

Harry Potter and the Cursed Child Study Guide

Harry Potter and the Cursed Child by J.K. Rowling, Jack Thorne, and John Tiffany

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Plot Summary

The following version of this book was used to create this study guide: Rowlings, J.K.; Tiffany, John; Thorne, Jack. *Harry Potter and the Cursed Child*. Arthur A. Levine Books, 2016, Kindle AZW file.

Albus Potter has grown up in the shadow of his father's fame and he struggles to find his way as a youngster and then as a teenager. His relationship with his father is difficult as neither is really able to communicate and both feel the pressure of failing in their family duties. Naturally, Albus rebels and finds himself in trouble, but the trouble is multiplied by the magical nature of his world.

This novel takes place more than 20 years after Harry Potter's adventures at Hogwarts. He and his friends have grown up and entered adult lives, careers, and families in the magical world. Harry and Ginny Weasley are married and have three children, Albus, James, and Lily. Harry has a job in the the Ministry of Magic's office. Hermione Granger and Ron Weasley are married and have two children, one son and a daughter named Rose.

There are the typical arguments and teasing between siblings as Albus and James head off for their magical training at Hogwarts School of Witchcraft and Wizardry. The first years pass quickly. Albus is named to the Slytherin House and feels that puts him in a poor light considering his father's past. He has a chance meeting with a boy named Scorpius Malfoy, the son of Draco Malfoy, and they immediately recognize their mutual need for friendship. Scorpius deals with the rumors that he might be the son of Voldemort, which makes him a pariah among the other students.

While home on break, Albus overhears Harry talking to an old man named Amos Diggory. Amos wants Harry to use a Time-Turner to go back in time and save Cedric Diggory, Amos's only son. Harry refuses. Albus convinces Scorpius to steal the Time-Turner and to go back in time. They enlist the help of Delphi, the woman they believe to be Amos's niece. She claims to offer to help because Cedric is her cousin and she wants to save his life. Their first trip back in time changes things slightly, and they go back a second time with a better plan that they hope will achieve the desired results. When Scorpius returns to the present for the second time he discovers that Albus does not exist because Harry died and that the world is filled with Darkness ruled by Voldemort. He finds that Professor Snape is alive and enlists the help of Snape, Hermione, and Ron to set things right.

When Albus and Scorpius return again, they are in trouble with their parents and the school administrators. Scorpius reveals that he has the Time-Turner and the boys decide they need to destroy it. Before they can accomplish that, Delphi steals it and announces that she plans to go back in time to ensure that Voldemort succeeds in ruling the magical world. They soon learn that she is Voldemort's daughter.



Delphi goes back in time to 1981, when Voldemort killed Harry's parents. That event gave Harry power and weakened Voldemort. Scorpius and Albus travel with her but are unable to stop her from destroying the Time-Turner, leaving them all stranded in 1981. Albus manages to send a message to Harry. Draco Malfoy has a second Time-Turner, though it is illegal to own one. Harry, Ginny, Hermione, Ron, and Draco travel to 1981, where they defeat Delphi. They are then forced to stand by while Voldemort murders Harry's parents.

Back in the present, Harry and Albus begin to work on their relationship. Both realize it will be a difficult road but pledge to try.



Act One, Scenes One through Seven

Summary

“Act One, Scene One” is set at “King's Cross,” a busy train station. People are rushing around as James and Albus Potter push their trolleys toward a spot between two platforms where the boys will board a magical train. As they walk, Albus asks his mother, Ginny, if she will remember to write to him. She promises. Harry Potter is also with the group, with his daughter Lily on his shoulders. Harry reminds them that they cannot hesitate once they reach the barrier between platforms, and the family runs toward the spot together.

“Act One, Scene Two” is set at “Platform Nine and Three-Quarters.” There is steam all over the platform from the Hogwarts Express, a magical train already on the track. This platform is also busy, but it is filled with families of witches and wizards, all working on their good-byes as their children prepare to board the train.

Lily is excited and begins to search immediately for Ron and Hermione, and their daughter, Rose. Lily rushes toward them and Ron picks her up, performing his version of a nose trick.

Albus asks Harry what will happen if he winds up in Slytherin. Harry says there is nothing wrong with Slytherin, but that the Sorting Hat will listen if it matters so much to Albus. Harry, knowing that Albus is nervous, promises that Hogwarts will be a positive experience. Hermione asks Rose to “send Neville our love,” but Rose says that is an unacceptable message for a professor. Albus hugs his parents again before boarding.

Harry, Hermione, Ginny, and Ron stand on the platform for a few minutes talking. Harry is curious that Albus expressed concern about Slytherin. Ginny asks Harry how he would feel if that happens. Ron says there were some who thought Ginny might be placed in Slytherin, which surprises her. Hermione points out that people are staring at them and suggests they leave. Ginny responds that everyone always stares at Hermione, Ron, and Harry, wherever they are and regardless of who they are with. As they leave, Ginny asks Harry once more for assurance that Albus and James will be alright, and Harry gives it.

“Act One, Scene Three” takes place on the “Hogwarts Express.” Rose tells Albus that they have to figure out who they are going to befriend. She points out that Hermione, Ron, and Harry all met on their first trip aboard the Hogwarts Express, and uses that to reason that they might find their life-long friends during this ride. She suggests they evaluate everyone they meet and then make a choice.

The first person Albus sees is Scorpius Malfoy. He is in a room all alone. He offers Albus some candy. Albus is captivated because Ginny does not let him have sweets. Rose tries to get Albus's attention but Scorpius is the one who realizes she is trying to get



Albus to leave. Scorpius says he knows who they are and announces that his parents are Astoria and Draco Malfoy. Rose already knows, and says that his parents are Death Eaters. Scorpius says his father was, but that his mother was not. Rose then mentions the rumor around Scorpius's parentage. Scorpius says the rumor is that Draco and Draco's father were desperate for a strong male heir and used a Time-Turner to send Astoria back in time, and that Voldemort is Scorpius's father.

Albus does not give the rumor any credence. Scorpius says he and his father have issues, but he would still rather be Draco's son than Voldemort's. Rose again says they have to leave, but Albus and Scorpius have connected on a basic level and Albus remains. After Rose leaves, Scorpius thanks Albus for staying. Albus says he did so because Scorpius has candy. They begin to eat some and Scorpius thanks Albus for staying to share his candy.

“Act One, Scene Four” is a Transition Scene. Several students at Hogwarts are excited to have Albus in their grade because he is Harry Potter's son. The Sorting Hat chooses Gryffindor for Rose and Slytherin for Scorpius, then hesitates before also choosing Slytherin for Albus. Everyone is confused, including Albus. The scene changes to flying lessons with Madam Hooch. Albus is the only one unable to get his broom to fly. A girl named Polly Chapman says he is nothing like his father.

The scene changes again and the family is on the train platform. A year has passed. Albus wants Harry to stand away from him. Harry says people are looking at Harry, not at Albus. Albus says they are looking at Harry and his “disappointing son.” (Act One, Scene Four, Location 277) James passes by, making a joke about Slytherins who are “dithering.” Harry tells James to stop but he is already gone. Harry is concerned and suggests that Albus expand his base of friends but Albus says he only needs Scorpius, even though he knows Harry does not approve of their friendship. Albus leaves and Draco appears, asking Harry to put a stop to the rumors that Voldemort is Scorpius's biological father. He says Scorpius is struggling on several fronts, including his mother's ill health. Harry refuses, saying there have been similar rumors about other children for years. He says Draco should ignore those who gossip.

The scene changes to the Great Hall where Professor McGonagall announces that Rose has been named to the Gryffindor Quidditch team. The next scene is Albus and Scorpius struggling through an assignment in potions class.

The scene returns to the train station. Everyone has aged another year. Harry has heard that Albus is isolated and does not apply himself to his schoolwork. Albus is angry and suggests Harry use some magic to change him into a better person. On the train, Scorpius tells Albus that his mother is dead. Albus asks what he can do and Scorpius says he just needs a friend. At Hogwarts, the Sorting Hat puts Lily Potter in Gryffindor. Scorpius is not surprised and Albus says he is the only Potter who belongs in Slytherin.

“Act One, Scene Five” takes place at the Ministry of Magic, Harry's Office. Hermione is at Harry's desk, sorting through piles of paper. When Harry enters, he confirms that they have arrested a man named Theodore Nott who had a Time-Turner in his possession.



He asks if she is really going to keep the device and she says she feels she has to. They talk about Harry's unread paperwork and Hermione cites events that could be part of a larger picture, such as giants in the Greek seas and trolls in Hungary. Hermione points out that these creatures are "allies of darkness" who fought with Voldemort.

They talk briefly about their families. Harry says his parenting skills are no better than his ability to keep up with his paperwork. Hermione says Ron believes she spends more time with her secretary than her family. She urges Harry to go home so he can return fresh. Harry goes to a phone booth where he dials the number 62442. The telephone booth calls him by name and Harry ascends out of the Ministry.

"Act One, Scene Six" takes place in "Harry and Ginny Potter's House." A man named Amos Diggory is at the door. He asks if Harry remembers Amos's son, Cedric, who was killed by Voldemort because he was with Harry. Harry remembers clearly. Amos says he knows the Ministry of Magic has a Time-Turner and he wants to use it to save Cedric's life. Harry says the Time-Turner is just a rumor.

Albus listens to all this from the stairs. A young woman appears and tells Albus that she is Amos's niece and caregiver. She says they live at St. Oswald's Home for Old Witches and Wizards, located at Upper Flagley. Amos calls for Delphi and they leave.

"Act One, Scene Seven" takes place at "Harry and Ginny Potter's House, Albus's Room." There is a commotion outside the room. James appears with pink hair, the result of a joke by Ron. He talks about the invisibility cloak, which was a back-to-school gift from Harry. Harry arrives in Albus's room. He says he wanted to give Albus something special as a back-to-school gift as well, and he presents him with a worn blanket, saying it was the only thing he possesses that belonged to his parents. He talks about the comfort he gets from holding it on Hallows' Eve, the anniversary of his parents' deaths, and suggests that he and Albus might find some common ground through that blanket. Albus says the blanket was a ridiculous gift, which hurts Harry. He continues to try to reach out but Albus grows increasingly rude, saying he wishes Harry was not his father. Harry says he sometimes wishes Albus was not his son. Harry immediately wants to take the words back, but cannot. Albus throws the blanket, which tips over a bottle of love potion that was his back-to-school gift from Ron. The potion spills on the blanket. Albus runs out of the room and Harry goes after him.

Analysis

There is a great deal of information in the first two chapters but there is also a lot taken for granted. The writers assume that their readers (and audience) will have a working knowledge of the main characters. Hermione mentions Neville and Rose responds with information that he is a professor. That is obviously meant to let the reader know that Neville is alive and well, and teaching at Hogwarts. He does not appear in this play but is mentioned again in a later scene.



The past histories and attributes of the main characters are among the pieces of information the writers expect the readers to already know. For example, Hermione talks about Rose's ambitions and Ron says that he cannot imagine why she is so ambitious. The words are sarcasm but the play does not go so far as to give diction directions for lines like this. The reader who is familiar with Hermione will know that she was always overly ambitious and that Ron's words were obviously sarcastic.

The reference to Slytherin and the Sorting Hat are more examples of the writers bringing previous information into the story without full explanations. Slytherin has a reputation for being the house where all the dark wizards landed, though there were also some good wizards in that house. Draco Malfoy was a member of Slytherin. The reader will note that the Sorting Hat hesitates before placing Albus in the Slytherin house.

Albus is worried that he might wind up in Slytherin, apparently because he knows the house's reputation and does not want to let Harry down. Harry assures Albus that the Sorting Hat will take Albus's feelings into consideration, just as it had done for Harry. There is no way to know the Sorting Hat's thoughts about placing Albus, but the hat hesitates, indicating that there is some question to sort through. That could be an indication that Albus does not really want to go to Slytherin on one level, but that he also wants to be in Slytherin with his new friend Scorpius.

There is no doubt that Albus is struggling from his first year in Hogwarts. He has trouble with magic, which is unfortunate because everyone expects more from Harry Potter's son than if Albus's father was an ordinary wizard. The reader sees an important strength in Albus from his first moments on the Hogwarts Express when Rose insists they leave but Albus decides to remain with Scorpius. That decision puts Albus at a bigger disadvantage.

