Harry Potter and the Sacred Text 4.17- The Four Champions: Unity

Casper: Chapter Seventeen: The Four Champions

“Harry sat there, (intro music begins) aware that every head in the Great Hall had turned to look at him. He was stunned. He felt numb. He was surely dreaming. He had not heard correctly…”

Casper: I’m Casper ter Kuile

Vanessa: And I’m Vanessa Zoltan

Casper: And this is Harry Potter and the Sacred Text.

(Intro music fades)

Casper: Vanessa, we’re only a couple weeks away from our live show in Western Mass. It’s on Thursday, March 8 and tickets are on sale at harrypottersacredtext.com. If you have friends or family who live in the upstate New York area, in Connecticut, or Western Mass we’d love to have them visit so send it their way. But if you’re not in the Holy Oak area, but you want to spend time with us in addition to this podcast, we’re really excited about a couple of podcasts that we have been featured on recently. There’s a new amazing show called “This Movie Changed Me” which is hosted by our friend Lily at On Being, and every week it’s a different guest talking abut a movie that has shaped their lives in some way. And I’m the guest next week talking about the greatest movie in the history of the world, You’ve Got Mail.

Vanessa: I was going to guess Citizen Kane. No? You’ve Got Mail. I totally agree with you, it’s fantastic, Nora Ephron man.

Casper: Ugh, so good.

Vanessa: And Lily Percy, the host of this podcast is just incredible.

Casper: She’s the best.

Vanessa: Yeah.

Casper: She’s the best so if you like thinking about popular culture and it’s meaning, this might be a fun podcast for you. And Vanessa you were recently on...

Vanessa: I was on Tell Me Everything last Sunday and my mom called after she listened and was like, “I loved this.” And then I listened to it and it’s because the two hosts compliment me and I was like, “of course you loved this mom.”
Casper: So if you want to check out those podcasts *Tell me Everything* and *This Movie Changed Me* we hope you enjoy it. And we just want to say a few words at the top of this episode that Vanessa’s story today is about the U.S. Gymnastics Team and the sexual assault cases that have ensued and we’ll be exploring some of the question that leads to in our conversation, so if that’s not something that you want to listen to, do skip forward to our sacred practice halfway through the episode.

Vanessa: So as many of our listeners I’m sure know, a couple of weeks ago Dr. Larry Nassar had a very public sentencing hearing. Dr. Nassar was already put in prison a number of years ago and sentenced to 30 years-to life for having a lot of child pornography on his computer, and since then he’s been accused of sexually violating hundreds of young women who do gymnastics in the United States. The top, top gymnastics athletes in the United States under the guise of medical treatment. The sentencing hearing got national attention because the judge allowed all of the women who wanted to speak to directly speak to Dr. Nassar and allowed these to be televised. And a lot of these stories were about the great impact that these sexual violations had on their lives long term. But one of the things that was so remarkable to me was how oceanic the voice was of 150 women standing together. But of course it didn’t start like that, right? Most notably Rachel Denhollander spoke up several years ago and because she was the only person who spoke up, she was not believed, in fact, not only was she not believed but her personal life was violated, people started talking about her sexual history, there was an attempt to discredit her in an aggressive way. And she just had such a singular sense of purpose, that she kept speaking up and I just want to read to you, she wrote a beautiful article in the New York Times a couple of weeks ago, an op ed piece, and I just want to read you a quote. She says, “In many ways the sexual assault scandal that was 30 years in the making was only a symptom of a much deeper, cultural problem. The unwillingness to speak the truth against ones own community.” And I think that what Rachel’s really speaking to here is one voice in face of a community. And it’s just easier to believe multiple people, you would see multiple parents and multiple children go in and out of this office and so you had to say, “all of these people are ignoring something in order to believe Rachel.” And what turned, was by Rachel speaking out other women were like, “oh this happened to one other person? It’s not just me? I’m not crazy?” And they felt comfortable speaking out. And now, of course, there is no doubt that this was true because 150 women, and it’s actually over 200 women total, just 150 who were willing to testify have spoken out. And you know we chose to read this chapter through the theme of unity and I think a lot of what we’re going to be talking about is the lack of unity once Harry gets picked as one of the four champions, but it just really highlights to me how powerful unity is. One person speaking out, speaking truth to power is so important, but it’s nearly impossible, but the only way that it can transfer from important to impactful is if other people unify against them, it takes more than one person. And so I’m really excited to speak to you about the power of unity today Casper, and celebrate people like Rachel who are the brave ones to come forward.
Casper: Wow, Vanessa that’s such a powerful story and I love that transition from important to impactful, and the role that unity plays in that. It’s not that a singular voice is not important but how we have impact is when we are believed and we are believed when we sadly, not always when we’re alone, but when we’re together. Thank you for sharing that story.

