(*theme music starts*)

Casper: Hey Vanessa!

Vanessa: Oh, hello Casper!

Casper: Do you know, rather than cutting the Sopophorous Bean, one ought to crush it with the side of a silver dagger to really release the juices.

Vanessa: I do know that.

Casper: I’m so glad.

Vanessa: Yeah.

Casper: You would get top marks in my Potions class.

(*music fades*)

Casper: (*laughs*) I don’t know why it’s *my* Potions class. I clearly excelled at Astrology.

Vanessa: (*laughs*)

In today’s episode we are going to be talking about everything we are excited about with Half Blood Prince, but we have a few announcements before.

First, is that we have revamped our Patreon.

Casper: (*dramatic gasp*) Ooooh!

Vanessa: (*laughs*) So, the thing that I am most excited about is that now when you join our $5 tier or above, you are going to get a limited to Patreon only, for the next year at least, sticker that says…

Casper: (*gasp*)

Vanessa: “Meet me in Mallorca!” Like Aunt Marge.

Casper: (*laughs*) And we always say that to each other when we have to come up with a random place, we’re like, “Mm, Mallorca!”

Vanessa: (*laughs*) Yes. I think this means that at one point you and I are just going to have to go to Mallorca.

Casper: Guys, let’s do a live show in Mallorca.

Vanessa: (*laughs*)

Casper: Holiday destination, who needs holiday weddings? Holiday live shows!
Vanessa: And then if you join for $15 a month, you’re gonna get an enamel mug – oo-ooh!
Casper: Ooh!

Vanessa: And then if you join at any amount, from a dollar a month, you get an extended blooper reel of Casper telling me that I’m beautiful.

Casper: The bloopers are one of my faves. And whatever amount you give, you’ll get a blooper reel, and we so appreciate all of you supporting – we’ve got over twelve hundred people supporting us on Patreon – and you are the engine of this community, so thank you everyone so much.

The second announcement is very exciting for me, because…

Vanessa: It is exciting for us all.

Casper: (*laughs*) Friends, I am writing a book, and I’m really excited about it, and it’s called “The Power of Ritual”, and so much of it comes from the conversations that I’ve had with Vanessa and Ariana and with all of you, thinking about sacred reading as one of the amazing ancient rituals that we can translate into a new context, so the book is coming out, probably in June of 2020, and it’s looking at all sorts of different ancient practices that help us to feel connected. I’ll tell more about it once we get close to the time, but right now I’m writing and editing and am very grateful for all of your support and encouragement, and – hopefully you’ll like the book ‘cause I wrote it for you!

Vanessa: It’s really good. I’ve read it, and if you don’t like it you are incorrect.

Casper: Thanks Vanessa;

Vanessa: I’m so excited.

Casper: And finally, because we’ve had such an explosive growth in local groups, we are going to shout out a local group in every episode of Season Six. ‘Cause there’s more than thirty local groups around the world now.

Vanessa: There are forty-two.

Casper: Forty-two!

Vanessa: But who’s counting?

Casper: (*whispers*) Who’s counting?

So, if you’re in a local group, keep your ears out, ‘cause every episode we’ll give you a little shout out. And if you’d like to start a group, reach out – we’ve got Maggie, who’s working with us, who helped launch the Chicago group, who is on hand to help you navigate any questions. And, we’ve learnt one thing sitting in the studio all these years, sacred reading is better together.

Vanessa: And the first local group that we are shouting out because it was her idea, is the Western Mass group, which is run by Angela Clark. So go to harrypottersacredtext.com/groups and you will see all of our groups, and if you live in
western Massachusetts, you should definitely join Angela and all of her wonderful peers who read the books together.

So what are you excited to talk about in Half-Blood Prince?

Casper: I feel like this is the book I’ve been waiting for to really live my Draco fantasy. I have a tee shirt which says “Draco Malfoy is my Boyfriend”, I think sometimes it scares people a little bit.

Vanessa: (*chuckles*)

Casper: But I just love the Malfoys as a, like, cast of characters throughout this book. Obviously, Draco gets set this task which is overwhelming to him, and we see him struggle and struggle as the book progresses, but we also see – we really get to know Narcissa for the first time, so I – I just really love the whole Malfoy drama. How about you?

Vanessa: Oh, I couldn’t agree more on that. I feel like getting to know the Malfoys as a unit of three, I feel like we have these three units of three with single sons – the Dursleys, Petunia, Vernon and Dudley; and then we have the Malfoys, with Narcissa, Lucius and Draco; and then obviously we have Lily, James and Harry, and it’s the different dynamics…

Casper: Mmm.

