



Harry and Hermione tried to calm Ron down.

"It'll all be over at midnight on Saturday," said Hermione, but this didn't soothe Ron at all. On the contrary, he sat bolt upright and broke into a sweat.

"Midnight on Saturday!" he said in a hoarse voice. "Oh no — oh no — I've just remembered — Charlie's letter was in that book Malfoy took, he's going to know we're getting rid of Norbert."

Harry and Hermione didn't get a chance to answer. Madam Pomfrey came over at that moment and made them leave, saying Ron needed sleep.

"It's too late to change the plan now," Harry told Hermione. "We haven't got time to send Charlie another owl, and this could be our only chance to get rid of Norbert. We'll have to risk it. And we *have* got the Invisibility Cloak, Malfoy doesn't know about that."

They found Fang the boarhound sitting outside with a bandaged tail when they went to tell Hagrid, who opened a window to talk to them.

"I won't let you in," he puffed. "Norbert's at a tricky stage — nothin' I can't handle."

When they told him about Charlie's letter, his eyes filled with tears, although that might have been because Norbert had just bitten him on the leg.

"Aargh! It's all right, he only got my boot — jus' playin' — he's only a baby, after all."

The baby banged its tail on the wall, making the windows rattle. Harry and Hermione walked back to the castle feeling Saturday couldn't come quickly enough.