Harry Potter and the Sacred Text 4.27 - Padfoot Returns

Vanessa: Chapter 27. Padfoot Returns.

"One of the best things about the aftermath of the second task was that everybody was keen to hear details of what happened down in the lake, which meant that Ron was getting to share Harry's limelight for once. Harry noticed that Ron's version of events …"

(Reading fades out, music fades in)

Vanessa: I'm Vanessa Zoltan.

Casper: And I'm Casper ter Kuile.

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

Everybody, we just want to remind you of a few upcoming live appearances. We are going to be in Pittsburgh, PA, on May 17th. We are going to be in...

Casper: London on Sunday, June 10th.

Vanessa: And then, Ariana and I are gonna be in Dallas, Texas for Leaky Con on August 10th and 11th. Casper, now that we're done with announcements, I was wondering if you would please tell me a story.

Casper: Well, I'd be glad to.

Today I want to tell you about Samuel Pepys, the famous diarist. And apparently he's not so well known in America but in England he's kind of a big deal. He's a contemporary of Sir Christopher Wren who built St. Paul's Cathedral and he's famous for writing witty notes about his day and kind of giving you an insight into every day life in 17th century London. Think really big curly wigs and big ruffled collars, that's the vibe. And he was an administrator in the Navy and his official income was 350 pounds a year.

Vanessa: Sounds like a lot!

Casper: Well, certainly for the time it was a good job. But here's the extraordinary thing. By the end of seven years, he was getting paid 7,000 pounds a year.

Vanessa: That is more than 350.

Casper: That is a lot more than 350 and it wasn't just because he got a raise. Pepys accepted money and gifts of all sorts, even sexual favors from people with whom he did Navy business.
And now on the one hand you could say, listen, no one expected that your salary that you were paid was what you would limit your earnings to. Everyone was gaming the system and if you look at what Pepys actually accepted there were times where he didn't accept gifts and he didn't accept it because he didn't want to make that decision. So there's times when Pepys said no, but on the other hand, he accepted all sorts of things that would influence his decision and ultimately influence his superiors. And so, historians are conflicted, you know, was Samuel Pepys this kind of totally unreliable character because he accepted bribes. Or, was he simply a patron and accepted patronage himself. And perhaps both are true. And it really made me think of this theme of Corruption that we're exploring in this chapter because to some extent it depends how you look at it. And it depends what the norms of the system are in which you live. You know, so often in the Western media we'll look at political changes in governments for example on the continent of Africa and we'll say, oh, so much corruption happens, et cetera et cetera, but when we look at the recent tax bill passed in the United States and the fact that Paul Ryan the former Speaker of the House got $500,000 the day afterwards pretty much from the Koch Brothers, no one calls that corruption, but it's exactly the same. But we think of it as normal. So I want to try and understand when is corruption corruption and when is it just the water that we swim in. And I hope we can discuss that together today.

Vanessa: I think that that is exactly the right question. I think it's a bit ironic given that you are someone who often takes two or three extra seconds in the thirty-second recap that you're getting all high-horsed about corruption

Casper: I'm not getting high-horsed, I'm just saying when is it corruption and I believe that's just a flaw in the timing system. (Vanessa and Casper both laugh). Okay, Vanessa, here we go. Thirty second recap. 3, 2, 1, go!

(ticking clock noise begins)

Vanessa: So, Ron is, like, oh, I'm the hero of everything and Hermione's, like, no you're not, and he's like ugh, you're right, awkward, and then they go down to Snape's dungeon for class and it turns out that there's an article that, um, Harry's being rejected by Hermione and Hermione's putting love potions on everyone and Snape and Karkaroff bond over the fact that the, the thing that is showing up on their forearm which is where Nazi tattoos often were and then, um, they go to Hogsmeade and they see - they see Sirius and they talk to him!

(alarm sounds, ticking clock noise ends)

Casper: I love that you think Snape and Karkaroff are bonding.

Vanessa: They have a moment.

