Wrap Up
Harry Potter and the Order of the Phoenix

Vanessa:

“Instead he smiled, raised a hand in farewell, turned around, and led the way out of the station toward the sunlit street, with Uncle Vernon, Aunt Petunia, and Dudley hurrying along in his wake.”

I'm a portrait trapped in the purgatory of Dumbledore's office.

Casper: And I'm a thestral that only sees children if they've died. (*Vanessa laughing*)

Vanessa: And this is a wrap up of Harry Potter and the Order of the Phoenix as a sacred text.

Casper: Vanessa, you and Ariana have been working really hard on a new project launching very soon called Hot and Bothered.

Vanessa: Yes! We've been working on the process of writing romance novels as a sacred practice. And the first episode of Hot and Bothered comes out on July 16th.

Casper: We'll put it in this feed and then go and subscribe to its own separate feed, Hot and Bothered, the new podcast coming straight from Not Sorry Productions to your ears.

So Vanessa, before we do our thirty second recap of the entire book—

Vanessa: Yep.

Casper: What stood out to you reading Book Five this time?

Vanessa: I think what struck me in this book is that Hogwarts is never safe. Voldemort is in Hogwarts from the very beginning in Quirrell's head, we just don't know it. But, it's in Book Five where it feels as though Hogwarts gets infiltrated by Umbridge and by the Ministry and by misinformation, but like, Barty Crouch Jr was there as Moody last year and Peter Pettigrew was there the whole time as a rat! Like, Hogwarts has always been unsafe. There's just been this false sense of security until now and this is the year in which it's like, oh, Hogwarts is not protected. McGonagall gets attacked. Hagrid gets attacked and fired. Dumbledore has to escape. This is the first time that I'm like, oh this is not a hallowed ground, like there isn't actually anything special about this place that can keep us protected.
Casper: And that's what I always find so hard about this book. This is traditionally been my least favorite book because frankly part of what I love about reading these books is the safety and the feeling of, yes, adventure, but always like it is going to be okay, and in this book it is not okay. I mean Sirius dies. And I don't like that! I don't want it to be hard! You know, I want everything to be okay and I really love your refrain that actually for me, it might have seemed safe but actually we know now it has never been safe.

Which, a wonderful friend and colleague of mine Jennifer Bailey talks about really trying to not use this language of safe spaces which at first I was like, yeah we want to create safe spaces, and she was like, 'You know what? We can't actually promise safety for a lot of people, especially people of color,' and so she talks about building brave spaces, which if we can think of Hogwarts as a place where each of us can be brave, that I really love because that's what we see happening in this book, right? We see the kids forming Dumbledore's Army and one thing I'll say is I didn't notice until this reading that it's Ginny who comes up with that language—

Vanessa: Mhmmm.

Casper: And it keeps happening to me that in these whole book overviews, Ginny is the one who keeps emerging interestingly kind of from the shadows of the story. So yeah, I'm just really loving how you're reframing that—what Hogwarts really is.

Vanessa: The other thing that I'll say about this book, right? It's like in the first few books, it's like in the first few books, oh at the end of every book there's an adventure. And then starting with Book Four, it's at the end of the book there's a death.

Casper: Mmmm...

Vanessa: Right? And so Book Five is the first one that I feel like really starts in Four. I feel like Book Five starts with Cedric's death, the death of the child is what opens up this chaos. The death of a child is so against nature and is such a tragedy that maybe there were all these cracks in the foundation before, and then a child dies and like, that's it. Right?

Casper: Mmmm...

Vanessa: Like, we can never go back. We're at war. I was just surprised by how much Cedric's death loomed for me throughout this book.

Casper: Mmmmmm.

Vanessa: What about you? What were some of your big takeaways?

