***Harry Potter and Prisoner of Azakaban***

#### **Chapter 4-The Leaky Cauldron**

***Summary and analysis***

***Brief Summary:***

Harry greatly enjoys his new freedom. For the first time in his life, he can get out of bed when he wants, eat when he feels like it and come and go as he pleases. He heads down to Diagon Alley to gather his books and supplies for his third year at Hogwart's. While getting his third year books, he sees a book about death omens on a table in the book shop. On the cover is a image of a large black dog with gleaming eyes; it looks strangely like the figure he saw in the alley just before the arrival of the Knight Bus.

On the last day of the summer holiday, Ron and Hermione surprise Harry by showing up to meet him for the day. Ron's dad had told them he was staying at the Leaky Cauldron. He fills them in on the past five week's events and walks with them as they shop for their own school supplies. Hermione purchases a rather large orange magical cat named Crookshanks. Ron's own magical creature, a rat named Scabbers, is a hand-me-down from his brothers. He is not too fond of Hermione's new companion. The two immediately start to go at it and Ron tells Hermione to return the nasty cat to the shop. She refuses to do so.

Ron's parents, Mr. and Mrs. Weasley and his brothers join them all at the Leaky Cauldron. Ron's sister is now a student of Hogwart's and has a huge crush on Harry. That night, Harry overhears Mr. Weasley telling Mrs. Weasley the reason the Ministry is so concerned about Harry is that they have reason to believe that Black wants to target Harry specifically. They have put Azkaban guards outside the school to safeguard it and hopefully catch the outlaw. Harry keeps having visions of the "death omen" from the alley way in his head.

Harry has never in his life been allowed to do as he pleases. At the Dursleys, he had to live under their strict rules and regulations. Even though he had a little more freedom at Hogwart's, at least on the weekends, he still had to follow school rules and be up for classes. It is a great revelation to him to experience being on his own and do whatever he pleases. He does not, however, take advantage of his new freedom. He pays heed to Fudge's warning to stay at the Inn for the remainder of the summer.

Harry is sure the dog-like creature he saw in the dark alley is the same one featured on the death omen book's cover. He now has a feeling of dread with the added knowledge that Sirius Black, an escaped murder and assumed "Death Eater," (or follower of Voldemort) may be looking for him specifically. He still does not know exactly why the escaped prisoner of Azkaban would be looking for him.

***Brief Analysis:***

Harry spends the next weeks happily wandering through Diagon Alley. He finishes his homework, eats ice cream sundaes in sidewalk cafes, admires a Firebolt broomstick in the window of a Quidditch supplies store, and buys his books for school. During his visit to the bookstore, he is alarmed to catch sight of a large black dog on the cover of a book about death omens; the dog reminds him of the dark shape he saw when leaving the Dursleys. Around this time, Harry reunites with Ron and Hermione, and while discussing their summers and coming classes, they stop by a pet store. While Ron buys rat tonic for his old and rather sickly-looking rat, Scabbers, a ginger cat leaps upon them and dashes after Scabbers. Ron is furious when Hermione emerges from the pet store having purchased the cat, Crookshanks.

The three friends join the Weasleys, where each of Ron's siblings is in his or her element. The twins, Fred and George, are busy making everybody laugh. Percy is looking stiffly annoyed, and Ginny, the youngest Weasley and the only daughter, is looking on shyly and giggling. They eat together, and after dinner Harry passes by the bedroom where Mr. and Mrs. Weasley are in a heated argument about whether or not to tell Harry that Sirius Black escaped Azbaban with the supposed intention of finding and killing Harry. Harry is not terribly frightened; he feels that Hogwarts is extremely safe, and besides, he has encountered Voldemort twice before.

These chapters establish a contrast between the magical and non-magical worlds. We see the wizard world through Harry's eyes, beginning with the eerie experience of being in the space between the worlds, outside the Dursleys' house, but miles away from Hogwarts or Diagon Alley. This discomfort is magnified when Harry spies a huge black dog watching him. In this scene, Harry's wand shoots up sparks and he is almost run over by The Knight Bus, an unusual vehicle that carries wizards out of unlucky situations and to whichever destination they desire. The bus sails through the night, and we, like Harry, marvel that all objects (houses and street-signs) jump out of its way-one more facet of the wizard world's ability to exist completely without interfering with Muggle life. The conversation between Ernie and Stan during the bus ride establishes Harry's fame among wizards, due to his defeat of Voldemort before he was old enough to remember. This fame marks Harry's experiences as a wizard in bittersweet ways; he is often given special treatment, but also special protection when he doesn't necessarily want it. He has certain inborn strengths, but he also is susceptible to certain things, like the dementors, that affect him more than others.

