

Rebellion Against Abusers of Power

There was a horrible smell in the kitchen the next morning when Harry went in for breakfast. It seemed to be coming from a large metal tub in the sink. He went to have a look. The tub was full of what looked like dirty rags swimming in gray water.

“What’s this?” he asked Aunt Petunia. Her lips tightened as they always did if he dared to ask a question.

“Your new school uniform,” she said.

Harry looked in the bowl again.

“Oh,” he said, “I didn’t realize it had to be so wet.”

*Book 1 (Sorcerer’s Stone),
Chapter 3 (The Letters From No One)*

“I know what day it is,” Dudley repeated, coming right up to him.

“Well done,” said Harry. “So you’ve finally learned the days of the week.”

*Book 2 (Chamber of Secrets),
Chapter 1 (The Worst Birthday)*

“Why were you lurking under our window?”

“Yes — yes, good point, Petunia! *What were you doing under our window, boy?*”

“Listening to the news,” said Harry in a resigned voice.

His aunt and uncle exchanged looks of outrage.

“Listening to the news! *Again?*”

“Well, it changes every day, you see,” said Harry.

*Book 5 (Order of the Phoenix),
Chapter 1 (Dudley Demented)*

“As I was saying, today we shall be practicing the altogether more difficult vanishment of mice. Now, the Vanishing Spell —”

“*Hem, hem.*”

“I wonder,” said Professor McGonagall in cold fury, turning on Professor Umbridge, “how you expect to gain an idea of my usual teaching methods if you continue to interrupt me? You see, I do not generally permit people to talk when I am talking.”

Professor Umbridge looked as though she had just been slapped in the face.

*Book 5 (Order of the Phoenix),
Chapter 15 (The Hogwarts High Inquisitor)*

“Yes,” said Harry stiffly.

“Yes, *sir.*”

“There’s no need to call me ‘sir,’ Professor.”

*Book 6 (Order of the Phoenix),
Chapter 9 (The Half-Blood Prince)*

He held out his hand, and Scrimgeour leaned forward again and placed the Snitch, slowly and deliberately, into Harry's palm.

Nothing happened. As Harry's fingers closed around the Snitch, its tired wings fluttered and were still. Scrimgeour, Ron, and Hermione continued to gaze avidly at the now partially concealed ball, as if still hoping it might transform in some way.

"That was dramatic," said Harry coolly.

*Book 7 (Deathly Hallows),
Chapter 7 (The Will of Albus Dumbledore)*

"Agreed," said Fred. "So, people, let's try and calm down a bit. Things are bad enough without inventing stuff as well. For instance, this new idea that You-Know-Who can kill with a single glance from his eyes. That's a basilisk, listeners. One simple test: Check whether the thing that's glaring at you has got legs. If it has, it's safe to look into its eyes, although if it really is You-Know-Who, that's still likely to be the last thing you ever do."

For the first time in weeks and weeks, Harry was laughing: He could feel the weight of tension leaving him.

"And the rumors that he keeps being sighted abroad?" asked Lee.

"Well, who wouldn't want a nice little holiday after all the hard work he's been putting in?" asked Fred. "Point is, people, don't get lulled into a false sense of security, thinking he's out of the country. Maybe he is, maybe he isn't, but the fact remains he can move faster than Severus Snape confronted with shampoo when he wants to, so don't count on him being a long way away if you're planning on taking any risks. I never thought I'd hear myself say it, but safety first!"

*Book 7 (Deathly Hallows),
Chapter 22 (The Deathly Hallows)*

Uncomfortable Truths

"But you're telling people, aren't you?" said Harry, looking around at Mr. Weasley, Sirius, Bill, Mundungus, Lupin, and Tonks. "You're letting people know he's back?"

They all smiled humorlessly.

"Well, as everyone thinks I'm a mad mass murderer and the Ministry's put a ten-thousand-Galleon price on my head, I can hardly stroll up the street and start handing out leaflets, can I?" said Sirius restlessly.

"And I'm not a very popular dinner guest with most of the community," said Lupin. "It's an occupational hazard of being a werewolf."