Casper: I mean, it's impossible to escape just the overwhelming sadness and pain for Harry. I mean we've had his experience of being not believed. Of being maligned. But now, he is unable
to process his own experience and so we get that kind of shouty all-caps Harry. You know, just that phrase, towards the very end of the book,

"I'VE HAD ENOUGH, I'VE SEEN ENOUGH, I WANT OUT, I WANT IT TO END, I DON'T CARE ANYMORE!"

And I was just so struck by that because Harry is defined by his caring, right? He's always the one to step up, to do the right thing, to do something that's not necessary and sometimes (*chuckling*) not very sensible, but is the right thing, and he's just reached his limit.

I think you know that's really embodied by the moment he tries an unforgivable curse. When he really tries, you know, to crucio Bellatrix in the Ministry, you've seen how he is now tipped across to something. Now he doesn't yet know how to cast a curse like that and to really inflict pain, but he's willing to do it. And I think that's an important point to see that you know, Harry may be an exemplar of all sorts of things, but he's human. And we humans can do horrible things when we're stretched way beyond what we can hold.

Vanessa: Yeah and as Harry has been put just in this corner where the only thing that he can do is fight his way out, he's also been given his priestess, right, in Luna.

Casper: Mmmm.

Vanessa: You know, Luna can't save him. She doesn't come in and be his salvation in any way. But I do think she comes in and like is chaplaining him and is like walking with him and accompanying him in a way that nobody else has. So I'm glad she's here.

Casper: And especially in this book, because as you said there are so many absences. Right? Hagrid goes on his big adventure. McGonagall has to go for hospital care and then Dumbledore is thrown out. And so, I love you refocusing the camera to kind of look at the people who have entered the story and Luna is definitely leading that contingent.

Vanessa before we dig into all of this, let's do the thirty second recap of the entire book. There's thirty seconds on the clock. There's more than thirty chapters to cover, so good luck!

Vanessa: (*laughing*) A second per chapter, got it!

Casper: Here we go! 3-2-1 go! (*clock begins ticking*)

Vanessa: Dementors come to Little Whinging, Harry gets put on trial, Mrs. Figg is a hero, Molly has to fight a boggart and then they get to school and Umbridge is going to be there, 'ahem ahem.' And Umbridge is just really terrible. And Defense Against the Dark Arts is terrible and she starts firing people. She tortures Harry just a little bit. And they get taken off the quidditch team. The twins leave and are like, in the most glorious way ever! And then, oh my God, it turns


out that Sirius is at the Ministry and they all go and Sirius dies and Dumbledore does all of this meaning making and Harry has to die. (*Buzzer sounds*)

Casper: That was really impressive.

Vanessa: Thank you! I think that the best thing to do is stay calm. Did you ask for my advice? (*Casper laughing*) No. People not asking for my advice I find is just their way of asking for my advice.

Casper: It's like a silent request.

Vanessa: Yeah. (*laughing*) And I am here to serve the people.

Casper: You're here to help.

Vanessa: Yep. Okay. Are you ready?

Casper: Yes, I'm ready to roll.

Vanessa: On your mark, get set, go! (*clock begins ticking*)

Casper: (*in strange voice*) Okay well hello everyone my name's Reginald and I process the educational decrees here at Hogwarts and this has been a really busy year. (*Vanessa laughing*) I mean it was just one thing after another. Is started with uhh, you know in the event of the current headmaster being unable to provide a candidate for a teaching post the Ministry should select an appropriate person. That was August! It was downhill from there. It ended, I think we had about thirty-seven and frankly I thought my hands were hurting after doing all of that handwriting but now she's got me doing lines on me own back of the hand. What a nightmare. (*Buzzer sounds*)

Vanessa: (*laughing*) Oh my God, perfectly done. (*Casper laughing*) Summed it up in a minute, you're welcome.

(*Quip toothbrush and Native deodorant ads play*)

Casper: So ladies and gentlemen, welcome to the long view.

Vanessa: I forgot about the long view!

Casper: This is where we take one character and really try and think about them across the whole arc of this book and this as you all know is the longest book of all of the seven, so
Vanessa, which character do you want to spend some time with as we accompany them through these chapters.