Once Harry is left at Diagon Alley, the wizard experience commences, as its inherent state of freedom and inclusiveness sweeps over Harry. He is able to do his homework outside in the sunshine while he eats ice cream sundaes. He is able to roam the streets of Diagon Alley, spending the money his parents left him. He independently purchases school supplies and interacts with other wizards. Harry is again in his element. One of the most significant things about this world is that although magical things appear everywhere, basic human relations are unremarkable. Wizards are entirely human in their interactions and motivations. Like any other group of friends that has been separated, Harry, Ron, and Hermione are excited at seeing each other again. Soon after, we see that tension rises as soon as Ron's old rat and Hermione's new cat appear to share mutual animosity. In this world, we see the grand, comfortable chaos of a large family like the Weasleys, filled with sibling rivalry, great parental love, and a very basic sense of mischief generated by the twins, Fred and George, and directed toward Percy, the responsible eldest child at home. We note the subtle differences between the twins, who have a few basic differences: Fred is a bit more over-the-top in his humor, beginning jokes and carrying them to their extremes, and George is somewhat subtler, more sardonic in his comments.

***Synopsis:***

* Harry is having the best summer ever in Diagon Alley. He's free to do whatever he likes and he spends his days wandering around, working on his homework, and eating free ice cream sundaes (being the defeater of Voldemort really pays off).
* One day, Harry sees the coolest thing ever: a brand new broom called the Firebolt. It's super expensive, though, so Harry restrains himself from buying one.
* Harry runs errands and starts buying his supplies for the school year.
* At the bookstore, he picks up his books for a new subject, Divination, which is about predicting the future. He also learns that the Monster Book he got is a course book for Care of Magical Creatures.
* The books are all eating each other in a display case, much to the store owner's horror.
* Harry sees the large black dog on a book cover and gets nervous – turns out the black dog is a death omen.
* Finally, Hermione, Ron, and the other Weasleys arrive in Diagon Alley.
* Harry goes shopping with his friends and they all head to a magical pet shop so Hermione can get an owl.
* Ron also takes Scabbers to get him checked out. Scabbers has been looking sick since the Weasleys returned from Egypt.
* The trip to the shop is eventful since a giant orange cat jumps on Ron.
* The boys wait outside and Hermione appears with her new pet: that ugly orange cat, whose name is Crookshanks.
* The trio go back to The Leaky Cauldron and have an entertaining dinner with the Weasleys.
* Fred and George ham it up and make fun of Percy, who acts more smug than usual since he was made Head Boy at Hogwarts.
* Mr. Weasley tells the kids that they'll be taking Ministry cars to the train station tomorrow to catch the Hogwarts Express. Everyone finds this a bit odd.
* Later that night, Harry walks in on a fight between Ron and Percy. Percy can't find his Head Boy badge and Ron has lost his rat tonic.
* When Harry goes downstairs to get the tonic, he overhears Molly and Arthur Weasley discussing Sirius Black: "Always the same words: 'He's at Hogwarts [...] he's at Hogwarts.' Black is deranged, Molly, and he wants Harry dead" (4.3.34).
* Turns out that Black is after Harry and Arthur wants to tell him; Molly disagrees.
* Arthur tells Molly that some guards from Azkaban are coming to guard Hogwarts until Black is caught and Dumbledore isn't thrilled about it.
* The couple goes off to bed and a stunned Harry returns the rat tonic to Ron.
* He also encounters the twins, who reveal that they stole Percy's badge and charmed it to read "Bighead Boy" (4.3.46). Good one.
* Harry goes to bed and realizes that he isn't all that afraid. He's faced Voldemort, after all, and he trusts Dumbledore to keep him safe at Hogwarts.
* What really upsets Harry is that with Black on the loose, he probably can't go to Hogsmeade with his friends.
* Well, that's one way to deal with learning that a homicidal maniac is after you.

***Critical Study Ch1-ch5***

The third installment in the [*Harry Potter*](https://www.gradesaver.com/harry-potter-and-the-prisoner-of-azkaban/study-guide/character-list#harry-potter) series begins, as all the other novels in the series begin, with a brief recap of who exactly Harry Potter is. Rowling's first chapters don't assume that the reader has read the previous books, thus making it possible (though not advised!) for a new reader of Harry Potter to ostensibly start reading the books non-chronologically. Chapter One of [*Harry Potter and the Prisoner of Azkaban*](https://www.gradesaver.com/harry-potter-and-the-prisoner-of-azkaban) begins in Harry's bedroom at number 4, Privet Drive, where he lives with his cruel Uncle Vernon, Aunt Petunia, and cousin Dudley. Harry is a wizard, but his parents were killed when he was an infant by the evil Lord Voldemort, and since that tragic event, he has lived with his non-magic ("Muggle") family on his mother's side (Aunt Petunia was his mother's sister). Harry lived his entire childhood totally unaware that he was a wizard until his eleventh birthday, when he recieved an acceptance letter from Hogwarts School of Witchcraft and Wizardry. There, he learned that he was a celebrity in the wizarding world on account that when Voldemort tried killing him as an infant, he lived through the attack, thus earning him the moniker, "The Boy Who Lived." Harry loves being at Hogwarts with his best friends [Ron Weasley](https://www.gradesaver.com/harry-potter-and-the-prisoner-of-azkaban/study-guide/character-list#ron-weasley) and [Hermione Granger](https://www.gradesaver.com/harry-potter-and-the-prisoner-of-azkaban/study-guide/character-list#hermione-granger), however when school is out for summer, he is forced back to his hateful extended family's house on Privet Drive. And much to Harry's misfortune, his Muggle family despises magic and forbids the mention of anything wizarding-related in their home. They make Harry's life miserable on account of him being "different" from them. So, in this first scene in his bedroom, Harry is quietly trying to complete his summer work in the middle of the night, because his aunt and uncle don't allow him to do his homework in their house.