Vanessa: Casper, as the chapters get longer, I feel like you and I need more unity in recapping.

Casper: It's true; it's hard to cover it all in 30 Seconds.

Vanessa: Right, so why don't we see what you do…

Casper: Okay.

Vanessa: …and I will follow up. I got your back.

Casper: I love this, collaboration, not competition.

Vanessa: Yes! Are you ready?

Casper: I’m ready.

Vanessa: On your mark, get set, go.

(Ticking noise)

Casper: Okay so everyone is freaked out, like why is there a fourth champion? Harry, you know his face is just gasp and he has to walk this like, long, kind of walk of shame-esque across the, you know, long tables—not on the tables but like through the tables—to the room where all the champions are. Then there’s the five judges and Snape is there being like, “ugh,” and Dumbledore’s kind of looking weird and as he walks, Hagrid isn’t smiling and everything is bad. And Crouch is there and he says, “no you have to compete,” and then Ron says like, “oh you always do this and I’m not going to talk to you anymore.”

(Buzzing noise—117 words in 30 seconds)

Casper: Well Vanessa, that leaves plenty of work for you to do. Are you ready?

Vanessa: Yes.

Casper: Well here we go: 3, 2, 1, go.

(Ticking noise)
Vanessa: Madame Maxime and Karkaroff are like, “I would have submitted more people if I had
know that Hogwarts was going to get two champions.” And Fleur Delacour is like, “he’s just a
boy, he can’t.” And Harry is like, “I really didn’t do this.” And Snape is like, “Yes he did.” And
Moody is like, “whoever wanted to do this obviously wanted to kill Harry,” and that’s so smart
because he’s the one who wants to kill Harry. And for some reason the head of Hufflepuff
House isn’t back there but Snape is and that’s really confusing to me. And yeah Ron’s not
talking to Harry.

(Buzzing noise—106 words in 30 seconds!)

Casper: (in French accent) Can we do the rest of the episode with this little French accent?

Vanessa: (in French accent) He’s just a boy.

Casper: (in French accent) He’s just a boy and I have beautiful Veela hair. (back to normal
voice) Vanessa, one of the first moments that we see unity broken is this walk of shame. Really
it’s a moment of real isolation where the whole school has been wrapped around Cedric as their
champion—here he is, isn’t he wonderful—and then suddenly that unity is ripped apart, because
Harry is then named as a second Hogwarts champion.

Vanessa: Yeah and I think that the moment that it really becomes clear that he’s not going to
get anyone’s support is when he walks by Hagrid…

Casper: Right.

Vanessa: And he’s just sitting there staring, he doesn’t nod or do anything. I feel like that’s the
moment where Harry realizes, “there will be no unity behind me.” The unity that Harry does not
see at all in this chapter is somebody asking him what he thinks really happened and actually
caring about his story and his desires. What really strikes me is everyone is talking above his
head, everybody is theorizing about him. Everyone in Gryffindor who is unifying behind him
doesn’t believe that he didn’t put his name in.

Casper: Right, they refuse to believe it, the twins are like, “you didn’t tell us that you entered,
how did you do it?” And they wrap a flag around him and there’s this image that he’s a
figurehead he’s a champion around which Gryffindor can unify. But it doesn’t feel like unity
because it’s based on a lie.

Vanessa: Right and they don’t want to know the truth.

Casper: Right.
Vanessa: Which I feel like if I were Harry I wouldn’t feel like people were unifying around me, you’re unifying around an idea and a national unity around Gryffindor. It’s not actually about Harry.