*Book 5 (Order of the Phoenix),
Chapter 5 (The Order of the Phoenix)*

Subverting Expectations

“A fine thing it would be if, on the very day You-Know-Who seems to have disappeared at last, the Muggles found out about us all. I suppose he really *has* gone, Dumbledore?”

“It certainly seems so,” said Dumbledore. “We have much to be thankful for. Would you care for a lemon drop?”

“A *what?*”

“A lemon drop. They’re a kind of Muggle sweet I’m rather fond of.”

“No, thank you,” said Professor McGonagall coldly, as though she didn’t think this was the moment for lemon drops.

*Book 1 (Sorcerer’s Stone),
Chapter 1 (The Boy Who Lived)*

“Ah, of course,” said Professor McGonagall, suddenly frowning. “There is no need to say any more, Miss Granger. Tell me, which of you will be dying this year?”

Everyone stared at her.

“Me,” said Harry, finally.

“I see,” said Professor McGonagall, fixing Harry with her beady eyes. “Then you should know, Potter, that Sibyll Trelawney has predicted the death of one student a year since she arrived at this school. None of them has died yet. Seeing death omens is her favorite way of greeting a new class. If it were not for the fact that I never speak ill of my colleagues —”

...

“You look in excellent health to me, Potter, so you will excuse me if I don’t let you off homework today. I assure you that if you die, you need not hand it in.”

*Book 3 (Prisoner of Azkaban),
Chapter 6 (Talons and Tea Leaves)*

“Mr. Malfoy then saw an extraordinary apparition. Can you imagine what it might have been, Potter?”

“No,” said Harry, now trying to sound innocently curious.

“It was your head, Potter. Floating in midair.”

There was a long silence.

“Maybe he’d better go to Madam Pomfrey,” said Harry. “If he’s seeing things like —”

“What would your head have been doing in Hogsmeade, Potter?” said Snape softly. “Your head is not allowed in Hogsmeade. No part of your body has permission to be in Hogsmeade.”

“I know that,” said Harry, striving to keep his face free of guilt or fear. “It sounds like Malfoy’s having hallucin —”

“Malfoy is not having hallucinations,” snarled Snape, and he bent down, a hand on each arm of Harry’s chair, so that their faces were a foot apart. “If your head was in Hogsmeade, so was the rest of you.”

*Book 3 (Prisoner of Azkaban),
Chapter 14 (Snape's Grudge)*

"... It is my very great pleasure to inform you that the Triwizard Tournament will be taking place at Hogwarts this year."

"You're JOKING!" said Fred Weasley loudly.

The tension that had filled the Hall ever since Moody's arrival suddenly broke. Nearly everyone laughed, and Dumbledore chuckled appreciatively.

"I am not joking, Mr. Weasley," he said, "though now that you mention it, I did hear an excellent one over the summer about a troll, a hag, and a leprechaun who all go into a bar . . ."

Professor McGonagall cleared her throat loudly.

"Er — but maybe this is not the time . . . no . . ." said Dumbledore, "where was I? Ah yes, the Triwizard Tournament . . ."

*Book 4 (Goblet of Fire),
Chapter 12 (The Triwizard Tournament)*

"Of course we still want to know you!" Harry said, staring at Hagrid. "You don't think anything that Skeeter cow — sorry, Professor," he added quickly, looking at Dumbledore.

"I have gone temporarily deaf and haven't any idea what you said, Harry," said Dumbledore, twiddling his thumbs and staring at the ceiling.

"Er — right," said Harry sheepishly.

*Book 4 (Goblet of Fire),
Chapter 24 (Rita Skeeter's Scoop)*

"Well?" said Professor McGonagall, rounding on him. "Is this true?"

"Is what true?" Harry asked, rather more aggressively than he had intended. "Professor?" he added in an attempt to sound more polite.

"Is it true that you shouted at Professor Umbridge?"

"Yes," said Harry.

"You called her a liar?"

"Yes."

"You told her He-Who-Must-Not-Be-Named is back?"

"Yes."

Professor McGonagall sat down behind her desk, frowning at Harry. Then she said, "Have a biscuit, Potter."