As Harry tries to write a history essay on the futility of witchburning in the fourteenth century, he takes a moment to look out his window, wondering where his pet snowy owl, Hedwig, has been for the last two days. When he glances at his digital clock, it reads 1 AM, and Harry remembers that it is now officially his thirteenth birthday. Since he was a child, his birthdays have been ignored in the Dursley household, so Harry never expects gifts or fanfare. As he scans the night sky, Harry spots three figures growing larger on the horizon. As they fly closer, he recognizes them as owls, two of which are familiar owls. There is his own Hedwig, a scrawny, pitiful looking owl named Errol that belongs to the Weasleys, and a third, handsome tawny owl bearing a letter from Hogwarts. The Weasleys' package contains a letter from Ron and a newspaper clipping announcing Ron's dad, Arthur Weasley, as the winner of the Daily Prophet Grand Prize Galleon Draw. The Weasleys have many children but very little money, so winning a small pile of gold was a great boon to them. They were spending the money on an extended holiday in Egypt where their son Bill works for the famous Gringotts Wizarding Bank. Ron's letter wishes Harry a happy birthday, gives him an update on the Weasley family (Ron's older brother Percy was made Head Boy at Hogwarts), and implores him to come to London for the last week of summer break. Included in Ron's package is also a gift, a "Pocket Sneakoscope," which is a magical apparatus that lights up when someone untrustworthy is nearby.

The package Hedwig carried in contains a letter and wrapped birthday present from Hermione. In her letter, Hermione updates Harry on her summer travels through France, where she's learned all about the regional wizarding practices there. In her typical studious way, Hermione talks about her schoolwork and how jealous she is of Ron being able to learn about the ancient Egyptian wizards. Harry is surprised to find that as a gift, Hermione sent him not a book, but rather a high-end broomstick servicing kit (Harry plays Quidditch at Hogwarts, a sport played atop flying broomsticks). Then, finally, Harry turns his attention to the packages from Hogwarts. The first was a letter from Hagrid, Harry's friend and the half-giant gamekeeper at the school. Hagrid sent Harry a copy of The Monster Book of Monsters, which is not only a book, but a small, rabid animal with sharp teeth. Harry manages to wrestle the book into a belt without waking the Dursleys. The last letter is from Professor McGonagall, the Deputy Headmistress of Hogwarts. Enclosed is a permission slip to visit Hogsmeade village on the outskirts of Hogwarts, a privilege students are granted in their third year at the school. Pleased that his friends remembered his birthday, Harry decides to go to sleep and finish his essays another time. As he falls asleep, he wonders how he will convince the Dursleys to sign his permission slip.

The next morning Harry goes down to breakfast and finds the three Dursleys huddled around the television, already eating. The news reports an escaped convict is at large by the name of [Sirius Black](https://www.gradesaver.com/harry-potter-and-the-prisoner-of-azkaban/study-guide/character-list#sirius-black), but the Muggle news fails to report from where the convict has escaped (an omission that Uncle Vernon finds quite frustrating). Of course, none of the Dursleys remember Harry's birthday. Instead of wishing him a happy birthday, Uncle Vernon informs Harry that [Aunt Marge](https://www.gradesaver.com/harry-potter-and-the-prisoner-of-azkaban/study-guide/character-list#aunt-marge), Vernon's sister, will be visiting them for a week. Marge is one of Harry's least favorite people in the world, and that's saying something for a boy who spends his days fighting evil witches and wizards. Vernon instructs Harry on how to act while his sister is in town. He's told Marge that Harry attends "St. Brutus's Secure Center for Incurably Criminal Boys," and implores Harry to corroborate the lie. Harry counters with a bargain, verging on blackmail. He tells Uncle Vernon about the permission slip he needs signed in order to visit Hogsmeade Village. "If you sign my permission form," Harry says to a purple-faced Uncle Vernon, "I swear I'll remember where I'm supposed to go to school, and I'll act like a Mug— like I'm normal and everything," (21). Through gritted teeth, Vernon agrees to Harry's terms.