Casper: Absolutely, and what’s so interesting about all of this is that Harry, even though he’s protesting and he’s saying, “I didn’t enter my name,” you know nobody believes him and it really resonates with this story that you shared at the beginning, like his agency is so minimized by everyone else’s projecting onto him. And I think this is one or the questions about unity is to preserve this sense of togetherness we wash away individual difference to the point where we miss complete truths and stories that would help us be better if we listened to them.

Vanessa: You know I was thinking about his a lot this past weekend with the Super Bowl; the beautiful thing about sports is the unity of fans…

Casper: Right.

Vanessa: …coming together and people across all sorts of differences are like, “but I love the Eagles and you love the Eagles and that’s all that matters.” But then the problem with that kind of unity is you are ignoring the violence that’s happening right in front of you or the corruption that’s happening right in front of you in order to have that unity. And the conversation that I get in a lot with people is, is it worth it? Right? And often unity can bridge across difference and so what can become invisible are things that should be invisible, right? The fact that it shouldn’t matter that you and I come from different places, like we’re two human beings and we have a common goal, but it also makes invisible things that do matter and that shouldn’t be invisible.

Casper: Exactly, exactly. I feel like there’s two types of unity, and they’re based on different things. There’s one which is, I would say, kind of like a shallow example and I think of like big, corporate retreats where you have thousands of people who all work for the same company and they all come together for a couple of days and everyone’s like, “Yay marketing department,” and “Yay we have q goals around x amount of growth,” and like “Yay we all have this mission.” But even when you’re there it all feels fake there’s just something that’s inauthentic about it; but you could say there’s a unity there. Versus on the other hand a community that has struggled through difficulty together that has listened to each other’s most true stories and has really dealt with difference and challenge and through that is grounded in something much deeper. Like that’s the kind of unity that I think we should be aspiring to. It doesn’t hide difference, it works through it.

Vanessa: So I’m just thinking, I’m thinking of moments of real unity, you know like around the Civil Rights Movement, when people cross the Edmond Pettus Bridge together—I don’t think that necessarily they all knew each others deepest, darkest secrets; but by showing up there you knew something about each other which is that you are willing to risk your life and risk going to jail in order to fight for voting rights. And that was all you needed to know about each other that was essential enough in that moment. And then if they were to run into each other at a
coffee shop, I don’t think that necessarily that same unity is there. I think unity can be just in a
time and a place and then it can evaporate.

Casper: I love that and I love that’s another way of splitting the unity pie of saying well what are
you unifying around? Because this is one of my biggest frustrations around he concept of unity
in the Anglican Communion, which is the Church of England, and in the Episcopal and Anglican
churches around the world—unity is a central virtue. Unity gets placed around everything else
and there’s a big difference right now in the Anglican world around different social norms around
ordaining women and LGBT people, and in countries like the U.S. and the U.K where gay
marriage is now legal, that’s a very different context than in Nigeria for example where
homosexuality is something that you condone in public life in the same way that we do. And so
because there’s an unwillingness to split the unity which is so held, you can’t get married as a
gay person in a church in England, that’s a Church of England Church; and for me this is where
we’re putting unity above the rights and the dignity of people which just feels so damaging. And
so when we place unity at the front of our virtues we can only go as fast as the slowest person,
and this reminds me in the chapter, you know, there’s a number of people who have the
opportunity to break the unity to break the momentum around this process of having a fourth
champion, totally unexpected. Dumbledore doesn’t break it but I would say even more
importantly, Crouch Sr. is specifically asked, “what are the rules and what should we do?” by
Karkaroff and Madame Maxime and he is saying the show must go on. Like we have to stick to
the agreement, we have to stay unified with the plan; and I feel like that’s a failure of his
responsibility. This child is his responsibility and we agreed no one under age and we agreed
one champion per school, like no, stop.

Vanessa: I think that this gets to something that we talk about a lot, which is that priorities often
need to shift on a moment’s notice, right? It’s, “I am here to represent the rules, but the higher
rule is that we said that no one under the age of 17 is going to compete in this competition.”
And the way that it’s discussed, it seems like there’s some sort of magical bind…

Casper: Right.

