

She stopped to draw a deep breath and then went ranting on. It seemed she had been wanting to say all this for years.

"Then she met that Potter at school and they left and got married and had you, and of course I knew you'd be just the same, just as strange, just as — as — *abnormal* — and then, if you please, she went and got herself blown up and we got landed with you!"

Harry had gone very white. As soon as he found his voice he said, "Blown up? You told me they died in a car crash!"

"CAR CRASH!" roared Hagrid, jumping up so angrily that the Dursleys scuttled back to their corner. "How could a car crash kill Lily an' James Potter? It's an outrage! A scandal! Harry Potter not knowin' his own story when every kid in our world knows his name!"

"But why? What happened?" Harry asked urgently.

The anger faded from Hagrid's face. He looked suddenly anxious.

"I never expected this," he said, in a low, worried voice. "I had no idea, when Dumbledore told me there might be trouble gettin' hold of yeh, how much yeh didn't know. Ah, Harry, I don' know if I'm the right person ter tell yeh — but someone's gotta — yeh can't go off ter Hogwarts not knowin'."

He threw a dirty look at the Dursleys.

"Well, it's best yeh know as much as I can tell yeh — mind, I can't tell yeh everythin', it's a great mystery, parts of it. ..."

He sat down, stared into the fire for a few seconds, and then said, "It begins, I suppose, with — with a person called — but it's incredible yeh don't know his name, everyone in our world knows —"