*Book 5 (Order of the Phoenix),
Chapter 12 (Professor Umbridge)*

None of the staff but Filch seemed to be stirring themselves to help [Umbridge]. Indeed, a week after Fred and George's departure Harry witnessed Professor McGonagall walking right past Peeves, who was determinedly loosening a crystal chandelier, and could have sworn he heard her tell the poltergeist out of the corner of her mouth, "It unscrews the other way."

*Book 5 (Order of the Phoenix),
Chapter 30 (Grawp)*

Skewering Unlikable Characters

There was only one way to get out a book from the Restricted Section: You needed a signed note of permission from a teacher.

"Hard to see why we'd want the book, really," said Ron, "if we weren't going to try and make one of the potions."

"I think," said Hermione, "that if we made it sound as though we were just interested in the theory, we might stand a chance. . . ."

"Oh, come on, no teacher's going to fall for that," said Ron. "They'd have to be really thick. . . ."

[next chapter starts]

Since the disastrous episode of the pixies, Professor Lockhart had not brought live creatures to class. . . .

*Book 2 (Chamber of Secrets),
Chapter 9 (Gilderoy Lockhart) & Chapter 10 (The Rogue Bludger)*

Professor Trelawney rustled past.

"Would anyone like me to help them interpret the shadowy portents within their Orb?" she murmured over the clinking of her bangles.

"I don't need help," Ron whispered. "It's obvious what this means. There's going to be loads of fog tonight."

Both Harry and Hermione burst out laughing.

*Book 3 (Prisoner of Azkaban),
Chapter 15 (The Quidditch Final)*

"What — what are you doing?" said Professor McGonagall, her eyes following the bouncing ferret's progress through the air.

"Teaching," said Moody.

"Teach — Moody, *is that a student?*" shrieked Professor McGonagall, the books spilling out of her arms.

"Yep," said Moody.

*Book 4 (Goblet of Fire),
Chapter 13 (Mad-Eye Moody)*

“You’re joking, Weasley!” said Malfoy, behind them. “You’re not telling me someone’s asked *that* to the ball? Not the long-molared Mudblood?”

Harry and Ron both whipped around, but Hermione said loudly, waving to somebody over Malfoy’s shoulder, “Hello, Professor Moody!”

Malfoy went pale and jumped backward, looking wildly around for Moody, but he was still up at the staff table, finishing his stew.

“Twitchy little ferret, aren’t you, Malfoy?” said Hermione scathingly, and she, Harry, and Ron went up the marble staircase laughing heartily.

*Book 4 (Goblet of Fire),
Chapter 23 (The Yule Ball)*

“. . . If he had not forgiven we who lost faith at that time, he would have very few followers left.”

“He’d have me!” said Bellatrix passionately. “I, who spent many years in Azkaban for him!”

“Yes, indeed, most admirable,” said Snape in a bored voice. “Of course, you weren’t a lot of use to him in prison, but the gesture was undoubtedly fine —”

*Book 6 (Half-Blood Prince),
Chapter 2 (Spinner’s End)*

Throwbacks / Defusing Tension

“How d’you spell ‘belligerent?’” said Ron, shaking his quill very hard while staring at his parchment. “It can’t be B — U — M —”

“No, it isn’t,” said Hermione, pulling Ron’s essay toward her. “And ‘augury’ doesn’t begin O — R — G either. What kind of quill are you using?”

“It’s one of Fred and George’s Spell-Check ones . . . but I think the charm must be wearing off. . . .”

“Yes, it must,” said Hermione, pointing at the title of his essay, “because we were asked how we’d deal with dementors, not ‘Dugbogs,’ and I don’t remember you changing your name to ‘Roonil Wazlib’ either.”

“Ah no!” said Ron, staring horror-struck at the parchment. “Don’t say I’ll have to write the whole thing out again!”

“It’s okay, we can fix it,” said Hermione, pulling the essay toward her and taking out her wand.

*Book 6 (Half-Blood Prince),
Chapter 21 (The Unknowable Room)*

“This is your copy of *Advanced Potion-Making*, is it, Potter?”

“Yes,” said Harry, still breathing hard.

“You’re quite sure of that, are you, Potter?”

“Yes,” said Harry, with a touch more defiance.

“This is the copy of *Advanced Potion-Making* that you purchased from Flourish and Blotts?”

“Yes,” said Harry firmly.