Vanessa:… and the way that they play out, and I just think – I think Dumbledore does a really good job early in the book of like changing our expectations and our ways of viewing all of these dynamics by saying to – he says to Petunia and Vernon, like, it’s really awful all the terrible things that you’ve done to Harry, at least you haven’t done as much damage to him as you have to Dudley. (*sucks in breath*)

Casper: What a burn!

Vanessa: It’s such a good burn. (*laughing*) And they are all sort of like confused. And so I think that these three family dynamics of these like trios with single sons are so interesting, and I think Narcissa’s love for Draco is so interesting, and I think that the different ways that all three of these boys try to please their fathers and live up to their fathers’ reputations are so interesting. And so I think, really getting to know Narcissa, understanding why Draco takes on this task as a way to make up for his father’s reputation. I just think it’s fascinating.

Casper: Well, and especially we’ve had so many books focused on the kind of Gryffindor common room and heritage, now this book really gives us a lot of Slytherin.

Vanessa: Yeah.

Casper: We’ve got the Malfoys that we’ve mentioned, but we’re also going to learn a lot more about Voldemort, Tom Riddle, and of course Snape plays such a central role.

Vanessa: And Slughorn.

Casper: And Slughorn (*gasps*).

Vanessa: We meet Slughorn, who’s a Slytherin.
Casper: That’s right.
Vanessa: And is a complicated…
Casper: Yes.
Vanessa: …Slytherin. Right?
Casper: Turns out there are no simple Slytherins (*laughs*). I think we can’t fall into the lazy tropes of like, “Slytherin equals like scary bad person” ’cause we see Slughorn really struggle with responsibility and with personal sacrifice and he has to kind of navigate putting himself first, and second. (*laughs*) This is when I really fell in love with, like, the Slytherin identity, because I think Slughorn is this perfect case study where we see – even when we do something right, we don’t always do it for the right reasons, and even when we do something wrong, we might have done it for the right reasons. I just love Slytherin identity as lived out through Slughorn, and we’re going to meet him in just a few chapters as he kind of tries to avoid Dumbledore’s call to go to Hogwarts, but ultimately he does accept, and, becomes a really influential teacher, as now Snape has moved to Defence Against the Dark Arts.
Vanessa: That is so interesting; I did not know that that was why you identified as a Slytherin. I really find that reason compelling, because Slughorn obviously, has a lot of great qualities, right?
Casper: Right.
Vanessa: He brings students together in a social way. He’s somebody who lives with a tremendous amount of shame and regret.
Casper: Yeah.
Vanessa: In such a live way that I find fascinating, and I’m really excited to explore that. This makes so much more sense to me, why you love identifying as a Slytherin, if you think of like, Book Six, as really the exploration of what it means to be a Slytherin. Because, yeah, meeting the young Tom Riddle you really get a sense of ambition without totally knowing what it’s about yet, and I think that you see the potential in who Tom Riddle could have been.
Casper: Right.
Vanessa: And obviously did not turn out to be.
Casper: yeah. This is where it gets so complex, because Slughorn is the one who ultimately tells Riddle about Horcruxes. You know, that’s that crucial piece of information which shapes who Voldemort is going to become in-in such a massive way. And perhaps Riddle would have found out one way or another, and perhaps he wouldn’t. But there’s something really interesting I think about this question of responsibility of knowledge and responsibility of care if you are someone’s caretaker or you’re in a loco parentis, right, like in a boarding school where you have the place of a parent, where you’re responsible for a child’s wellbeing. It has all these interesting ethical questions, ‘cause he is teaching him and so this really fine line of when-when is it responsible to share something, when is it dangerous.
Vanessa: I also think that Slughorn, just in the way that you were talking about, that Slughorn’s relationship with Tom Riddle makes me think of a lot of incidents that we’re hearing about with the Me Too movement.

Casper: Yes!

Vanessa: Where it’s…

CasperL Yes!

Vanessa: …oh, in hindsight, what I did was maybe culturally appropriate at the time…

Casper: Yes.

Vanessa: …but, oh my God! I have so much shame around what I did, and what do I do with the fact that I deeply regret something that I did, you know, twenty years ago. And I think Slughorn apologises and deals with that shame in the not super mature great way that we see a lot of men doing.

Casper: Right.

Vanessa: Where we see some men, obviously, standing up and being like, I regret what I did…

Casper: Right.