Sugar is an issue for some of the characters. Harry refuses a toffee from Hermione, saying the family is off sugar at the moment. Hermione asks Harry not to tell Ron that she is eating sweets. Albus is interested in the sweets on the Hogwarts Express from the moment of his arrival. All these things are normal, human reactions to a family that is facing everyday questions, such as how to eat healthier foods. The point is that they are magical families, but they are still families with many of the typical problems and faults. That makes it clear that Harry and Albus, despite being members of a magical and famous family, might struggle in their relationship just like fathers and sons sometimes do.

It is obvious from the first look at Scorpius that he is desperate for a friend. When Albus enters the room where Scorpius is sitting by himself, Scorpius offers Albus and Rose some candy. In the true nature of someone who is so desperate, he says his mother suggested that sharing candy could be the key to making friends. He even sings that little piece of advice. Interestingly, he realizes that he's made a social mistake and comments on his lack of forethought. Also interestingly, Albus does not walk away. The boys forge an immediate connection that creates what will likely be a life-long friendship.



Much later, Draco tells Harry that Scorpius's mother, Astoria, was never strong enough to have a child but that she wanted to be sure Draco was not left alone after she died. Her illness weighs on Scorpius from his early childhood. Scorpius is also fighting the rumors that he is Voldemort's biological child and the stories about the ill deeds of his father and grandfather. With all those things, it seems that Scorpius could become an angry young man who cares only about himself. That does not turn out to be the case at all. That gives the reader a true look at his caring nature and makes him a stronger character than he initially appears.

Delphi makes an immediate connection with Albus. She asks if he is awed by his father but Albus, already struggling with his relationship with Harry, makes it clear that he is not. Delphi points out Amos and says that no one gets to choose their relatives. That hits home for Albus at a time when he really needs someone to understand. It is only much later that he will realize that she made that comment strictly for the purpose of manipulating Albus.

The scene in which Harry gives Albus the blanket becomes significant later in the play, which explains why there are so many details about the events that occur in that room. This is one of several pieces of subtle foreshadowing, though some of them – like this scene – are so subtle that readers might not recognize them as significant until later.

Discussion Question 1

What are the challenges Scorpius faces during his first year at Hogwarts? What are the rumors about his parentage?

Discussion Question 2

Describe the relationship between Harry and Albus. What seems to be at the heart of their problems? Does this sound like a typical father-son relationship?

Discussion Question 3

Who is Delphi? What does she say that forges an instant connection with Albus?

Vocabulary

trolley, glare, accusingly, progeny, beloved, barreling, certified, glorious, extremely, legendary, resonates, carriage, concentrate, shards, discombobulated, alluringly



Act One, Scenes Eight through Nineteen

Summary

“Act One, Scene Eight” takes place as a “Dream, Hut-On-The-Rock.” Harry is dreaming about the day in Harry’s childhood when Hagrid appeared at the home of Aunt Petunia, Uncle Vernon, and Dudley Dursley. Hagrid bursts through the door and addresses Harry. Hagrid asks Harry what he knows about his future, including Hogwarts. Harry says he knows nothing which infuriates Hagrid. Hagrid says Harry is a famous wizard. The dream is interrupted by Voldemort’s voice calling out to Harry.

“Act One, Scene Nine” takes place in “Harry and Ginny Potter’s House, Bedroom.” Harry wakes in a panic with pain in the scar on his forehead. Ginny wakes as well and casts a spell to light the room. Ginny is concerned. They talk about Albus. She says she knows Harry will apologize for what he said to their son. She says that Albus really needs to see the “real” Harry rather than the front Harry uses with the rest of the world. Harry’s scar hurts more and he gasps. Ginny asks how long it has been since his scar hurt. He lies, saying that it was more than 20 years earlier.

“Act One, Scene Ten” takes place on “The Hogwarts Express.” Rose and Albus are beginning their fourth year of school. Rose says she wants to be friends with Albus again. Albus says they were never friends, which Rose says is mean. She tells Albus that the Ministry of Magic conducted a raid and that Harry was “brave.” Albus says he never knows what is going on with his father. Rose then says that Harry confiscated a Time-Turner. Albus grows suspicious of Rose’s motivation and she admits that Ginny talked to Ron.

Albus refuses to listen any longer and walks away. Rose follows him to the car he always shares with Scorpius. Albus asks Scorpius about the Triwizard Tournament and Scorpius gives him information, including that it has not been held since Voldemort killed Cedric Diggory during a tournament that included Harry. Albus knows some of the story from the conversation between Harry and Amos. Voldemort encountered Cedric and decided to kill the “spare” wizard because he really just wanted to kill Harry. Albus says that Harry lied to Amos about having the Time-Turner because Harry does not care that Cedric died. Albus says that everyone talks about how wonderful Harry is, but the truth is that Harry made errors during his life, just like everyone else. Albus plans to get off the train, find the Time-Turner, and save Cedric, and he asks Scorpius to go with him.

“Act One, Scene Eleven” is set on the “Roof of the Hogwarts Express.” Albus believes they will soon be near some water and that would be the perfect place to jump, just in case their cushioning spell does not work. Albus is concerned. Just then, the Trolley Witch appears on top of the train. She says she has handed out sweets on the train since the beginning of Hogwarts, which Scorpius knows is 190 years, and that she has never allowed anyone to get off the train. Her fingers transform to spikes but Albus



jumps, casting his spell as he does. Scorpius tells the Trolley Witch that he has to go with his friend, and jumps after Albus.

“Act One, Scene Twelve,” takes place at the “Ministry of Magic, Grand Meeting Room.” Hermione calls a meeting to order. She says Voldemort’s allies have been moving in recent months and asks if any has seen anything suspicious. Professor McGonagall says someone had taken some minor items from the potions store at Hogwarts over the summer, but that none of them were controlled substances. Draco points out that Voldemort is dead but Hermione says they have reason to believe that “some trace of Voldemort” might be present. (Act One, Scene Twelve, Location 786) Harry asks anyone with a Dark Mark to report any feelings of unrest. Draco accuses Harry of trying to stir up trouble to put himself back at the center of attention. Draco then says that all the meeting will accomplish is to again give rise to rumors about Scorpius. He leaves and some others follow.

“Act One, Scene Thirteen” takes place at “St. Oswald’s Home for Old Witches and Wizards.” There is chaos until the moment Albus says they want to see Amos. Someone refers to him as “that miserable old sod.” (Act One, Scene Thirteen, Location 820) Delphi appears and invites them to visit Amos.

“Act One, Scene Fourteen” takes place at “St. Oswald’s Home for Old Witches and Wizards, Amos’s Room.” Amos is not receptive. He says Albus is interfering in someone else’s business based on a conversation he heard by eavesdropping. He says he read that Albus is in the Slytherin house and suggests Albus might be involved in Dark Magic. Albus argues that there is blood on Harry’s hands and that Albus only wants to correct one of the many tragedies in Harry’s past. Amos is adamant until Delphi points out that Albus and Scorpius are the only ones offering to help. Amos gives in.

“Act One, Scene Fifteen” takes place at “Harry and Ginny Potter’s House, Kitchen.” Harry, Hermione, Ron, and Ginny are eating together and talking about Draco’s accusation that the Ministry of Magic is perpetuating the rumors about Scorpius’s parentage. They talk about the possibility that something Dark could be happening. Ron said that it could also be coincidence – that the trolls in Hungary might just be traveling to a get-together and that Harry’s scar might hurt because he is getting old.

An owl flies in, dropping a letter on Harry’s plate and putting a halt to the conversation. The letter announces that Albus and Scorpius left the train and did not arrive at Hogwarts.

“Act One, Scene Sixteen” takes place at “Whitehall, Cellar.” Delphi has created a Polyjuice potion that she, Albus, and Scorpius consume. The potion will transform them to look like Hermione, Ron, and Harry, respectively, so they can gain access to the Ministry of Magic. The transformation is painful but they manage to get through it and enter the phone booth where they enter the numbers 62442. The phone booth recognizes them by name and takes them inside the Ministry of Magic.



“Act One, Scene Seventeen,” takes place at the “Ministry of Magic, Meeting Room.” Hermione, Ginny, Harry, and Draco are discussing the situation and the possibilities, including that Dark Magic could be involved. Ginny brings up Harry's argument with Albus and Harry admits that he was cruel. Draco pledges to use anything the Malfoys have to get Scorpius back. As he leaves, he says that Harry may have saved the world, but has been “a constant curse on my family” (Act One, Scene Seventeen, Location 988).

“Act One, Scene Eighteen” takes place in the “Ministry of Magic, Corridor.” Delphi, Albus, and Scorpius, still disguised as Hermione, Ron, and Harry, are making their way to Hermione's office where Delphi is certain the Time-Turner is hidden. They hear the real Hermione and Harry approaching and tell Albus that he has to stall them. Disguised as Ron, Albus is the only one who can stall them. He is ridiculous with his tactics but manages to keep them out of Hermione's office.

“Act One, Scene Nineteen” takes place in the “Ministry of Magic, Hermione's Office.” They soon discover that the Time-Turner is hidden in the bookshelf, protected by a riddle. Delphi and Albus are sucked into the bookshelf and tossed around, sometimes in the room for a brief moment. Scorpius manages to solve the riddle and they find the Time-Turner.

Analysis

Scorpius has a crush on Rose. His feelings are obvious from his first meetings with her. He applauds when she is named to the Quidditch team, though Albus does not. Scorpius, however, is rather backwards socially and has trouble talking every time Rose is in the room. At one point, he tells her that she smells good. When she is confused, he says she smells like bread. Later, Rose calls him “bread-head,” which would likely become a joke between them. Some readers will find this and other scenes reminiscent of the first meetings between Harry, Ron, and Hermione. Harry and Ron were also portrayed as awkward boys while Hermione was self-possessed from an early age.

Delphi has created a Polyjuice potion. She never explains where she got the ingredients, but it seems reasonable to believe she might have stolen them from Hogwarts. That seems to be a case of literary direction aimed at making the reader wonder about upcoming potions, because Delphi could probably have bought the potions from any number of places.

The scene at St. Oswalds would likely be hilarious on screen and could be described in much deeper detail in a traditional novel. The description of the facility, which is basically a nursing home for the old witches and wizards, indicates that these people are now having fun with their powers. They are no longer bound by the demands of life as they were when they were young, but are now finding enjoyment where they can. Someone enchants a male nurse so that he dances the tango. There are only a few examples of the enchantments happening as Albus and Scorpius walk in, but the reader's imagination can likely produce more.



The dialogue is sometimes humorous, especially if the reader can imagine the actors on stage or on screen, performing the lines. When Amos tells Albus that trying to save Cedric will be dangerous, Albus responds that they already know about the dangers. Scorpius responds, “Do we?” When Amos says they will be risking their lives, Albus says they are ready to do that, which prompts Scorpius to say, “Are we?” (Act One, Scene Fourteen, Location 866) This is one of many examples of the back-and-forth dialogue that audiences would expect on stage but that do not quite have the same effect in writing.

The idea of Harry Potter getting old will be difficult for some readers to imagine while others will find the situation amusing. Ron talks about the fact that they are all aging, and he says that he grunts each time he sits down. That is yet another case of the use of dialogue to promote humor.

The Ministry of Magic seems to be an unwieldy term because it is the name of a department without the word “department” or any similar designation. On the face of the term itself, some readers may believe this is a person. Hermione is the Minister of Magic, but the office is called the Ministry of Magic, or sometimes just the Ministry.

Discussion Question 1

Why does Albus say he wants to go back in time to save Cedric? What emotions are affecting his decision?

Discussion Question 2

Describe the St. Oswald's Home for Old Witches and Wizards. What kinds of things can you imagine happening here?

Discussion Question 3

What do Albus, Scorpius, and Delphi have to do to get the Time-Turner? Why do they want it in the first place?

