***Harry Potter and the Chambers of Secret***

***Chapter 13***

***Summary and analysis***

***Summary:***

**The Very Secret Diary**

* Hermione stays in the hospital wing for several weeks recovering from her cat transformation.
* Ron and Harry visit her regularly.
* One evening, Harry and Ron are walking back from the Hospital Wing when they hear Filch complaining.
* He's furious because someone has flooded the corridor near where Mrs. Norris was attacked.
* The water looks like it's coming from Moaning Myrtle's bathroom.
* Harry and Ron go to investigate.
* Moaning Myrtle is crying even louder than usual.
* She's upset because someone through a book into her toilet: "I was just sitting in the U-bend, thinking about death, and it fell right through the top of my head" (13.29).
* Harry and Ron find the book on the floor. It's a fifty-year old diary with the name of the owner – T.M. Riddle – written on the first page.
* Otherwise, the book is blank.
* Ron recognizes the name of the owner: "T.M. Riddle got an award for special services to the school fifty years ago" (13.39).
* Harry also realizes that Riddle must have been Muggle-born: the diary comes from a store on Vauxhall Road, in London.
* When Hermione finally gets out of the Hospital Wing, she examines the book for hidden enchantments.
* She can't find anything, though. It really does look like the diary is empty.
* Harry keeps hanging onto the diary, nevertheless.
* Harry also finds out that Riddle received "an old Medal for Magical Merit" (13.71), and that he had been Head Boy of Hogwarts in his time.
* The Mandrakes are quickly approaching maturity, so Professor Sprout is confident they'll be able to cure the Petrified students, ghost, and cat soon.
* There's been no sign of activity from the Heir of Slytherin.
* Things seem to be calming down a bit.
* To improve the school's morale, Professor Lockhart makes this boneheaded plan to celebrate Valentine's Day.
* In addition to dressing in pink robes and filling the Great Hall with Valentine decorations, he also brings in "a dozen surly looking dwarfs […] wearing golden wings and carrying harps" (13.87) to deliver Valentines to people.
* As Harry is going to Charms class, a "particularly grim-looking dwarf" corners Harry.
* Harry tries to get away, but his bag tears and he has to stop to gather his things.
* The dwarf forces him to accept a singing Valentine in front of a hallway full of students.
* The Valentine is so hilarious that all the students present start laughing hysterically.
* Draco notices Tom Riddle's diary lying on the floor with Harry's stuff and picks it up.
* Ginny "[stares] from the diary to Harry, looking terrified" (13.108).
* Harry spells the diary to fly out of Draco's hands.
* Draco mocks Ginny for sending Harry such an awful Valentine.
* She runs off, embarrassed.
* Harry notices that Riddle's diary, which got soaked in ink, remains blank and pristine.
* Later that night, Harry tries writing in Riddle's diary to see what will happen.
* When he writes, "My name is Harry Potter" (13.118), the diary replies, "Hello, Harry Potter. My name is Tom Riddle. How did you come by my diary?" (13.121).
* Harry and Riddle speak back and forth about Hogwarts and the Chamber of Secrets.
* Riddle offers to show Harry his memories of that time fifty years ago, when the Chamber was last opened and a girl died.
* Harry experiences Riddle's memories as though he is standing in the room.
* He sees young Tom Riddle asking Headmaster Dippet if he can stay at Hogwarts over the summer rather than returning to his "Muggle orphanage" (13.157).
* Headmaster Dippet refuses, "Particularly in light of the recent tragedy…the death of that poor little girl" (13.166).
* Riddle wants to know, if he can find the person who killed the girl, if Headmaster Dippet would change his mind.
* Riddle walks through the halls of Hogwarts, thinking hard.
* A tall wizard "with long, sweeping auburn hair and a beard" (13.176) stops Riddle in the hallway.
* It's young-ish Professor Dumbledore.
* He tells Riddle to hurry off to bed.
* Riddle doesn't, though; instead, he goes down into the dungeons, sits down, and waits.
* At last, they hear someone coming.
* The person is whispering, "C'mon…gotta get yeh outta here…C'mon now…in the box" (13.186).
* It's Hagrid as a schoolboy.
* Riddle tells Hagrid that he can't cover for Hagrid anymore: "I don't think you meant to kill anyone. But monsters don't make good pets […] The least Hogwarts can do is make sure that the thing that killed their daughter is slaughtered" (13.194-7).
* A giant spider comes rushing out of the door of the castle.
* Riddle raises his wand, but Hagrid tackles him to protect the spider.
* Harry wakes up from Riddle's diary.
* He tells Ron, "It was Hagrid […] Hagrid opened the Chamber of Secrets fifty years ago" (13. 207).