Aunt Marge arrives with one of her prize-winning bulldogs (she is a professional dog-breeder) and immediately starts in on Harry, ridiculing him for being ungrateful and snide, and suggesting that they aren't beating him enough at his correctional school. But Harry manages to bite his tongue for the first few days of her visit. On the third day, after a few glasses of wine, Marge alludes to the notion that Harry might have something innately wrong with him that simply cannot be cured. As Harry stares her down from across the dinner table, her wine glass shatters in her hand. Marge laughs it off, blaming her firm grip. Harry excuses himself to his room, afraid that he may have accidentally caused the glass to shatter.

On the final day of Marge's visit, dinner seems to be going smoothly. Marge has somehow neglected to harass Harry all through the entree course. Then, once Petunia breaks out dessert and Marge is feeling sufficiently drunk, she starts to comment on Harry's "runty" physique. Harry tries to distract himself by thinking of his broomstick servicing kit and the lessons in his magic books, but Marge continues to dig into him. Finally, she crosses the line by speaking ill of Harry's parents. She calls his mother "a bad egg" (28) and says that Harry's father James was an unemployed drunk. Harry rises to his feet and vehemently denies Marge's claims. Marge starts screaming at Harry, calling him insolent and a liar, when her whole body begins to swell like a balloon. She continues to inflate until she finally floats up to the ceiling like an actual balloon. [The Dursleys](https://www.gradesaver.com/harry-potter-and-the-prisoner-of-azkaban/study-guide/character-list#the-dursleys) realize that Harry's magic is the obvious culprit, and chaos ensues in the dining room. Harry storms out of the house with his luggage, telling a panicked Vernon that his sister deserved what she got, even though it was an accident.

Once out of the house, Harry's mind is racing. He realizes that his actions have placed him in a dire situation. First of all, by performing magic as an underage wizard, he's broken wizarding law and opened himself up to expulsion from Hogwarts. Secondly, he has nowhere to go and no way of contacting anyone who could help him. As Harry stands on the curb with his luggage a few blocks away from the Dursleys house, he has an eerie feeling that he's being watched. He takes out his wand and casts an illumination charm, which reveals some kind of hulking dog-like animal in the bush behind him. Before he has a chance to react, a massive triple-decker bus screeches to a halt right by where he's standing. A young man named Stan Shunpike disembarks the bus and announces himself as the conductor of "the Knight Bus, emergency transport for the stranded witch or wizard" (33).

Shunpike is under the impression that Harry hailed the bus, when in fact Harry has never heard of the Knight Bus before this moment. But Harry boards anyway and asks to be taken to the Leaky Cauldron, an inn in London and a portal to Diagon Alley, a wizarding section of the city. When Stan asks for Harry's name, Harry tells him he is Neville Longbottom, a clumsy schoolmate of his at Hogwarts. On the bus, Stan reads in the newspaper about the escaped convict, Sirius Black, who has escaped from Azkaban Prison, the feared prison of the wizarding world that is supposed to be impossible to escape from. He was originally imprisoned for allegedly killing thirteen people with a single curse. Stan explains to Harry that Sirius Black was a big supporter of the Dark Lord Voldemort, and that he was thought to be somewhat of an heir-apparent to Voldemort's evil organization.

Once they arrive at the Leaky Cauldron, Harry finds Cornelius Fudge, the Minister of Magic himself, awaiting him on the doorstep of the inn. Fudge greets Harry, revealing to Stan and Ernie, bus driver, Harry's true identity. Upon finding out, Stan exclaims that he knew he was Harry Potter all along because of the trademark scar on his forehead. Fudge takes Harry up to a private conference room in the Leaky Cauldron where he debriefs him on what unfolded at number 4, Privet Drive after he boarded the Knight Bus. People from the Ministry managed to deflate Aunt Marge and erase her memory. The Dursleys were quite furious, but willing to take Harry back the following summer as long as he spent Easter and Christmas holiday at Hogwarts. Harry, confused, asks the Minister how he'll be punished for performing underage magic. The Minister assures Harry that he is not in trouble and that everyone at the Ministry knows it was an accident. But the Minister makes Harry promise that for the remaining two weeks of summer break, he will stay within the confines of Diagon Alley. Harry is provided a room at the inn, where he finds his owl Hedwig patiently waiting for him.

Life in Diagon Alley agrees with Harry. He finds it much more enjoyable than living under the iron fist of Uncle Dursley. He spends his days there breakfasting in the Leaky Cauldron, sitting in cafes and out on the patio of Florean Fortescue's Ice Cream Parlor doing his homework, and browsing the many magic stores and oddities to be found in Diagon Alley. While shopping for his school books, Harry encounters a Divination book about death omens. On the cover of the book is a big, black dog that reminds Harry of the one he saw the night he boarded the Knight Bus, and the coincidence sets him on edge. On the final day of summer break, Ron and Hermione show up to Diagon Alley. They, along with the entire Weasley family, are also staying at the Leaky Cauldron.