Vocabulary

cowering, massive, distracted, forbid, menacingly, intense, agitation, superior, obvious, nonchalantly, disperse, strategy, ponder



Act Two, Scenes One through Nine

Summary

“Act Two, Scene One” is a “Dream, Privet Drive, Cupboard Under the Stairs.” In the dream, Aunt Petunia wakes Harry, complaining about the poor job he did washing dishes and griping because he wet the bed. In the dream, the young Harry says he was dreaming about his mother and some magic words, and that he thought it was at the moment of her death. Aunt Petunia says all Harry’s mother saw at the moment of her death was a car crash. She walks away.

Albus appears on stage. He is simply looking the young version of Harry. There are whispers around the auditorium in the language of Parseltongue, then Voldemort’s voice calling Harry’s name.

“Act Two, Scene Two” takes place at “Harry and Ginny Potter’s House, Staircase.” Harry wakes on the stairs in his own home. He says he dreamed of Albus wearing the robes of the Durmstang school. As Harry considers his dream more, he realizes where he can find Albus.

“Act Two, Scene Three” takes place at “Hogwarts, Headmistress’s Office.” Harry and Ginny are talking with Professor McGonagall as Hermione, Ron, and Draco arrive individually through the chimney. Draco says he does not trust Harry, but knows that Harry is one person who is always fortunate to be in the right place. He says again that he wants his son back safely. The group prepares to go to the Forbidden Forest.

“Act Two, Scene Four” takes place at the “Edge of the Forbidden Forest.” Delphi is teaching Albus a spell that he will use to take Cedric’s wand during the Triwizard Tournament. The idea is that if Cedric is disqualified in the first round, he will not meet Voldemort in the third round where Voldemort kills him. Albus and Scorpius are to wear Durmstrang robes so that no one from Hogwarts will wonder who they are. Delphi is too old to pass for a student but plans to pretend to be a dragon trainer. After some discussion, they decide she should not go at all.

“Act Two, Scene Five” takes place in the “Forbidden Forest.” The adults are searching for Albus and Scorpius when an incredible centaur named Bane approaches Harry. His tone warns Harry that the humans are not welcome in the forest. Harry explains that he needs to find Albus. Bane counters, saying he has seen signs of Harry’s son “in the stars” (Location 1329). Bane cannot help Harry find Albus, but does make a prediction. He says Harry will find Albus this time, but that he could lose him in the future.

“Act Two, Scene Six” takes place “At the Edge of the Forbidden Forest.” Scorpius and Albus prepare to use the Time-Turner. They do not really know what to expect and are a little scared. Scorpius says he always dreamed of having a friend at Hogwarts that he could get into mischief with, and that he is amazed that friend turned out to be Albus



Potter. Albus considers Scorpius his best friend also, and assures him their adventure will turn out alright. Albus activates the Time-Turner. There is light and a loud sound, then time stops and begins turning backwards, slowly at first then very fast.

“Act Two, Scene Seven” takes place at the “Triwizard Tournament, Edge of the Forbidden Forest, 1994.” An amplified voice announces the opening of the tournament and the four contenders, though there are usually only three. Viktor Krazy Krum is from Durmstrang, Fleur Delacour is from Beauxbatons Academy, and Harry and Cedric are representing Hogwarts. The first person Albus and Scorpius sees is the young Hermione. Rose looks so much like her that Scorpius believes is it Rose. Cedric enters as he begins his first quest. The Time-Turner begins to shake as Albus does a spell that causes Cedric's wand to fly into Albus's hand.

At that moment, there is a flash of light and Albus and Scorpius are back in their present. Albus falls to the ground, crying in pain just as the adults find them.

“Act Two, Scene Eight” takes place at “Hogwarts, Hospital Wing.” Harry is at Albus's bedside. Albus Dumbledore arrives in the painting above the bed. Dumbledore asks about Albus's condition. Harry says Madam Pomfrey has reset Albus's arm, which looked as if it had been broken 20 years ago and allowed to heal at odd angles.

Harry says he has missed Dumbledore's advice. He wants to know how to protect Albus. Dumbledore says Harry cannot protect Albus any more than Dumbledore could protect Harry. Instead, he said Harry must teach Albus how to take care of himself. Dumbledore also points out that he is actually dead, and that Harry is only talking to “paint and memory” (Location 1479).

Albus wakes. Harry asks why he ran away. Albus says he is miserable because he does not fit in at Hogwarts. Harry then says that Albus can no longer associate with Scorpius. When Albus argues, Harry says he has tried to be Albus's friend, but now realizes that he is just supposed to be his father. He says Professor McGonagall will keep an eye on Albus and that he will spend any of his free time in the Gryffindor common room. Albus says Harry cannot move him from Slytherin, but Harry tells Albus to stop “playing games” (1518).

“Act Two, Scene Nine” takes place at “Hogwarts, Staircase.” Albus threatens to run away again. Ron enters. He is markedly different in very “staid” attire. Albus says they can use a joke to lighten the mood. Ron says he does not know any jokes, but he says he and Padma got Albus some quills as a get well gift. Albus asks who Padma is. Ron says Padma is his wife. Albus says that Ron is married to Hermione, which seems to confuse Ron. Harry then demands that Albus stop pretending that he does not know people. Scorpius enters and Albus tells him that they can no longer be friends, though his heart breaks with the words.



Analysis

Albus's appearance on stage during Harry's dream is meant to convey some meaning to the reader and the reader probably expects Albus to present an aside to convey that meaning. That does not happen, which means it is left to the reader to decide the purpose of Albus's appearance. It seems to indicate that there is a connection between Albus and the Dark that is obviously beginning to gain strength. The inclination is to expect that Albus is going to be connected to a Dark force and the author is using words, phrases, and scenes to point toward Scorpius as the catalyst for that. However, by this point, the reader could also be suspicious of Delphi. She seems genuine but her placement and role in the storyline is such that she could be part of the Dark problems approaching.

Harry's first inclination is to trust Bane, and with good reason. They have a history that avid Harry Potter readers will recognize. However, the author also chose to include some background in the form of dialogue. They talk about the battle they fought together and that Bane only joined the humans because that was best for the centaur herd. He then tells Harry that he is sharing the information about Albus only because that is also the best course of action for his herd. That makes the reader realize that there are bigger implications to what Albus is doing than might first be expected, and the centaurs might also be in danger. The centaurs are reasonably isolated and protected, so if they are in danger, everyone will be.

When Albus and Scorpius return from their first trip back in time, they discover that their actions have altered the past. Albus is in Gryffindor house instead of Slytherin, Ron and Hermione never married, Ron is stooped and serious, and Hermione is a shrewish professor. What seems almost unbelievable about all this is that Albus and Scorpius are still best friends in this reality. They might have connected on the same level on their first day of school, just as they did in their true reality, but in this reality Albus was somehow not assigned to Slytherin.

Discussion Question 1

Describe the plan Albus, Scorpius, and Delphi come up with to save Cedric. What do they think saving Cedric will accomplish?

Discussion Question 2

Who is Bane? What does he tell Harry about Albus? Why does Harry pay attention to Bane?



Discussion Question 3

Describe Draco's attitude toward Harry and his concern over Scorpius. What do his actions and words thus far reveal about Draco's character?

Vocabulary

cupboard, disgusting, contorts, concerned, disarming, decisively, enthusiastic, supremely, flattered, opportunity, magnificent, disgrace, imperiously, fervor, gait, candidly, aura



Act Two, Scenes Ten through Twenty

Summary

“Act Two, Scene Ten” takes place at “Hogwarts, Headmistress's Office.” Harry demands that Madam McGonagall keep Albus and Scorpius apart. She is to track them using a magical map. She believes it is a bad idea but gives in to Harry's demand.

“Act Two, Scene Eleven” takes place at “Hogwarts, Defense against the Dark Arts Classroom.” Albus discovers that Hermione is the professor and that she is very strict.

“Act Two, Scene Twelve” takes place at “Hogwarts, Staircases.” Albus and Scorpius have a chance encounter as their staircases pass each other. Albus is filled with guilt and Scorpius is in pain over their lost friendship.

“Act Two, Scene Thirteen” takes place at “Harry and Ginny Potter's House, Kitchen.” Ginny and Harry are arguing about Albus. Harry says keeping him away from Scorpius is the right decision. Draco enters. He asks Harry why he had split the boys apart, considering their deep friendship. Harry says Bane saw Darkness near Albus, and he asks if Draco is Scorpius's biological father. Draco is furious and they get into a fight, throwing lightning and furniture at each other until Ginny intervenes.

“Act Two, Scene Fourteen” takes place at “Hogwarts, Staircases.” Delphi talks to Scorpius, saying that Albus desperately needs his friendship.

“Act Two, Scene Fifteen” takes place at “Harry and Ginny Potter's House, Kitchen.” Harry, Ginny, and Draco are talking. Draco says he missed out in the kind of friendship Harry had with Hermione and Ron. He says both he and Harry are having trouble talking to their sons, and that is the bottom line of their problems. Harry considers Draco's words. Ginny offers to get the Floo powder so they can travel back to Hogwarts.

“Act Two, Scene Sixteen” takes place at “Hogwarts, Library.” Scorpius confronts Albus, saying they changed things and now they have to fix it. He points out that Ron and Hermione never married, meaning Rose was never born. Scorpius has done research and knows that Hermione was supposed to go to a ball with Viktor Krum from Durmstrang where Ron became jealous, and that began their romance. But in this reality, Hermione had refused to go to the ball with Viktor because of the two suspicious Durmstrang boys she saw at the Triwizard event.

Albus says his father has changed as well. Albus asks for the Time Turner and tells Scorpius that he is certain he can fix things if they go back one more time. Albus makes a rude comment to Scorpius which prompts a tirade. Scorpius believes Albus has never even considered Scorpius's life. He said his first thought when he knew they had changed things was that perhaps his mother did not get sick, but that piece of history did not change. As Scorpius talks, Albus realizes the depth of the hurt he has brought to Scorpius.



Just then, Professor McGonagall calls out that she believes the boys are together, giving them the chance to separate before she enters the room. But Albus hides them with James' invisibility cloak. Professor McGonagall has not approved of Harry's demands and she cites the fact that she can not see them as an opportunity to ignore that they are together.

When they are alone again, Albus says he knows the Ministry of Magic is looking into the rumor that Scorpius is Voldemort's biological child, but Albus says the rumors cannot be true because Scorpius is too kind to be Voldemort's child. Albus goes on to say that Scorpius is a wonderful person. He begins to talk about how his life is actually better than Scorpius's, but Scorpius stops him, pointing out that Albus is turning the conversation back on himself, as he always seems to do.

Albus says the key is to go back in time and to humiliate Cedric in the second task of the Triwizard event so that he loses in a spectacular way that will keep him from returning for the third. Albus says he also has a surprise to get Ron and Hermione back together. The Time-Turner transports a person back in time at the exact location where they begin. That means Albus and Scorpius need to get to the lake. Albus has an idea that they can do that from the ground floor girls' bathroom.

“Act Two, Scene Seventeen” takes place at “Hogwarts, Staircases.” Ron and Hermione meet by chance. Ron is looking for the son he has with Padma. Hermione's heart jumps at the sight of him, but she does not reveal that. They are awkward with each other and go their separate ways.

“Act Two, Scene Eighteen” takes place at “Hogwarts, Headmistress's Office.” Harry, Ginny, and Draco arrive in Madam McGonagall's office. She says she will have nothing more to do with keeping Albus and Scorpius apart. Harry says he agrees, then says that he and Draco need to see their sons. Madam McGonagall consults her magic map and finds the boys together in the girls' bathroom.

“Act Two, Scene Nineteen” is set at “Hogwarts, Girls' Bathroom.” A ghost who haunts the bathroom, Moaning Mona, tells Albus and Scorpius that the sink drains directly into the lake. She promises she will not tell anyone about their travels. They use incantations and gillyweed to breath underwater and head down the drain. Madam McGonagall arrives with the adults. Moaning Myrtle quickly reveals what she knows, including that they had a trinket with them and that they planned to save Cedric. Harry realizes they are time traveling.