Vanessa: McGonagall.

Casper: Oh! I love it! Say more!

Vanessa: So McGonagall has been teaching at Hogwarts for decades. And I feel like this is a remarkable year for her.

Casper: Bigtime.

Vanessa: Yeah. This is probably the only year that she's not been able to finish the school year because she's been attacked. It's probably the only year that she has served any headmaster other than Dumbledore. It's the year that we see her most willing to break rules. She makes exceptions. We see the possibility right? She was gonna get Harry in trouble for flying on the broom too early, but then she's like, 'Oh, you'd be a real asset on the Gryffindor quidditch team.' So we see that like for like little sneaky reasons, she's willing to break rules, but she becomes outright subversive here in a way that I don't find obvious.

I think that another version of McGonagall could be like, 'Look, this is our current headmaster and so we follow it. And I don't like it just as much as you, but like, this is what we have to do.' And instead, she is resisting Umbridge at every turn. And I just really fell in love with her as a warrior, as like a constant source of resistance. And I think that a lot of times we talk about resistance and we have these petty arguments about like, you know you should quit in protest or you should stay and resist or you should—right? And I think we see in this book that it takes all kinds.

Casper: Mmmm.

Vanessa: Dumbledore leaves, not by choice, but he leaves. But McGonagall stays and resists at every moment. And if she hadn't stayed, then she wouldn't have been there to put her life on the line for Hagrid, and so I really feel like we learn a lot about McGonagall in this book and I love everything we learn about her.

Casper: Uhh, there's something really interesting about the absence of Dumbledore and what that creates in the school. Obviously we see people like you know Flitwick kind of allowing all sorts of trouble to happen, right? Peeves is running wild. But we also see other characters step up, and I think the person I'm really interested in tracking is Neville.

Vanessa: Oooh!!
Casper: And I think he and McGonagall go together really, really well because in the final chapters of the final book, Neville is, you know, really leading the school's resistance and McGonagall is the one who kind of leads all of the wizards and witches in putting up the large protective shield, right? So really leading in the Battle of Hogwarts. And so the two people we've picked are those who are leading the fight on the inside.

Vanessa: Mmmhmmm.

Casper: And we know we're going to follow the story of the trio as they take the fight to the outside in dismantling the Horcruxes but I love in this book we actually see a flash of both Neville and McGonagall's leadership and the incredible skill and smarts and strategy that both of them put to use. I mean we see McGonagall say really zesty things (*Vanessa laughing*) shall we say to Umbridge, and we really see Neville's motivation of why this matters to him. It's so personal, you know the confrontation with Bellatrix especially.

What I love about this book is that although the character of Harry is so central, we are seeing more and more and more that this is not just his fight. And even though we hear this prophecy that neither can live if the other survives, we are actually seeing this much broader tableau of why these battle lines have been drawn. And we're going to see in Book Six of course Draco and the Malfoys' story becoming much more central.

So I love that we're both kind of zooming in and zooming out at the same time in this book.

Vanessa: Yeah, I mean there are just two big Neville moments to me in this book which is one, seeing him at St. Mungo's, right, like take those wrappers from his mom, right? It feels like a key that we're just unlocking to seeing the beauty and pain of Neville. And then the other moment is when we find out in a DA practice that only Hermione was better! Like he's just a talented wizard, and when he's not under the like, hawk eyes of Snape or any number of other stressful situations, when he is like, in his community, he thrives!

Casper: And in fact that is going to help him become such a good teacher, I mean we know that he's going to become a great scholar of herbology and I think we really see that he understands what it means to learn. He understands what it is to struggle with something. You know one of the most recent episodes we had a theme of patience and I think actually Neville really demonstrates that. You know, he's so belittled and made fun of, you know, both by his grandmothers and teachers, let alone other students, and yet he is one who we know is going to become just a wonderful, wonderful teacher and scholar.