***Brief Summary:***

The discovery a diary leads to new information and clues about the Chamber of Secrets. Ron and Harry find the diary in Moaning Myrtle's toilets when they are returning from visiting Hermione in the hospital wing. The corridor is flooded, so the boys go into the toilets to investigate. Myrtle informs them that someone threw a book at her and it is this book that's blocking the toilet, causing the flooding. The boys retrieve the book and find it is a diary. Disappointingly, it is blank; the only information in the diary is the name of its owner, T. M. Riddle. This name seems vaguely familiar to Harry but he is unable to explain why. Hermione tries to uncover the diary's secrets with various spells when she is released from the hospital, but she, too, is unable to unlock its secrets. Harry and Hermione are convinced that it is linked to the Chamber of Secrets, dating back fifty years to the time the chamber was originally opened. Ron is less optimistic and cannot see any connection between the diary and the chamber. Despite its apparent lack of value, Harry keeps it with him.

As time passes, the effects of the attacks begin to wear off, with the school returning to normal. Lockhart decides to lift spirits by introducing special activities for Valentine's Day: he suggests consulting Snape for a love potion or Professor Flitwick for an entrancing charm. He has also invited a host of dwarfs into school to dress up as cupids and deliver Valentine's messages. His ideas aren't popular with other staff or with Harry, who is embarrassed to be pursued by a dwarf determined to deliver a musical message to Harry. When there is a scuffle as the dwarf forces Harry to listen to his message, Harry's bag is ripped and his belongings are scattered in the corridor, breaking a bottle of ink and bringing the diary to Draco's attention. Draco teases Harry about the diary, believing it to be Harry's, and threatens to read it aloud. Harry is furious and casts a spell on Malfoy that returns the diary to him. He is surprised to notice that the ink has not stained the diary as it has his other books.

Later that night, Harry investigates the diary further. To his amazement, the diary isn't affected by spilling ink on it, merely soaking up the liquid. He writes in the diary as an experiment and is surprised when the diary writes back. Harry and Hermione's theory about the diary was correct: it is linked to the Chamber of Secrets. Tom Riddle used the diary to record the events surrounding the chamber, fifty years ago. Through the diary, Riddle shows Harry what happened. He learns that the true events were covered up and Riddle was made to keep quiet about what happened. Harry is lead to believe that a young Hagrid opened the chamber and was responsible for the ensuing events, which involved a creature in a box, similar to a large, hairy spider with lots of legs and pincers. The young Hagrid denies that his pet; the creature, had anything to do with the attacks but isn't believed by Riddle. Harry is shocked that it was Hagrid, and tells Ron about his discovery.

***Brief Analysis:***

The character of Tom Riddle is introduced with interesting consequences. Harry is familiar with the name Tom Riddle but can't work out the connection. Clear comparisons can be drawn between Tom and Harry: they are both orphans, both raised in the Muggle world and both are involved with the Chamber of Secrets. Harry finding Tom's diary also links the two characters. The finding of the diary by Harry can be viewed in different ways: is it fate or pure coincidence that Harry finds the diary? Or is it something more direct than this? The diary might have been planted with the intention of Harry discovering it, in order to solve the puzzle about the Chamber of Secrets. Hagrid is blamed in this chapter for the events of fifty years ago, calling into question Harry's faith. Whether he believes the views of a character he has only met through the pages of an enchanted diary or whether he believes in his friend is a true test of Harry's faith and loyalty.

***Critical Analysis:***

On the way back from visiting Hermione, who is in the hospital wing recovering from her cat-state, Harry and Ron hear Filch yelling at someone, and they round the corner to see a flood of water seeping out of Moaning Myrtle's bathroom. The boys step inside to look around, and they immediately spy a diary bobbing in the toilet. They examine it and see the name T.M. Riddle written on the first page, but the rest of the pages are blank. Ron recalls the name from his trophy-polishing detention as the boy who was rewarded for special services to the school fifty years ago. Harry feels a strange familiarity to the name, and so he pockets the diary. They show it to Hermione when she is fully cured, and she concludes that Riddle, who was commended fifty years before, must have caught the Heir of Slytherin, who had opened the Chamber of Secrets fifty years before. She tries to make words appear on the pages, but with no success.

At the beginning of February, the school is calmer; nobody else has been attacked, and the Mandrakes are becoming moody and secretive-in other words, entering adolescence-and soon will be ready to be made into an elixir. Lockhart believed that he had intimidated the monster into hiding, and by Valentine's Day he was in such a cheerful mood that he decorated the great hall in pink and organized a troupe of dwarves to deliver valentines. The dwarves were not quite so cheerful, however, and an embarrassing encounter occurs when a dwarf had to kick through the masses, knock Harry's bag out of his hands, and ultimately sit on Harry's ankles in order to deliver him a singing valentine, sent (we are fairly certain) by a nearby blushing Ginny Weasley. Once Harry has gathered his things and left the laughing crowds, he notices that all of his belongings are covered in his spilt red ink, all except Riddle's diary. This puzzles Harry, and he retires to bed early that evening and pages through the diary. He writes his name on a page and watches it disappear, and suddenly the ink rises up again, forming the words, "Hello, Harry Potter. My name is Tom Riddle. How did you come by my diary?" This begins a dialogue between the two boys with oddly similar appearances and pasts, separated by fifty years and connected through this secret diary. Riddle writes that he was in fact awarded his medal for catching the person who had opened the Chamber, and he invites Harry to visit his memory.

