Seamus dressed at top speed the next morning and left the dormitory before Harry had even put on his socks. “Does he think he’ll turn into a nutter if he stays in a room with me too long?” he wondered…

Vanessa: (*reading aloud*) Chapter 12 “Professor Umbridge”

Casper: And I’m Casper Ter Kuile-

Vanessa: and this is Harry Potter and the Sacred Text

Happy Thanksgiving, Casper.

Casper: Happy Thanksgiving to you, Vanessa, on this invented holiday.

Vanessa: *laughs* Holidays are sort of the worst.

Casper: Listen, let’s make it very clear there’s a difference between a vacation and a family visit and Thanksgiving is often a family visit.

Vanessa: *laughs* Which is its own kind of joy.

So Casper, I just want to make one quick announcement today, which is that we have new items on our merch store.

Casper: So exciting.

Vanessa: Yes! So we’ve expanded our merch store so that you can be stuffing stockings, putting things under trees, getting them ready near the menorah, whatever made up holidays you’re celebrating this time of year. If you want to celebrate with Harry Potter and the Sacred Text gear, we are expanding our merch store so we have t shirts, we have florilegia journals, we have stickers, we now have mugs and sweatshirts and other writing tools to help you be a great marginalia keeper and other things. So go to harrypotterandthesacredtext.com and go to our merch store and check out what we’ve got.

Would you like to tell everyone a story now?

Casper: Yes. Vanessa and I went to see a movie yesterday. It was my birthday treat and she brought lots of chocolates and it was wonderful. And we went to see the movie, which is based on a true story, called Can You Ever Forgive Me? Melissa McCarthy is in it, it’s amazing. And it’s based on the story of Lee Israel, who was born in the ’30s in New York City and became a writer. She had a bestselling biography on the New York Times bestseller list and she was an established author. She was a lesbian woman, Jewish, and also quite grumpy. *laughs* I don’t think she really had what they called people skills and so when things started to turn for her and she fell down on her luck, there were not a lot of people who
were wanting to help her. And she got so desperate that she needed to find some way to earn money and so she started forging literary letters, so letters from people like Noel Coward or Dorothy Parker, these kind of great witty writers of a bygone era. And she was so good at it that people bought them and she sold, in the end, over 400 of these fake letters. Two of them were even in Noel Coward’s, like, collection of collected writings. I mean, the experts could not see the difference. But, as ever with these things, pride comes before the fall and she was found out. And there’s this beautiful scene at the end of the movie where she’s in court, she’s kind of giving testimony, and she’s about to read a prepared statement to kind of apologize and halfway through she says “you know, I don’t regret what I’ve done, I’m sorry that I’ve defrauded people, but this is maybe the work I’m most proud of in my life.” And it really made me think, I always have a very complex relationship with pride because on the one hand, I think it’s so important to believe in yourself and what you make in the world and to stand up for what you believe in and especially when it comes to your identity, obviously I think of gay pride. But then also, the kind of twisted side of it is when things become about fulfilling the pride and not the work, so at some point, she had paid off her debts and she was creating these forgeries not because she needed to, but because she liked being successful. And she didn’t care enough about how she was harming others, essentially, through these forgeries. And so I really want to understand in this conversation, like, where is that limit of pridefulness? Like, where is it a positive beneficial thing that helps us live our lives with confidence and contribution and where does it turn and start to tear us and people around us down?

Vanessa: I just want to tell anyone who still wants to see this movie, Casper didn’t spoil anything. I think all of that is in the trailer for the movie. I was very glad to have you to hold my hand through.

Casper: I was very glad to have the chocolate that you brought for me.

Vanessa: Ya, ya.

Casper: Hey Vanessa, you know what I’m not gonna hold your hand through?

Vanessa: What?

Casper: This 30 second recap!

Vanessa: Oh my god, I didn’t see that coming at all!

Casper: Alright, you ready to roll? 3-2-1, go! *ticking sound*

Vanessa: So we go through Harry’s first day of school, he goes to all of his different classes, Snape is the worst. Everybody is gossiping about him, um, I really, sorry Snape is abusive. They go to Umbridge, Hermione raises her hand and is interrupting and, like, oh my god, Hermione is interrupting? And then Harry has this, like, outburst in class and Umbridge is like sit down, you’re lying and Harry is like I am not lying and then he gets, um, he gets detention from Umbridge and he goes to McGonagall and McGonagall is like have a biscuit, Parter-Potter and Porter and I can’t talk anymore. *buzzer sounds*

Casper: Ya! She’s like “have some port with your biscuit”

Vanessa: *laughs* Obviously. Ok Casper, I set a very low standard, so please do better.