Casper: Yeah!
Vanessa: Here's the thing, Casper, time equals relationship and even though -

Casper: *(laughs)*

Vanessa: - it's acrimonious, they are building a shared memory.

Casper: Yeah, of Karkaroff sitting in the back of the classroom anxiously waiting and not letting Snape go.

Vanessa: So I will admit that this wasn't the most eloquent that I ever was, but let's see if you can do any better! On your mark, get set, go.

*(ticking clock noise begins)*

Casper: So what's really fun is that Hermione is like, how did Rita know, like and then she is literally crushing a beetle as she's talking about that, favorite moment in the whole chapter. They go and see Sirius, Sirius is hiding in the cave pretending to be a dog, tells us the whole backstory about Barty Crouch Sr. And like the history of, like how he was super intense and put his son in prison and his wife died and it all seems a little sketchy and um, I feel like he's not really feeding Buckbeak. The only thing he's giving Buckbeak are used bones and I'm like, Sirius, Buckbeaks *(alarm sounds, ticking clock noise ends)* need to eat, too.

Vanessa: *(laughs)* Actually, you're wrong. The best moment in the chapter is when Ron says "She's talking about you like you're a *scarlet woman*" and Hermione is like, you are a ridiculous human being and I'm in love with you, Ron Weasley.

Casper: And Ron says "that's what my mother calls them."

*(Both Casper and Vanessa laugh)*

Casper: Vanessa, it seems like the obvious place to start in this chapter, when we think about this theme of corruption is the introduction of the clear liquid which reveals all truth, Veritaserum. Snape introduces it, like, in this menacing moment where he's kind of, he's really threatening Harry. He's separated Ron, Harry, and Hermione, he's taken off points from Gryffindor and he's put Harry right at the front of the classroom and kind of whispers in his ear and he's like *(Snape voice)* I could just slip a few drops in to your pumpkin juice *(Casper voice)* and it feels like Snape is really about to drug him without his consent.

Vanessa: Yes. Snape is awful in this chapter. Snape is awful in every chapter, Vanessa repeats herself. Now Vanessa does what she always does which is weirdly talk about herself in the third person and defends Snape.
Vanessa: Both of those things are weird. Okay, so Snape says this thing in this creepy whisper moment with Harry. He says I think that you are nothing but a nasty little boy who considers the rules beneath him. And, okay, Snape is wrong that Harry is not nothing but a nasty little boy, but Harry is a smug kid who thinks the rules are beneath him. And Snape isn't wrong about all of it, right? Harry was part of how the Polyjuice Potion ingredients got out of the closet, sure Harry didn't take them, Hermione did, but Harry was part of that plot. He's not wrong that Harry was on the stairs in the Invisibility Cloak that night. Snape is not crazy. And there's just no worse feeling to me than being gaslighted and Snape is, he's being gaslighted by Harry. Harry is like I don't know what you're talking about. I would find that infuriating. I think that Harry is quite corrupted, I don't think that he has enough political power to be a force for corruption but he is somebody who is willing to lie, willing to lie to authorities, willing to steal. He helps with an international dragon heist, he helps a convicted felon escape, like, I mean, I'm rooting for him but I think that it complicates what corruption is and when we want someone to not follow the rules and when we do.

Casper: You're absolutely right. Snape is certainly picking up on something and it struck me that Harry is trying to avoid Snape's eyes which, of course, later in the books will become much more meaningful because Snape and his quest for truth and kind of hunting out deception and corruption in some way is really central to his whole mission at this point. Certainly here with the Veritaserum, definitely with his ability to read minds. And of course it's totally entwined with his own corruption. He is trying, I think, in some way to resolve the fact that he was corrupted, he did go to the Dark Side as it were and so he's extra vigilant about it in the same way that that's kind of mirrored with Moody. We see this obsessive character who's all about uncovering truth and finding the misdoers when he, in fact, himself as Barty Crouch Jr. is the central character who's kind of tricking everyone in this book. And so it's this interesting connection of all the characters who meet on the stairway a couple of chapters ago. They're all on this line of trying to find out the secrets of the others while maintaining their own purity when in fact they're totally compromised.