That day, Ron and Hermione catch Harry up on their summers. Harry accompanies them while they buy their school supplies and attend to other errands. Ron's rat, Scabbers, has been ill, and Hermione wants to bring a pet to Hogwarts, so the three of them head to a magical creature store. While in the store, a large, ginger cat named Crookshanks attacks Ron and Scabbers, so they promptly leave. When they meet up with Hermione later on, much to Ron's horror they find that she has purchased Crookshanks and plans to take him to Hogwarts. In the evening, Harry has dinner with Hermione and the Weasleys at the inn, and Arthur informs everyone that the Ministry is providing a few cars to take them to Charing Cross station in the morning. But an otherwise joyous reunion turns sour when later that night, Harry overhears an argument between [Mr. and Mrs. Weasley](https://www.gradesaver.com/harry-potter-and-the-prisoner-of-azkaban/study-guide/character-list#mr-and-mrs-weasley) about whether they should tell Harry the true depth of the danger he faces while Sirius Black is on the loose. Harry overhears them say that Black is after Harry as revenge for weakening the Dark Lord. Mr. Weasley wants to tell Harry so he can be on his guard, but Mrs. Weasley insists that there is no point in worrying him, and that as long as Harry is at Hogwarts, (where, as a safety measure, the feared guards of Azkaban will be patrolling), he will be safe.

In these first four chapters of The Prisoner of Azkaban, Rowling is laying the foundation for the rest of the book, which means that around every corner, we find heavy foreshadowing, exposition, and as with all fantasy novels, constant world-building. Rowling devotes much of the first chapter, "Owl Post," to quickly establishing who Harry is, who his friends are, and what his trajectory looks like for the rest of the novel. Rowling reminds us that Harry is, of course, a wizard (and a famous one, at that), and that he is forced due to the tragic murder of his parents to spend his summer breaks with the Dursleys at number 4, Privet Drive. Immediately, Rowling re-establishes Harry's double life. In the "Muggle" world, Harry is an outcast. He's isolated, abused, and harassed because he is a wizard. Possessing magical abilities in the Dursley household is treated as a crime. However, in the wizarding world, Harry is celebrated for his exceptional magic. Where no one in the Muggle world knows his name, everyone in the wizarding world knows Harry Potter, "The Boy Who Lived." This dichotomy characterizes Harry as a hero and celebrity while also granting him the experience of being confined to normal, human constraints such as anonymity and loneliness.

All four pieces of mail Harry receives on the night of his birthday indicate some future importance. Ron's emphasis that his brother Percy made Head Boy at Hogwarts undoubtedly foreshadows Percy's future role in either hindering some hijinx or using his power to facilitate some kind of rulebreaking that Harry, Ron, and Hermione will surely need to engage in throughout the course of the book. Ron also includes a device called a "Pocket Sneakoscope," which lights up when someone untrustworthy is nearby. Given that Harry and his friends face evil adversaries every year, the Sneakoscope will certainly come in handy at school. From Hermione, Harry receives a broomstick servicing kit, which introduces Harry's role on the Gryffindor Quidditch team and offers Rowling the opportunity to remind readers that Quidditch is a wizarding sport played atop flying brooms. Harry's letter from Hagrid, accompanied by a monstrous book about monsters that thrashes and bites, explicitly engages in mystery; Hagrid writes, "Think you might find this useful for next year. Won't say no more here. Tell you when I see you" (14), indicating that there is some omission that will later come to light. And finally, the letter from Hogwarts requesting a signed permission slip to allow Harry to visit Hogsmeade village indicates that Hogsmeade will be an important location later in the story.

In Chapter 2, "Aunt Marge's Big Mistake," Rowling demonstrates one of her tendencies to associate body types and physical attributes to personality traits; for the Vernon, Dudley, and Marge, this manifests as a fixation on their character's size and how that corresponds with gluttony. Rowling frequently describes Vernon in terms of the beefiness of his fingers, the size of his swollen, purple face, or the weight of his steps. Marge is often shown consuming food and drink, overindulging to the point of intoxication, and then picking fights with Harry. In their last fight before he unintentionally inflates her like a balloon, Marge compares the body types of Dudley and Harry, saying of Dudley, "I do like to see a healthy-sized boy," and referring to Harry as having "a mean, runty look about him" (27). She goes on to blame Harry's "breeding," which ultimately leads to a discussion of his parents. Harry, on the other hand, is described throughout the series as being wiry and slim, which in Rowling's terms, may translate as someone who isn't overindulgent.

A series of circumstances in these first four chapters indicate the future importance of a large, black dog. First, Harry feels as if he's being watched while standing outside on Magnolia Crescent after storming out of his aunt and uncle's house. When he looks behind him, he thinks he spots a large, black dog. Shortly thereafter, the Knight Bus arrives, and the conductor is under the impression that Harry hailed the bus. But we know, as readers, that Harry had nothing to do with the Knight Bus arriving, so the only conclusion is that someone else hailed the bus. Then, when Harry is in Diagon Alley, he sees a large, black dog on the cover of a Divination book about death omens. In the midst of all this hysteria, a supposedly crazed lunatic named Sirius Black is on the loose after escaping from Azkaban prison, and according to the Weasleys, he's hunting for Harry Potter. Rowling's clues in these first four chapters are strong indications that somewhere along the line, Harry will confront this ominous black dog. Whether it is a friend or a foe is yet to be known.