Casper: If I fail, it’s like really bad.
Vanessa: No, I just think our listeners deserve better. So, please...on your mark, get set, go! *ticking sound*

Casper: So it’s the first day of school and they’re like “ugh, I have the worst Monday ever!” and there’s divination and they have to make a dream journal and Binns bores them to sleep and, but, he’s talking about giants. Warning, warning! Um and Draco’s like “I wonder where Hagrid has gone, maybe he’s into something that’s too big for him” and then, um, Defense Against the Dark Arts with Umbridge is about just all about the theoretical principles and the students are like wait, but we’re not gonna get a chance to practice. Everyone’s freaking out, Hermione is like knitting hats for all the house elves, um, and well I mean, I can just stop there! That really covers it. *buzzer sounds*

So Vanessa, we’re reading this chapter through the theme of pride. So I’m wondering where in the chapter do you want to start as we think about this theme?

Vanessa: So, I’m really interested in the theme of pride as being at the center, to some extent, of the fight between Harry and Umbridge. I just think that pride is often something that keeps people from seeing one another’s points of view in arguments. Umbridge is somebody who clearly comes into the classroom with a lot of pride, right? She wants everybody to be raising their hands, she wants everybody to be saying, like,

Vanessa and Casper together: “Good afternoon, Professor Umbridge!”

Vanessa: Exactly, thank you. Right, like she’s somebody with a tremendous amount of pride, which shows itself in demanding a certain performance of respect. And I think that that sets an initial tone for this series of small confrontations that leads to a big one.

Casper: Absolutely. Like, what’s interesting is first she introduces the approach of the class and most of the students are like “ok, let’s just write down these three principles” and then she says start on page 5 and start reading and nearly everyone does, until we see Hermione who has her hand up. So she is still following the laws, right, she is giving Professor Umbridge her pride of, like, I’m gonna adhere to your system. And then finally it gets so awkward that the whole class is kind of looking at Hermione and so Umbridge feels like she has to respond. And that’s where you start to see the kind of attack on her approach coming more and more and more. And the breaking point is when Parvati says, “Wait, I’m not gonna get to practice spells to defend myself until I’m in the exam? Like, I’m definitely going to fail.” And Umbridge is like, ya, that’s my approach. Deal with it. If you read the theory close enough, you will understand.

And I think this is really interesting, that this is where the class turns. Because it’s building on one of the kind of core tenants of community organizing. That just having shared values is not enough, you need to have self interest at stake to really mobilize people. And so in this moment, the classroom is like oh my god, I’m gonna fail my exams, I am gonna push back against this professor. And I think, you know really, what is failing a class all about? What is failing an exam? There’s pride at stake. So I fell like Parvati is-and Hermione as the instigator-is actually using the classroom’s pride to kind of overpower Umbridge’s pride.

Vanessa: Ya, I completely agree. But it seems as though it’s like Hermione’s pride and the classes’, Parvati’s, pride, of like we have to learn this. And learning theory is not an actual way to learn practice. I can study music theory, I’m not gonna suddenly be able to play the trombone. I need to practice the
trombone. And Umbridge saying no no please do not question, I am here from on high. Not only representing my own skills, but also the ministry and like do not question me. But I think for Hermione, there might be something different at stake. She believes Harry, right? And she has seen firsthand violence. Like she has her own past trauma, she’s seen Ginny traumatized, she was attacked by the troll, she was then petrified, she’s seen Ginny kidnapped...like, let’s not forget that she has seen a tremendous amount of violence in addition to seeing Cedric die and believing Harry. And so, I think that for her there’s just a genuine desire to learn how to defend herself.

Casper: Right, yes, absolutely. The stakes for her are so much more real, so really we kind of have 3 camps at this point in this, like, tense stand off. We’ve got Umbridge, who’s unwilling to yield. The class that’s freaking out about failing its exam. And then we’ve got the trio, who are like no! I really need to learn how to, like, fight because the stakes are so real.

Vanessa: Right. And so, I think that for Harry it’s both stakes and pride.

Casper: Yeah!

Vanessa: Right? Because for Harry, it’s like ok, I could die if I don’t learn how to defend myself. But it’s also, nobody is believing my story. It’s an identity thing.

Casper: Well and I don’t want you to win. I mean that’s so clear between both Umbridge and Harry and that becomes more and more clear as the book goes on. You know, I think this is the danger of pride is that it becomes less easy to kind of climb back from the position you’ve claimed. For Umbridge to now turn and be like “hmm actually the evidence is overwhelming and uh yes, Voldemort is back and we should probably change things.” It’s gonna cost too much. Like, she’s gonna be publicly ridiculed, no one will believe her ever again, you know? She-her career will be finished. So she’s gonna get more and more invested in not acknowledging the truth. And I think that’s the bit about pride that is so dangerous. Right? I mean, kind of just like my story with Lee Israel. Like, once she had paid back her debts and she was writing maybe the tenth or the twentieth or the two hundredth letter and making good money...to turn back from that? The stakes were now too high, so it seemed like the only way to move forward was to continue to do the same thing until she got caught.