Vanessa: …that something high risk and terrible would happen if Harry didn’t compete. But I’m
not sure why Harry isn’t encouraged to sort of like, go and then take a knee and then just lose
every match, or something. And there seems to be some sort of unity to a higher ideal that’s
more important than humanity, and I just I’m trying to think of moments in my life in which I think
that that’s true and to me I just can’t see being unified to anything else than trying to save,
especially a child. And so I don’t understand what Dumbledore is about in this moment and it’s
just so disappointing to me and I think that we can see a lot of beautiful things in what they’re
trying to do, they’re trying to honor tradition, they’re trying to honor the Ministry of Magic. I mean
I think we saw that in Hillary Clinton’s most recent memoir, she talks about deciding with Bill as
to whether or not they were going to go to Donald Trump’s inauguration, and they really did not
want to go and George W. Bush also really didn’t want to go because of how Donald Trump had
treated Jeb, his brother. And so they got on the phone and they were like, “look out of loyalty to
the Presidency and wanting to maintain the dignity of the office, former Presidents and former First Ladies go to the inauguration. And I don’t think that was wrong of them, I do think that there are moments in which in order to preserve a norm you should unify with that above yourself. And so I’m wondering if that’s what Dumbledore and Crouch are trying to do here?

Casper: Right but with the inauguration a child wasn’t going to die in dragon flames.

Vanessa: Yes and that seems like an essential difference. Casper, I have a question for you, why is Snape in this back room?

Casper: Oh because he has a great burn, “Potter’s been crossing lines since the moment he arrived,” which is hilarious because he crossed the age line. He’s been breaking rules, he’s been crossing lines, I just think it’s really funny.

Vanessa: Okay sure, you think he ran back there just because he was like, “I have a burn!”

Casper: Yeah I think he’s been planning it since he found out.

Vanessa: Here’s the theory that is maybe nice to Snape, which makes me uncomfortable, is his feeling unified with Lily? Is he trying to get Harry out of the tournament? He’s sort of the only one really advocating for Harry to not be in the tournament.

Casper: You are blowing my mind.

Vanessa: And I wonder if this is like unity to Lily? He’s like, “No Harry can’t compete, I’m supposed to be saving his life and he will die. I know he is not that good of a wizard.”

Casper: That is really interesting.

Vanessa: Because why else is he back there? This is none of his business. McGonagall is there, Dumbledore is there, I don’t understand where Sprout it, but fine—I wouldn’t understand why else Snape thinks he belonged back there.

Casper: Well and I wonder is he there to keep an eye on Karkaroff? Something has gone very strangely wrong so I think he suspects Karkaroff and wants to keep a close eye.

Vanessa: Yeah it just occurred to me, I always thought that Snape went back there because he thought, “Potter’s trying to be the center of attention again,” but I really think he might be back there to keep an eye on Karkaroff, to figure out what’s going on, and maybe to protect Harry.

Casper: I do wonder Vanessa if we should distinguish unity from loyalty because I really resonate with what you’re saying about Snape and Lily, but that feels like a relational think
because there’s a loyalty to her and a sense of duty. But unity feels like you don’t unify around a person or a relationship but more around a shared goal in some way.

Vanessa: Yeah I completely agree with that, I just that potentially now that Lily is dead the goal is to honor her life, right? And that what he’s constantly thinking of is trying to honor her life and her sacrifice.

Casper: Let it go Severus.

Vanessa: I mean don’t let it go if he’s the only person in that room who’s worried about Harry dying.

Casper: That’s true.

Vanessa: But McGonagall is back there and she seems to be concerned but she is not asserting her voice.

Casper: I think she’s suffering from like Anglican-itus, because she’s like “okay well Dumbledore’s made a decision, and I’m not going to challenge that—certainly not in public—and so I will stayed unified with the institution that I’m apart of…” which is different than what she usually does which if takes responsibility for the children's safety.

Vanessa: Yeah, I will say that something that I see adults do now that I am one, is I often see people who have authority really not realize that they have it and so in moments of confusion just sort of default to not great choices because it’s like, “well I don’t want to make this worse, and I don’t really understand what’s going on,” like Dumbledore’s like, “at the end of the day this is Barty Crouch’s or Bagman’s decision.” And Crouch is like, “well at the end of the day, rules are rules.” And it’s almost a bystander syndrome going on here where everybody assumes someone else is going to step up and there are so many adults in the room that nobody stands up as the clear voice who’s like, “do you know what, shut this down. I don’t care what the rules are, we will appeal to the highest court.” And I really just think that nobody is stepping up and taking a leadership role.