“Act Two, Scene Twenty” is set at the “Triwizard Tournament, Lake, 1995.” This scene is underwater. Albus performs a spell that makes Cedric rise out of the lake. The announcer says it looks like Cedric is a balloon, and that his situation has to be humiliating. While Cedric is floating away, fireworks explode into the words “Ron loves Hermione.” The light dims and the Time-Turner stops ticking, indicating that the setting is back in the present. Scorpius rises out of the water but Albus is nowhere to be found. Dolores Umbridge demands that Scorpius get out of the water. He calls her “Miss Umbridge” and she informs him that she is Hogwarts' headmistress. Scorpius does not



try to figure that out but asks for help finding Albus Potter. Dolores says there has not been a single Potter attending Hogwarts since Harry Potter died. Albus questions that, saying, "Harry Potter's dead?" (Location 2115).

A breeze wafts through the audience and dementors rise up from around the auditorium. They are whispering Harry's name in Voldemort's voice, just like in Harry's dream. Dolores gripes at Scorpius, saying that his actions have stirred up the dementors and that he is going to make a problem for her on Voldemort Day.

Analysis

Delphi continues to play her role in trying to get the past arranged in a way that is most beneficial to her while pretending to just be concerned about Cedric. When Harry forces Albus and Scorpius apart, Delphi sneaks into the school and talks to Scorpius. It is noteworthy that there has been a light flirtation going on between Albus and Delphi, and that Scorpius has been jealous of that. When Delphi arrives at Hogwarts, she tells Scorpius that Albus has been sending her messages, which Scorpius fully believes could be true. She says that Albus is miserable without Scorpius's friendship, and that it is up to Scorpius to fix their relationship. Later, Albus will say that Delphi manipulated them all along and Ginny will tell him that the Dark magicians are good at manipulation. The important thing up to this point is that Albus does not yet know that Delphi is evil, and both he and Scorpius trust that her motives are to save Cedric.

Harry seems unchanged from a superficial perspective after Albus and Scorpius return from their first visit to the past, but Albus knows that there is something different about his father. He is demanding, especially regarding Albus, saying that he will not tolerate any discussion about Albus's friendship with Scorpius. It is important that Albus recognizes this because it is an indication that he actually knows his father better than he has always seemed to.

Ginny also notices that there is something different about Harry, which seems to be a fault in the storyline. Harry snaps at Professor McGonagall, which is unlike Harry in the true reality. But, if Ginny had lived through the time change like Harry and everyone else did, there seems little doubt that she would not have expected anything different from him.

Draco Malfoy does not seem to change much from the first time the boys go back in time, but it is becoming more apparent that he truly loves Scorpius and that he wants to do what is best for him. Early in the novel, Draco said that his own father had seemed to want was best for Draco, but those with knowledge of the series know that Draco's father went about it wrong. Draco does interfere a few times on Scorpius's behalf, but he does nothing like his own father did.

Moaning Myrtle is another character returning from previous books of the series. She is something of a comic character, despite the fact that she is dead, and she dramatically swoons when she sees Harry as an adult, commenting on how handsome he is. The



comedy in this scene is that she promises to keep the secret that Albus and Scorpius have left through the sink drain and are traveling in time, but she can barely wait to tell Harry, saying she could never resist him.

The final scene of this Act involves dementors, frightening demons seen in previous books of the series, moving around the auditorium. The reader should be able to envision that and to understand the impact these stage directions would have on the audience.

Discussion Question 1

What changes do Albus and Scorpius cause the first time they go back in time? Why do they think they can fix those by going back a second time? Do you think they had any alternative?

Discussion Question 2

What do Albus and Scorpius plan to do during their second trip back in time?

Discussion Question 3

Why did the author choose to have the dementors move around the audience rather than just moving around the stage?

Vocabulary

vitriol, deliberately, affinity, necessity, abject, warily, consumed, repel, endangering, lax, casual, desperately, envied, centaur, psychopath



Act Three, Scenes One through Ten

Summary

The first chapter of Part Two is “Act Three, Scene One” is set at “Hogwarts, Headmistress Office.” Dolores Umbridge tells Scorpius that she has had her eye on him for the position of Head Boy, considering he is athletic and a leader with a pure bloodline, but she says that she is wondering why he has been acting strangely in the three days since he was in the lake. She cites his research into the battle at Hogwarts where Harry was killed and his interest in Cedric. He assures her that he is alright, and that his weird actions are temporary. As he leaves the office, she makes a salute and says, “For Voldemort and Valor.” (Location 2153). She mentions the Augurey, which is some form of governing body in this world.

“Act Three, Scene Two” is set at “Hogwarts, Grounds.” Everyone calls Scorpius the Scorpion King and he learns that it was his idea to kill Mudbloods. He is wildly popular, especially with the girls who are wondering who he will take to the Blood Ball.

“Act Three, Scene Three,” is set at “Ministry of Magic, Office of the Head of Magical Law Enforcement.” Scorpius arrives at the office to find that Draco holds that position. Draco has heard about Scorpius's problems at Hogwarts and he warns Scorpius about embarrassing the family name. By now, Scorpius knows that there is a lot of murder and cruelty going on. He asks how much Draco is involved. He says his mother always said Draco was a good man at heart, but Scorpius believes Draco is really cruel. Draco gets control of himself and says he is not involved with recent bombings.

Scorpius says that he does not like the person he has become. Draco asks why and Scorpius says it is because he has seen that he could be a different person. Draco acknowledges that Scorpius is a lot like his mother. He urges Scorpius to be careful, saying he cannot abide losing another family member.

“Act Three, Scene Four” takes place at “Hogwarts, Library.” Scorpius is looking through a history book, trying to figure out why Cedric became a Death Eater. He is still in the library when a boy named Craig Bowker Jr. enters, saying he is still working on Scorpius's homework but that it takes time to meet Professor Snape's demands. The two boys go their separate ways with Scorpius thinking about Professor Snape.

“Act Three, Scene Five” takes place in “Hogwarts, Potions Classroom.” Scorpius arrives in Snape's room. It takes a little time for him to convince Snape that he is from a different reality and that he knows Snape was secretly fighting against the Darkness during Dumbledore's lifetime. (Dumbledore was killed in the same battle where Harry died.)

Scorpius says he cannot really work out the details of why time changed so dramatically. He questions Snape about Cedric's life after the Triwizard Tournament.



Snape says that Cedric killed only one wizard – Neville Longbottom. With that, Scorpius understands. In the true reality, Neville killed Voldemort's snake, and the snake had to die before Voldemort could die.

“Act Three, Scene Six” takes place in the “Campaign Room.” Hermione is dressed like a warrior and is holding Scorpius down on a table. Snape says that Hermione never listened when she was a student and that she is not listening now when Snape and Scorpius say he is on their side. Snape says Scorpius knows things about Snape that he could only know if he really was from the future. Ron rushes in as Scorpius begins his story.

“Act Three, Scene Seven” continues in the “Campaign Room.” Hermione is examining the Time-Turner. They keep asking Scorpius questions about the reality that was true before he and Albus meddled with it. Professor Snape correctly assumes that he dies in that reality. They talk about the need to go back in time to both of the moments Albus and Scorpius changed. They plan to block the spells so that the boys are not able to change Cedric's actions at all.

The Time-Turner only takes the travelers back in time but does not change where they are. That means that Hermione and Ron will have to be outside for a period of time. They are wanted and the dementors are forever watching for them. They come up with a plan that will limit the time they are exposed outdoors. Then they travel back.

“Act Three, Scene Eight” is set at the Edge of the Forbidden Forest, 1994.” Scorpius, Hermione, Ron, and Snape watch the Triwizard event get underway. They watch Albus raise his wand but Hermione blocks the spell just as they are returned to their own time.

“Act Three, Scene Nine” takes place at the “Edge of the Forbidden Forest.” They were not expecting to be outside. Ron is injured, just as Albus was when he returned from his first trip back in time. The four are panicked, trying to figure out how to hide. Before they can think it through, the dementors arrive. Hermione says they only want her and she falls back, hoping the others can complete the mission. Ron remains with her. They kiss as the dementors arrive. Snape warns Scorpius to be calm and think about something pleasant, like a friend. Scorpius is terrified as the dementors circle around him, but thinks about Albus, and the dementors pass by.

Scorpius and Snape head for the lake but Dolores stops them. After a brief conversation, Snape realizes that Dolores knows all about him. Snape gets the first hit against Dolores and he conjures a Patronus in the shape of a doe. Scorpius notes that is also Lily's Patronus. He gives Scorpius a message for Albus, saying he is pleased that Albus carries Snape's name – Severus. Scorpius thanks Snape for his heroism. Dementors encircle Snape and there are screams everywhere as Scorpius follows the doe.

The bang of the Time-Turner is heard and all is quiet for a moment, then Scorpius and Albus rise come up in the middle of the lake. Albus is confused that the spell on Cedric did not work. Scorpius is thrilled that Albus is back. The adults arrive just then and



Scorpius is overly excited that they are all present. Madam McGonagall makes it clear they know the boys were traveling through time. Scorpius announces that he has lost the device.

“Act Three, Scene Ten” takes place at “Hogwarts, Headmistress's Office.” Madam McGonagall announces that the boys will be in detention for the remainder of the school year. Hermione arrives and Madam McGonagall gripes at her for keeping the Time-Turner. She says that even the adults in the room are too young to really know how frightening the wizard wars became. She dismisses them all, and they all obey. As they leave, she shouts that they better find the Time-Turner.

Analysis

There is an important look into Scorpius's true character in this section of the play. He arrives at an alternative reality where Darkness rules and where he and his father are important people. Draco is a member of the Ministry and Scorpius is athletic and popular. He pushes one student into doing his homework for him and has girls hoping he will ask them to the dance. This is pretty much the opposite of Scorpius's real life in the true reality. He might have settled into this world and lived out his life without ever telling anyone he was responsible. He apparently does not even consider that as a possibility but immediately begins trying to find a way to put the world back as it was.

The idea of fate is presented by the author through Cedric. Scorpius and Albus had been trying to save Cedric's life by keeping him out of the final event at the Triwizard Tournament. However, when they do manage to stop him from dying during the event, he still dies a short time later. The only real difference is that he kills Neville Longbottom, which is ultimately the changing point that allows Darkness to rule.

Draco Malfoy is a member of the Ministry of Magic in this alternative relative that Voldemort rules. That gives the reader a look into his true character, which is in keeping with his character from previous books of the series. However, Scorpius says that his mother always believed Draco was, at heart, a good person. That fact is borne out, at least to some degree, by the fact that Draco is not in favor of the attacks the magical people are waging against the Muggles. He says that he will have to be the person who bribes the Muggle Minister into ignoring the murders. Another important aspect of Draco's character is seen in how he reacts to Scorpius. He is angry, saying that Scorpius's actions are embarrassing him, but he seems to understand when Scorpius says that he does not like the person he has become. At that point, Draco tells Scorpius to be careful. It is clear that Draco has come to hate the person he has become as well. This brings up an interesting point about the evil side of Draco's nature in that he fought for the Darkness but was not happy with the world when the Darkness won.

There are literary challenges with creating alternative realities because the author has to consider ramifications to all the characters. It is not possible to leave some characters completely unchanged when the reality has changed this dramatically. Scorpius's mother dies in the true reality and that hurts him immeasurably. In the first changed



reality, Scorpius rushes to find out if his mother is still alive, hoping that would be one of the things changed. In this second reality, his mother is also dead. Considering Draco's position in the Ministry and Voldemort's power, the author could have chosen to have some Dark Magic power available that kept her alive. That might have created too great a conflict for Scorpius.

Snape was presented as a Dark character during the early days of Harry's career at Hogwarts, but it soon became clear that he was actually fighting against the Darkness. His underground work in that reality put him in danger and he eventually died. He quickly figures out that if he helps change the reality back, he will die. This is another case of a person's true character showing through. He does not seem to even hesitate, saying only that some people have burdens to carry for the common good.

Discussion Question 1

Describe the changes that happen when Scorpius arrives in an alternative reality with Voldemort in control.

Discussion Question 2

What is happening between the magical people and the Muggles in the alternative reality? What is Draco's role?

Discussion Question 3

Describe the roles and attitudes of Draco and Scorpius in the alternative reality. Why might each of them have wanted that reality to be true? Why would they possibly want to change things back?