Vanessa: … it was culturally appropriate at the time, but it shouldn’t have been, and like bad and shame on me. Whereas other men do this like hedging of like, it was fine at the time, I didn’t know! And so I think that there is like something so relevant about the Slughorn/Tom Riddle relationship.

Casper: Yeah, well, and that’s mirrored in such an interesting way in Harry and Dumbledore, and that becomes really central towards the end of the book as we see – spoiler alert, friends! – the demise of Dumbledore. You know, it is that moment where the hero surpasses the mentor; at the end of the book where Harry is left really alone, you know, Book Seven is going to be him and Ron and Hermione off on their own and with no one to really teach them. So that kind of teacher-student relationship is really central, here, and you could even say that happens between Snape and Draco as well, that you have this promise that Snape makes to Draco’s mother at the very beginning of the book. Just as we have those three family units, I think that we have these three teacher-student kind of couples that we-that we might track through the book.

Vanessa: Yeah. Of Slughorn and Tom Riddle, Dumbledore and Harry and Snape and Draco.

Casper: Right.

Vanessa: That’s so interesting. I think that part of the reason that I love Book Six so much is that we get so much face time with Dumbledore.

Casper: Yeah.
Vanessa: And as complicated of feelings as I have about Dumbledore intellectually, whenever he’s on the page, I do, I just feel comforted. There’s something so lovable about Dumbledore, even with all his flaws, ’cause just, like I can’t deny as soon as he shows up at the door at the Dursleys, I’m like, everything will be all right.

But can we not forget the thing that’s most exciting about Book Six.

Casper: (*chuckles*) You can talk about teenage romance.

Vanessa: Oh my God! The drama.

Casper: (*laughs*)

Vanessa: I love the drama, I’m here for all the drama.

(*Casper laughing in the background*)

Vanessa: Lavender really gets short shrift, which I’m really excited to talk about – justice for Lavender!

Casper: Oh my God, Lavender!

Vanessa: I know. And just – I really think one of the top three moments in all of the books happens here when Hermione summons birds to go after Ron.

Casper: (*laughs*)

Vanessa: And I am anti-violence, but…

Casper: Except for birds. I will say I feel like with this book, the movie has kind of imprinted itself on my mind, and I want to – especially when it comes to the teenage like love triangle dramas – I really wanna get back into the text rather than what I remember from the screen. Not that I didn’t enjoy the movie, but I-I really want to hear what the text has to say, especially about Lavender as you said. I think she kind of becomes, you know, a kind of caricature of herself, certainly in the movie, and so I want to see if that’s true on the page as well.

Vanessa: I haven’t seen the movie. Maybe that’s why I love Lavender.

Casper: That’s awesome!

Vanessa: I think the thing that I really wanna do is just – one of the most comforting and lovely things that an adult ever said to me was – Ms Lyons, my drama teacher in high school was listening to some students in the class pine about lost love, and they said, “I’m sorry, this must seem really silly to you,” and she was like, “No, I remember feelings at your age. Those feelings are big and real feelings.” She was like, “I will never minimise your feelings.” It was just like such a – even though it wasn’t about me – felt so validating to be like, “Oh, even though I’m fourteen or fifteen, my feelings are real,” and Hermione’s feelings are so real. She’s been crushed by this, and then Ron’s feelings of inadequacy and like, of going about it in just this gross bro-y way of like making out with a girl that he doesn’t really like in order to get experience, is like also really real, and then poor Lavender, like, we can joke about like
how silly it is, but like the feelings are so real and hard and I just wanna like kiss them all on the forehead and hug them.

(*Casper laughing in the background*)

Casper: I also wanna think about like how do we know when we love someone? I – you know, their relationship has gone from friendship to romance, which is very apropos, and if you haven’t downloaded *Hot and Bothered*…

Vanessa: Friendship to lovers is my favourite trope.

Casper: Well so, I wanna, let’s talk about that in this context as we see that relationship progress and change, like what are the moments when you start to think, “Oh wait! Hang on, there’s something different here,” or like, “I’m noticing in myself that I feel something maybe that I didn’t expect I would feel.” And not just in a oh, isn’t it fun to think back, you know if we are older, to our teenage days, but, listen – whether you’re a celibate priest or in a committed relationship, you’re going to feel things for people. And so, how do you navigate that, how do you notice that, what do you do? Obviously there might be a choice to explore that, but there might also be a moment to be like, oh, I’m going to notice this, and I wanna stay with the person I’m with, or I wanna stay in celibacy, because of course there are so many priests that listen to our show… (*laughing*).