Harry agrees, and within seconds he is blown into the pages of the diary to the headmaster's room. Here he witnesses a conversation between Riddle and the then- headmaster in which Riddle's request to remain at Hogwarts for the summer holidays is turned down because of the recent dangers of the open Chamber of Secrets. Harry then follows Riddle through the corridors, once running into a younger, auburn-haired Dumbledore who warns Riddle to head back to his dormitory. Riddle and Harry wait in the dungeons for a long time, and finally they hear and follow nearby footsteps. The footsteps belong to a younger Hagrid, who is trying to conceal something inside a box. Riddle explains that he must turn Hagrid in for possessing the guilty monster, and Hagrid argues vehemently that the animal inside the box is innocent. Riddle pulls out his wand, casting open the box and releasing a giant, hairy spider that scuttles over him and out through the corridor. Harry is whirled back into real time, back into his dormitory, and he begins to tell Ron what he saw.

When Harry decides not to leave the diary bobbing in the toilet, we see a flash of intuition telling him that the name T.M. Riddle is significant. Voldemort left Harry with marks other than the scar on his forehead; we learn later in this book that he left him with the ability to speak Parseltongue, and in the first book of the series, we learn that the wand that chose Harry contained the brother phoenix feather to the wand that chose Voldemort. Harry is connected to his nemesis in more ways that he knows or understands, and this explains his curiosity about Riddle before he knows that Riddle is the boy who one day would become Voldemort. Good and evil are never wholly unconnected, but rather will always return to interact with each other. These moral extremes even at times share origins, as Riddle and Harry do, with their orphaned, Muggle-raised childhoods, their gift for Parselmouth, their skinny, dark-haired appearances.

The early glimpse of Riddle is telling. He is a school hero who has won his glory by framing another student, Hagrid, for the murder that he himself caused. One could go so far as to note a Satanic element in this "fall" of Riddle into Voldemort, from Hogwarts hero to the demonic figure who caused such a reign of terror among the wizard community. At the same time, a Jesus-like element resides in the younger Dumbledore, who sweeps through the halls with his auburn hair, understanding more than he lets on, yet preserving a forgiving, reticent wisdom that has not faded after fifty years. Furthermore, it is noted several times that Voldemort is threatened only by Dumbledore, because he knows that Dumbledore would never join his side.

The incident with the Valentine's Day dwarf does then amount to something beside Harry's humiliation, in that it demonstrates the ink-absorbing property of the very secret diary, inspiring Harry to experiment writing in it. We are also reminded in this incident of Ginny's long-standing crush on Harry, something that appears in certain occasions but as of yet has not taken its place in the plot.

The description of the Mandrakes touches upon another important point in the Harry Potter series. In the wizard world, everything is given the gift of life; ghosts return and "live" within the Hogwarts walls, pet owls and mice have distinct opinions and personalities of their own, dwarves, wizards, elves, cars, and plants all possess human characteristics. The Mandrakes are a particularly humorous touch, as their maturation process follows exactly the stereotypical one followed by human adolescence: first crying like babies, then becoming secretive and being ailed with acne, and eventually (when they come closer to adulthood) throwing parties and trying to move into each other's pots. The realm of magic is vibrant and curious because everything inside it has its own right to life in all its stages and eccentricities, as shown here by the Mandrakes.***Critical Study:***

Hermione remains in the hospital for several weeks. When the rest of the school returns from the Christmas holidays, everyone thinks that she has been attacked. Madame Pomfrey places curtains around Hermione’s bed to spare her the shame of being seen with a furry face. Harry and Ron visit her every evening, bringing her homework assignments. Her spirits improve when the hair leaves her face and her eyes return to brown. Ron is disgusted to find that Hermione sleeps with Gilderoy Lockhart’s get-well card under her pillow.

Harry and Ron overhear Filch shouting, and then discover why: The corridor in front of [Moaning Myrtle](https://www.gradesaver.com/harry-potter-and-the-chamber-of-secrets/study-guide/character-list#moaning-myrtle)’s bathroom is flooded. Myrtle is wailing even louder than usual because someone threw a book at her. When Harry goes to pick up the book, Ron stops him, warning that it could be dangerous, and relates his father’s stories of books that the Ministry of Magic has confiscated. Harry hesitates, and then ducks around Ron to pick it up. The book is a fifty-year-old diary with the name T.M. Riddle written inside. Ron recognizes the name as a student who got a special award for services to the school fifty years ago. Filch made Ron polish Riddle’s shield repeatedly in detention. Harry is disappointed to find that the diary is blank. He figures that the owner must have been Muggle-born when he notices that the book was purchased on Vauxhall Road in London. Ron wants to throw the book at Myrtle, but Harry pockets it.