Vanessa: I also wonder if Hermione's championing of Neville has a greater impact than is really obvious.

Casper: Oh that's so interesting!
Vanessa: Cuz she just always loves him and always helps him a little bit with his potion, right? Like she always helps Ron and Harry, but she also always helps Neville, and I wonder if like getting a little bit of love and attention from like, the coolest, brightest witch helps sustain him throughout the years.

Casper: You know we've talked about Hermione so much and it—it's never enough because you know, if we go back all of the way to that troll encounter in Book One, right? Where we see her facing the reality that on her own, she is not going to do the things she wants to do and that she takes that moment to commit to being friends with these two (*laughing*) reckless kind you know, tweeny boys, and how much that shapes her, but if we know anything about Hermione it's that she's always bringing people with her even if she has to run to the library first on her own, (*Vanessa laughing*) like once she knows what she's doing, she's always involving other people, always lifting other people up.

I mean, I notice that especially in this book with Ginny becoming part of the trio, like actually we can't really talk about a trio at this point anymore because Luna is there, Neville is there, Ginny is there, even at other points, you know, people like Seamus and other members of the DA and that's Hermione's doing. Harry is not seeking out those people and what I love about the Ginny connection is there is an age difference. Right? There is a year difference there. And that's just overcome so easily with Hermione's generosity and invitation.

Vanessa: There's one other thing I would like to take a lonnnnnngview—

Casper: Lonnnnnngvieeeeee.

Vanessa: —of is quidditch because I feel like, you know, in books one through three I was like, ughh, quidditch. And then in Book Four when the Triwizard Tournament takes away quidditch I was like, I miss quidditch. And then in this book, we get the promise of quidditch and then Fred, George, and Harry just get yanked off the team! And so, quidditch again gets disrupted. And I just think I am curious about the role quidditch plays because I—I'm curious if part of why Harry stays in caps lock mode for as long as he does is that quidditch has been taken away from him and he like doesn't have this catharses of a place where he thrives and is applauded and like, feels as though he actually deserves the fame he otherwise gets for like no reason. And I also think that I wonder if the twins would have left before the quidditch was over—

Casper: Ohhh woooow.

Vanessa: If they had been on the quidditch team. And I just like, I remember from my own life, I was to the surprise of no one a theater kid in high school, and there was a day that I was so sick, but I didn't want to skip school because I had rehearsal after school. And I remember my mom being like, 'I can't believe I'm arguing with a teenager telling her she has to stay home from school.' (*Casper laughing*) And I didn't want to go to school! I wanted to stay after for rehearsal.
And I just feel like the twins, right? Are like, 'We've got nothing to stay for. We're of age and we don't even have quidditch.' I just like never really thought about the absence of quidditch in this book or like how strong it is that it gets taken away from the twins and Harry but I think if they had been allowed to stay on the quidditch team, then this would have unfolded totally differently.

Casper: I buy that. I definitely buy that. And yet, in this year, where you know, we really see the absence of quidditch for the twins and Harry, it's really a year of presence of quidditch for Ginny and Ron, and it struck me how absent Ron is in a lot of this book, like he is really not just a second fiddle but just not really leading important elements of what's happening to Harry and what's happening in the fight against Voldemort. He's there. I mean absolutely he's always there along the way until, spoiler alert, he isn't later on, but that just struck me that this might be a year where Ron is really paying attention elsewhere. He's finally getting a chance to be on the field, right? And we, the times when we really do see Ron in this book is with 'Weasley is our king.'

And so his own kind of dramatic experience of being maligned and then championed doesn't really involve Harry, in fact, Harry is not there to witness his crowning moment. That just strikes me that we do see a bit of a divergence between the two.

Vanessa: And the prefect thing, right? It's like—

Casper: Yes!!

Vanessa: Ron's busy being prefect also, which it struck me and we didn't get a chance to talk about this, but Dumbledore at the very end of his conversation with Harry, the last thing he says is,

"And I also bet you're wondering why you weren't a prefect."