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

***Summary Part 1:***

After a few days, [Harry](https://www.litcharts.com/lit/harry-potter-and-the-prisoner-of-azkaban/characters/harry-potter) adjusts to his freedom. He spends his days exploring the shops in Diagon Alley. He does his homework at Florean Fortescue's Ice Cream Parlor, and Fortescue himself helps Harry with his essay on [witch hunts](https://www.litcharts.com/lit/harry-potter-and-the-prisoner-of-azkaban/symbols/witch-hunts). He has to exercise control to not purchase the newest racing broom, the Firebolt, which is on display in the Quidditch shop. Harry does buy new robes, potions supplies, and schoolbooks. He's surprised to find The Monster Book of Monsters at the bookshop, but then realizes that it's the assigned text for Care of Magical Creatures.

***Analysis Part 1:***

Now that Harry knows The Monster Book of Monsters is an assigned textbook, Hagrid's cryptic note makes much more sense. This illustrates on a very small scale how simply having another shred of information can be enough to entirely change a person's perspective on something. The mention of witch hunts again reminds the reader that Harry will learn this year about how ridiculous "justice" can be.

***Summary Part 2:***

The manager of the shop is relieved when [Harry](https://www.litcharts.com/lit/harry-potter-and-the-prisoner-of-azkaban/characters/harry-potter) says he already has The Monster Book of Monsters. As the manager gets Harry his textbook for Divination, Harry notices the cover of another book and stares in shock: the book is about death omens, and the cover picture is of a hulking black dog. Harry rushes back to the Leaky Cauldron with his books, dumps them on his bed, and then looks in the mirror. He tells himself that he just saw a stray dog in Magnolia Crescent.

***Analysis Part 2:***

Again, now that Harry knows that a big black dog is a death omen, he's able to make more sense of past events and, more importantly, can look forward to the future and understand better what's going on if he does see the black dog again.

***Summary Part 3:***

[Harry](https://www.litcharts.com/lit/harry-potter-and-the-prisoner-of-azkaban/characters/harry-potter) begins looking for [Ron](https://www.litcharts.com/lit/harry-potter-and-the-prisoner-of-azkaban/characters/ron-weasley) and [Hermione](https://www.litcharts.com/lit/harry-potter-and-the-prisoner-of-azkaban/characters/hermione-granger) as the start of term approaches. He finds [Seamus Finnigan](https://www.litcharts.com/lit/harry-potter-and-the-prisoner-of-azkaban/characters) and [Dean Thomas](https://www.litcharts.com/lit/harry-potter-and-the-prisoner-of-azkaban/characters), as well as [Neville Longbottom](https://www.litcharts.com/lit/harry-potter-and-the-prisoner-of-azkaban/characters/neville-longbottom). Finally, on the last day of the holiday, he runs into Ron and Hermione at the ice cream shop. Hermione immediately asks about [Aunt Marge](https://www.litcharts.com/lit/harry-potter-and-the-prisoner-of-azkaban/characters/aunt-marge) while Ron howls with laughter. Ron doesn't know why [Fudge](https://www.litcharts.com/lit/harry-potter-and-the-prisoner-of-azkaban/characters/cornelius-fudge) didn't punish Harry for his transgression—[Mr. Weasley](https://www.litcharts.com/lit/harry-potter-and-the-prisoner-of-azkaban/characters/mr-weasley) works at the ministry and so might have insight. Ron does say that the Ministry is providing cars to drive them to the train station tomorrow and invites Harry to join them.

***Analysis Part 3:***

Though Ron doesn't know about Black’s connection with Harry, it is likely that the adults in Ron's life do know. This reminds the reader that, because Harry, Ron, and Hermione are still children, what they learn about the world is still heavily filtered through their parents and other adult authority figures. The cars to get to the train station suggest that security is higher than it would normally be, though Ron's inability to notice this points to his immaturity.

***Summary Part 4:***

[Ron](https://www.litcharts.com/lit/harry-potter-and-the-prisoner-of-azkaban/characters/ron-weasley) pulls out a box containing his new wand and [Harry](https://www.litcharts.com/lit/harry-potter-and-the-prisoner-of-azkaban/characters/harry-potter) asks about [Hermione](https://www.litcharts.com/lit/harry-potter-and-the-prisoner-of-azkaban/characters/hermione-granger)'s bulging bag of books. She begins listing all the classes she's taking and Harry asks if she's planning on eating or sleeping. Changing the subject, Hermione says she'd like to buy an owl, since her parents gave her money as an early birthday present. They head to the magical creature shop. Ron takes [Scabbers](https://www.litcharts.com/lit/harry-potter-and-the-prisoner-of-azkaban/characters/scabbers-peter-pettigrew), who is lethargic and droopy, to the counter so the witch can look him over. The witch asks how old Scabbers is and if he has any powers. Scabbers is twelve and, in the years that the Weasleys have had him, has shown no powers.