Vanessa: (*laughs*)

Casper: …that this would apply to. but-but really that question of what do I do when I notice attraction.

Vanessa: Hm-m.

Casper: I think could be really interesting to explore.

Vanessa: Yeah, and the other thing that I’ve been giving a lot of thought to is, what-what is the difference between a friendship and a romantic relationship or a partnership?

Casper: Mm.

Vanessa: And the thing that I’ve really come away with is that friendship is a relationship in which you can like sort of drift apart and find each other again.

Casper: Mm.

Vanessa: Whereas if you are in a daily committed partnership with somebody, there’s just a different equation…

Casper: Yeah.

Vanessa: …and like a different set of mathematics that you have to be doing. And so I think that we think of relationships sometimes as like friendship with benefits…

Casper: Mm.
Vanessa: …and I think that Ron and Hermione are navigating like, what does it mean that I love my best friend in a romantic way? And of course that transition is gonna be awkward and murky.

Casper: Yeah. Yeah, it’s kind of going from a person to the person or like, my person.

Vanessa: Yeah, and I think that they’re realising that it’s not just like friendship with snogging, right?

Casper: (*laughs*)

Vanessa: If it was, they would just snog and get it over with.

Casper: That is one word that I’ve not said since I moved to America. It’s such an English word – snog, snogging.

Vanessa: Well, it’s in this book a lot.

(*Casper laughing*)

Vanessa: So that’s something else I’m looking forward to, is the great use of the word snog. And then the other thing that obviously I am so excited in this book, is like spending more time with the awesome Ginny Weasley.

Casper: She really comes to the fore in this book.

Vanessa: Yes she does! The reason that Ron starts feeling inadequate about his lack of snogging experience is because he like slut-shames Ginny, and Ginny is like, just because you haven’t kissed anyone doesn’t mean that kissing people and sexuality is wrong. And she is just this like sex positive guru, and then she gets the guy she’s always been in love with. Talk about a romance novel, being in love with someone since you were like nine years old and then finally getting him. And like not in a teeny bopper way but in a like legitimate soul-mate way. Uh. Swoon. Ginny.

Casper: Started from the bottom, now we’re here Ginny.

Vanessa: (*laughs quietly*) And I also wanna use Ginny to be kinder to Ron. I think that it is easy to be very frustrated with Ron in this book, and I want to at minimum see him as Harry and Hermione see him. And also I just think like I need to start to see myself more in Ron, I think he’s like, very easy to toss aside for mistakes that I make every day, right, like being oblivious – how many people am I oblivious to in a day? You know, sometimes being insensitive to other people’s feelings because I have a goal - pff, hi, my whole life.

Casper: (*laughs*)

Vanessa: So, the way that we, you know, that you very early on in this process encouraged us to see the Durselyishness within ourselves…

Casper: Mm.
Vanessa: … I think I wanna see – not that I am comparing Ron and the Dursleys – but I-I think that I wanna see Ron in myself, the -um – just like dopey well-intended like moments.

Casper: The other thing that I think is really important to think about as we enter Book Six, is that the context for the story has changed completely. If you think about the kind of wizarding culture and society, you know, now there’s a widespread acceptance that Voldemort has returned, we’ve seen changes in the Ministry, Fudge has gone – although he’s still an advisor, which I’d be worried about for my P.R. But Scrimgeour is now the new Minister of Magic, and there’s just a gloomy sense of, I don’t wanna say defeat, but a hardiness of entering another war. But at the same time that we have this kind of gloomy hardy gritty context, you know, the-the joke shop of the twins really stands out as this wonderful contrast. And it has maybe one of my favourite quotes from the whole books, which is, “Why are you worrying about You-Know-Who when you should be worrying about U-No-Poo, the constipation sensation that’s gripping the nation?” No better poetry has ever been written.

Vanessa: (*laughing*) Yeah, I think, you know there used to be that stereotype that skirts get shorter during wars?

Casper: Yes!

Vanessa: And there are studies about how during hard times musical theatre becomes more popular, musicals make it back into popular culture and into movies, and I think that the twins are sort of the embodiment of that in this book, right? The war is like open, Voldemort is back, and so a joke shop arises. It’s a reminder of the humanity that you’re fighting for.

Casper: Mmmm.

Vanessa: Right/?

Casper: Yeah, it’s more than an antidote, it’s an actual embodiment of why we’re doing this in the first place. That’s really lovely.

Vanessa: I would really like you to hold my feet to the fire on this next thing that I’m looking for in this book, which is I don’t wanna forget about heartthrob Lee Jordan.