Vanessa: Yeah, I really love that point, especially about Snape, that after being a double agent or flipping back and forth, he must be distrustful of other people because you're like, I know that I am lying to everybody all the time -

Casper: Right.

Vanessa: - and so, who else is lying all the time?

Casper: Well, and even more than that, I wonder if it becomes difficult to know when you're lying yourself. Because if you're so good at playing both those roles who are you when you're living this double life. And I think that's what I like about this theme of corruption is that it isn't just lying or pretending. It's actually becoming this other thing. You know, the metaphor of a disease, it
literally corrupts your body and you are changed by it. I feel like that's what's happened with Snape is there's nothing pure left.

Vanessa: It's so interesting that especially that you use the metaphor of disease because it's exactly what I was thinking at another point in the chapter. When we were talking about the methods that Barty Crouch Sr. used in order to fight Voldemort -

Casper: Yes.

Vanessa: - because what he does is clearly wrong. He sends Sirius to jail without a trial. He allows Aurors to start killing without really asking any questions. But, you know, I was thinking about it in terms of chemotherapy. If Voldemort is a cancer in their society, sometimes the cure is awful. Chemotherapy is a form of poison and you are hoping that the poison is better than the disease. You know there's this idea that in order to have freedom you also need a certain level of safety or you don't feel free. And that is, you know, the justification in a liberated free democracy that we still have police, for example. And so we talk about safety versus liberty and I'm somebody who would always rather a guilty man go free, ten guilty men go free, than one innocent man go to jail. I would rather feel a little bit unsafe and freer. But that is a tight line to walk and so I'm wondering, do you see what Barty Crouch Sr. was doing as corrupt, as taking advantage of powers as soon as it's offered to him or is this just a necessary strategy when the cancer of Voldemort was overtaking all of England.

Casper: It's such a juicy question and not one where they're a simple answer. You know, I see what Crouch did by countering violence with violence and allowing the Aurors to kill and use the Unforgivable Curses. But the thing that really worries me is that if we do go down that road of an eye for an eye and a tooth for a tooth everyone ends up without teeth, you know, like when does the violence end because that's what we have with the arms race, right? There is no end in sight. Everyone's gonna build a bigger weapon, everyone's going to build a bigger shield and we just keep investing more and more. And I feel like that's what Crouch has set in motion in some way and you know, we haven't seen any transformative justice happen at all. Certainly by taking away the trial as a mechanism of truth-telling and punishment, the fact that Voldemort is able to rise again and find so much aid is because there's a whole bunch of people who haven't been integrated or healed and there's a whole bunch of relationships that are still brittle and waiting to explode once there's some tinder. And Voldemort is nothing if not a very sparky, fiery tinder.

Vanessa: Yeah and I mean then there's this idea, right, I remember this conversation a lot in the United States right after 9/11 of if Al-Qaeda changes the way that we live our lives haven't they already won.

Casper: Right.
Vanessa: And so the question becomes, like, what are we fighting for but at the same point how much do we defend ourselves. I mean, these are like deeply existential questions that I think that we also feel in our personal lives when somebody has treated me really horribly, my initial desire is to treat them horribly back. I think we also see our own willingness to deal with corruption in a moment at the end of the chapter. So Sirius, Ron, Hermione, and Harry are talking about Crouch and there's talking a little bit about the fact that Percy works for Crouch.

Casper: Mmmm.

Vanessa: And they all in this like, sort of judgmental way, is like, well, Percy loves rules. So, like, what is Percy if not to some extent incorruptible. He is someone who likes the system and someone who likes to work within the system. And takes that very seriously. And yet we have an inherent distaste for him, right? We're like, you're not critically thinking at all, you're just willing to toe the line on everything, you're going to defend Barty Crouch no matter what. When you know in another context that could be considered loyal or having a lot of integrity. And so to some extent we want everybody to be a little bit corruptible, right? We want people to make exceptions and I think that if you're not making exceptions, if you're completely incorruptible then you have no humanity. Isn't corruption a way to demonstrate some form of humanity? Offering preferential treatment to your own family members, these are things that we want from one another.

