry and Hermione realize that they must take care of Norbert before Malfoy can disrupt their plans. After informing a tearful Hagrid that he must say goodbye to his baby dragon, Harry and Hermione manage to smuggle Norbert up to the tallest tower under the invisibility cloak and pass the dragon off to Charlie’s friends. As they leave the tower to return to Gryffindor, they forget to wear the invisibility cloak and are caught by Filch.

Filch takes them to [Professor McGonagall](https://www.gradesaver.com/harry-potter-and-the-philosophers-stone/study-guide/character-list#professor-mcgonagall), who has also caught Malfoy and Neville out of bed at the same time. Professor McGonagall docks Harry, Hermione, and Neville fifty points each and orders them to report to detention with Hagrid in the Forbidden Forest the following week. With the loss of one hundred and fifty points, Gryffindor is no longer in the running to win the House Cup championship over Slytherin, and Harry is suddenly despised by all of the other students in Gryffindor. He briefly considers resigning from the Quidditch team but ultimately decides simply to avoid breaking any other rules.

Unfortunately, Harry’s resolve is tested when he overhears Professor Quirrell sobbing and promising to do something. He assumes that Professor Quirrell has finally given in to Snape, though he does not see the Potions professor. He decides that he must try to steal the Sorcerer’s Stone before Snape can, and he enlists Ron and Hermione to figure out a way to get past Fluffy.

For their detention with Hagrid, Harry, Hermione, Neville, and Malfoy divide into groups and search the Forbidden Forest for unicorn that has been wounded. Harry and Malfoy come across the dead body of the unicorn just as a mysterious cloaked figure begins to drink its blood. Malfoy runs away in terror, but Harry remains immobile, incapacitated by the sudden pain that he feels in his scar. The figure moves threateningly toward him, but a centaur suddenly gallops in front of Harry in a protective stance, and the figure vanishes. The centaur, [Firenze](https://www.gradesaver.com/harry-potter-and-the-philosophers-stone/study-guide/character-list#firenze), takes Harry back to Hagrid and explains that the cloaked figure was [Voldemort](https://www.gradesaver.com/harry-potter-and-the-philosophers-stone/study-guide/character-list#voldemort). By drinking the blood of the unicorn, Voldemort can survive with a cursed life until he can steal the Sorcerer’s Stone and use its elixir of life.

Analysis:

***Analysis in Detail(Chapter 14 and 15):***

Rowling continues to discuss the theme of desire and its dangers in these next two chapters. Up until this point in the narrative, Hagrid’s character has been relatively two-dimensional. With the exception of his trip to Diagon Alley with Harry, in which Rowling includes a few subtle hints about Hagrid’s background, the reader does not have any other insight into Hagrid’s true nature. In fact, throughout most of the character, his only role seems to be that of the likable, comedic relief. Yet, Hagrid is just as complex as the other characters in the book, a fact that Rowling reveals through the introduction of Hagrid’s deepest desire: to own and raise a dragon on his own.

With the Mirror of Erised, Harry learned about the dangers of desire from a personal standpoint. If an individual becomes too preoccupied with desire, he or she can easily lose sight of reality and stop moving forward in life. With Hagrid, however, Rowling introduces a new kind of danger, one that has the potential to harm more than one person. When Hagrid tells Harry, Ron, and Hermione about his dragon egg, they do not immediately recognize the larger threat. As Rowling reveals later in the text, Hagrid’s wish for a dragon is not fulfilled by random chance, but rather as a part of Voldemort’s plot to steal the Sorcerer’s Stone. By tapping into Hagrid’s unfulfilled desire, Voldemort is able to manipulate him into giving him the information that he needs to get past the three-headed dog guarding the Sorcerer’s Stone.

Because of his conversations with Dumbledore about desire, Harry is suspicious about this sudden wish-fulfillment. Unfortunately, he and Hermione are preoccupied with protecting Hagrid in the short-term future: ensuring that he does not face legal consequences for possessing a contraband dragon. By the time Harry realizes that Hagrid has inadvertently given Voldemort the key to circumventing Fluffy, it is already too late. This one fulfilled desire serves as the catalyst to the events that unfold during the rest of the book. Without Hagrid’s slip, the Sorcerer’s Stone would not have been in danger, Harry would not have felt the need to protect it, and he would not face Voldemort in the final chapter of the book.