***Analysis Part 4:***

Note that Harry is aware that Hermione's course load seems ridiculous. This indicates that he's able to observe things that are off, but he's not necessarily able to draw any conclusions about what he notices (he doesn't learn until the end of the novel that Hermione will use time travel to make it to all her classes).

***Summary Part 5:***

The witch says that a garden rat like [Scabbers](https://www.litcharts.com/lit/harry-potter-and-the-prisoner-of-azkaban/characters/scabbers-peter-pettigrew) will only live for about three years and offers [Ron](https://www.litcharts.com/lit/harry-potter-and-the-prisoner-of-azkaban/characters/ron-weasley) some rat tonic. Before Ron can accept it, a huge orange cat leaps onto his head and then makes a dive for Scabbers. Scabbers races out of the shop, [Harry](https://www.litcharts.com/lit/harry-potter-and-the-prisoner-of-azkaban/characters/harry-potter) and Ron in hot pursuit. Once they catch the rat, they head back to the shop. [Hermione](https://www.litcharts.com/lit/harry-potter-and-the-prisoner-of-azkaban/characters/hermione-granger) comes out as they get close but instead of an owl, she has the orange cat. Glowing, she calls the cat [Crookshanks](https://www.litcharts.com/lit/harry-potter-and-the-prisoner-of-azkaban/characters/crookshanks) and gives Ron his rat tonic, insisting that Scabbers will be fine.

***Analysis Part 5:***

Notice that, according to this witch, Scabbers has already outlived all expectations. When neither Ron nor Harry see anything strange about Scabbers's unusually long lifespan, it indicates that when something (like Scabbers's presence) is normalized, it becomes more difficult to ask questions about why exactly it is considered normal.

***Summary Part 6:***

[Harry](https://www.litcharts.com/lit/harry-potter-and-the-prisoner-of-azkaban/characters/harry-potter), [Ron](https://www.litcharts.com/lit/harry-potter-and-the-prisoner-of-azkaban/characters/ron-weasley), and [Hermione](https://www.litcharts.com/lit/harry-potter-and-the-prisoner-of-azkaban/characters/hermione-granger) find [Mr. Weasley](https://www.litcharts.com/lit/harry-potter-and-the-prisoner-of-azkaban/characters/mr-weasley) in the bar at the Leaky Cauldron. Harry asks about [Sirius Black](https://www.litcharts.com/lit/harry-potter-and-the-prisoner-of-azkaban/characters/sirius-black) when he notices a photo in the paper again. Mr. Weasley sighs that all Ministry employees are on the lookout and shuts Ron down when he asks about a reward for catching him. [Mrs. Weasley](https://www.litcharts.com/lit/harry-potter-and-the-prisoner-of-azkaban/characters/mrs-weasley), [Fred](https://www.litcharts.com/lit/harry-potter-and-the-prisoner-of-azkaban/characters/fred-weasley), [George](https://www.litcharts.com/lit/harry-potter-and-the-prisoner-of-azkaban/characters/george-weasley), [Percy](https://www.litcharts.com/lit/harry-potter-and-the-prisoner-of-azkaban/characters/percy-weasley), and [Ginny](https://www.litcharts.com/lit/harry-potter-and-the-prisoner-of-azkaban/characters) come into the bar, all carrying shopping bags. Percy, who has been made Head Boy, greets Harry pompously, and Fred and George mimic him. Mrs. Weasley says with pride that Percy is the second Head Boy in the family. When she points out that Fred and George weren't made prefects, they say that'd take all the fun out of life.

***Analysis Part 6:***

Mr. Weasley's quick move to shut down Ron's idea about catching Sirius Black himself shows that he's well aware that Harry and Ron already have a reputation of getting into trouble when there's trouble to be had. This tells the reader that all the adults in Harry and Ron's life are doing their best to keep them safe, as they know that things could quickly get dangerous if they're allowed to ask too many questions.

***Summary Part 7:***

For dinner that night, the entire Weasley family eats with [Harry](https://www.litcharts.com/lit/harry-potter-and-the-prisoner-of-azkaban/characters/harry-potter) and [Hermione](https://www.litcharts.com/lit/harry-potter-and-the-prisoner-of-azkaban/characters/hermione-granger). They discuss transportation to King's Cross Station and [Mrs. Weasley](https://www.litcharts.com/lit/harry-potter-and-the-prisoner-of-azkaban/characters/mrs-weasley) sends [Ron](https://www.litcharts.com/lit/harry-potter-and-the-prisoner-of-azkaban/characters/ron-weasley) to pack. As Harry gets to his room, he hears Ron and [Percy](https://www.litcharts.com/lit/harry-potter-and-the-prisoner-of-azkaban/characters/percy-weasley) fighting next door. Harry goes to investigate and learns that Percy's Head Boy badge and [Scabbers](https://www.litcharts.com/lit/harry-potter-and-the-prisoner-of-azkaban/characters/scabbers-peter-pettigrew)'s rat tonic are gone. Harry offers to go look in the bar for the rat tonic but as he passes a parlor, he hears Mrs. and [Mr. Weasley](https://www.litcharts.com/lit/harry-potter-and-the-prisoner-of-azkaban/characters/mr-weasley) fighting too.