Casper: Yeah, I think that's the interesting question for me is like you could even say the fact that they're going to ask Percy a question is kind of breaking the boundaries of actual ministry information flow, for example, right? Like they're getting access to someone and that's frankly how most corruption happens, is it's like you happen to know someone who from college who -

Vanessa: You are very high up in the Ministry and your son is in prison and you can go and say goodbye to him.

Casper: Right, exactly. We see the Crouch parents being able to go visit their son in prison because they have that kind of access. Like, it's both humanity and it's a sign of corruption, like the rules do not apply for everyone.

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Casper: Vanessa, there's another place in the text I want to talk about which is this great quote that if you want to know what a man is like, take a good look at how he treats his inferiors, not his equals. Where, you know, Sirius is talking about how Crouch has treated Winky especially. and it gives us this insight into his character. What do you make of that line?

Vanessa: So I think that the sentiment is great and I think that you see the inherent corruption of society in this sentence.
Casper: Ooh, tell me more.

Vanessa: So he says, see how he treats his inferiors, not his equals. He doesn't say, if you want to know what is man is like see how he treats people with less power than him, or people with the same amount or more power than him. He says "inferiors" and "equals". I think that that belies that Sirius is somebody who has walked through the world with sort of staff or servants and thinks of certain people of his inferiors. I understand the sentiment and really appreciate the sentiment of, like, watch how somebody treats a waiter. Watch how somebody treats somebody who is only there to help them or is only in that other person's life, instrumentalized in that one way. But to call someone your inferior, that just speaks to me of caste system.

Casper: But don't you think that this just a manner of speech. You're in an office environment, someone's your superior, right, your boss. Someone works for you, they're your inferior. It feels to me like this is just, he's just making a concise point. I mean, it's uncomfortable but I don't think it illustrates like a deeply problematic perspective.

Vanessa: So, I do, because I think that supervisor versus my employee seems much better language to me than my superior or my inferior. If somebody has cancer, which is something that can happen to anybody, we just say, "Oh, he has cancer." But if somebody has a disease that we think of as defining them and is like something that can't touch us, "he's autistic" rather than "he has autism". And so these types of definitions where we're like, your entire personhood is bound up in your autism we're saying certain things about the ways that we view these medical issues. And I just think it's the same thing here, I think that language matters.

Casper: So what does this tell us about the text? What does it mean?

Vanessa: Well, I think that it tells us about Sirius, that even though he thinks he's woke, he's not as woke as he thinks he is!

Casper: (laughs) Which I guess we'll see in how he treats, you know, the house elf in the next book.

Vanessa: I think that the other thing is, that just because someone doesn't have the most woke language available to them doesn't mean that their heart isn't in the exact right place. He is saying let's hold each other accountable for how we treat people with less power than us. And he's validating for Hermione that that matters and that Hermione's eye is on the right thing. So I think it can teach us both lessons, right? Like, well-intentioned progressives aren't necessarily always thinking about things in the right way but also that people who don't necessary have the right language, that doesn't mean that their heart isn't in the right place.

Casper: Is there anywhere else in the chapter that you see this theme of corruption?
Vanessa: I mean, this is like definitely a stretch, but I'm not going to bless Hermione for this so I've got to talk about it here. I think that Hermione, she's not being correct in this moment, but when she flashes a smile to the Slytherins, this article has just come out saying that she is not pretty enough to have both the attention of Harry Potter and Viktor Krum.

Casper: It's brutal.

Vanessa: Yes.

Casper: It's brutal. And then it quotes Pansy Parkinson, saying she's very ugly or something, just something horrific!