This event also helps Harry to develop his growing awareness of the complexity of good and evil. Hagrid would certainly never be described as an “evil” character in the novel, yet his actions ultimately help the cause of evil, or at least, threaten to help it. As Rowling has expressed at other points in the novel, every character has flaws – aspects of both good and evil – and, as Harry discovers, an individual’s deepest desire can easily be manipulated to support either cause.

In Chapter 15, Harry comes face-to-face with the source of this dark evil (i.e. Voldemort) in the Forbidden Forest. There is no question of the evil of the mysterious hooded figure since only the most depraved dark wizard would be willing to murder a pure unicorn for the sake of its blood. The sudden pain that Harry feels in his scar reminds the reader that his scar is more than decorative; it actually serves as a beacon of evil. Thus, when Harry feels slight pain in his scar during his interactions with Snape, it is a sign that Snape has some evil aspects to his nature. In this case, the unbearable pain that Harry feels in his scar points to the complete evil that the hooded figure encompasses.

Critical Study:

Filch takes Harry, Hermione, and Ron to Professor McGonagall’s office to be punished. She accuses them of concocting the whole dragon story to lure Malfoy out of bed and get him into trouble. As punishment, McGonagall deducts fifty points from Gryffindor for each of the three wrongdoers. Harry is horrified that his house will lose 150 points. When the bad news is circulated the next morning, Harry quickly falls from his pedestal as Quidditch star. He considers resigning from the Quidditch team, but Wood convinces him that doing so would be useless.

Harry resolves not to get involved in any more suspicious activities, but a week later he overhears a conversation in which Quirrell appears to give in to someone, presumably Snape, as if Snape is pressing him to do something. Harry and his friends try to figure out what to do, but they cannot come up with a plan of action. Harry, Hermione, and Neville are told to report to Hagrid that night for their detention. When they show up, they are surprised to find that detention will be held in the surrounding Forbidden Forest. Malfoy, who has also been given detention, objects to being forced outside like a servant.

Hagrid points to some traces of unicorn blood on the ground and explains that they will be going into the forest to find out what has been harming the animals. They split up into two groups: Harry and Hermione with Hagrid, Neville and Malfoy with Hagrid’s dog, Fang. They penetrate deep into the forest. Harry sees signs that the other group is in trouble, but Hagrid discovers that Malfoy has merely been playing tricks on Neville. Hagrid sends Harry off with Malfoy, taking Neville along with himself. Harry and Malfoy come across a mysterious cloaked figure drinking the blood of a recently killed unicorn. Malfoy and Fang run away, leaving Harry alone. A centaur named Firenze rescues Harry and carries him back to Hagrid. On his way back, Harry learns that the cloaked figure was Voldemort and that he was drinking unicorn blood to sustain himself until he could obtain the Sorcerer’s Stone.

Death makes a sudden and violent appearance in these chapters. The spectacle of the dying unicorn that Harry glimpses in the forest is shocking not only because it is the first instance of death that we actually witness, but also because the unicorn is a symbol of innocence and purity. The murder of a unicorn, a harmless and delicate creature, displays death not as a natural process in the cycle of life, but as something wrongful and horrid. The death appears to be even more evil when we find out that the unicorn has died so that an evil being may live and that the wicked Voldemort drinks the unicorn’s blood to sustain his own life while searching for immortality. Voldemort has flown in to steal something that does not belong to him, as his name reminds us: Vol de mort means either “flight of death” or “theft of death” in French. Both names suit the unjust death he brings.

The spectacle of Voldemort’s exchange of death for life in the forest is important for Harry personally because he is the only one who witnesses it. We are reminded of another, much earlier moment of life and death in Harry’s experience, also spent in the presence of Voldemort: the moment when Harry’s life was saved in infancy while Voldemort killed Harry’s parents. In medieval Europe, the unicorn was often a symbol of pure and selfless womanhood. Like Harry’s mother, the unicorn dies protecting her baby son, perhaps even giving up her life so that her baby can live. Harry’s investigation of the Hogwarts mystery is bringing him closer to his parents, unwittingly bringing their killer, Voldemort, to some sort of justice.