Hermione leaves the hospital at the beginning of February. On her first evening back in Gryffindor tower, Harry shows her T.M. Riddle’s diary. She examines it excitedly, looking for hidden powers. Ron is skeptical, and thinks that Harry should chuck it. Harry and Hermione make the connection among several events that happened fifty years ago: the Chamber of Secrets was opened. T.M. Riddle won an award for special services to the school. And that’s when the diary is dated. Hermione speculates that Riddle won the award for catching the Heir of Slytherin. Then the diary could tell them everything they want to know about the Chamber. She tests it for invisible ink and tries out a revealer, but nothing happens. Ron thinks there’s nothing to find.

Harry doesn’t throw the diary away because he feels as though it were a story he wants to finish. The name T.M. Riddle means something to him, “almost as though Riddle was a friend he’d had when he was very small, and had half-forgotten.” He wants to learn more about Riddle, so along with his friends, he visits the trophy room and discovers that Riddle was a Head Boy who had won a medal for magical merit.

The sun begins to shine and the Hogwarts community becomes more hopeful as there have been no more attacks and the Mandrakes are maturing. Harry thinks that the Heir of Slytherin may have lost his or her nerve, and the monster will hibernate for another fifty years. Ernie is still convinced that Harry is the Heir. Peeves continues to taunt Harry about it. Gilderoy Lockhart thinks that he personally made the attacks stop, and that the school needs a morale booster to forget about the last term. On February 14th Harry discovers at breakfast that Lockhart’s idea of a morale-booster is to celebrate Valentine’s Day with pink decorations, heart-shaped confetti, and dwarfs dressed as cupids carrying valentine cards. Lockhart assumes that the other professors will want to enter into the spirit of the occasion. They remain stony-faced.

All day long the dwarfs barge into classrooms to deliver valentines. A dwarf catches up with Harry in between classes and tries to deliver a musical valentine. Harry attempts to escape, embarrassed at being given a valentine in front of a line of first-years, including [Ginny Weasley](https://www.gradesaver.com/harry-potter-and-the-chamber-of-secrets/study-guide/character-list#ginny-weasley). In the struggle Harry’s bag rips in two, spilling the contents on the floor. His ink bottle smashes, spilling ink over everything. This causes a holdup in the corridor. Draco and Percy appear in the commotion. When Harry tries to run, the dwarf knocks him over and sits on him before singing him his valentine. Percy tries to disperse the laughing crowd.

Draco picks up Riddle’s diary, thinking it’s Harry’s own. Ginny stares from the diary to Harry, looking terrified. Percy demands that Draco hand it over, but Draco continues to taunt Harry with it. Harry pulls out his wand and shouts “Expelliarmus!” The diary shoots out of Draco hands and Ron catches it. Percy admonishes Harry for doing magic in the corridors, but Harry doesn’t care. Draco yells at Ginny “I don’t think that Potter liked your valentine much!” Ginny covers her face with her hands and runs into class. Ron takes out his wand, but Harry pulls him away. In his next class, Harry notices something odd about Riddle’s diary: unlike his other books, which were covered in ink, the diary is clean. He tries to point this out to Ron, but Ron is having trouble with his wand, and isn’t interested.

Harry goes to bed early that night, wanting to examine Riddle’s diary again. When he drops an inkblot onto the diary the ink shines brightly and then vanishes. He writes “My name is [Harry Potter](https://www.gradesaver.com/harry-potter-and-the-chamber-of-secrets/study-guide/character-list#harry-potter).” These words also shine and then disappear. Then in his own ink, the diary replies, “Hello, Harry Potter. My name is Tom Riddle. How did you come by my diary?” These words also fade away. Harry and Tom converse through the diary. Riddle reveals that in his fifth year as a Hogwarts student the Chamber of Secrets was opened and the monster attacked several students, killing one. He says that he caught the person who opened the Chamber, who was then expelled. The headmaster at the time, Professor Dippett, forbade him to tell the truth, and covered up the incident. But he knew it could happen again because the monster lived on, and the one who had the power to release it was not imprisoned. Harry tells Tom that it’s happening again now, and asks who opened the Chamber last time. Riddle offers to show him. Harry writes “OK.”

The pages of the diary blow and then stop halfway through the month of June. Harry sees that the square for June 13th turns into a tiny television screen or window, so he puts his eye up to it. He tilts forward; the window widens; he is pitched headfirst through the opening in the page. Harry finds himself in Dumbledore’s office. Another elderly wizard sits behind the desk. When Harry speaks to him he doesn’t answer. Harry realizes that this is Hogwarts fifty years ago, and that he is invisible to the headmaster.