“Then why,” asked Snape, “does it have the name ‘Roonil Wazlib’ written inside the front cover?” Harry’s heart missed a beat. “That’s my nickname,” he said.

“Your nickname,” repeated Snape.

“Yeah . . . that’s what my friends call me,” said Harry.

“I understand what a nickname is,” said Snape.

*Book 6 (Half-Blood Prince),
Chapter 24 (Sectumsempra)*

Highlighting Quirks & Flaws of Likable Characters

“What’ve we got this afternoon?” said Harry, hastily changing the subject.

“Defense Against the Dark Arts,” said Hermione at once.

“*Why*,” demanded Ron, seizing her schedule, “have you outlined all Lockhart’s lessons in little hearts?”

Hermione snatched the schedule back, blushing furiously.

*Book 2 (Chamber of Secrets),
Chapter 6 (Gilderoy Lockhart)*

... Professor McGonagall standing up to tell them all that the exams had been canceled as a school treat (“Oh, *no!*” said Hermione) ...

*Book 2 (Chamber of Secrets),
Chapter 18 (Dobby’s Reward)*

Percy, however, held out his hand solemnly as though he and Harry had never met and said, “Harry. How nice to see you.”

“Hello, Percy,” said Harry, trying not to laugh.

“I hope you’re well?” said Percy pompously, shaking hands. It was rather like being introduced to the mayor.

“Very well, thanks —”

“Harry!” said Fred, elbowing Percy out of the way and bowing deeply. “Simply *splendid* to see you, old boy —”

“Marvelous,” said George, pushing Fred aside and seizing Harry’s hand in turn. “Absolutely spiffing.”

Percy scowled.

“That’s enough, now,” said Mrs. Weasley.

“Mum!” said Fred as though he’d only just spotted her and seizing her hand too. “How really corking to see you —”

*Book 3 (Prisoner of Azkaban),
Chapter 4 (The Leaky Cauldron)*

But Ron was staring at Hermione as though suddenly seeing her in a whole new light.

“Hermione, Neville’s right — you *are* a girl. . . .”

“Oh well spotted,” she said acidly.

*Book 4 (Goblet of Fire),
Chapter 22 (The Unexpected Task)*

Mrs. Weasley let out a shriek just like Hermione’s.

“I don’t believe it! I don’t believe it! Oh, Ron, how wonderful! A prefect! That’s everyone in the family!”

“What are Fred and I, next-door neighbors?” said George indignantly, as his mother pushed him aside and flung her arms around her youngest son.

*Book 5 (Order of the Phoenix),
Chapter 9 (The Woes of Mrs. Weasley)*

“Okay, write that down,” Hermione said to Ron, pushing his essay and a sheet covered in her own writing back to Ron, “and then copy out this conclusion that I’ve written for you.”

“Hermione, you are honestly the most wonderful person I’ve ever met,” said Ron weakly, “and if I’m ever rude to you again —”

“— I’ll know you’re back to normal,” said Hermione.

*Book 5 (Order of the Phoenix),
Chapter 14 (Percy and Padfoot)*

“Ron and Ginny say you’ve been hiding from everyone since you got back from St. Mungo’s.”

“They do, do they?” said Harry, glaring at Ron and Ginny. Ron looked down at his feet but Ginny seemed quite unabashed.

“Well, you have!” she said. “And you won’t look at any of us!”

“It’s you lot who won’t look at me!” said Harry angrily.

“Maybe you’re taking it in turns to look and keep missing each other,” suggested Hermione, the corners of her mouth twitching.

*Book 5 (Order of the Phoenix),
Chapter 23 (Christmas on the Closed Ward)*

“I’m going to have to do this tomorrow,” he muttered, pushing the books he had just taken out of his bag back inside it.

“Well, write it in your homework planner then!” said Hermione encouragingly. “So you don’t forget!”

Harry and Ron exchanged looks as he reached into his bag, withdrew the planner and opened it tentatively.

“*Don’t leave it till later, you big second-rater!*” chided the book as Harry scribbled down Umbridge’s homework. Hermione beamed at it.

“I think I’ll go to bed,” said Harry, stuffing the homework planner back into his bag and making a mental note to drop it in the fire the first opportunity he got.

