

# Harry Potter and the Chamber of Secrets

## Lesson Four

### Chapters Twelve to Fifteen

#### Chapter Twelve – The Polyjuice Potion



### Summary

While in Dumbledore's office, Dumbledore gives Harry an opportunity to tell him what's been going on, but Harry keeps his secrets. In the following days most of the students return home for the Christmas holidays, while Ron, Harry and Hermione stay behind. After dinner on Christmas day, Hermione informs Ron and Harry that the potion is ready. After retrieving a piece of hair from Crabbe and Goyle, the three are ready to assume their new personas. The three down the potion and transform. Hermione tells Ron and Harry she's going to stay in the toilets after all and, without questioning it, Ron and Harry head out to find Malfoy. Once they have found him, Malfoy leads the two into the Slytherin common-room and launches into a tirade against muggles, mudbloods, Dumbledore, and the Weasleys, making it hard for Harry and Ron to keep quiet. Malfoy reveals that the Chamber was last opened fifty years ago, and whoever did it was expelled. The potion begins to wear off, and the two run back to Myrtle's bathroom where they encounter Hermione, covered in fur and with two cat ears on her head. Distraught, Hermione informs them that the hair she thought was Millicent's was in fact her cat's.

What happens in this chapter?

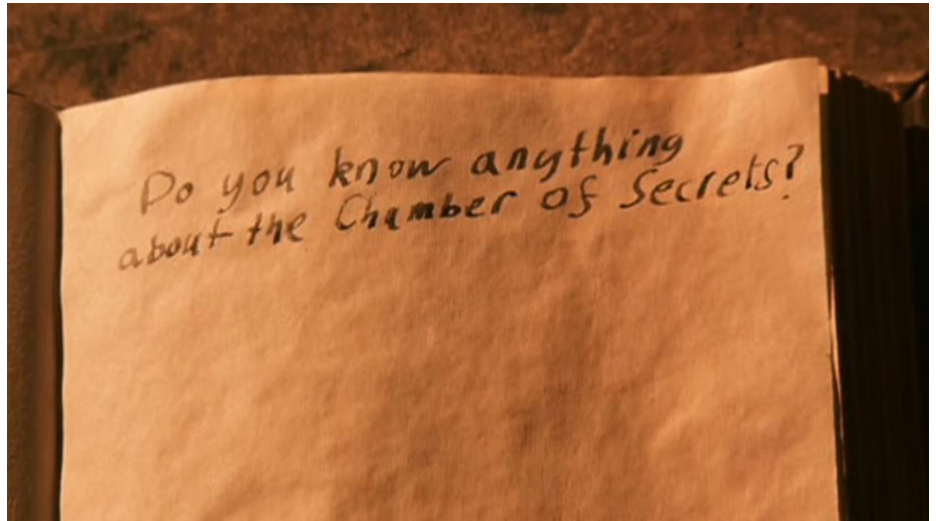
1. Do we think Harry is right to not tell Dumbledore what he knows? What would happen if he had told him?
2. What is the password for the Slytherin common room?
3. What does the Slytherin common room look like?
4. Why do Harry and Ron find it difficult to keep calm while talking to Malfoy?
5. What information do they get from Malfoy?

### Chapter Thirteen – The Very Secret Diary

## Summary

While returning from the hospital wing after visiting Hermione, Ron and Harry encounter a flood of water where the writing had appeared the previous term. They decide to look inside the girl's bathroom, where they find a black diary belonging to T. M. Riddle in the water. Someone had

clearly tried to flush it away, but it had simply been spat back up. When opened, the diary appeared completely blank, and the three begin to wonder why someone would want to throw away a blank diary.



That night, Harry begins writing in the diary and, to his surprise, sees that someone begins writing back to him. Tom Riddle, the writer of the diary, tells Harry that fifty years ago the Chamber had been opened and he had managed to close it, but the whole event had been hushed up. Riddle offers to show Harry his memories, and Harry agrees, entering the world of Riddle's memories. Harry watches Riddle's memory as a silent witness, and sees Riddle in conversation with the previous headmaster. The headmaster tells Riddle that he cannot stay in Hogwarts over the summer so long as the attacks keep happening. Riddle vows to catch whoever is doing it. Harry then sees Riddle confront a young Hagrid who has been harbouring a large spider. Riddle believes it is this spider that has been attacking students. Harry awakes to Ron entering the dorm room and informs him that it was Hagrid who opened the chamber of secrets fifty years ago.

What happens in this chapter?