A sixteen-year-old boy enters, wearing a prefect’s badge, and sits nervously. This is Tom Riddle. He has written a letter to Professor Dippett asking to stay at Hogwarts over the summer holidays rather than returning to a Muggle orphanage. Tom says that he is a half-blood, born to a Muggle father and a witch mother. His mother died just after he was born, living long enough to name him Tom after his father and Marvolo after his grandfather. Dippet replies that special arrangements might have been made for Tom, but because of the recent attacks, and death of the girl, he can’t allow him to stay at Hogwarts when the term ends. He says that the Ministry of Magic is talking about closing the school, and that they are no nearer to locating the source of the unpleasantness. Riddle starts to ask “Sir—if the person was caught—if it all stopped—” Dippett asks if Riddle knows anything about these attacks. Riddle replies no. Harry recognizes this as the same type of "no" that Harry had given Dumbledore.

When Tom leaves the room, Harry follows him. Riddle runs into fifty-year-younger Dumbledore, who tells him to hurry to bed. He continues on to the dungeons, and then stops in the dungeon where Harry has Potions class. He waits, leaving the door open only a crack, and watches the passway for about an hour. When someone creeps along the passage Tom and Harry follow until they hear a door creak open and someone whisper “C’mon... gotta get yeh outta here...C’mon now...in the box…” Harry thinks that there’s something familiar about the voice. Riddle jumps around the corner. Harry steps out and sees a huge boy crouching in front of an open door with a large box.

Tom addresses the boy as Rubeus and tells him that he will have to turn him in, that they’re talking about closing Hogwarts if the attacks don’t stop. He says that he doesn’t think that he meant to kill anyone, but that monsters don’t make good pets. Rubeus replies that it never killed anyone. Riddle argues that the least Hogwarts can do for the parents of the dead girl is to slaughter the thing that killed their daughter. Rubeus continues to defend the creature. Riddle draws out his wand and casts a spell that fills the corridor with light and forces the door open, throwing Rubeus against the wall. Out of the door comes something that makes Harry scream: it has a “vast, low-slung hairy body and a tangle of black legs; a gleam of many eyes and a pair of razor-sharp pincers.” Riddle raises his wand again, but the creature bowls him over and scuttles down the corridor. When Riddle tries again, Rubeus leaps on him, seizes his wand, and throws him back down, yelling “No!”

Harry falls out of the scene and back onto his bed with a crash. The dormitory door opens and Ron enters. Ron looks at Harry, who is sweating and shaking, with concern, and asks what’s up. Harry tells him that Hagrid opened the Chamber of Secrets fifty years ago.

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

***Summary Part 1:***

[Hermione](https://www.litcharts.com/lit/harry-potter-and-the-chamber-of-secrets/characters/hermione-granger) spends the week in the hospital wing, and rumors start to fly that she’s been attacked. [Ron](https://www.litcharts.com/lit/harry-potter-and-the-chamber-of-secrets/characters/ron-weasley) and [Harry](https://www.litcharts.com/lit/harry-potter-and-the-chamber-of-secrets/characters/harry-potter) visit her every day, trying to talk through any leads that they might be able to follow, but they can’t think of anyone else the heir might be.

***Analysis Part 1:***

Even while Hermione is in the hospital, the three protagonists are bonded by their friendship and their mutual desire to solve the mystery of the Chamber of Secrets, working together to find out any information possible.

***Summary Part 2:***

As [Harry](https://www.litcharts.com/lit/harry-potter-and-the-chamber-of-secrets/characters/harry-potter) and [Ron](https://www.litcharts.com/lit/harry-potter-and-the-chamber-of-secrets/characters/ron-weasley) walk back from the hospital wing, they return to the corridor in which Mrs. Norris was attacked, just outside of [Myrtle](https://www.litcharts.com/lit/harry-potter-and-the-chamber-of-secrets/characters/moaning-myrtle)’s bathroom. There is a new puddle on the floor, and Myrtle can be heard wailing inside. Harry and Ron go into the bathroom and ask her what’s wrong. Myrtle tells them that someone threw a book at her.

***Analysis Part 2:***

Harry once again shows his deep kindness and decency in asking Myrtle what’s wrong. This not only makes Myrtle feel better, but it also helps Harry because it leads him to Tom Riddle’s diary, which provides some more clues as to what occurred at the school fifty years ago.

***Summary Part 3:***

[Harry](https://www.litcharts.com/lit/harry-potter-and-the-chamber-of-secrets/characters/harry-potter) goes to pick it the book, which is small, thin, and has a shabby black cover, but [Ron](https://www.litcharts.com/lit/harry-potter-and-the-chamber-of-secrets/characters/ron-weasley) stops him, saying it could be dangerous. Harry ignores him and picks it up anyway. The year on the book tells him that it is fifty years old and belongs to a [T.M. Riddle](https://www.litcharts.com/lit/harry-potter-and-the-chamber-of-secrets/characters/tom-riddle-voldemort). Ron realizes he knows the name: when he was polishing trophies for detention, he polished an award for special services that T.M. Riddle earned fifty years prior. Harry opens the book, but it is completely blank. He puts it in his pocket.