Casper: Harry's like, 'No! My godfather just died, I literally forgot.'

Vanessa: So, and then Dumbledore says, 'It seemed to me like you had bigger things to worry about.' And that is when Dumbledore cries in like grief for Harry. And I think what that might be about is like, you because you have so many things to worry about, don't get to be Ron. You don't get to be a prefect and playing quidditch and going home to a family that loves you, and this moment where it's like very clear to me Ron always feels like, 'Oh, it's always about Harry. Harry's prophecy. Harry bla bla bla,' but really, this book, it's so all about Ron that he's not even in the book, ("Casper laughing") right? Like, coolest girl in school is in love with him, he is prefect, he's on the quidditch team, and like, is like the king of the quidditch house cup. Ron is like Mr. Varsity, ("Casper laughing") right? Like, he's the one who's actually living the high school dream. Not Harry.
Casper: Yeah. It's so important Vanessa that we do think about one of the key characters in this book, and that's of course Sirius. So let me ask you this question. I am really struck that the two gifts that he gives Harry at the beginning of the book, you know this piece of mirror through which he'll always be able to see Sirius or kind of make contact, and then the knife which can open anything, are kind of duds, even within the narrative, the plot of the story, they're not really key elements. In fact, Harry forgets that he even has this piece of mirror while he's desperately trying to find a way to communicate with Sirius, and not being able to communicate with Sirius is such a vital element of those final chapters when—

Vanessa: It kills Sirius!

Casper: It kills Sirius! And so, what can we make of these two objects that should have been really helpful but end up not being important? Or at least not influential in what happens?

Vanessa: There's just something so heartbreaking about the fact that if Harry had remembered the mirror, Sirius would still be alive, right? I think part of me just wants to be like, 'New technologies are hard to adopt,' right? (*Casper laughing*) I don't know why Sirius doesn't remind him of the mirror when they're having a hard time getting ahold of each other and have to talk in the fire, why isn't Sirius like, 'Oh we can talk in the mirror?'

Casper: Yeah, I mean part of me is so interested in this, especially because the next few books are going to become so focused on material objects, right? These different horcruxes: a cup, a diadem, a book—and here are these two objects which could be loaded with so much meaning and power, and just fall flat, and all of this is especially interesting to me when we compare it to the incredible, important role that the gift from Harry's father plays, namely the invisibility cloak, and also, frankly, the gift of the broom! Right? From Sirius which was anonymous at the time, but which we know comes from his godfather. So there's something maybe about a time when Harry was younger and was more, like, everything was still new and everything was special and different and exciting, and now he's kind of, you know, he's in the wizarding world. Like this is no longer a strange place, and, oh! You are giving me a mirror through which I can always see a face? Great. I'll put it at the bottom of my case. (*laughing*)

Vanessa: Right.

Casper: The world is not enchanted anymore. It has become normal.

Vanessa: Mmmm.

Casper: And so these objects which might have been magical and incredible to us in Book One have now become just kind of background objects.

Vanessa: Right, like when he first gets the invisibility cloak—
Casper: Yaaa!

Vanessa: —and the wand and the broom, like, any new object, and Hedwig from Hagrid, right?

Casper: Yes!

Vanessa: Like all of these gifts. I mean even the money that he has to buy all of these things is this unknown gift that his parents left him.

Casper: We spent like a chapter just learning about these things!

Vanessa: Yeah. And now it's like, oops, and like I don't begrudge him it.

Casper: Oh me neither.

Vanessa: It's just tragic.

Casper: And I think it speaks to the fact that the extraordinary can become ordinary with time. Right? Like that we get used to things that really should be treasures and so appreciated but it's so hard to stay in that world of wonder and enthusiasm when you walk past it every day. Like, we walk across Harvard Yard every day, multiple times a day. When I first arrived here, that was an incredible thing. And with time, it's just like, oh, I've got to go get milk, you know? (*laughing*)

Vanessa: (*laughing*) Yeah!