Vocabulary

contrite, fuming, emblazoned, fascistic, ludicrous, aberration, dilettante, obsession, pensive, coiled, agonized, defied, murkier



Act Three, Scenes Eleven through Twenty-one

Summary

“Act Three, Scene Eleven” takes place at “Hogwarts, Slytherin Dormitory.” Harry arrives to talk to Albus. Both are being very careful with their words and actions. Harry says that Albus frightened them by running away, and that Ginny had refused to let anything be moved in Albus's bedroom during that time. Harry says he knows that Scorpius is not evil. They agree that Albus being in Slytherin is not at the heart of their problems. Harry asks Albus if he is alright. He says he is not and Harry agrees that he is not either.

“Act Three, Scene Twelve” is a “Dream, Godric's Hollow, Graveyard.” Harry dreams that he and Aunt Petunia are at the cemetery where his parents are buried. Aunt Petunia says no one liked them but Harry points out all the flowers on their graves. Then Voldemort's shape rises above the tombstone. Aunt Petunia pulls Harry away just as Albus emerges from Voldemort's cloak, holding his hand out toward his father. The audience hears Parseltongue spoken and then Voldemort calling Harry's name.

“Act Three, Scene Thirteen” takes place at “Harry and Ginny Potter's House, Kitchen.” Harry tells Ginny that he is afraid of what his dreams mean. She asks if Albus is in danger but Harry says they are all in danger.

“Act Three, Scene Fourteen” takes place at “Hogwarts, Slytherin Dormitory.” Scorpius makes it clear that he is happy with the situation even though they are in detention. He says they were all tested in the alternative timeline, and that they all failed. Cedric became evil, Draco became a puppet, and Scorpius became mean. Albus says he failed because he was the one who wanted to go back, and then insisted on a second time. Albus says Scorpius is a hero for changing everything back.

Scorpius says he is glad to know Albus realizes time travel is a mistake, and he shows Albus the Time-Turner. He says they should destroy it because it is too dangerous to let the adults have it back.

“Act Three, Scene Fifteen” takes place at “Hogwarts, Slytherin Dormitory.” A boy named Craig Bowker Jr. is trying to keep Harry and Ginny out of the Slytherin dorm, saying it is after hours and that parents are not allowed in without the student's permission. Professor McGonagall joins them just as they discover that Albus and Scorpius are missing. Ginny asks if Harry was mean to Albus again, and says it is becoming difficult to forgive him.

“Act Three, Scene Sixteen” takes place at “Hogwarts, Owlery.” Albus and Scorpius are trying to figure out how to destroy the Time-Turner. Delphi arrives and Scorpius discovers that Albus sent her an owl, telling her about their plan. They tell Delphi about



the alternative world they created. She says Cedric would understand the need to destroy the Time-Turner. As she takes the device, she changes her demeanor. The boys notice a tattoo and Delphi tells them it is an Augurey. She says they are “sinister” black birds with calls that some believe mean impending death. She says her “guardian” had one in a cage when she was young.

At this point, the situation has changed. Delphi is obviously in control. The boys do not yet know what is happening but Scorpius has become suspicious that something is wrong. Scorpius says that, in the alternative reality, people referred to “the Augurey,” and that they were referring to Delphi. She attacks Scorpius first, then Albus, binding them both and breaking their wands.

“Act Three, Scene Seventeen” takes place at “Ministry of Magic, Hermione's Office.” Harry, Ginny, and Draco join Hermione and Ron with news that Albus and Scorpius are missing again. Ron says he saw Albus the previous evening at Hogsmeade, the town near Hogwarts, and that Albus was with an older girl. Ron assumes she is Albus's girlfriend. From Ron's description, Harry realizes Albus was with Delphi.

“Act Three, Scene Eighteen” takes place at “St. Oswald's Home for Old Witches and Wizards, Amos's Room.” Amos quickly tells Harry that he does not have a niece and Draco says they have to figure out Delphi's true identity.

“Act Three, Scene Nineteen” takes place at “Hogwarts, Quidditch Pitch.” Delphi now appears more powerful. Delphi cites the prophecy that she believes will return Voldemort to power. The prophecy reads, “When spares are spared, when time is turned, when unseen children murder their fathers: Then will the Dark Lord return” (Location 2965). She believes that Cedric is the “spare” and Albus is the “unseen child,” and that the key is for Albus to save Cedric and humiliate him, just as Albus did during his second trip back in time. Albus says he will not, but she hits Scorpius with a spell, making him cry out. Craig Bowker Jr. arrives on the scene and Delphi immediately kills him. She sets the Time-Turner and they disappear.

“Act Three, Scene Twenty” takes place at the “Triwizard Tournament, Maze, 1995.” They arrive in the maze and Delphi binds them just as Cedric arrives, subdues her, and releases the boys. He thinks it is all part of the tournament. He then says he will finish the maze. Albus knows he cannot do anything to change the future but he tells Cedric that his father loves him, which confused Cedric. Albus and Scorpius then realize that Delphi is using the Time-Turner again. They rush to her, knowing she could leave them in the past. They arrive at a new time and Delphi smashes the Time-Turner. They do not know when or where they are, but they know they are stuck.

“Act Three, Scene Twenty-one” takes place at the “St. Oswald's Home for Old Witches and Wizards, Delphi's Room.” They discover the prophecy on the wall and the sentence “I will bring my father back,” which makes them realize that Delphi is Voldemort's daughter.

Analysis

Harry has seen Albus associated with Voldemort in his dreams. The author is obviously leading the reader to interpret the dreams and the likely outcome of the interpretation is that Albus is somehow associated with Voldemort. Some people might jump to the conclusion that Albus is Voldemort's biological child and that he is struggling to return to Harry. Harry and Voldemort had a strong connection during one of the earlier books of the Harry Potter series, and that could be the piece of Voldemort that some people believe is still in the magical world even after Voldemort's death. However, most readers will find it inconceivable that one of Harry Potter's children could be evil and will dismiss that idea. Another explanation could be that Voldemort is somehow trying to take Albus. The authors are using this possibility to create a higher level of drama within the storyline.

Delphi's tattoo is unusual, mainly because tattoos are a piece of the Muggle world. The boys are initially interested mainly because the tattoo is an unusual thing among the people they know. Delphi is thrilled when Scorpius informs her that people in the alternate reality referred to her as "the" Augurey because that means she holds an important place in that world. That power is all Delphi wants.

Craig Bowker Jr. is a fleeting character but he becomes important as Albus begins to understand his father. Craig simply shows up at the wrong place at the wrong time, and Delphi kills him. That is very much like what happened to Cedric. Albus cannot do anything to save Craig and that will help him realize that Harry could not do anything to save Cedric or the others who died while fighting against the Darkness. The reader might remember that Craig, a popular boy with authority in this reality, was the cowering boy who was doing Scorpius's homework in the reality where Voldemort was in control.

The idea of absent fathers and poor father-child relationships is one of the book's themes, and several of the characters fit into that theme. Albus can relate to Cedric because he knows how much Amos loves Cedric.

There is a slightly different style of writing in some of the scenes that take place back in time, especially when the announcer is giving information about the tournament and the participants. The author makes use of alliteration when Delphi, Albus, and Scorpius travel back together to make that style distinction. The announcer says, "The perils are plentiful but the prizes are palpable" (Location 2995). The statement is ridiculous and is obviously meant to be an attempt at humor.

The idiom "time will tell" appears as a means of making the reader think about the time traveling that is happening through the play. The announcer makes the comment when Delphi, Albus, and Scorpius arrive at the third phase of the Triwizard Tournament. The announcer is talking about the current event, but there is no doubt that the author is also talking about the entire situation. Albus, Scorpius, and Delphi could change things again, and with disastrous results again.



There is a hole in the story as Delphi takes Albus and Scorpius back in time. She says that Albus has to be the one to humiliate Cedric, but Scorpius and Albus already said to each other that they cannot protect themselves from Delphi because she broke their wands. It is left to the reader to decide how she intended for Albus to stop Cedric.

Discussion Question 1

Why do you think Albus tells Cedric that his father loves him?

Discussion Question 2

Is Delphi's parentage a surprise to the reader at this point? What clues along the way have indicated that she is not what she claims to be?

Discussion Question 3

Why does Delphi seem pleased that people were calling her "The Augurey?" What does this indicate about her character?

Vocabulary

negotiating, aspersions, obnoxious, extraordinary, repelled, intensity, succumbing, rascalion, stench, horrific, ominously, contemplative, palpable



Act Four, Scenes One through Fifteen

Summary

“Act Four, Scene One” takes place at the “Ministry of Magic, Grand Meeting Room.” Hermione takes the stage in front of a packed room and announces that Voldemort has a daughter. When she admits that the woman is not in custody and that she might have time traveled, Professor McGonagall is furious. Harry steps on the stage in Hermione's defense and Ginny joins him, saying they cannot be sure what happened. Draco takes the stage as well, saying that Harry and Hermione have been trying to protect everyone and that he is as guilty in this situation as they. Ron also steps up on stage. He says he had little idea what was going on, but that he is always going to stand with the others. Harry says there is nothing to do but wait.

“Act Four, Scene Two” takes place in the “Scottish Highlands, Aviemore Train Station, 1981.” Albus and Scorpius have made their way here trying to figure out what Delphi is doing. They discover the date on a train schedule and become certain that Delphi has arrived just before Voldemort's attack on James and Lily Potter, Harry's parents.

“Act Four, Scene Three” takes place at “Godric's Hollow, 1981.” Albus and Scorpius make their way to town. Along the way, they see the house where Bathilda Bagshot lives. Scorpius is thrilled to see the famous author of *A History of Magic*. Albus and Scorpius watch as James and Lily Potter leave their house with baby Harry in a stroller. They know Delphi apparently has not done anything yet but they cannot figure out what they should do now.

“Act Four, Scene Four” takes place at the “Ministry of Magic, Harry's Office.” Dumbledore puts in an appearance in a painting on Harry's wall. They argue. Harry says he has let Albus down the same way Dumbledore let Harry down. Dumbledore says there are no easy answers in life and urges him to be true to the people he loves.

Dumbledore leaves and Draco enters. Draco announces that his father commissioned the Time-Turner confiscated from Theodore Nott, and that the one Albus stole was the prototype. He shows Harry another one that works much better and does not include the time limit. Draco says he hesitated to give it to Harry because he knows it would give more credence to the rumor that Scorpius is Voldemort's biological child. Draco admits that he never wanted to have a child because his wife was frail. He hid both his wife and child away for the short time they had together, which only fueled the rumors. Harry says both he and Draco have tried to do what's right for their sons. Harry points out that they do not know when to travel to, which means they cannot even begin to search for the boys.

“Act Four, Scene Five” takes place at “Godric's Hollow, Outside James and Lily Potter's House, 1981.” Albus and Scorpius consider several ideas of how to get a message to Harry. They cannot talk to anyone or they will risk changing the future. He has to get the



message at the right moment or they will risk changing the future. Albus sees Lily wrapping Harry in the blanket and that makes him think. Harry always holds the blanket on the anniversary of his parents' deaths. Albus spilled Ron's love potion on the blanket the day Harry gave it to him. They come up with a chemical reaction that can be prompted with the love potion. They plan to write a message on baby Harry's blanket with tincture of Demiguise, and they plan to steal that from Bathilda Bagshot's house.

“Act Four, Scene Six” takes place at “Harry and Ginny Potter's House, Albus's Room.” Harry and Ginny talk for a few minutes before Harry sees the words burned into the blanket. The message is “Dad. Help. Godric's Hollow” (Location 3457). The date follows and Harry knows where and when they need to go.

“Act Four, Scene Seven” takes place in Godric's Hollow. Ron, Ginny, Hermione, Harry, and Draco arrive at Godric's Hollow and then use the Time-Turner.

“Act Four, Scene Eight” takes place in “Godric's Hollow, A Shed, 1981.” The adults reunite with Scorpius and Albus. After a heartfelt reunion, they go to St. Jerome's Church where they can watch and formulate a plan.

“Act Four, Scene Nine” takes place at “Godric's Hollow, St. Jerome's Church, Sanctuary, 1981.” Ginny and Harry talk while Albus sleeps. She reminds Harry of a time when he took her side even when everyone else was avoiding her. She says she felt love for him at that moment. She points out that Harry would do anything for anyone, and that Albus needs to feel that he is special in Harry's eyes.