Casper: Vanessa the real sad moment in this chapter is that we’ve seen so much connection between our trio, Hermione, Ron and Harry; and Harry is enduring all of this sense of isolation and disconnection throughout this chapter and he’s going to come home, finally manage to break away from the Gryffindors, goes up to his room and expects to have a conversation with Ron...

Vanessa: Expects to fall in the warm embrace to his best friend...

Casper: And Ron is like, “you could have told me.” It’s this painful break where it feels like a much deeper pain than even Hagrid, than even Dumbledore, certainly than the rest of the
school; like this intimate connection where he’s not believed or it seems like he’s not believed. When unity is that deep and it breaks, it’s so much more painful.

Vanessa: Yeah, and it really seems to just be based in Ron’s insecurity. If Ron really thought about it, he would know that Harry wouldn’t leave him behind, but he doesn’t want to think about it, he wants to pout about the fact that Harry gets more attention than him, that the twins are more charming than he is, that he’s constantly lost. This is about Ron, but I do think that Ron and Harry’s relationship thrives the most when it is about unity and not loyalty. When they have a shared goal, they have a much easier time being loyal to one another, but when it’s only relational I think that often their insecurities come out in these really bad ways.

Casper: That totally shifts how I read book seven, that’s brilliant because although they have a goal, it’s so abstract and so difficult; there’s no guidance that all that they have is their loyalty and that is not enough to keep Ron in the picture.

Vanessa: Certainly not when he’s hungry.

Casper: We know that’s true of all of us.

(Sacred Reading theme music plays)

Casper: Vanessa, it’s time for our Sacred Practice today and we are doing PaRDeS, the four-step Jewish reading practice, and I am going to find a sentence at random and that sentence is:

I’m sure that should be good enough for everybody else.

Vanessa: ooooo McGonagall says that about Dumbledore.

Casper: That’s right, just step right into that P’shat, which is the first step, what is happening in this passage? What’s the literal meaning?

Vanessa: So Dumbledore has just said that he believes that Harry did not cross the age line, and McGonagall’s like, “If Dumbledore believes Harry, that is good enough for everyone.” So McGonagall is defending the authority of Dumbledore against everybody else.

Casper Super juicy, okay oh this is fun. So the P’shat is that literal reading on the surface level, the next level is Remez. So this is where we’re going to take a moment and I’ll read out the sentence again, we’re going to both think of one word that we really resonate with and try to think how does that link not only through this book, but through the rest of the books. So let me read it one more time:

I’m sure that should be good enough for everybody else.
Casper: Is there a word that stands out to you?

Vanessa: Yeah the word “good.”

Casper: Me too! Where else do you remember “good” showing up?

Vanessa: This whole series is about fighting between good and evil. And Harry is supposed to be…Harry and Dumbledore are supposed to be the beacons of good and then Voldemort is the embodiment of evil. And McGonagall is sort of taking advantage of that idea in this moment, like Dumbledore is supposed to be this embodiment of goodness and so it’s like if Dumbledore says so, that should set the tone for good. And I think that is why we see so much loyalty for Dumbledore and at times too much loyalty to Dumbledore is if you have one person embody “good” then you don’t get to see the complexities of them.

Casper: The other place where I’m thinking of the word “good” is in Luna Lovegood’s name, like it’s in the name. You know Luna is wonderful, and she’s actually one of my favorite characters, but certainly with her father I think we sometimes see that good is not enough. Like there’s no strategy behind the goodness, and there’s actually some foolishness even in the good. And so I’m wondering if there’s something insufficient about goodness?

Vanessa: Yeah, Dumbledore’s word isn’t good enough and McGonagall’s good intentions aren’t good enough. The road to hell is paved with good intentions, and we also need good strategy.

Casper: Exactly.

Vanessa: And Dumbledore is right that Harry didn’t cross the age line, but he’s not right that some big magical thing had happened.

Casper: Exactly

Vanessa: There is actually ill intent in this, and so this is a disappointing moment of McGonagall.