***Summary and Analysis Part by Part***

***Summary Part 1:***

[Filch](https://www.litcharts.com/lit/harry-potter-and-the-sorcerer-s-stone/characters) takes [Harry](https://www.litcharts.com/lit/harry-potter-and-the-sorcerer-s-stone/characters/harry-potter) and [Hermione](https://www.litcharts.com/lit/harry-potter-and-the-sorcerer-s-stone/characters/hermione-granger) to [Professor McGonagall](https://www.litcharts.com/lit/harry-potter-and-the-sorcerer-s-stone/characters/professor-mcgonagall)’s study. When they reach her, [Neville](https://www.litcharts.com/lit/harry-potter-and-the-sorcerer-s-stone/characters/neville-longbottom) is also there—he had been trying to warn Harry that [Malfoy](https://www.litcharts.com/lit/harry-potter-and-the-sorcerer-s-stone/characters/draco-malfoy) was going to catch him. McGonagall deduces that they fed Malfoy the story to try to get him out of bed and into trouble. She gives the three of them detention and takes fifty points from Gryffindor for each of them, putting Gryffindor in last place for the House Cup. The next day, the other Gryffindors are furious with Harry. Harry is almost glad the exams aren’t far away; he buries himself in his studies and vows not to meddle anymore.

***Analysis Part 1:***

This is one of the rare times that Harry gets in trouble for breaking the rules, and he takes it as a sign not to get involved with things that can get him into trouble. Yet he was, in fact, breaking the rules for a good reason, and when he returns to breaking the rules at the end of the story, it is because he acknowledges once more that sometimes it is important to meddle in things in order to do what is right.

***Summary Part 2:***

About a week before exams, [Harry](https://www.litcharts.com/lit/harry-potter-and-the-sorcerer-s-stone/characters/harry-potter) hears [Quirrell](https://www.litcharts.com/lit/harry-potter-and-the-sorcerer-s-stone/characters/professor-quirrell) whimpering in a classroom as he walks down the hall. He thinks that someone is threatening Quirrell, and hears him sob, “No—not again, please—”. Quirrell emerges from the room quickly, but when Harry peers into the classroom, it is empty, but a door is ajar at the other end. Harry reminds himself not to meddle.

***Analysis Part 2:***

Harry is adamant that Snape is evilly torturing the feeble, nervous Professor Quirrell so that Snape can get the Stone for himself.

***Summary Part 3:***

[Harry](https://www.litcharts.com/lit/harry-potter-and-the-sorcerer-s-stone/characters/harry-potter) tells [Hermione](https://www.litcharts.com/lit/harry-potter-and-the-sorcerer-s-stone/characters/hermione-granger) and [Ron](https://www.litcharts.com/lit/harry-potter-and-the-sorcerer-s-stone/characters/ron-weasley) what he heard, wondering if [Snape](https://www.litcharts.com/lit/harry-potter-and-the-sorcerer-s-stone/characters/professor-snape) convinced [Quirrell](https://www.litcharts.com/lit/harry-potter-and-the-sorcerer-s-stone/characters/professor-quirrell) to tell him how to get past his enchantment. Hermione says that they should go to [Dumbledore](https://www.litcharts.com/lit/harry-potter-and-the-sorcerer-s-stone/characters/albus-dumbledore), but Harry argues that they have no proof, and that Dumbledore will think that they made it all up to get Snape fired. Also, they’re not supposed to know about [the Stone](https://www.litcharts.com/lit/harry-potter-and-the-sorcerer-s-stone/symbols/the-sorcerer-s-stone) in the first place. Harry resolves not to do anything.

***Analysis Part 3:***

Harry’s argument is a decent one, but it is also worth noting that Dumbledore seems to continue to encourage Harry to break the rules when he feels it is necessary, rather than come to Dumbledore to deal with the problems they are facing.