They have worked on the assumption that Delphi is going to ensure that Voldemort kills Harry as well as his parents, but now realize that she is going to keep him from attacking Harry. Voldemort's attack is what made Harry strong enough to kill Voldemort later.

“Act Four, Scene Ten” takes place at “Godric's Hollow, St. Jerome's Church, 1981.” They come up with a plan to disguise Harry using Polyjuice. He will take on Voldemort's form and lure Delphi into the church where they will combine their powers to attack her.

“Act Four, Scene Eleven” takes place at “Godric's Hollow, St. Jerome's Church, 1981.” Albus confides in his mother that he is responsible for the situation. Ginny says that Harry believes he is the one responsible. Ginny, Albus, Hermione, Ron, Draco, and Scorpius hide as Delphi enters the church. Harry remains disguised for only a short time and Delphi becomes suspicious. When she realizes she has been tricked, she and Harry engage in a battle. She locks the others outside so that Harry faces her alone. She is very powerful and Harry is soon struggling to hold his own. Albus arrives through a vent and manages to get the doors open. The others rush in and quickly defeat Delphi.

Delphi pleads to just have a chance to see Voldemort. Harry refuses. She asks to be put to death and Harry refuses that as well. They hear Voldemort approaching and Draco silences Delphi, then uses another spell to remove her from the church.



“Act Four, Scene Twelve” takes place at “Godric's Hollow, 1981.” Harry realizes that Voldemort is about to kill his parents and that he cannot intervene. Draco says that Harry could do something but Albus says that Harry will do the right thing by letting the events play out as they did in the past. Ginny suggests they leave but Harry insists on watching, especially since he is standing right there, “letting it happen” (Location 3816). Albus holds one of Harry's hands and Ginny holds the others as they watch Voldemort's attack.

“Act Four, Scene Thirteen” takes place in Godric's Hollow, Inside James and Lily Potter's House, 1981.” Hagrid enters, finds James and Lily dead, and takes Harry away.

“Act Four, Scene Fourteen” takes place at “Hogwarts, Classroom.” Albus and Scorpius are back at school and everything is normal. There is an obvious affection growing between Rose and Scorpius.

“Act Four, Scene Fifteen” takes place on “A Beautiful Hill.” Harry and Albus are walking together. Harry talks about school and Albus changes the conversation, saying he saw Lily and James interact with Harry. Albus says Harry was happy and that he thought James and Lily would have been beloved grandparents. Harry says he did not realize that he was still emotionally healing from his earlier encounters with Voldemort, and that he had not realized that until recently.

Albus indicates disbelief that Harry could ever be afraid of anything. Harry says he is afraid of lots of things, including the dark and pigeons. He says being a father scares him more than anything else. He pledges to be a better father to Albus. Albus pledges to be a better son.

They talk about the situation and Harry points out that Delphi was not going to go away without a fight. Ultimately, Albus saved them all. He predicts Albus will become a great wizard. Albus teases, saying he has just decided on a career in pigeon racing instead.

Albus looks around and realizes they are at a cemetery. Harry points out Cedric's grave. He asks Albus how well he knew Craig Bowker Jr., the boy Delphi killed. Albus admits that he did not know him well at all. Harry says he feels the same about Cedric. He says he thinks of all the things Cedric might have become, such as a professor or professional Quidditch player. He sometimes stops by Cedric's grave, just to say he is sorry Cedric did not have that chance.

Harry looks at the sky and predicts a good day ahead. Albus agrees.

Analysis

Delphi is a powerful witch, which is why Harry and the others do not recognize her as being Dark earlier. Harry has always been a powerful wizard but he has never been able to stand alone with his power. He has always had to rely on his friends and his intelligence as a means of beating the Darkness. That is the case in this situation as



well. Delphi would likely have beaten him if he had stood against her alone, but she could not withstand the joint efforts of the group.

The prophecy written on the wall in Delphi's room is meant as a way to ensure that Voldemort returned to power. She tried to fulfill that prophecy by sending Albus and Scorpius back in time, but they were able to reverse the effects of that trip. She next tried to go back in time herself but Albus and Scorpius refused to help her. She needed them to willingly do their part in order to fulfill the prophecy. When Scorpius argued with her, he pointed out that prophecies can obviously be changed. That is what gives Delphi the idea to change the prophecy surrounding Harry and his ability to kill Voldemort. The natural assumption that everyone makes is that Delphi will take control of the situation and will make sure that Harry dies as well. They all believe they are going to try to save Harry but Ginny is the first to figure out that Voldemort's best chance at growing his power is to do nothing. If he does not attack James and Lily, Harry will not get the combination of his mother's protective charm and Voldemort's failed attack, and he will not become powerful enough to kill Voldemort. The authors pushed the readers to follow along the same lines of thought during the first three acts of the play, assuming that Delphi was going to kill Harry. That kind of misdirection is seen throughout the play and is an effective way of presenting plot twists that keep the play interesting.

There are some theatrics at the end of the scene in which Voldemort kills James and Lily. The scene does not just come to an end with a closed curtain as might be expected. Instead, the "stage transforms and rotates." Harry and the others are "rotated off and away" (Location 3838). This is one of many examples of stage directions seen throughout the play. The purpose is to lend a little more description than the typical ending of a scene. The imagery is clear – that Harry is filled with grief and his friends and family are gathered around him as he endures watching the tragic scene.

The final scene of the play is a bonding moment for Harry and Albus. Harry seems to be taking Ginny's advice about being honest with Albus in ways that he would not be with the rest of the world. Part of their talk is about James. Albus believes that James is like Harry but Harry says that James has a natural ability to fit in and succeed, while Harry had constant struggles. That makes Albus understand that he is more like Harry than he has always thought.

Albus thought that Harry was heartless when it came to Cedric's death. He initially thought Harry did not want to go back in time because he just did not care that Cedric had died. However, during the final scene, Harry makes it clear that he has thought about Cedric a lot and that he wonders what Cedric might have become, if he had grown into adulthood. That fact obviously moves Albus. The perspective is seen at play here. The reader saw Harry's regret during the first scene involving Amos, but Albus did not. Albus made an assumption based on what he felt was true and the reader always knew that Albus was mistaken.



Discussion Question 1

What do Harry and the others believe Delphi is going to do in Godric's Hollow? What do they realize she is actually planning?

Discussion Question 2

Describe the scene in the cemetery. Why does Harry choose to take Albus there?

Discussion Question 3

What could Harry have done when he knew Voldemort was about to kill his parents? What does he choose to do? Do you believe he is right?

Vocabulary

fierce, similarly, dislocate, version, persuade, titanic, frantically, essence, shrouded, emerge, malediction, passive, solidarity, cohort, negligence, negligible



Characters

Albus Severus Potter

Albus is the son of Harry Potter and Ginny Weasley Potter. He carries the weight of being the son of the famous Harry Potter, and he feels like he is failing because of the expectations. He feels that he has several strikes against him, including that the Sorting Hat placed him in Slytherin, the House at Hogwarts that is associated with snakes.

Albus's relationship with his father is strained. The two have an argument just before Albus is returning to Hogwarts for his fourth year and both say cruel words to the other. Albus does not understand Harry, partly because he does not understand Harry's history. When Albus has time to think about Amos Diggory, he believes that Harry is being selfish in his refusal to go back in time to save Cedric. Albus's anger toward his father overrides any thoughts that he was making a mistake.

Albus matures greatly over the course of the book and discovers that there are times when a person has to accept what happened in the past without trying to interfere.

Most readers will be sympathetic to Albus, at least to a degree, remembering how difficult the teenage years are. However, some of his actions seem incredibly reckless and his refusal to communicate with his father puts the entire world in danger. To that degree, he seems like a selfish child.

Scorpius Malfoy

Scorpius and Albus are the same age and they meet during their first trip on the Hogwarts Express, a train that takes them to the Hogwarts School. Scorpius is in a car by himself and he fully expects to remain alone. He is very surprised when Albus chooses to remain with him even though Albus's cousin, Rose, says they should not associate with Scorpius.

Scorpius is fully aware that there are rumors about his parentage. Some people believe he is the biological son of Voldemort, though his real father – Draco Malfoy – denies the claim. As Harry begins to experience signs that the Dark Magic is gaining strength, he worries that Scorpius is somehow involved, and that their friendship is putting Albus in danger. When Harry demands that the boys stop associating, Scorpius is devastated. He has never had another friend and is fully dependent on Albus to fill that role.

When Scorpius returns from his second trip back in time, he finds the world is a very different place. He is incredibly popular and talented – traits that he likely wishes for when he is living his true reality. He could have chosen to remain in that time and to leave the past alone, but he did not. That decision makes it clear that he is a strong character with high morals, and that he values Albus's friendship. He refused to let the



idea of other friends distract him from his mission to repair the damage so that he and Albus could resume their friendship.

Harry Potter

Harry is an adult in this play. He is married to Ginny Weasley, has three children, and has a career with the Ministry of Magic's office. He is ultimately happy in his life at this point but is afraid that he is not doing a good job as a father. Toward that end, he tries to grow into a better relationship with Albus. His efforts fall short until Albus himself begins to mature. Though Harry's character changes slightly as Albus and Scorpius change the past, his basic attitudes and beliefs seem to remain in tact. As the play comes to a close, he realizes that he has to talk more openly to Albus so the two of them can mend the rift between them and learn to become closer as father and son.

Ginny Potter

Ginny is Harry's wife, Albus's mother, and Ron's little sister. She is a strong woman who is able to stand on her own despite the fact of her husband's fame. She does not interfere or judge when Harry and Albus have trouble communicating, but she does help Harry understand the need to truly communicate with Albus in order to forge a strong bond.

Hermione Granger Weasley

Hermione is married to Ron Weasley and they have two children: a son and a daughter named Rose. Since Harry is married to Ron's sister, Ginny, Hermione and Harry are in-laws. Hermione has become the Minister of Magic and remains close friends with Harry and Ginny. She remains a strong character who believes she is capable of doing anything that needs to be done, but she allows Harry to take the lead when he takes the initiative to do so. She has a strong sense of family, evidenced by the fact that she shows up to help search for Albus and Scorpius when Harry believes the boys are in the Forbidden Forest.

Ron Weasley

Ron is Hermione's husband, Albus's uncle, and Rose's father. He operates a joke shop, has an elaborate sense of humor, and is entirely devoted to his friends and family. When Harry, Hermione, and Ginny stand together to say that they are all responsible for the recent events, Ron stands with them, though he says he had little information about the events as they were taking place. While he seems to fill the role of comic relief, he is a strong character in his way and willing to do whatever is necessary for those he loves.



Draco Malfoy

Draco is Scorpius's father. Though he was an evil character in previous books, he is now a father and widower who is obviously grieving for his wife and for his son's heartaches. He is very much aware that his past is the cause of some of Scorpius's suffering and he really just wants to be a good father. He is desperate when Scorpius and Albus disappear together. His first response is anger directed toward Harry but he soon realizes that they have to work together if they want to get their children back.

Rose Granger-Weasley

Rose is the daughter of Ron Weasley and Hermione Granger Weasley, and is Albus's cousin. She is a strong-willed young woman, which is to be expected from Hermione's daughter. She and Albus are together on their first ride headed to Hogwarts and Rose urges Albus to think carefully before making friends because they could be his best friends for life. She initially refuses to have anything to do with Scorpius because of the rumors that Voldemort is his biological father and she ignores Albus for a long time because the two boys become friends. However, she renews her friendship with Albus before the end of the play and even seems to begin to warm up toward Scorpius.

Amos Diggory

Amos is an old man who is still grieving over the death of his son, Cedric. He pleads with Harry to use the Time-Turner to save Cedric's life. Harry refuses which makes Amos furious. Amos is just a lonely, old man who feels very much alone as he nears the end of his life. His desire to save Cedric is the catalyst that sets the play in motion.

Cedric Diggory

Cedric is a boy who attended school with Harry and who participates in the Triwizarding Tournament. Voldemort killed him during that tournament, only because Cedric is the "spare" wizard in the maze that day. Cedric's death haunts Harry and Amos. Amos pleads with Harry to go back in time and save Cedric, which is the catalyst for the remainder of the action in the play.