Casper: And that's the reality. That's how life is. And frankly, you know, I'm sure visiting the Queen for the first time is going to be amazing for someone who gets to do that.

Vanessa: I thought like, when you go, (*Casper laughing*) shortly in just a few weeks.

Casper: Yeah, she—we're about to become great penpals, (*Vanessa laughing*) uhh, just hasn't quite happened yet. But, you know, for the Queen, like it's frickin just another Tuesday, and she's gotta put that crown on.

Vanessa: Yeah. And holding onto the magic for too long is annoying right?

Casper: Mmmm...

Vanessa: The aunt who you see who's like, 'Oh my God! I can't believe he's grown!' You're like, oh my God get over it.

Casper: You too have grown. (*Vanessa laughing*) Old. (*laughing*)
Vanessa: People stay in like, wonder-mode for too long. There's something beautiful about the extraordinary being ordinary, right? There's intimacy to that which I find beautiful.

Casper: Yeah.

(*piano interlude plays*)

Vanessa: So Casper, for our wrap-up episodes, we do sort of a modified version of *Florilegia* where we each pick a sentence that sparkles at us as emblematic of the entire book for one reason or another, and then we put those two sentences together and do *Florilegia*. I'm wondering what sentence you picked.

Casper: Well, listeners might remember this one because it is very famous from Book Five. I chose

> “Things we lose have a way of coming back to us in the end, if not always in the way we expect.”

How about you?

Vanessa: Mine is,

> "Get out, get out, I don't want to see you in this office ever again!"

(*Casper laughing*)

Casper: Hawhawwwwww!

Vanessa: So Casper, why don't you remind us who it is that says yours and the context around it.

Casper: So this is Luna—

Vanessa: Ahh!

Casper: Of course, it's Luna. And you know, things, all of her kind of stationary and clothes and all sorts of things just go missing.

Vanessa: Her shoes!

Casper: Her shoes, and at the end of term, she's just expecting that they will come back. She's not really actively searching for them. But the reason why it had resonance for me, when I read
it again I was like, oh wait, this actually applies to a couple of other characters in an interesting way.

The first one actually was Snape. Particularly because one of the best chapters about Snape is in this book in terms of his worst memory and I just love that image that kind of the memories that we lose—and we talked about this in a recent episode—have a way of coming back to us. And he thinks he's gonna be in this Occlumency class with Harry, expecting to probably see some of Harry's life, and yeah, actually what happens is his own memory is kind of pulled out of him and Harry sees it. So that was one interesting mirror for me.

But the other one is also about Umbridge. You know, we see her prejudice, nastiness, horror, especially about non-human creatures and—and centaurs and of course she gets carried off by centaurs into the dark night. So she loses her decency and her respect and it comes back to bite her. So I just love that.

And finally, of course, you know, Harry and Sirius—Sirius does return to Harry, right? At the end of Book Seven, and his—his presence is with Harry in a way that is very Luna-esque, right? Like Luna straddles this world of the seen and the unseen, and Harry is going to be in that world more and more. I mean he's physically going to travel into it in Book Seven.

So yeah, I love this line of Luna, there's trust, there's mystery, there's foolishness. All of it is so Luna, but I think it echoes across characters. How about you? Where's your from? Actually can't think of where it's from.

Vanessa: Yeah! So it is from, interestingly enough, from the chapter, "Snape's Worst Memory."

Casper: Ooooooooooh.

Vanessa: Which when I was like, I want a sentence that like, captures at least my experience with the book, my big aha moment from this whole book, is that Snape's worst memory which is one of the greatest scenes, it was a moment where I sort of flipped on Snape—

Casper: Mmmmmmm.

Vanessa: Because I think that it's his worst memory because it's the moment that he was cruel to Lily.

Casper: I love that reading. Yeah.

Vanessa: And not, and obviously that he was terribly bullied, but again, I just—I think that he was used to being bullied and this being bullied wasn't necessarily worse than other being bullied—
Casper: Right.