Casper: Yes.

Vanessa: His two best friends have abandoned him; we know that he, a year from now, is going to be a crucial part of the resistance…

Casper: Mm.

Vanessa: …by being like the underground media for the resistance. What is Lee up to now that he’s been left behind by his two best friends?

Casper: Isn’t that obvious? McGonagall one-on-one teaching.

Vanessa: I think so too.

Casper: (*laughs*) But I do think he is gonna learn from somewhere how to take the gift that he has, which is commentating Quidditch matches, and turn it into a tool of-of resistance,
which is to start this underground radio station, and that’s something that I think that I love seeing in these books, that you see each of the characters really discover – what is my thing to give? We’ve talked about the twins as offering this, you know, symbolic embodiment of what we’re all fighting for, we’re gonna see Harry, Ron and Hermione go and chase the Horcruxes, we’re gonna see Neville and Ginny lead the DA, they already have. And so each character is finding what they can give to fight for the world they long for, which I think is an invitation for all of us, you know, what is it that we can do that’s authentic to who we are, but that nonetheless risks something for what we know to be right? I mean, Dumbledore even so much as to allow himself to be killed in order to help move that dial, so…

Vanessa: Yeah. I love what you just said about, what is that we can do that can be authentic to who we are, but that’s still risking something…

Casper: Mm.

Vanessa: I think that that is such a fine balance and such a like beautiful way to think about the way that we walk through the world, that we shouldn’t be sacrificing our identities. You know, it’s something that I’ve been thinking about a lot in terms of what’s going on at the border, like, what can I authentically do within the powers that I have? But that still are risky and still cost me, right, because I do, like Dumbledore models for us, like Lee Jordan does, right, I do wanna put myself at risk for these cases that matter to me, and so, yeah, I really love that.

So I wanna see – ‘cause Quidditch is actually back in Book Six.

Casper: (*ha ha*)

Vanessa: I remember being excited about Quidditch being back in Book Five, because I was like, oh my God the Four Wizard Tournament, there was no Quidditch, it just got cancelled, and I can’t believe I missed it, and instead we were risking children’s lives.

Casper: Triwizard Tournament!

Vanessa: It’s the Four Wizard Tournament! Let’s call things what they are, Casper.

Casper: (*laughing*)

Vanessa: And then, in Book Five, I forgot that Umbridge swoops in and ruins Quidditch! And I can’t believe how much I am like, learning the value sports as a form of distraction and joy and whatever! But Quidditch is back, and exciting things happen, and Harry and Ron are on the same team, and I’m excited to hear what Lee Jordan has to say, and I’m just, Quidditch is actually back this season.

Casper: Well, and-and we get one of the best scenes, which is the whole Liquid Luck moment right, Felix Felicis, and the kind of, moment that Ron thinks he’s had some, and he does all these amazing saves, but actually it was in him all along and the Force lives in him, there’s Simba, there’s Lion King, there’s Star Wars. It’s all in one.

So Vanessa, as we do-we do look back to Book Five, like what other pieces of that tome are we bringing with us into Book Six?
Vanessa: So the thing that I was thinking about as we started reading, is we think of Book Five as CAPSLOCK!Harry…

Casper: Yeah.

Vanessa: …but it’s not like Harry’s PTSD is now over.

Casper: (*chuckles*)

Vanessa: Like we don’t think of Book Six as capslock book, but his trauma has just been compounded…

Casper: Mm.

Vanessa: …in the loss of Sirius, and then this real battle in which he was scared his friends were dead, and this has only gotten more intense, and sure, people believe him now, so there isn’t the gaslighting like, I think that there must be like some relief with that, but I think it’s important to remember from Book Five that the trauma isn’t over, right like, PTSD lasts a lifetime and is something that you live in relationship with, and I don’t want it to be like, Book Five, PTSD book, Book Six – that’s over!

Casper: Right. Right, absolutely. I-I’m looking for well, what can we think of this book as if it’s not the all caps PTSD book? I wanna say like is there some sense of healing, but that’s not there, I mean there’s gonna be this enormous loss at the end of this book as well. And in some ways. I think actually this is the biggest loss that he experiences; of course the end of Book Seven is his own sort of death-resurrection moment, but there’s not a sense of abandonment at the end of Book Seven. This is really the high point, the apex, of the kind of you know, the ultimate mentor, the ultimate wise leader, protective force disappearing, and so I think I like what you’re saying that we should kind of elongate that sense of loss and stress and – uh – trauma though this book as well. Is there something Harry has now that he hasn’t had before?