Vanessa: And that, like, she's probably slipping people love potions -

Casper: (laughs)

Vanessa: Right? Which is like a terrible accusation. But I think that Hermione is using like dishonesty to her benefit here. She looks at them and just gives them a sarcastic smile, like hey, I don't care about this at all. Obviously it's going to bother her at least a little bit, but I think this gets back to your original point which is like, corruption can look like a lot of different things. And lying can look like a lot of different things. And this is a lie, she is not thrilled about this moment. But it's a power move and it is a powerful power move. I love looking at a bully and smiling and being like, I'm fine, you're ridiculous.

Casper: Amen.

(music interlude)

Casper: It's time for our spiritual practice. And just between you and me, this might be my fave.

Vanessa: I mean, it is tied for one of my five favorites. (laughs)

Casper: (laughs) It's time for Lectio, our original sacred practice, a four step reading practice. And Vanessa you have chosen a random sentence which we will think about literally, we'll think about it allegorically, we'll think about what stories it reminds us from our own lives and then what action we're being invited to take by the text.

Vanessa: So the sentence that I picked is "The dungeon rang with the Slytherins' laughter and an unpleasant smile curled Snape's thin mouth."

Casper: Ooh! Can you read it one more time?
Vanessa: "The dungeon rang with the Slytherins' laughter and an unpleasant smile curled Snape's thin mouth."

Casper: So this is happening in the Potions classroom. My expectation is that it's near the beginning of the class when Snape sees that Hermione has the newspaper, The Witches Weekly, and picks it up and starts reading it sentence by sentence with a little pause between these sentences so that the Slytherins can kind of laugh and humiliate everyone.

Vanessa: That is exactly correct.

Casper: It's as if I did my reading. *(laughs)* So that's what's happening at a very literal level in the narrative. Let's think about allegorically, what images or songs or stories does it remind us of?

Vanessa: "The dungeon rang with the Slytherins' laughter and an unpleasant smile curled Snape's thin mouth."

Casper: What are you thinking of, Vanessa?

Vanessa: The unpleasant smile, I'm thinking of like the Cheshire Cat.

Casper: Ooh!

Vanessa: Who like, smiles, over looking everything and delights in its misery. What about you?

Casper: Well, that is making me think of Nagini in book seven when Nagini is kind of transformed into the old lady who doesn't say anything, but is just kind of beckoning Harry and Hermione and ends up being, of course, a very very dangerous trap, but there's that kind of silent smile.

Vanessa: Yeah, and the dungeon, right? They're in the dungeon for Potions, but later we're gonna see in Book Seven, them go into the dungeon at Malfoy Manor and so I think they're in this like very unsafe place when they're in Potions class.

Casper: And even the word "rang", I'm thinking of bells. Like bells as signs of danger or fire, right, when villages when try and communicate with each other over long distance they would ring the bells, but it would also be a celebratory thing.

Vanessa: Church bells on wedding days -

Casper: Right.
Vanessa: Well, and what you said about bells resonated for me with the word laughter, right? Laughter we often think of as so pleasant but if someone is laughing and you don't know what they're laughing at, it's also the most terrifying sound in the world. Because you're afraid they're laughing at you and I think that laughter is like bells, it's either announcing something wonderful or it could be announcing something awful.

Casper: Yeah.

Vanessa: Is there anything else in here that you'd like to discuss allegorically?

Casper: I was thinking of the word "curled". Again that snake imagery is so strong, because we're in the dungeons, we're with Slytherins, like I'm just seeing a snake curling up on itself. Like there's something unplaceable about a curl, right? It's not a straight line, you don't know where it's going, it has an intriguing but potentially dangerous vibe to it. I feel like in some ways this also represents Snape, like he's weaving his way from one side from Voldemort to Dumbledore from Voldemort to Dumbledore, like there's this unplaceable, unsteadfast nature to Snape, and you know how he acts in the world but also how he is to himself. There's something in that that shapes his behavior here.

Vanessa: Should we move onto Stage Three?