***Summary Part 4:***

The following evening, [Filch](https://www.litcharts.com/lit/harry-potter-and-the-sorcerer-s-stone/characters) takes [Harry](https://www.litcharts.com/lit/harry-potter-and-the-sorcerer-s-stone/characters/harry-potter), [Hermione](https://www.litcharts.com/lit/harry-potter-and-the-sorcerer-s-stone/characters/hermione-granger), [Neville](https://www.litcharts.com/lit/harry-potter-and-the-sorcerer-s-stone/characters/neville-longbottom), and [Malfoy](https://www.litcharts.com/lit/harry-potter-and-the-sorcerer-s-stone/characters/draco-malfoy) to [Hagrid](https://www.litcharts.com/lit/harry-potter-and-the-sorcerer-s-stone/characters/rubeus-hagrid)’s hut, announcing that they will be serving detention in the Forbidden Forest Both Malfoy and Neville grow visibly nervous, but Harry is just glad to see Hagrid. As the students and Hagrid (and Hagrid’s bloodhound, Fang) walk through the Forest, Hagrid points to a silvery liquid on the ground, which he explains is unicorn blood. They’re going to split into two parties to try and find the animal. Harry, Hermione, and Hagrid take one path, while Malfoy, Neville, and Fang take another.

***Analysis Part 4:***

Harry’s relief in knowing that Hagrid is the one leading them into the forest (in contrast to someone like Filch) once again emphasizes how the bonds of friendship feel like a form of protection to Harry.Additionally, the unicorn blood, which Harry will come to learn has lifesaving properties, becomes a representation of how greedy people prioritize themselves over anyone and anything else, even the most innocent of creatures.

***Summary Part 5:***

[Harry](https://www.litcharts.com/lit/harry-potter-and-the-sorcerer-s-stone/characters/harry-potter), [Hagrid](https://www.litcharts.com/lit/harry-potter-and-the-sorcerer-s-stone/characters/rubeus-hagrid), and [Hermione](https://www.litcharts.com/lit/harry-potter-and-the-sorcerer-s-stone/characters/hermione-granger) follow a trail of blood until they hear something along the path. Hagrid arms his bow in alarm, but a centaur named Ronan emerges into the clearing. Hagrid greets Ronan, who remarks that Mars is bright. Hagrid asks if he’s seen something bad in the forest, as there’s a hurt unicorn somewhere. Ronan remarks vaguely that “the innocent are [always] the first victims.” Another, centaur, Bane, joins them, and answers Hagrid’s questions just as vaguely. Hagrid walks off with Harry and Hermione in a huff. He explains that centaurs have “deep minds,” but don’t reveal much about what they know to humans.

***Analysis Part5:***

Ronan’s statement contains a great deal of foreshadowing. The reference to Mars is a reference to Greek mythology, as Mars is the god of war, and war is imminent in the wizarding world because of Voldemort’s return. Additionally, his statement about the innocence foreshadows not only the death of the unicorn, but also relates to Harry and his tendency to be self-sacrificial.

***Summary Part 7:***

[Hagrid](https://www.litcharts.com/lit/harry-potter-and-the-sorcerer-s-stone/characters/rubeus-hagrid), [Harry](https://www.litcharts.com/lit/harry-potter-and-the-sorcerer-s-stone/characters/harry-potter), and [Hermione](https://www.litcharts.com/lit/harry-potter-and-the-sorcerer-s-stone/characters/hermione-granger) see red sparks—a signal that [Neville](https://www.litcharts.com/lit/harry-potter-and-the-sorcerer-s-stone/characters/neville-longbottom) and [Malfoy](https://www.litcharts.com/lit/harry-potter-and-the-sorcerer-s-stone/characters/draco-malfoy) are in trouble. Hagrid leaves Harry and Hermione on the path while he goes for the others. They grow more and more nervous until Hagrid returns with the other boys. Malfoy had pranked Neville, causing him to panic and send up sparks. Hagrid switches the groups, pairing Harry and Malfoy and taking Neville and Hermione with him.

***Analysis Part 7:***

In contrast with Harry’s comfort and protection with Hagrid, Malfoy continues to antagonize the other students. This lack of friendship and outright cruelty makes Neville feel extremely vulnerable.