***Analysis Part 3:***

Ron’s warning is an important one: even though the book could provide key information, it might also be dangerous. Harry ignores this skepticism, but it turns out to be an important lesson. Just because Tom’s diary ultimately provides Harry with information doesn’t mean that that information is necessarily accurate, and misinformation can be extremely harmful.

***Summary Part 4:***

When [Hermione](https://www.litcharts.com/lit/harry-potter-and-the-chamber-of-secrets/characters/hermione-granger) gets out of the hospital, [Harry](https://www.litcharts.com/lit/harry-potter-and-the-chamber-of-secrets/characters/harry-potter) shows her the diary. They realize that because it is fifty years old, [Riddle](https://www.litcharts.com/lit/harry-potter-and-the-chamber-of-secrets/characters/tom-riddle-voldemort) would have been at Hogwarts when the Chamber of Secrets was opened last. They wonder whether Riddle might have gotten his award for catching the Heir of Slytherin. Hermione performs spells to try and reveal invisible ink, but she is unsuccessful. Harry is plagued by the book, wondering why someone tried to throw it away.

***Analysis Part 4:***

Even the prospect of finding more information on who Riddle is, or about any involvement he might have had with the opening of the Chamber fifty years prior, consumes Harry. Any information that he might be able to find could inform them about what is happening at the castle at that point, and could hopefully prevent more attacks.

***Summary Part 5:***

On Valentine’s Day, [Lockhart](https://www.litcharts.com/lit/harry-potter-and-the-chamber-of-secrets/characters/gilderoy-lockhart) brings in a dozen dwarfs dressed like cupids, inviting students to use them to send valentines. When [Harry](https://www.litcharts.com/lit/harry-potter-and-the-chamber-of-secrets/characters/harry-potter) is walking to Charms, a dwarf tries to stop Harry and deliver one to him. Harry tries to run, but the dwarf tugs on his bag, spilling all of its contents and splattering ink over everything. The dwarf starts to sing to him, making Harry want to vanish on the spot. [Draco](https://www.litcharts.com/lit/harry-potter-and-the-chamber-of-secrets/characters/draco-malfoy), who is also in the hall, waves the diary around, thinking that he has Harry’s diary. The onlookers (including [Ginny Weasley](https://www.litcharts.com/lit/harry-potter-and-the-chamber-of-secrets/characters/ginny-weasley), who is watching in horror) fall quiet. Harry disarms Draco in order to get the diary back.

***Analysis Part 5:***

This episode is key to helping Harry solve the mystery of Tom Riddle’s diary, as the spilled ink will allow him to get information from the book. But it is also worth noting how the episode will also spur Ginny’s bravery and loyalty to Harry. Later, it will be revealed that by this point she knows that the diary is evil (and she was the one who threw it into Myrtle’s bathroom). When she sees Harry with it, she plots to get it back so that he will not be taken advantage of by Riddle as she was.

***Summary Part 6:***

Later, when [Harry](https://www.litcharts.com/lit/harry-potter-and-the-chamber-of-secrets/characters/harry-potter) examines the diary, he notices something odd: his other books are covered in ink, but [Riddle](https://www.litcharts.com/lit/harry-potter-and-the-chamber-of-secrets/characters/tom-riddle-voldemort)’s diary is completely clean. That night, in his dorm, Harry drops another blot of ink on the diary and the ink is absorbed into the pages. Excitedly, Harry writes “My name is Harry Potter,” and is amazed when other words appear on the page: “Hello, Harry Potter. My name is Tom Riddle.”

***Analysis Part 6:***

When Harry solves the mystery of Tom Riddle’s diary, he is very excited—presumably because this will allow him to find out more information. Harry should actually be more skeptical and even fearful of this dangerous object, because it allows Riddle to mislead Harry and show him a false narrative.

***Summary part 7:***

[Harry](https://www.litcharts.com/lit/harry-potter-and-the-chamber-of-secrets/characters/harry-potter) is stunned at the response. [Riddle](https://www.litcharts.com/lit/harry-potter-and-the-chamber-of-secrets/characters/tom-riddle-voldemort) explains that he has preserved his memories in this diary. Harry asks Riddle whether he knows about the Chamber of Secrets. Riddle confirms that the Chamber was opened during his fifth year at school and that the [monster](https://www.litcharts.com/lit/harry-potter-and-the-chamber-of-secrets/symbols/the-monster-basilisk) attacked several students, killing one. Riddle caught the person who did it and that person was expelled. Riddle offers to show Harry the memory of the night he caught the person.

***Analysis Part 7:***

Riddle lulls Harry into believing the information he is about to show him by first confirming what Harry already knows. In this way, Riddle is then able to gain Harry’s trust and create a false sense of accuracy and security in the information that he provides.