Casper: Vanessa it’s time for our third step, D’rash, and this is where we try and imagine, is there a meaning in the text? Is there a snippet of wisdom that we want to share and we like to ask ourselves, “if I were going to preach a sermon on this snippet of text, what would it lead me to say?”

I’m sure that should be good enough for everybody else.

Casper: You know the meaning I’m finding here is I’m not sure this is good enough for McGonagall. I think she’s externalizing her own doubt onto everyone else in the room. And it
makes me think that when we are the harshest critics of other people, you know why isn’t this good enough for you? It probably is saying something about ourselves that we should be giving closer attention to.

Vanessa: I think for me I would preach a sermon on taking a breath in moments of chaos. So much is going on, and McGonagall is like, “do you know what, let’s all believe Dumbledore.” When really what everybody needs is 30 seconds of silence to reflect on what’s going on, right? So many power struggles are happening, there’s just so many different dynamics at play and I think that if there was just 30 seconds of quiet, they would see that there’s actually something very simple happening here, a child’s life is being put at risk that should not be put at risk. And I really believe that sometimes just in moments in chaos, we just need to stop and breath and be like, okay what is actually going on here.

Casper: Nice. The final and most mystical part of PaRDeS is the search for the Sud, and it’s less than a search and more of an opening of the arrival of the Sud. The Sud is the secret, and so this is not a logical thing that we’re looking for, it’s not really even the meaning in the text that we’re looking for; it’s a completely received insight about life, about the text that comes to us. So I’ll read the sentence one more time and perhaps a Sud will arrive, perhaps is won’t.

I’m sure that should be good enough for everybody else.

Vanessa: Yeah the secret that arrived for me is that whenever I say I’m sure I think it means that I’m not. How people often say the opposite of what they mean, right? I’m just thinking of like whenever a man interrupts me, he always says, “I hate to interrupt, but…” and it’s like, “well you obviously don’t hate to interrupt, because there you go.” And so the secret that emerged to me is to pay attention to when people are saying things that are the opposite of true and when I say things that are the opposite of true and what actually is going on. What about you Casper? Did a Sud emerge?

Casper: No. I don’t think it did Vanessa. I was looking at the shapes of the letters. I always find that fascinating, there’s moments where I just look at a letter and I’m like, “who decided that was going to be a ‘p’ sound.” Today’s voicemail is from Alex and she’s returning to the episode we had on trauma, and shares some of her story, which does include some tough topics. She also brings a really insightful reading for *Prisoner of Azkaban*. The voicemail’s about four minutes long so if you do want to skip through, you’re welcome to do that; but we invite you to listen as much as you’re comfortable.

(Beep)

Alex: Hi Casper, Vanessa, and Arianna; this might be a bit of a longer voicemail so I apologize in advance. So I just finished listening to your episode on trauma and it’s inspired me to tell a part of my story that I haven’t really felt brave enough to truly share before. It’s not directly related to this chapter or even *The Goblet of Fire* as a whole, but it’s very centric to Harry Potter.
A little over four years ago I was violently raped by someone I had trusted very deeply. I’m not going to delve into that very deeply because that’s not the part of my story that I like to focus on. Due to my sexual assault I fell into a deep depression. I began isolating myself from my friends and family, stopped caring about everything I loved like school, all of my passions, and my relationships. I felt trapped. I felt so trapped in fact that I had resolved at one point to end my life, I had slowly amassed a pile of pills that I was 99% certain would kill me. I remember sitting on my bed with pills in my hand and tears running down my face, I felt like all hope was lost. When I was sitting there I had this really really odd notion to read Harry Potter and I know it sounds crazy but it was suddenly something I desperately needed to do. I picked up the nearest copy of any Harry Potter book and it happened to be *The Prisoner of Azkaban*. I thumbed through the pages and ended up at the scene where Remus Lupin is telling Harry Potter about the Dementor’s kiss. The quote that struck me so deeply as I was reading this was, “you can live without your soul, you know? As long as your brain and heart are still working, but you’ll have no sense of self anymore, no memory, no anything. There’s no chance of recovery at all, you’ll just exist as an empty shell and your soul’s gone forever, lost.” It dawned on me as I sat there reading this passage that I’d read a million times before that he was not just talking about the Dementor’s kiss, he was talking about his assault—the werewolf attack that transformed his entire life. He was talking about the freedom that that had took from him. He was put through something he never asked for and never once deserved. He lived with a stigma surrounding him of being a werewolf and just for being the recipient of a very vicious attack. Despite all of this, despite everything he had to go through: all the names, all the stigma, all of the shame, and all of his trauma; he survived. He lived with this every single day and someone he persevered. He ended up finding love with Tonks, he found friends in the Marauders, and he found life every single day. He found a reason to keep living no matter what it was. He kept living. I found my will to live again that night because of Remus Lupin. I found out that even though Remus was a fictional character, I was not alone in this world. Other people had had these experiences and they survived, and if they could survive then I could too. I just wanted to offer a blessing who has been, is going through, or will go through trauma in their lives. I truly hope that you can find healing and that you know that you are not alone. Whether you find your saving grace through The Bible or Harry Potter or anywhere else that it may present itself, your experience is valid and you are strong and you are a survivor. Thank you so much for this podcast and thank you for allowing me the chance to tell my story. Bye guys.