Vanessa: Yeah, I hadn’t thought of it until you asked, but his friendship circle is significantly expanding.

Casper: Mm.

Vanessa: Right like, so he always had Hermione and Ron, and that means so much, but in this book, like, he brings Luna to Slughorn’s party, and he and Neville really are friends now, they’ve really gone through something together.

Casper: Yeah.

Vanessa: And then he-he gets Ginny, right.

Casper: Mmm.

Vanessa: Um, in a totally new way. And so his friendship circle sort of doubles, and that mm-aa-thers, right?

Casper: It does, yeah.
Vanessa: Going from two to five, it more than doubles! And so I-I think that, like, that that’s significant, and then the other thing he gets, he gets Dumbledore back in this book.

Casper: That’s huge.

Vanessa: Dumbledore would not look at him in Book Five, and he didn’t really have access to Sirius because of Umbridge. He has so much more support in this book, which I guess might be why the capslock got turned off.

Casper: Yeah, well, I just said well this can’t be a book of healing, but actually it is, if-if this is a moment in his narrative where these relationships deepen and richen and multiply, that is one of the biggest things that can help us through moments of intense struggle, and so, maybe healing is still too big a word, but at least he’s no longer isolated in the way that he was. You know, certainly in Book Four we saw like the-the media take him on, and then last year we saw, you know, the school turn on him as well, that has really shifted, right like the-the troops are aligning behind Harry in a way that, at least the battle lines are clear, right, you’re either with Voldemort or you’re with Harry and Dumbledore, and so I think that sense of solidarity is maybe something that is really strong in this book, that makes it so enjoyable to read, because we- we know where good and evil lies, and now the question is just, what are you gonna do about it? Which will leave us in a perfect place to start Chapter One, as we meet The Other Minister.

So, as we get started with Chapter One, we’ve got some amazing guests joining us this season. John Green will be with us for Chapter Five, our beloved Matt Potts is gonna be back, as well as Mike Schubert from the Potterless podcast, which should be a lot of fun.

Vanessa: Yeah, he’s hysterical. We’re also gonna have Gaby Dunn, from Bad With Money, who’s way too cool for either of us.

Casper: (*laughs*)

Vanessa: Luckily she’s not too cool for Harry Potter, so, there by the grace of God go we, and then we’re gonna be joined by my dear friend, the incredible writer and environmentalist, Terry Tempest Williams, who I’m just so grateful that I have any excuse to be in a room with her, and so – yeah, I created this podcast as an excuse to be in a room with you, and now I get Terry and it’s just, “Mlah! My evil plot is all coming together!”

Casper: So that’s it for this preview episode; we’ll be back next week with Chapter One, and as a special treat for you, instead of our usual outro music, our friends over at Harry and the Potters have a new album out called Lumos, and they’ve agreed to let us play one of their songs as we play the credits, so here is Hermione’s Army. We hope you enjoy.

(*music starts*)

Vanessa: You’ve been listening to Harry Potter and the Sacred Text, and next week we will be reading Chapter One, The Other Minister, read through the theme of helplessness.

Casper: We’d also love you to come and join the over a thousand people supporting us on Patreon, and you can leave us a review on iTunes, which I like to read before I go to bed.
Vanessa: We hope to see you at one of our live shows: we will be in New York City on September 9th, in Cambridge, Massachusetts on October 2nd, and Washington DC on November 7th, and St. Louis Missouri on December 19th. And registration for our Virginia Woolf pilgrimage will be launching on October 15th.

Casper: Don’t forget to check out *Women of Harry Potter* and *Hot and Bothered*, also produced by Not Sorry Productions. Our executive producer is Ariana Nedelman; our associate producer is Chelsea Ursin; our music, as ever, is by Ivan Pyzow and Nick Bolh, and we are part of NightVale Presents. Huge thanks to Julia Argy, Nicki Zoltan, Maggie Needham, Meghan Kelly and the wonderful Stephanie Paulsell.

(*music continues for a while and then fades out*)

Casper: Hey Vanessa, you know what’s better than cutting the Sopophorous Bean? You’ve gotta crush it with the flat side of a silver dagger to release the juice better.

Vanessa: I knew the answer, you just mansplained it to me and didn’t give me a chance to answer.

Casper: (*laughing*) Really it’s booksplaining, but, hi Vanessa!

Vanessa: Did you just mansplain booksplaining to me?

Casper: (*chuckling*)

Vanessa: Hi Casper.