Vanessa: And so that reading of Snape just made me feel love for him, and not forgive him for all of his poor behavior by any means, but it just made me care for him—

Casper: Mmmmm.

Vanessa: In a different way. And so this, my quote, "Get out, get out, I don't want to see you in this office ever again!" is after Harry has seen this scene, and that this, just, is such a missed opportunity because of shame. This could be a moment of real connection. They are actually feeling some more emotions. Right? Harry is feeling a tremendous amount of shame about his father—

Casper: Yeah.

Vanessa: And his father's behavior in this moment. And because instead, Snape has not forgiven himself or reconciled in any way this moment and so just sends Harry out. Harry doesn't learn Occlumency Harry and Snape never really do connect. There's just all of these negative implications. And I just really see myself in both of their reactions, like, I can count on one hand the number of times that I've let a difficult moment lead to a vulnerable moment in which I leave feeling closer to the person. I'm more of a like I'm going to run away.

Casper: Aren't we all.

Vanessa: And so yeah, I just see this, "Get out, get out, I don't want to see you in this office ever again!" is a real missed opportunity.

Casper: So Vanessa, let's put them together and see what new insights we get from reading them as one text.

"Things we lose have a way of coming back to us in the end, if not always in the way we expect."
"Get out, get out, I don't want to see you in this office ever again!"

Vanessa: Ooof. So the thing that Snape loses is his control.

Casper: Ooooh.

Vanessa: And he gets control but only as like Headmaster of Hogwarts when he has to pretend to kill Dumbledore right? We think that Harry is the one who has to sacrifice himself but Snape is really the one who's sacrificing himself. And again, like, not graciously. Not well. But like,

Casper: Mmmhmmm
Vanessa: He is doing it.
Casper: Will you read it for me?
Vanessa: Yeah.

“Things we lose have a way of coming back to us in the end, if not always in the way we expect.”
"Get out, get out, I don't want to see you in this office ever again!"

Vanessa: It's the Dursleys, right? It's Petunia and her sister. She's really made that break, and yet, here comes back into their life this child from that part of her life, right? She grew up with a witch as a sister, she grew up knowing about Hogwarts, knowing about Azkaban, and she has pushed it as far away from her life with Vernon as possible and things have a way of coming back to you in the way that you didn't always expect. And here comes this little baby boy on her front doorstep. I'm just suddenly seeing the futility of trying to push out things that are inherently ours. Or belong to the people we love. Kind of like Snape. We can try to push away that memory, but it has formed us and it's part of who we are and what life we've lived.

Vanessa: Well, in Harry seeing this memory, gets Snape to push Harry away, right?
Casper: Yeah.

Vanessa: And kick him out. But the last thing that Snape dies is hand Harry a bunch of his memories.
Casper: Wow.
Vanessa: And so at one point, he feels so distant from Harry—
Casper: Mmmm
Vanessa: But he's like, you so can't see this but I will go against Dumbledore's orders which Snape never wants to go against Dumbledore's orders, but I will go against Dumbledore’s orders I'm so embarrassed by these memories. And then just two books from now, it's going to be his dying wish that Harry—
Casper: Wow
Vanessa: Deal with his memories.
Casper: I guess we're really seeing that this primal instinct to push out things in our lives that we are ashamed of or the things that we're not proud of or the people that we can't bear to engage with, to some extent, we can never take away that connection.

Vanessa: Yeah.

Casper: For better or worse, they come back like Luna's shoes.

Vanessa we are truly coming to the end of Book Five, *Harry Potter and the Order of the Phoenix* and we can make one more blessing for the characters in this book. Who would you like to offer a blessing to?

Vanessa: So I am going to change the blessing last minute just so inspired by what you just said. So the character that annoys me the most—obviously I hate Umbridge and I hate all of the baddies, but Luna's really difficult for me. And I, instead of like throwing her off, I want to like, embrace her and bring her in.