Delphi

Delphi is Voldemort's biological daughter. She is fully evil and is trying to change time for the opportunity to stand in power with her father. She manipulates Albus and Scorpius into joining her plan and almost succeeds in creating a world without Harry Potter's strength to kill Voldemort.



Symbols and Symbolism

Voldemort

Voldemort, the villain of the story, symbolizes darkness and fear. He is Delphi's father and was the demon that killed Harry's parents when Harry was just an infant. He was defeated long before the main storyline of this play occurs but appears in the scene set in 1981. He is truly evil, as seen in the events that Scorpius witnesses after his second trip back in time.

Time-Turners

The Time-Turners symbolize second chances but also symbolize the past, which should be left alone. They are illegal devices that, once activated, takes one or more people to a specific point in time. Harry and his group confiscates a Time-Turner from a man named Theodore Nott. Hermione hides it in her office where Albus, Scorpius, and Delphi find it. That one is something of a prototype that allows a person to remain in the past only five minutes at a time before launching the traveler back to the present. Draco Malfoy reveals that his father commissioned the device and that there is a second one that works without the five-minute limit. Harry and the others use that one to travel back in time to stop Delphi and to rescue Albus and Scorpius.

The Triwizard Tournament

This is symbolic of the moment when everything went wrong for Cedric. Albus and Scorpius go back in time with the hope that they can save his life. Even when they do keep him out of Voldemort's reach, he becomes evil and then dies.

The Hogwarts Express

The Hogwarts Express is the train that carries young wizards and witches to Hogwarts, and it represents a first chance for life-long friendship. Rose points out to Albus on their first trip on the train that Hermione, Ron, and Harry met on the train, and they remained friends for life. She expects the same will happen for them and it seems to work that way for Albus and Scorpius.

The Scorpion King

Scorpius's nickname in the alternative reality he and Albus created is symbolic of the power and popularity Scorpius wishes for. He has that in the alternative reality but still seeks a way to put the world back right because he knows that his friendship with Albus is more important than being popular.



Cedric's Grave

Cedric's grave symbolizes the loss of his life and of Harry's sorrow that Cedric died. Harry takes Albus to the grave at the end of the play to show him that Harry is not indifferent as Albus first assumed.

Harry's Blanket

Harry's blanket is important to him because it is the only thing he has that came from his mother, and in that context, it symbolizes love and security. Albus uses the blanket as a means to send a message to Harry, and in that context it symbolizes hope and love.

Slytherin

When Albus is sorted into the Slytherin house, that becomes symbolic of everything that is wrong between Albus and his father. Slytherin is one of the four houses at Hogwarts and it has a reputation for being the home of all those with Dark tendencies. Near the end of the play, Albus says that he realizes that being in Slytherin is not what is wrong with their relationship.

Harry's Scar

Harry's scar hurts several times over the course of the play, indicating the presence of Darkness and symbolizing the possibility of Voldemort's return. The origin of Harry's scar is not discussed in this novel other than in terms of being able to detect when Darkness nears.

Delphi's Prophecy

Delphi's Prophecy is symbolic of her desire to have a relationship with her father, Voldemort. She believes that she can bring Voldemort to power if she can find a way to fulfill the prophecy. When that fails, she sets out to save Voldemort a different way, but she fails at that as well.



Settings

Hogwarts

Hogwarts School for Witches and Wizards is the magical training academy for those with magical abilities, including Harry and his family. The building is not fully described in this play but fans of the series will be able to imagine the various aspects of the school. There are moving staircases, which are described briefly as Albus and Scorpius encounter each other one day as their staircases pass near each other. The girls bathroom is also described briefly as Albus and Scorpius use it to reach the lake.

Godric's Hollow

Godric's Hollow is where Voldemort killed Harry's parents and tried to kill Harry. In this play, the town is the same village and Harry travels there with Ginny, Hermione, Ron, and Draco in an effort to stop Delphi from her evil plan and to rescue Albus and Scorpius. There are a few descriptions of the village, including that it is home to a famous writer and has a church where the group battles Delphi for the final time.

The Potter Home

This is where Harry, Ginny, James, Albus, and Lily live. The home seems typical of non-magical people in design, including bedrooms, a kitchen, and a staircase. The functionality is somewhat different with Harry and Ginny using spells to create light during the night. The actual location is a mystery, as is the case with most physical buildings in the magical land.

King's Cross

King's Cross is the train station in London station with a magical portal that witches and wizards use to reach the platform for the Hogwarts Express, the train that takes students to Hogwarts School. One of the first scenes of the play takes place on that platform as some of the main characters are presented and reintroduced.

St. Oswald's Home for Old Witches and Wizards

This is literally an old folks' home for the old witches and wizards of the region. As is to be expected, the residents are no longer bound by what is expected and are likely to be involved in silly spells and witchcraft. The home seems to be reasonably on scale with the human version of this facility except that Delphi, as a caregiver, has her own room there.



Themes and Motifs

The Relationships between Parents and Children

Several parents in this novel have issues with their children, many around their inability to communicate. The relationship between Harry and Albus is at the heart of the novel, driving some of the action. That theme crops up repeatedly over the course of events, but it is in sharp focus as Albus decides to travel back in time to save Cedric. He says he wants to right at least one of Harry's mistakes, indicating that he thinks Cedric's death was Harry's fault. He may also be trying to do something heroic so that he will be recognized as a wizard in his own right rather than constantly struggling to get away from Harry's reputation.

Though their relationship is strained, Albus ultimately trusts in Harry. Albus sends a message to Harry without knowing that another Time-Turner exists or that Harry could use that as a means of reaching Albus and Scorpius. However, Albus sends the message in the full belief that his father will find a way.

As the novel comes to a close, both Albus and Harry pledge to work harder at their relationship and each moves a small step toward understanding the other.

The relationship between Delphi and her biological father, Voldemort, is the other relationship that drives the action. Delphi desperately wants to see her father. She is evil herself and she might have found some sort of powerful control on her own, but she expended all her time and energy trying to save Voldemort so they could rule together. Her desperation is seen in her final scene when she pleads with Harry for just one sight of her father. Harry refuses, but it is clear that he understands her need. He is also an orphan and he tells her that nothing will ever change how she feels about that.

Scorpius and Draco are additional examples of this theme. Draco is a single father and his heart is broken over his wife's death. That has made it even more difficult for him to communicate with Scorpius on a meaningful level. However, unlike Harry and Albus, both Draco and Scorpius are more at ease with their relationship and accept it as it is. When Draco and Harry arrive at Godric's Hollow with the other adults, Ginny and Harry rush to hug Albus. Draco tells Scorpius they can hug if Scorpius wants, and they enter into an awkward embrace that does not last long. Neither Scorpius nor Draco need the contact as part of their relationship.

Draco's love for Scorpius is seen in his effort to protect him. He tries to make Hermione and Harry issue statements from the positions in the Ministry of Magic about Scorpius's parentage to stop the rumors that he might be Voldemort's biological son. He brings his Time-Turner to Harry, seeking help to find Scorpius. In the alternative reality where Scorpius is trying to find a way to put things right, Draco tells him to be careful. All these point to a caring father, though Draco's methods are sometimes not the best options.



The Importance of Friendship

The young wizards are in need of friendship, just as young humans are. Their friends provide companionship, but also provide support through the struggles young magical people encounter. Rose is very clear on the importance of friendship. She points out that Ron, Hermione, and Harry met for the first time aboard the Hogwarts Express; she uses that in her effort to make Albus understand that they must choose their friends wisely. She fails, however, to realize that Ron, Hermione, and Harry forged friendships because they recognized their natural affinity toward each other. Rose wants to meet everyone on the train and calculate which will be the best friends. Albus sees Scorpius and immediately feels that draw that bonds them as best friends. Even Rose's insistence that they should leave and Scorpius's admission that there are rumors that Voldemort is his father are not enough to drive Albus away.

Harry tries to put a stop to the friendship between Albus and Scorpius, but not because he does not understand the importance of friendship. He believes that Scorpius could be putting Albus in danger, and he tries to keep the boys apart in his effort to keep Albus safe. Interestingly, it is Draco who helps Harry see his error.

Draco says Scorpius is miserable without Albus's companionship. Draco talks at length about his own childhood and the fact that he envied the friendship between Harry, Hermione, and Ron. He had two friends of his own but Draco said their relationship was not the kind of friendship Harry had. His words help Harry think about his own childhood and how different it would have been without his friends. He agrees to lift his directive to force the boys apart.

The theme comes into play in a major way when Scorpius discovers that they have changed reality. After their first trip back in time, Ron and Hermione are no longer married and Rose does not exist. Scorpius insists that they have to do something to correct that because he considers Rose his friend. After their second trip back, Scorpius finds an even greater changed reality. In that reality, Albus does not exist either.

Scorpius finds himself in a world controlled by Darkness but he is popular. There are many students who clamor for his attention and he could have shifted his attention to them, making new friends. But he recognizes the hole in his life because Albus is missing. He wants that true friendship back instead of some false friendship based on fear and power, and he risks his life to correct their mistakes to put things back. When he is successful and Albus returns, Scorpius says he depended on Albus's friendship to help him be strong during those frightening days in the Dark alternative reality.

When they return with everything back in place, Madam McGonagall puts them on lockdown. Scorpius is fanatically happy, saying he does not care about anything as long as he and Albus are friends. That friendship does apparently settle in to last a lifetime as seen in the final acts of the play.



The Delicacy of Time

Most people have heard of the ripple effect – the idea that a small event has repercussions that keep spreading exponentially over time. That idea means that any small action a time traveler makes could mean huge changes in the future. Albus and Scorpius believe they can travel back in time and make changes to the events without any repercussions. After they manage to recover from their first series of disasters, Albus admits that he was arrogant in that belief.

The first time Albus and Scorpius travel back in time, they make one minor change to the events. They snatch away Cedric's wand so that he cannot complete the event. They hope that he will simply walk away from the tournament and that nothing else would change except that he would not die. That is not what happens.

When Albus and Scorpius return to their present, they find that they changed more than they intended. Hermione saw them at the contest and grew suspicious. They were wearing the robes of the Durmstang school which made her turn down a Durmstang student's invitation to a dance. Since she was not at the dance with that student, Ron never grew jealous and asked her out, which meant they never married. The result was that both Hermione and Ron were miserable in their lives, had chosen different professions, and never had their children. There were other changes, including Harry's tendency to be short-tempered.

When the boys went back the second time, they hoped only to save Cedric and to get Ron and Hermione together. They did save Cedric from being killed at the tournament but he was so humiliated that he turned to the Dark, made changes that gave Voldemort the ability to win the war. Cedric still dies young.

Albus and Scorpius realize that Cedric's death in the maze is an important part of history that they cannot change, and they are forced to stand by and watch as he rushes away from them. They know that he will die just moments later but they realize that they cannot do anything to change it. Albus does, however, tell Cedric that his father really loves him and those words apparently have no effect on the future.

Another example of this perspective is seen when Harry is forced to stand by and watch while his parents are murdered. When it becomes clear that Voldemort is near and that he will soon attack Harry's parents, members of the group question whether they should do something. Harry already knows about the delicacy of time and he knows that he cannot do anything that will change the future or the life that lies ahead of him. Draco seems to disagree, saying that Harry can do something. Albus knows how his father feels at this moment, and knows that Harry's honor will not allow him to do something for himself that will change the true reality.



Prophecies and Fate

Much evidence in the play supports the idea of Fate and that how it is presented can change, but ultimately the same outcome will prevail.

Delphi was working on the idea that her future would be secured if a specific prophecy came true. She was, however, unwilling to wait for the prophecy to be fulfilled in its own time and set out to give it a push by using Albus and Scorpius. The prophecy related to the “unseen son” and she believed that was Albus. Albus and Harry have had problems in their relationship and Harry said that he believes every parents has failed to truly see their child at some point. The prophecy went on to say that the unseen son would play a role in “sparing the spare.” Voldemort had referred to Cedric as the “spare” wizard in the maze just before he killed Cedric. That made Delphi believe that Albus had to intervene in the Triwizard Tournament as the person who would save Cedric.