***Summary Part 8:***

[Harry](https://www.litcharts.com/lit/harry-potter-and-the-chamber-of-secrets/characters/harry-potter) is sucked into the diary. In the memory, [Riddle](https://www.litcharts.com/lit/harry-potter-and-the-chamber-of-secrets/characters/tom-riddle-voldemort) speaks to the Hogwarts Headmaster at the time, Professor Dippet. Professor Dippet announces that Riddle cannot stay at school over the summer, even though he hates the Muggle orphanage he lives in (he is half-blood, but his witch mother died just after he was born). Dippet says that with the attacks at the school, Riddle will not be safe, and that the Ministry is even discussing closing the school. Riddle wonders aloud what would happen if the person who is responsible for the attacks were caught. Dippet asks him if he knows anything, but Riddle says no.

***Analysis Part 8:***

This exchange is key to the comparisons that Harry later draws between himself and Riddle, noting many similarities. Riddle is half-blood and an orphan. He hates the Muggles he lives with and considers the school to be his home. He also has a habit of not telling the full truth to authorities, just as Harry did when Dumbledore asked him if anything was wrong. But Harry will ultimately see key differences between himself and Riddle: whereas Riddle’s background fuels his prejudice and his tendency towards evil, Harry’s background leads him to a life of friendship and love.

***Summary part 9:***

[Riddle](https://www.litcharts.com/lit/harry-potter-and-the-chamber-of-secrets/characters/tom-riddle-voldemort) then goes to the dungeons and waits. When someone moves along the passageway, Riddle follows the person down the corridor. [Harry](https://www.litcharts.com/lit/harry-potter-and-the-chamber-of-secrets/characters/harry-potter) sees a huge boy crouching in front of an open door with a large box. Riddle greets the boy—who turns out to be [Hagrid](https://www.litcharts.com/lit/harry-potter-and-the-chamber-of-secrets/characters/rubeus-hagrid)—and says he’s going to turn Hagrid in. Hagrid argues, saying that his pet never killed anyone.

***Analysis Part 9:***

Riddle’s memory is very clear, but as Rowling reveals later, it doesn’t necessarily leave Harry with the right information. In this way, Riddle’s memory is only as good as a rumor, because it is based on a biased perspective.

***Summary Part 10:***

[Riddle](https://www.litcharts.com/lit/harry-potter-and-the-chamber-of-secrets/characters/tom-riddle-voldemort) then lights up the corridor, and the creature scurries away through the open door. Riddle tries to send a spell after it, but [Hagrid](https://www.litcharts.com/lit/harry-potter-and-the-chamber-of-secrets/characters/rubeus-hagrid) tackles Riddle, screaming “NOOOOOOO!” Harry is transported back onto his bed, the diary lying on his stomach. [Ron](https://www.litcharts.com/lit/harry-potter-and-the-chamber-of-secrets/characters/ron-weasley) enters the room, and Harry tells him what he’s found out: Hagrid opened the Chamber of Secrets fifty years prior.

***Analysis Part 10:***

Even though Riddle provides Harry with inaccurate information, it is still enough to convince Harry of his perspective. But this information plays against Harry’s loyalty, which turns out to be strong enough to make him question what Riddle has presented to him.

***Quotations:***

***Quotation 1:***

The pages of the diary began to blow as though caught in a high wind, stopping halfway through the month of June. Mouth hanging open, Harry saw the little square for June thirteenth seemed to have turned into a minuscule television screen. His hands trembling slightly, he raised the book to press his eye against the little window, and before he knew what was happening, he was tilting forward; the window was widening, he felt his body leave his bed, and he was pitched headfirst through the opening in the page, into a whirl of color and shadow. (13.138)

***Explanation1:***

Later in the series, we get to see Pensieve memories, which present events from a third-person perspective and in a relatively objective way. We know from the example of Professor Slughorn's altered memory in Book 6 that it is very difficult to lie using a Pensieve. Riddle's diary, on the other hand, gives a highly subjective view of the events at Hogwarts fifty years before. Riddle frames the whole memory with his own narrative – which turns out to be an utter lie. So, when Harry chooses to look into Riddle's diary, he believes that what he is seeing is objective truth, but it is in fact a sophisticated manipulation. How else does Voldemort try to trick Harry later on in the series? How do his later strategies seem similar to (or different from) the deception he pulls with the diary in Book 2?

***Quotation 2:***

Malfoy was looking furious, and as Ginny passed him to enter her classroom, he yelled spitefully after her, "I don't think Potter liked your valentine much!"