1. What are the signs that the mandrakes are leaving childhood?
2. How does Harry realise that the diary is special?
3. What is Tom Riddle's plan?
4. Who do we think Tom Riddle is (no spoilers)?
5. Do we think Hagrid really opened the chamber of secrets?



# Chapter Fourteen – Cornelius Fudge



## Summary

Although Harry knows Hagrid never meant to kill anyone, he can believe that Hagrid would go looking for a monster if he knew one was in Hogwarts. During the Easter Holidays, the second years are told to choose their subjects for their third year. When Harry returns to his dorm after breakfast, he finds his trunk has been turned inside out and the diary is missing, meaning a Gryffindor must have stolen it. Later on, Harry hears the mysterious voice again and Hermione, realising something, runs to the library. Just as the Quidditch match is about to start that day, McGonagall storms onto the pitch with a megaphone and announces that the match is cancelled, sending all students back to their dorms. She then takes Harry and Ron to the hospital wing where Hermione and a fifth year Ravenclaw lay petrified. McGonagall later informs the Gryffindor common room that the school will have to be closed if the culprit is not found.

Despite curfew, Harry and Ron decide they need to visit Hagrid to ask him about the situation, and so sneak out that night under the invisibility cloak. While there, there is a knock on the door, and Dumbledore and a man called Cornelius Fudge, the Minister for Magic, enter Hagrid's hut. The Minister informs Hagrid that he wishes to remove him and place him in Azkaban, just as a precaution. At that moment, Lucius Malfoy enters and presents Dumbledore with an Order of Suspension. Dumbledore and Hagrid are escorted out, but not before Hagrid informs the room to 'follow the spiders'.

What happens in this chapter?

1. Why does Harry believe Hagrid would open the Chamber of Secrets?
2. How does Harry pick his subjects for third year?
3. Why does Harry empathise with Tom Riddle?
4. What do you think Dumbledore means when he says 'help will always be given to those who ask for it'?
5. Why do you think Lucius wants to get rid of Dumbledore?

# Chapter Fifteen – Aragog



## Summary

Summer approaches with Hagrid and Dumbledore gone from Hogwarts. Draco, pleased with Dumbledore's expulsion, says Snape should take the job. Later that night, Harry and Ron follow Hagrid's advice and follow a trail of spiders that leads into the Forbidden Forest, much to Ron's despair. The two take Harry's invisibility cloak, pick up Fang, and head into the Forest, following the spiders deeper into the trees. Suddenly, the two see a bright light, which turns out to be the Weasley's car, turned feral in the forest. At that moment, however, Ron, Harry and Fang are picked up by three large spiders and carried away to a hollow, filled with spiders the size of horses. The spiders call on Aragog, who emerges, larger than the other spiders, and begins to converse with Ron and Harry. Harry informs Aragog that they are friends of Hagrid, who is in trouble. Aragog explains that he was not the monster from the Chamber, and that Hagrid was merely looking after him, and that the opening of the Chamber was wrongly blamed on both of them. Just as the spiders begin to attack Ron and Harry, the Weasley's car arrives to save them, and takes them back to Hagrid's hut. Once back in their dorm, Ron and Harry have an idea. What if the girl that was killed 50 years ago was still in the bathroom where she died? What if that girl was Moaning Myrtle?

What happens in this chapter?

1. Why is Draco pleased in this chapter?
2. Why is it hard for Harry and Ron to make it out of the castle?
3. What do Harry and Ron learn from Aragog, and how does this change our understanding of what's happened so far?
4. What is Harry and Ron's next plan?

## Themes

## Choices

- Harry makes the choice not to tell Dumbledore about what is troubling him. What do we think of the choice, and what do we think about the fact that Tom Riddle said the very same thing to Dumbledore in his memory?
  - “But Harry was sure it was the same sort of "no" that he himself had given Dumbledore.”
- "And Riddle was going to go back to some Muggle orphanage if they closed Hogwarts," said Harry. "I don't blame him for wanting to stay here ....."
  - What do we think of this quote?
- “Tom Riddle had turned Hagrid in because he was faced with the prospect of a Muggle orphanage if the school closed. Harry now knew exactly how he had felt.”

## Prejudice

- Hagrid experiences a lot of prejudice because of something he was wrongly accused of in the past. How might this be overcome in the books?
- Similarly, how do we feel about the way that Draco discusses ‘mudbloods’? Do we think it is acceptable that the school lets him talk this way? What basis is his prejudice formed on?

## Vocabulary

- Whirring
- Ludicrous
- Resolve

## Homework

Imagine that you are Tom Riddle. Write a diary entry for the night when Tom finds Hagrid with Aragog. What do you think he was thinking and feeling that night, what were his motivations?