The end of the prophecy was that this unseen son would cause his father's death and that Voldemort would then come to power. Delphi wants that and she manipulates Albus into the situation so that it could come true. By the time Delphi is with Albus and Scorpius, both boys realize the consequences of their actions and they refuse to help at all. Delphi believes they cannot resist because it is part of the prophecy, but Scorpius argues. He points out that, if it were truly fated to happen that way, she would not be able to intervene at all. Delphi comes to realize that he is right and she decides to attack another prophecy instead. That is what takes her to Godric's Hollow.

Harry, Ginny, Hermione, Ron, and Draco assume that Delphi is going to try to kill Harry during Voldemort's attack on the Potters, assuming that would be the most reasonable way to ensure that Harry's prophecy – as the wizard who would kill Voldemort – never came true. They watch and wait with that idea in mind until Ginny realizes that there is another way to break that prophecy. She points out that Harry only became the strong wizard able to kill Voldemort because of Voldemort's attack on Harry's parents. Harry's mother, in her effort to protect Harry, helped create the spell that made Harry so powerful. With that thought, they realize that Delphi is going to try to stop Voldemort from attacking the Potters at all.

While it was Cedric's fate to die a young death, it was Harry's fate to be the wizard who would kill Voldemort. Ultimately, both came true but at high costs.

While prophecies and fate are obviously not concrete, those who try to manipulate them for specific outcomes ultimately fail. Albus and Scorpius try to save Cedric, but he dies in the alternative reality anyway. When Delphi tries, she also fails. People sometimes intervene but it seems that the outcomes are never what the humans hope for.

Another perspective of this theme is seen in Cedric's death. Albus and Scorpius initially set out to save him. They manage to keep him from dying in the maze at Voldemort's hands, but he winds up becoming Dark and dying anyway. He dies as a young man regardless of what happens around him, which suggests that he was fated to die an early death.



Good Versus Evil

The authors create sometimes-blurry lines between good and evil, as well as red herrings to make readers question the morals and true nature of multiple characters, as a literary method to keep readers guessing.

Good versus evil is often seen in literature as the natural tendency is to pit the evil in a battle where good has at least a chance to win. In the tradition of Harry Potter, individuals may lose in those fights, but the good ultimately wins. This novel, presented in the form of a play, is no exception.

Voldemort, Delphi, and Darkness represent the evil side of the battle. In a common literary ploy, the evil is not introduced as evil in the early scenes. In fact, Delphi is introduced as a loving niece who has had a difficult life and who wants only to save her cousin. Her motives are not really questioned until she takes the Time-Turner from Albus and Scorpius. At that point, it becomes clear that she is evil, but more scenes will pass before her familial relationship with Voldemort is revealed.

There is also some misdirection in the case of several of the good characters. Harry has a dream in which Voldemort rises up above a tombstone, but then Albus emerges from Voldemort's robes, calling out to his father. That could be interpreted that Voldemort is a threat to Albus, or that Albus is somehow becoming Dark and hopes Harry can save him. Another case of this misdirection is seen as Scorpius is introduced and becomes an important part of Albus's life. There are rumors that Scorpius is Voldemort's biological child. A centaur named Bane warns Harry that there is a Darkness around Albus, and Harry believes that could be related to Scorpius's presence. By the time Scorpius and Albus have been separated for a short time, the tone changes and the reader probably becomes convinced that Scorpius is not evil at all. Albus says that there is no way Voldemort could have fathered such a sweet person.

Harry and his group of close friends – Ginny, Hermione, and Ron – are unquestionably on the side of good, which is a leftover feeling from previous books involving these characters. Draco Malfoy, also a character from a previous book, is another matter. Draco was a mean boy from the beginning. He was selfish and rude, which pitted him against Harry even before Harry faced the real evils of his world. Draco later became truly Dark and Harry's group struggles to trust him. When it becomes clear that he is only interested in saving his son, everyone accepts that at face value except Ron. He still questions Draco but goes with the other three to accept his presence and his help.

Professor Snape puts in a brief appearance in the alternative reality. During the earliest books of the series, he seemed to be evil but was secretly working on the side of good. That is also the case in the alternative reality. Scorpius finds Snape who helps set things right, even though it means he dies.

Styles

Point of View

The storyline is presented as a play, which means it is in third person from an omniscient view. That view is limited by the actors' knowledge of any event at a given time but the audience always has more information than any given actor. For example, Harry, Ginny, and Draco begin searching for Albus and Scorpius after they fail to show up at school. The three adults have no idea what the two boys are doing, but the audience already knows. In another scene, the actors get hints that there is Dark Magic present but it is the audience that first sees the dementors.

Some readers may find that Delphi is a questionable character from her earliest appearance, but Albus senses nothing sinister in the young woman until she reveals her identity. Even then, Albus and Scorpius do not really know what she is planning to do. Once the adults arrive and have time to think about it, they begin to question the coming events. In that aspect of the play, the audience is left in the dark until the main characters begin to voice their ideas.

With the exception of Delphi, the main characters control the perspective. They depend on each other for information, as is seen when Hermione and Scorpius share historic details. The dependence on dialogue limits the information the reader has about the motivations of the characters. For example, Draco is overbearing and demanding during his first appearances which leads the reader to expect that to be the case throughout the play. However, he soon reveals that he is just worried about his son, and that he is willing to do whatever it takes to get him back safely.

Language and Meaning

Harry Potter fans will have little trouble following the story but those with very limited or no previous knowledge of the characters and places may not understand some pieces of the play. The relationships between the adult characters is one example. Harry, Ron, and Hermione were best friends during their years at Hogwarts School for Witches and Wizardry, and Draco Malfoy was a rude bully who turned toward darkness out of anger, jealousy, and his family history. That explains much of the current situation, including Ron's distrust when Draco becomes part of the team going back to 1981. While the novel could be considered a stand-alone work, those and other subtleties will be lost to the reader who has no previous understanding of the series.

Because the novel is about wizards, time travel, and magic, there are many imaginary words and phrases. "Muggles" is a term coined in the first Harry Potter novels. It refers to those without magical abilities. "Dementors" are demons that suck the souls from their victims, forcing them through a living nightmare on the way to a comatose state.



Most of these terms are used casually in this play, indicating the expectation that the reader will understand their meanings.

The play depends heavily on dialogue. The conversations seem in keeping with the characters' phrasing and attitudes from previous novels. Ron, as expected, manages to work the term "bloody hell" into the conversation at least once. Readers will likely find the humor in some scenes, including the aging characters from previous novels.

The story is set in England which means American readers may find some unfamiliar words and phrases. Albus and James push a "trolley" toward their train as the story opens. Americans would call that by another name, such as a cart, depending on regional customs.

Structure

The novel is written as a play that premiered at Palace Theatre in London in 2016. Some readers may find that reading the storyline as a play is distracting. The format means there are no lengthy narratives explaining the events that are taking place. The author depends solely on scene descriptions, dialogue, and stage directions. The stage directions can sometimes seem exaggerated, which is typical with a play of this type.

Some of the scene descriptions are easy for the reader to imagine happening on the movie screen but difficult to imagine depicted in real time on a stage. For example, several of the characters engage in time travel. The same passage appears in each case of time travel. "And time stops. And then it turns over, thinks a bit, and begins spooling backwards, slow at first ..." (Act Two; Scene Six; Location 1372).

There are also scenes that include action off stage in the auditorium. In those scenes, "black robes arise" from various places among the audience and turn into dementors, which are dark creatures that literally suck the souls from their victims. The stage directions include the word "dementors" but it is assumed that the people in the audience will recognize them for what they are.

The play is presented in chronological order for Albus and Scorpius, but the time travel angle means that those two characters appear in scenes that occurred far in the past. For Albus and Scorpius, though, the events are in their present.



Quotes

Albus Severus, you were named after two headmasters of Hogwarts. One of them was a Slytherin and he was probably the bravest man I ever knew.”

-- Harry Potter (Act One, Scene Three paragraph 38)

Importance: Albus has just admitted that he is worried about being placed in the Slytherin house at Hogwarts. He mentions the house's reputation as being home of Dark wizards. Harry is trying to reassure his son but he may also have some deep-rooted objections to Slytherin.

You told me yourself, the words he said were 'Kill the spare.' The spare. My son, my beautiful son, was a spare.”

-- Amos Diggory (Act One, Scene Six paragraph 11)

Importance: Amos has heard that Harry has a Time-Turner and he is trying to get Harry to go back in time to save Cedric. Harry knows that it is too dangerous to go back in time, but he does not tell Amos that, probably because he knows he will not understand. Instead, Harry denies that the Time-Turner exists. This conversation, along with Delphi's actions, prompt Albus's decision to go back in time the first time.

And then he feels intense pain in his forehead. In his scar. Around him, Dark Magic moves.”

-- Narrator (Act One, Scene Nine paragraph 2)

Importance: Harry's scar is not identified fully in this novel but readers of the past novels will know that his scar is sensitive to Dark Magic. The fact that he can feel the movement indicates that there is something sinister brewing.

The trolls could be going to a party, the giants to a wedding, you could be getting bad dreams because you're worried about Albus, and your scar could be hurting because you're getting old.”

-- Ron Weasley (Act One, Scene Fifteen paragraph 8)

Importance: Ron is providing comic relief, as is par for his character, but he is also making a statement about the fact that these adult characters have aged significantly since they were seen in the final book of the previous series.

Harry Potter is always where the action is at. And I need my son back with me and safe.”

-- Draco Malfoy (Act Two, Scene Three paragraph 18)

Importance: Draco's comment is an important look into his character, specifically with regard to his love for Scorpius. He has followed Harry even though they were enemies when they were younger, but he is now willing to do anything to ensure Scorpius is safe.



All I ever wanted to do was go to Hogwarts and have a mate to get up to mayhem with. Just like Harry Potter. And I got his son. How crazily fortunate is that.”

-- Scorpius Malfoy (Act Two, Scene Six paragraph 11)

Importance: Scorpius is explaining to Albus that he is happy they are friends and is trying to convey how much their friendship means to him.

Suddenly from around the auditorium, the feel of a breath of the wind. Some black robes arise around people. Black robes that become black shapes. That become dementors.”

-- Stage Directions (Act Two, Scene Twenty paragraph 36)

Importance: The novel is presented as a play and this is one of many examples of the stage directions. The purpose is to give directions to the actors who will perform, but also to give the reader a sense of what the audience will experience.

Scorpius, I've thought for a long time that you have Head Boy potential, as you know. Pure-blooded, a natural leader, wonderfully athletic ...

-- Dolores Umbridge (Act Three, Scene One paragraph 4)

Importance: Scorpius is in the alternative reality and is still trying to figure out how things changed so dramatically. In this reality, he is surprised to find that he is powerful and popular, but he still looks for a way to change it back.

And your response to disappearing Hugo and Rose Granger-Weasley was to go back in time again – and this time, instead of losing two people you lost a huge number of people and killed your father – and in doing so you resurrected the worst wizard the world has ever known and heralded in a new age of Dark Magic.”

-- Professor McGonagall (Act Three, Scene Ten paragraph 4)

Importance: Albus and Scorpius have related the details of their time traveling, making the adults realize just how near they came to losing their lives. She goes on to say in a “dry” tone that Harry is right in thinking that it sounds bad.

You have seen the world as it should be, Scorpius, and today we're going to ensure its return.”

-- Delphi (Act Three, Scene Nineteen paragraph 13)

Importance: Delphi is taking Scorpius and Albus back in time again, hoping that they can return things to the way they were when Scorpius experienced an alternative reality. Now that she knows it is possible, she is determined to make it come true. The theme of fate and prophecy plays an important role in this section of the novel.

You were pretty happy to sacrifice yourself for the world. He needs to feel specific love.”

-- Ginny Weasley Potter (Act Four, Scene Nine paragraph 16)

Importance: Ginny is talking about Harry's relationship with Albus. She says that Harry



has not let Albus see his true self, and that Albus needs to feel that he is more important to Harry than all the other people Harry has done things for.

Delphi wasn't going anywhere, Albus – you brought her out into the light and you found a way for us to fight her. You may not see it now, but you saved us.”

-- Harry Potter (Act Four, Scene Fifteen paragraph 33)

Importance: Albus believes that he made huge mistakes. He was punished for using the Time-Turner in the first place, but Harry points out that Delphi might have found some other way to change the world if Albus had not fought her.