***Summary Part 8:***

[Harry](https://www.litcharts.com/lit/harry-potter-and-the-sorcerer-s-stone/characters/harry-potter) and [Malfoy](https://www.litcharts.com/lit/harry-potter-and-the-sorcerer-s-stone/characters/draco-malfoy) walk together with Fang for nearly half an hour, and Harry notes that the blood on the ground is getting thicker. They then see the unicorn, dead on the ground. As Harry approaches it, a hooded figure (later revealed as [Voldemort](https://www.litcharts.com/lit/harry-potter-and-the-sorcerer-s-stone/characters/voldemort-you-know-who)) crawls across the ground and begins to drink the unicorn’s blood. Malfoy and Fang bolt away, but Harry is paralyzed in fear. The figure starts to come toward Harry, and Harry feels an exceptional pain in his scar. Harry staggers back, and just before the figure reaches him, another centaur charges toward it, sending the figure running. The centaur, [Firenze](https://www.litcharts.com/lit/harry-potter-and-the-sorcerer-s-stone/characters), offers to take Harry to [Hagrid](https://www.litcharts.com/lit/harry-potter-and-the-sorcerer-s-stone/characters/rubeus-hagrid) on his back.

***Analysis Part 8:***

This is the first time that Harry (and the reader) encounters Voldemort. Even though Voldemort has not fully returned to power, the image of this hooded figure drinking the blood of a unicorn demonstrates the greediness of the series’ central villain. Thus, just as Harry’s association with humility makes him a quintessentially “good” character, Voldemort’s association with greed and power makes him a quintessentially evil one.

***Summary Part 9:***

[Firenze](https://www.litcharts.com/lit/harry-potter-and-the-sorcerer-s-stone/characters) and [Harry](https://www.litcharts.com/lit/harry-potter-and-the-sorcerer-s-stone/characters/harry-potter) gallop back, but are interrupted by [Bane](https://www.litcharts.com/lit/harry-potter-and-the-sorcerer-s-stone/characters) and [Ronan](https://www.litcharts.com/lit/harry-potter-and-the-sorcerer-s-stone/characters), who criticize Firenze for behaving like a “common mule” with Harry on his back. Firenze says that this is not just anyone—it’s “the Potter boy.” Ronan and Bane warn him not to tell Harry what they have read in the “movements of the planets.” Firenze angrily tells them that he opposes the thing that is lurking in the forest, and will take the side of humans if he needs.

***Analysis Part 9:***

The centaurs are referencing a prophesy that will become central to the series in the later books and play on themes of fate and choice. But Firenze’s assertion that he opposes Voldemort makes an important point about power: that if people do not resist someone gaining power for the wrong reasons, it only enables that power.

***Summary Part 10:***

[Firenze](https://www.litcharts.com/lit/harry-potter-and-the-sorcerer-s-stone/characters) runs off with [Harry](https://www.litcharts.com/lit/harry-potter-and-the-sorcerer-s-stone/characters/harry-potter), ignoring Harry’s questions about what is lurking in the forest and why the others are angry. Firenze instead tells Harry that unicorn blood can keep someone on the brink of death alive, “but at a terrible price,” because they “have slain something pure and defenseless.” A person who drinks unicorn blood will live a “cursed life, from the moment the blood touches [their] lips.” When Harry asks who would do that, Firenze asks who has long awaited their chance to return to power—and who might want to keep themselves alive in order to drink from the Elixir of Life. Harry realizes that Firenze means [Voldemort](https://www.litcharts.com/lit/harry-potter-and-the-sorcerer-s-stone/characters/voldemort-you-know-who).

***Analysis Part 10:***

Here Rowling cements her association with greed, power, and evil. A person who is greedy and wants to become so powerful as to evade death can only by necessity be evil, because to do so requires them to kill something “pure and defenseless.” Harry also realizes how powerful that makes the Elixir of Life as well, and how it can be corrupted into an evil substance because it can enable Voldemort’s return.