Casper: Yeah, so in this third stage, traditionally we'd be invited to think about how the text has shown up in our own lives. Would you read it one more time for us, Vanessa?

Vanessa: "The dungeon rang with the Slytherins' laughter and an unpleasant smile curled Snape's thin mouth."

Casper: Weirdly I'm thinking of birthday parties, because in some way, Snape is so theatrical. Like there's something kind of like a comical evil genius. For my tenth birthday party, my dad pretended to kidnap two of my sisters and like, took them into the forest and my friends and I all had to dress up as Casper the Friendly Ghost and like, go and rescue them. To the point where two ten-year-old boys were so terrified that they ran home and left the party, but I just feel like there's that kind of comical evil genius, like "Mwahahaha!" It just reminds me of my dad.

Vanessa: (laughing) Knowing your dad, that is adorable!

Casper: So that's what it reminds me of in my life. (laughs). How about you?

Vanessa: It reminds me of people who you have to interact with once you already know that you don't trust them or like them. If you've had a following out with someone and you run into them on the street, or god forbid the moments where you have to be at a party with them. And it's like okay, this isn't about the fact that I hate so-and-so, I'm at this other person's wedding so I'm
going to have to be in the same room as them. And the way that you like politely smile at each other while secretly being like, I can't stand you and I think you're a bad person.

Casper: Oh yes. I think we're all familiar with that situation. (laughs)

Vanessa: Right? And it's terrifying, right? Because you don't know if the other person is going to come up and confront you, you don't know if the other person is just going to be nice to you and pretend like you don't have any problems. You don't know if they're just going to avoid you. I feel like it's the same kind of terrifying moment here with this unpleasant smile, right? It's like, is he just gonna look at the article and be like oh, haha, I get to laugh at Harry, or is he going to publicly humiliate them. And it's that same feeling at a party of like, fear of the unknown that makes it so stressful.

Casper: Yeah. Well, let's transition to the final step of Lectio which is where we think about what is the text inviting us to do. Is there an action that we might take that feels like it has spoken to us, that we're invited to do. Can you read it one final time for us, Vanessa?

Vanessa: "The dungeon rang with the Slytherins' laughter and an unpleasant smile curled Snape's thin mouth."

Casper: I'm a big fan of RuPaul's Drag Race, as you know. And I've been thinking of the show more and more because I'm more and more conscious of how the editing of the story is setting up some of the queens to be liked and some of them to be vilified. And that's partly the joy of a story. There's goodies and baddies, and what's going to happen. But I feel like whenever I'm invited to have that kind of snide smile, like there's something about it that I'm increasingly less comfortable with. And so I want to be really careful about how I'm being invited to have that kind of snide smile of superiority for my entertainment. How about you?

Vanessa: I mean, what I feel called to do but I don't think I'm going to be able to do, is like be Hermione. And just like, smile big at the people who are laughing at me.

Casper: I believe in you, Vanessa.

Vanessa: No, I don't want to, though. I feel called to it, but what I really want to do is punch those people.

Casper: (laughs)

Vanessa: I hate those people, I hate the people I hate. I do.

Casper: Well, that's why we're here every week trying to move through that, my darling.
Vanessa: I know, like, I feel called to smile at them, but I don't want to. I wanna smack 'em. And be like you owe me an apology, stop literally running away from apologizing to me.

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Casper: Well, from that note, Vanessa, it's time for our voicemail this week. From Wesley Cheney.