*Book 5 (Order of the Phoenix),
Chapter 24 (Occulmency)*

Perplexed, Ron followed Harry back to the Gryffindor Tower at a run. They were temporarily detained by Peeves, who had jammed a door on the fourth floor shut and was refusing to let anyone pass until they set fire to their own pants, but Harry and Ron simply turned back and took one of their trusted shortcuts. Within five minutes, they were climbing through the portrait hole.

...

“Well, I’m keeping an eye on him from now on,” he said firmly. “And the moment I see him lurking somewhere with Crabbe and Goyle keeping watch outside, it’ll be on with the old Invisibility Cloak and off to find out what he’s —”

He broke off as Neville entered the dormitory, bringing with him a strong smell of singed material, and began rummaging in his trunk for a fresh pair of pants.

*Book 6 (Half-Blood Prince),
Chapter 21 (The Unknowable Room)*

From inside his cloak Moody now withdrew a flask of what looked like mud. There was no need for him to say another word; Harry understood the rest of the plan immediately.

“No!” he said loudly, his voice ringing through the kitchen. “No way!”

“I told them you’d take it like this,” said Hermione with a hint of complacency.

“If you think I’m going to let six people risk their lives — !”

“— because it’s the first time for all of us,” said Ron.

“This is different, pretending to be me —”

“Well, none of us really fancy it, Harry,” said Fred earnestly. “Imagine if something went wrong and we were stuck as specky, scrawny gits forever.”

Harry did not smile.

“You can’t do it if I don’t cooperate, you need me to give you some hair.”

“Well, that’s that plan scuppered,” said George. “Obviously there’s no chance at all of us getting a bit of your hair unless you cooperate.”

“Yeah, thirteen of us against one bloke who’s not allowed to use magic; we’ve got no chance,” said Fred.

“Funny,” said Harry, “really amusing.”

*Book 7 (Deathly Hallows),
Chapter 4 (The Seven Potters)*

Highlighting Differences in Cultures & Perspectives

There was already a small queue for the tap in the corner of the field. Harry, Ron, and Hermione joined it, right behind a pair of men who were having a heated argument. One of them was a very old wizard who was wearing a long flowery nightgown. The other was clearly a Ministry wizard; he was holding out a pair of pinstriped trousers and almost crying with exasperation.

“Just put them on, Archie, there’s a good chap. You can’t walk around like that, the Muggle at the gate’s already getting suspicious —”

“I bought this in a Muggle shop,” said the old wizard stubbornly. “Muggles wear them.”

“Muggle *women* wear them, Archie, not the men, they wear *these*,” said the Ministry wizard, and he brandished the pinstriped trousers.

“I’m not putting them on,” said old Archie in indignation. “I like a healthy breeze ’round my privates, thanks.”

*Book 4 (Goblet of Fire),
Chapter 7 (Bagman and Crouch)*

“And as for this book,” said Hermione, “*The Tales of Beedle the Bard* . . . I’ve never even heard of them!”

“You’ve never heard of *The Tales of Beedle the Bard*?” said Ron incredulously. “You’re kidding, right?”

“No, I’m not!” said Hermione in surprise. “Do you know them, then?”

“Well, of course I do!”

Harry looked up, diverted. The circumstance of Ron having read a book that Hermione had not was unprecedented. Ron, however, looked bemused by their surprise.

“Oh come on! All the old kids’ stories are supposed to be Beedle’s, aren’t they? ‘The Fountain of Fair Fortune’ . . . ‘The Wizard and the Hopping Pot’ . . . ‘Babbitty Rabbitty and her Cackling Stump’ . . .”

“Excuse me?” said Hermione, giggling. “What was that last one?”

“Come off it!” said Ron, looking in disbelief from Harry to Hermione. “You must’ve heard of Babbitty Rabbitty —”

“Ron, you know full well Harry and I were brought up by Muggles!” said Hermione. “We didn’t hear stories like that when we were little, we heard ‘Snow White and the Seven Dwarfs’ and ‘Cinderella’ —”

“What’s that, an illness?” asked Ron.

*Book 7 (Deathly Hallows),
Chapter 7 (The Will of Albus Dumbledore)*