***Summary 11:***

At that moment, [Hagrid](https://www.litcharts.com/lit/harry-potter-and-the-sorcerer-s-stone/characters/rubeus-hagrid) and [Hermione](https://www.litcharts.com/lit/harry-potter-and-the-sorcerer-s-stone/characters/hermione-granger) run towards [Harry](https://www.litcharts.com/lit/harry-potter-and-the-sorcerer-s-stone/characters/harry-potter) and [Firenze](https://www.litcharts.com/lit/harry-potter-and-the-sorcerer-s-stone/characters) on the path, happy to that he’s okay. Back in the Gryffindor common room, Harry  tells both [Ron](https://www.litcharts.com/lit/harry-potter-and-the-sorcerer-s-stone/characters/ron-weasley) and Hermione what he saw, concluding that [Snape](https://www.litcharts.com/lit/harry-potter-and-the-sorcerer-s-stone/characters/professor-snape) is trying to steal [the Stone](https://www.litcharts.com/lit/harry-potter-and-the-sorcerer-s-stone/symbols/the-sorcerer-s-stone) for [Voldemort](https://www.litcharts.com/lit/harry-potter-and-the-sorcerer-s-stone/characters/voldemort-you-know-who) so that Voldemort can then kill Harry. Hermione tries to comfort him, saying that Voldemort wouldn’t try to kill Harry with [Dumbledore](https://www.litcharts.com/lit/harry-potter-and-the-sorcerer-s-stone/characters/albus-dumbledore) around. Harry goes to bed exhausted, but when he pulls back his sheets, he finds the Invisibility Cloak waiting for him. The note pinned to it says, “Just in case.”

***Analysis 11:***

Harry, again fueled by his desire to prove that Snape is acting out of evil, tries to reason that he wants the Stone for Voldemort, prompted by the sneaking around that he has seen Snape do, but also because of Harry’s initial impression of Snape’s willingness to abuse his power. Additionally, the Cloak makes its return, seemingly sent from the same person who gifted it to Harry the first time (later revealed as Dumbledore). The note, which reads, “Just in case,” reminds Harry that sometimes it is necessary to break the rules.

***Quotations:***

***Quotation 1:***

A hundred and fifty points lost. That put Gryffindor in last place. In one night, they'd ruined any chance Gryffindor had had for the house cup. Harry felt as though the bottom had dropped out of his stomach. How could they ever make up for this? (15.16)

***Explanation:***

Although Hogwarts serves as a big home for all the students during the academic year, students also feel a responsibility to their individual "houses." Each of the four Hogwarts houses is a kind of home containing a kind of family (true for at least the academic year). Here, Harry was trying to do something good, but instead has let down both his school home and school family terribly.

***Quotation 2:***

Only Ron stood by him.  
  
"They'll all forget this in a few weeks. Fred and George have lost loads of points in all the time they've been here, and people still like them." (15.20-21)

***Explanation:***

Here, Ron shows temporary and long-term loyalty to Harry, supporting him in a tough moment by acting like his friend – at a time when no one else wants to be – and encouraging him that, down the road, people will forget about these lost points. He argues that if Fred and George can keep their friends after losing points time and time again, that Harry should be able to also.

***Quotation 3:***

Harry caught Neville's eye and tried to tell him without words that this wasn't true, because Neville was looking stunned and hurt. Poor, blundering Neville – Harry knew what it must have cost him to try and find them in the dark, to warn them. (15.9)

***Explanation:***

Harry's right to feel sorry for Neville here; Neville's sacrificed himself on Harry and Hermione's account, and Harry can't even tell Neville the truth about what went down. So often when Neville tries to be brave, he gets in trouble himself: here, he gets detention.

***Quotation 4:***

"That is because it is a monstrous thing, to slay a unicorn," said Firenze. "Only one who has nothing to lose, and everything to gain, would commit such a crime. The blood of a unicorn will keep you alive, even if you are an inch from death, but at a terrible price. You have slain something pure and defenseless to save yourself, and you will have but a half-life, a cursed life, from the moment the blood touches your lips." (15.155)

***Explanation:***

Just in case we were unclear about the question of why killing unicorns is bad, Firenze reminds us with a flurry of strong adjectives: "monstrous," "terrible," and "cursed." Of all the crimes out there, this is one of the worst, only "commit[ted]" by those with "nothing to lose." Committing this crime carries with it its own instantaneous, permanent punishment of a "half-life."