

Uncle Vernon grunted again.

"Would it be all right if you gave me a lift?"

Grunt. Harry supposed that meant yes.

"Thank you."

He was about to go back upstairs when Uncle Vernon actually spoke.

"Funny way to get to a wizards' school, the train. Magic carpets all got punctures, have they?"

Harry didn't say anything.

"Where is this school, anyway?"

"I don't know," said Harry, realizing this for the first time. He pulled the ticket Hagrid had given him out of his pocket.

"I just take the train from platform nine and three-quarters at eleven o'clock," he read.

His aunt and uncle stared.

"Platform what?"

"Nine and three-quarters."

"Don't talk rubbish," said Uncle Vernon. "There is no platform nine and three-quarters."

"It's on my ticket."

"Barking," said Uncle Vernon, "howling mad, the lot of them. You'll see. You just wait. All right, we'll take you to King's Cross. We're going up to London tomorrow anyway, or I wouldn't bother."

"Why are you going to London?" Harry asked, trying to keep things friendly.

"Taking Dudley to the hospital," growled Uncle Vernon. "Got to have that ruddy tail removed before he goes to Smeltings."