Ginny covered her face with her hands and ran into class. Snarling, Ron pulled out his wand, too, but Harry pulled him away. Ron didn't need to spend the whole of Charms belching slugs. (13.113-114)

***Explanation 2:***

The teenage years are suppose to be the Awkward Age, but Ginny's only eleven in Book 2 and she appears to be cramming all of her awkwardness in early. In the later books, Ginny seems relatively self-possessed and self-confident. In Book 2, though, she's got a crush she can't deal with and she's getting possessed by Tom Riddle's diary. She really can't get a break. Even so, she has loyal friends and family who express concern for her throughout the book. Even though she's going through a rough time, she's not as alone as she may imagine she is. Are there parallels we can draw between Ginny's experiences in Book 2 and Harry's emotional crises in Book 5? What might they be?

***Quotation 3:***

Moaning Myrtle was crying, if possible, louder and harder than ever before. She seemed to be hiding down her usual toilet. It was dark in the bathroom because the candles had been extinguished in the great rush of water that had left both walls and floor soaking wet. (13.21)

***Explanation 3:***

First of all, can you imagine anything worse than spending eternity haunting a bathroom? Maybe Moaning Myrtle is annoying and spends too much time feeling sorry for herself, but she really does get a raw deal. Secondly, Moaning Myrtle's hysterics mainly get played for laughs during Book 2. She's so over the top, with her crying and her self-pity. Yet she really is isolated from all of the other characters in the book, not only because she is dead, but also because she is so unpleasant personally. She's neither bad nor cruel; she's just supremely annoying. Why do you think J.K. Rowling depicts a dead girl in this relatively unsympathetic way? How might Book 2 be different if Moaning Myrtle were a tragic figure instead of a ridiculous one?

***Quotation 4:***

"Dangerous?" said Harry, laughing. "Come off it, how could it be dangerous?"

"You'd be surprised, said Ron, who was looking apprehensively at the book. "Some of the books the Ministry's confiscated – Dad's told me – there was one that burned your eyes out. And everyone who read Sonnets of a Sorcerer spoke in limericks for the rest of their lives. And some old witch in Bath had a book that you could never stop reading! You just had to wander around with your nose in it, trying to do everything one-handed." (13.33-34)

***Explanation 4:***

Muggle-born wizards and witches obviously are just as good (or in Hermione's case, better) than purebloods. Still, Book 2 does show evidence of real cultural differences between people who have been raised in the wizard world and those who have been brought up in the Muggle world. Harry is a great example. As a kid brought up by the Dursleys, he has no idea why being a Parselmouth would make him terrifying to other wizards. Here, he has none of the caution around an unknown book that comes naturally to Ron. So Harry has none of the prejudices that purebloods have about their world, but he's also still learning a basic level of caution and understanding as he integrates with other wizards. As an early part of the Harry Potter series, Book 2 shows us that Harry is still in the middle of a process of adapting to the unfamiliar dangers and differences of the wizarding world. He doesn't think about this new, empty book as a danger because he hasn't been raised by a magical family, but his experiences with Tom Riddle's diary give him a quick education in taking bewitched objects very, very seriously.

***Quotation 5:***

"My friendly, card-carrying cupids!" beamed Lockhart. "They will be roving around the school today delivering your valentines! And the fun doesn't stop here! I'm sure my colleagues will want to enter into the spirit of the occasion! Why not ask Professor Snape to show you how to whip up a Love Potion! And while you're at it, Professor Flitwick knows more about Entrancing Enchantments than any wizard I've ever met, the sly old dog!"

Professor Flitwick buried his face in his hands. Snape was looking as though the first person to ask him for a Love Potion would be force-fed poison. (13.87-88)

***Explanation 5:***

As with the Dueling Club, we have to be impressed at Professor Lockhart's complete and utter lack of self-consciousness. He really does not seem to notice (or care) that he is making the other professors loathe him with his horrible behavior. Why does Professor Lockhart persist in these stunts? Does he think it will win him popularity at the school? Is he really just that stupid, that he doesn't realize most of Hogwarts thinks he's a laughing stock? Or could it be more sinister? Maybe Professor Lockhart is trying to use these ridiculous stunts to distract people from wondering too much about the truth of his books. What do you think Professor Lockhart's motivations are?

***Quotation 6:***

Harry couldn't explain, even to himself, why he didn't just throw Tom Riddle's diary away. The fact was that even though he knew the diary was blank, he kept absentmindedly picking it up and turning the pages, as though it were a story he wanted to finish. And while Harry was sure he had never heard the name T.M. Riddle before, it still seemed to mean something to him, almost as though Riddle was a friend he'd had when he was very small, and had half-forgotten. But this was absurd. He'd never had friends before Hogwarts, Dudley had made sure of that. (13.69)

***Explanation 6:***

While the diary still appears blank to Harry, he keeps flipping through it as though it means something to him. What do you think is prompting this curiosity? Is the diary beginning to work its possessing magic? Is Harry working on his own personal instincts (which have led him to battle Voldemort successfully before)? How lucky is Harry that he was in the right place to find this diary in the first place? In some way, Harry seems to be fated to be in the right place at the right time to find the diary and discover Tom Riddle. What if someone else had picked up Riddle's diary in Moaning Myrtle's bathroom?