***Analysis Part 7:***

Again, notice that Harry doesn't question why the Ministry is escorting the Weasleys to the train station like this—and most importantly, it doesn't occur to Harry that the escort is actually for his benefit, not the Weasleys'. However, Harry doesn't make this leap because he trusts the adults around him and feels safe.

***Summary Part 8:***[Harry](https://www.litcharts.com/lit/harry-potter-and-the-prisoner-of-azkaban/characters/harry-potter) hesitates to listen until he hears [Mr. Weasley](https://www.litcharts.com/lit/harry-potter-and-the-prisoner-of-azkaban/characters/mr-weasley) say that Harry has a right to know. [Mrs. Weasley](https://www.litcharts.com/lit/harry-potter-and-the-prisoner-of-azkaban/characters/mrs-weasley) doesn't agree, but Mr. Weasley says it's for Harry and [Ron](https://www.litcharts.com/lit/harry-potter-and-the-prisoner-of-azkaban/characters/ron-weasley)'s own safety. He points out that [Sirius Black](https://www.litcharts.com/lit/harry-potter-and-the-prisoner-of-azkaban/characters/sirius-black) is mad and before he escaped, he was muttering "he's at Hogwarts" in his sleep—Black is after Harry and seems to believe that killing Harry will bring back [Voldemort](https://www.litcharts.com/lit/harry-potter-and-the-prisoner-of-azkaban/characters/voldemort). Mrs. Weasley points out that Harry will be safe while [Dumbledore](https://www.litcharts.com/lit/harry-potter-and-the-prisoner-of-azkaban/characters/albus-dumbledore) is around and Mr. Weasley concedes that the Azkaban guards will be at Hogwarts, thereby making Harry safer. Harry hurries to find the rat tonic.

***Analysis Part 8:***This conversation shows Harry that his trust in the adults around him and in the Ministry has blinded him to what's actually going on. Though it's likely that everyone is just trying to keep Harry safe, it's worth noting that now that Harry has this information, he'll be able to make more informed choices about what he does, where he goes, and how seriously he takes adults' attempts to protect him.

***Summary Part 9:***When [Harry](https://www.litcharts.com/lit/harry-potter-and-the-prisoner-of-azkaban/characters/harry-potter) gets back upstairs, he finds [Fred](https://www.litcharts.com/lit/harry-potter-and-the-prisoner-of-azkaban/characters/fred-weasley) and [George](https://www.litcharts.com/lit/harry-potter-and-the-prisoner-of-azkaban/characters/george-weasley) on the landing with [Percy](https://www.litcharts.com/lit/harry-potter-and-the-prisoner-of-azkaban/characters/percy-weasley)'s badge—it now reads "Bighead Boy." He forces a laugh, gives [Ron](https://www.litcharts.com/lit/harry-potter-and-the-prisoner-of-azkaban/characters/ron-weasley) the rat tonic, and then shuts himself in his room. Everything makes sense now—[Fudge](https://www.litcharts.com/lit/harry-potter-and-the-prisoner-of-azkaban/characters/cornelius-fudge) was so lenient because [Black](https://www.litcharts.com/lit/harry-potter-and-the-prisoner-of-azkaban/characters/sirius-black) is after Harry. Harry wonders why he doesn't feel more scared, but he does agree with [Mrs. Weasley](https://www.litcharts.com/lit/harry-potter-and-the-prisoner-of-azkaban/characters/mrs-weasley) that with [Dumbledore](https://www.litcharts.com/lit/harry-potter-and-the-prisoner-of-azkaban/characters/albus-dumbledore), he'll be safe. He also wonders what the deal is with the Azkaban guards, since everyone seems terrified of them. What bothers Harry most is that it seems likely that nobody will want him to visit Hogsmeade. He scowls, thinking that he's already escaped [Voldemort](https://www.litcharts.com/lit/harry-potter-and-the-prisoner-of-azkaban/characters/voldemort) three times, and flashes on the big dog he saw in Magnolia Crescent. He says out loud that he's not going to be murdered.

***Analysis Part 9:***Harry's thought that he's already escaped Voldemort three times indicates that though he's a child, he does have an inflated sense of his own abilities and importance—it implies that he thinks the adults are being silly and that Harry doesn't see himself as needing protection. This suggests that as Harry grows, one of the things he'll have to learn is how to both ask for and accept help in situations like this as he can't do things entirely alone.