Casper: Mmmm.

Vanessa: And so I would like to offer a blessing to Luna who she's just challenging everyone, right? She is there to tell Ron, 'Everyone describes you as the likable guy but you're actually not that nice.' (*Casper laughing*) 'And Hermione, you think everything is fact-based, but you don't know everything.'

Casper: Mmmmm.

Vanessa: And, you know, 'Harry, you always want to push everyone away and I'm just going to stand right next to you. And Umbridge, you want to use force? Well, force doesn't work on me.'

Casper: Mmmmm.

Vanessa: Right? Like, she's just constantly pushing people sort of exactly where they need to be pushed. And not aggressively and not in order to be a contrarian. She's just so herself that she holds a mirror to everybody else, and I just think she's sort of a poem walking through—

Casper: I love that.

Vanessa: This book. So I would like to offer a blessing to Luna for challenging me, right? Like, my annoyance with Luna is about me. It's not about Luna.

Casper: Mmmmm.

Vanessa: What about you Casper?
Casper: That's so beautiful Vanessa. And I'm inspired by that because I'm also going to change who I thought I would be blessing. I am going to bless Sirius because he frustrates me I think in the way that maybe frustrates you. He's this very adventures bro. Right?

Vanessa: (*laughing*) Ha ha ha!

Casper: Right? And I'm just not that. (*laughing*) Ha! Ha! Ha!

And—and he was pretty mean, right? He was kind of one of the school bullies. I know who that was in my high school. You know what I mean? And I don't like the way in which he is immature in his relating to Harry. I think he's unskillful. I think he takes unnecessary risks. I think he is—he hasn't processed (*laughing*) a lot of his feelings and, you know, projects onto Harry what is really about James, all of these kinds of things.

And I guess in a way represents a kind of brash masculinity which maybe I struggle with a little bit. And it leads to his unfortunate end. And there's something kind of Shakespearean about that, right? He's the one that says that it's how you treat those lesser than yourself that marks you out as who you are and the way he treats Kreacher is instrumental to his undoing. I—I guess I see myself in him as well because I will pass plenty of people who I should be paying more attention to, and—

Vanessa: Don't we all.

Casper: Don't we all. And don't we all. So, a blessing for Sirius, and I guess all of our—all of our flawed, belovedness in the midst of real challenge and suffering.

(*theme music begins*)

You've been listening to Harry Potter and the Sacred Text. We finished Book Five, *Harry Potter and the Order of the Phoenix* which leaves us with just two more books! But don't worry, we're going to do them.

Vanessa: Next week, Casper is going to be doing a final Owl Post with the great Matt Potts. Then we're taking two weeks off. Book Six starts July 25th. Follow us on Twitter, Instagram, and Facebook and join our Facebook group, The Harry Potter Sacred Text Common Room, or come and join the 1,200+ people supporting us on Patreon. You can leave us a review on iTunes, send us a voicemail, and we hope to see you at one of our live shows in New York City on September 9th, Washington, DC on November 7th, and St. Louis, Missouri on December 19th where the famous Kim, my best friend, will be.
Casper: This episode has been produced by Not Sorry Productions with our executive producer, the great Ariana Nedelman, our associate producer Chelsea Ursin, our music by Ivan Pyzow and Nick Bolh, and we're part of Nightvale Presents.

Thanks so much, as ever, for their wonderful hard work: Julia Argy and all of the behind-the-scenes things she does, Maggie Needham for the wonderful social media and local group support she does, and our beloved Stephanie Paulsell for whispering wisdom into our ears.

See you next week!

(*music ends*)

Casper: So friends, ladies and gentlemen, welcome to this wrap-up episode where we're going to take (*in dramatic voice*) the lonnnng viewwwww.

Vanessa and Casper in unison: (*drawn out*) theeeeee lonnnnnng viewwwwwwwww. It's theeeeee lonnnnnnnng viewwwwwwwww (*laughing*)