Vanessa: Alex, thank you so much for that amazing insight about Lupin, and for also sharing your story, we really appreciate it and anybody who furthers our ideas of the text that we can use it in our own lives more and models how to do that so well. You just really deserve our gratitude, so thank you.

Casper: And I really appreciate that in the episode and on social media I think more and more we’re sharing stories with each other as a listening community to help each other be brave and to heal together so thank you for modeling for that Alex.
Vanessa: Casper, we now get to bless somebody, who would you like to bless this week?

Casper: My blessing is for Cedric. This is a huge moment for him, he’s been chosen as the Hogwarts Champion. He’s been honored with this great role to represent his school, and he’s been totally upstaged. And that feeling of when you’ve done something and you’re supposed to get praise and attention and you don’t—feels so annoying. And so I don’t see Cedric being in any way negative about what’s going on, he’s not nasty to Harry. Can you imagine if the other champion had been Draco or something? And so I feel like he acts like a gentleman in the midst of a really difficult situation and doesn’t center himself in a way that is undue or unfair. To anyone who feels like they’ve been upstaged or overshadowed for no reason…

Vanessa: That their cohost has a cuter British accent?

Casper: (laughter) a blessing to you.

Vanessa: Thank you.

Casper: What about you Vanessa?

Vanessa: I’m going to give a blessing to Fleur. She is the only female champion, and she’s already being called out, you know like Bagman walks in and is like “gentleman and lady.” And it’s like, you know dude we don’t need to be separating her already. Just say like students, or people, or nothing I don’t know. I just think it’s hard to be the only woman in any situation and to be the only female athlete competing against men, we’re going to see that it’s a real challenge for her and in this moment she’s just exuding confidence—even some contempt for Harry—and yeah I just want to honor awesome female athletes.

(Outro Music Begins)

Casper: You’ve been listening to Harry Potter and the Sacred Text. You can follow us on Twitter, Instagram, and Facebook, or leave us a review on iTunEs, and send us a voicemail to harrypottersacredtext@gmail.com.

Vanessa: Do you think our listeners have noticed that we dropped Tumblr?

Casper: Shhhhh. Also you can check out Vanessa and I on different podcasts at This Movie Changed Me and Tell me Everything.

Vanessa: Next week we’ll be reading chapter 18: The Weighing of the Wands through the theme of glory. This episode of Harry Potter and the Sacred Text for a change was produced by Ariana Nedelman, Casper ter Kuile, and, me, Vanessa Zoltan. Our music is by Ivan Pyzow and Nick Bohl. And we are part of the Panoply Network. You can find ours and other great
shows on panoply.fm. This week’s voicemail was thanks to Alex Wood. We’d like to thank Rebecca and Charlie Ledley, Julia Argy, and Stephanie Paulsel.

Casper: See you next week everyone!

Vanessa: Sorry this episode was late, we love you!

(Outro Music Ends)

Vanessa: The word “seven” sounds so absurd to me.

Casper: Oh I find the word “warmth” super weird.

Vanessa: So my two are “seven” and “counter.” Like a “counter” that you chop on, why is that a counter?

Casper: Warmth.

Vanessa: Counter—these sounds don’t mean anything.

Final Music: Panoply