(voicemail beep sound)

Wesley: Hi, Vanessa and Casper. My name is Wesley Cheney. This voicemail is in response to your recent episode on Happiness. I'm a man of greater than normal stature, half-giant you might say. I also can claim some Scottish heritage. As a teenager I imprinted upon the cult classic scifi film The Highlander. Inspired by it, I chose to wear a kilt to my high school prom and a few years later, I was married in a kilt. While I loved wearing my kilt then, I was also embarrassed to be seen wearing it in public. Now several years ago, I left my corporate job and my office casual uniform that was built around khaki trousers. Those khakis rarely fit me well and they usually ended up ripped at the crotch. Well, I switched careers and I began replacing my pants with kilts. I now wear a kilt almost every day. I lead bicycle tours in Alaska during the summer in a kilt. I wear a kilt under my Episcopal choir cassock and I also perform with my ukulele while wearing a kilt. Wearing a kilt makes me happy. And it makes other people happy too. Total strangers will compliment me on my kilt and I make a point of graciously and sincerely accepting their compliments. I would like to offer a blessing to all people who pursue their happiness outside the norms of society. And I also want to bless those who do not feel they the confidence or the safety to do so. Know that you are loved and worthy of love.

Casper: Wesley, I love it. You go wear your kilt. I mean, I feel like you're missing out that you're not wearing a cape. That's my personal fave -

Vanessa: And a kilt and a cape, is just, it's too boxy.

Casper: *(singing)* Unforgettable... *(speaking)* That would be a combo of dreams.

Vanessa: Oh, really? I think that it would make you seem too shapeless.

Casper: *(gasp)* Never! You do you, Wesley.

*(pause)*

Casper: Vanessa, it's time for us to bless someone from the pages of this chapter. Who are you giving your blessing to?

Vanessa: I have been inspired by you, Casper, and so I'm going to give a Casper-type blessing.
Casper: Ooh!

Vanessa: I'm going to bless Pansy Parkinson. Because she does this terrible thing, right? She calls Hermione ugly and she accuses Hermione of drugging boys. Somebody who's happy within themselves would not do that.

Casper: Hmm.

Vanessa: And so I want to bless Pansy for whatever it is that is causing her to act out like that. And I want to bless each of us for the moments in our lives when we have lashed out at somebody else, because we have felt insecure or hurt or whatever Pansy is feeling right now. I think that this is clearly a young woman in a lot of pain. If she is going after somebody who she doesn't even really have a relationship with. So I'd like to offer a blessing to Pansy and say that I see your pain and that must be really hard. So - what about you, Casper?

Casper: My blessing is for Karkaroff. You know, throughout the books he's painted in this kind of shady way when actually he's just really frightened. And in this chapter, we see him enter Snape's classroom and refuse to leave because Snape has been avoiding him all the time. And I feel like here's someone who's saying, I'm freaking out and no one is believing me. People are avoiding me, they don't want to confront the truth. I mean, the whole of the next book, The Order of the Phoenix, is about that theme of Harry not being believed and it's already happening here. Karkaroff sees his Dark Mark getting stronger but no one is coming to his aide. For anyone who feels like they can see the writing on the wall and they're afraid of what's coming and no one is standing with them, I hope that people will stand with you.

(closing music begins)

Casper: You've been listening to Harry Potter and the Sacred Text. You can follow us on Twitter, Instagram, and Facebook and leave us a review on iTunes and send us a voicemail.

Vanessa: Next week, we'll be reading Chapter 28, The Madness of Mr. Crouch through the theme of Inspiration. This episode was produced by Ariana Nedelman, Casper ter Kuile, and me, Vanessa Zoltan. Our music is by Ivan Pyzow - whose just recently moved in with Ariana - and Nick Bohl - as just roommates, they're not, like, dating or anything. We are part of the Panoply network. You can find ours and other great shows on Panoply.FM. This week's voicemail was from Wesley Cheney. We'd like thank, as always, Rebecca and Charlie Ledley, Julia Argy, and Stephanie Paulsell.

Casper: See you next week, everyone.

Vanessa: Bye!
(closing music ends)

Casper: (laughing) And we literally, like, the doorbell rang and all that was left were my sister's clothes.

Vanessa: (laughing)

Casper: (laughing) Now he would never do that.

Ariana: What were you supposed to imagine?

Casper: Yeah! It's like, pretty freaky!

(Vanessa, Ariana, and Casper talking over one another and laughing)

Vanessa: Oh my god. Amazing.