Vanessa: Right. I mean, pride is great as a result of something. But it’s not great as like a modus operandi.

Casper: I love that.

Vanessa: It’s like pride should be your glass of champagne, it should not be the drinks that you need to get through the day.

Casper: *laughs* Yes.

Vanessa: I think that Harry is motivated both by an acute sense of threat and by pride. It might be what gets him into trouble here, right? I think that standing up to Umbridge and every time someone says this didn’t happen, saying no but it did is an important act of resistance. But what gets in the way is the fact that he feels personally attacked. And understandably so, she is calling him a liar. She is saying that he didn’t experience this trauma and that he has been like, war mongering, whether or not she actually believes it. Of course that feels like an incredible attack on Harry. But the strategy, I think here, would be
to say “respectfully, Professor Umbridge, this did happen. And I do think it’s really important. You’re the one in charge here and so you can teach how you’re gonna teach, but I disagree.”

Casper: Ya, obviously he like loses his temper and he becomes shouty and it’s a totally understandable response. But it’s maybe not the most effective response.

Vanessa: Right. Whereas Hermione, because there is no pride at stake, is able to do this so effectively. More to your point, she raises her hand, she resists within respectful confines. She sort of resists appropriately for what’s at stake in this classroom.

Casper: The thing that strikes me as interesting is that when Harry is sent out of the classroom. He’s told you have detention. Umbridge creates this little message that she magically seals and says go to McGonagall. And Harry runs through the castle and arrives at McGonagall’s office and she kind of opens-

Vanessa: First getting mocked by Peeves. But anyway…

Casper: Ugh, goodness sakes, Peeves, honestly. What’s so interesting to me—this is the famous scene where McGonagall says “have a biscuit, Potter” which is one of our favorite lines. But here is another interesting example of pride. Because McGonagall, who’s always been this figure of authority, who’s in control, who’s running the show, says “don’t be stupid, Potter.” Like you can’t just flip out at her. Like this is not within the confines of normality. She has power, don’t you know who she represents? Right, think of who she works for and so McGonagall is showing a real vulnerability of her own position. And I’m assuming there’s a climb down in pride there, that she as a member of staff would like to maintain some sense of solidity and in-charge-ness in front of students and she has to admit like I can’t help you here. Don’t be so reckless, like, you have to be more strategic with how you resist Umbridge. I guess I just really respect McGonagall’s honesty. First of all, warmth and humaneness in the face of just awfulness. But then secondly, like, she’s willing to lose some face in order to protect Harry.

Vanessa: Ya, I think that is a great moment of McGonagall sort of checking her pride. I really feel for her because I’ve been in positions where I’ve had to say to a student, “the powers that be will not support you in the ways that I personally believe that you should be supported.” And it’s such a hard thing to have to say to a student. I don’t know if you had this feeling as well, Casper, but while we were in with McGonagall and she has this moment where she says to Harry, “well I’m glad that you listened to Miss Granger, even if you don’t listen to anybody else”. Do Hermione and McGonagall talk like all the time?

Casper: This was my question too! I literally wrote in my book, is she Hermione’s mentor? Like, do they get together once a week? Hermione has to be learning this from somewhere, right? We all need role models and I feel like McGonagall would be like ok I see you are super talented and eager to learn, I’m gonna invest in you.

Vanessa: Ya! Like I’m gonna offer you tea and biscuits. Because I feel like McGonagall’s grace is imitated by Hermione in this chapter. When, um, Harry is like so upset about what happened with Umbridge and keeps just attacking Ron and Hermione again and again, and Hermione finally says to him like “stop jumping down our throats, we believe you and we know that this is harder for you than it is for us, but like we’re on your side, so stop yelling at us.” And to me, that is finally about her pride being attacked and having had enough. She’s like I am always a good friend to you, I am always loyal to you, and I know you’re in pain, but there’s only so much of this that I can take and I have enough of a sense of pride that
I’m not gonna let you just abuse me. And I was so relieved to see that moment in Hermione. Because as we talked about earlier, you know, we have seen the abuse that Ron and Hermione have been willing to take like physically packed onto their hands, enduring understandably and with tremendous graciousness, Harry’s pain. And so I think this was a great use of pride, where Hermione’s pride has had enough and she is like ok, I’m not gonna take your abuse anymore. I love you, you’re in pain, but stop.

Casper: Ya, this is one of the questions I always have about pride. It’s really about finding a sort of right sizeness. You don’t wanna feel smaller than you are, but you also shouldn’t feel bigger than you are. I feel like that’s exactly what happens here with Hermione. She’s beginning to feel to be made small by Harry’s kind of outbursts and she’s like no, I need to feel safe and I need to feel good. And I know this is not what you mean, but let me just point out the behaviors you have right now that are really making me feel bad. And like, I need you to stop. Pride is about feeling, like, enough of yourself that you can move freely in the world and give what you have to give, but is also not being more than that so you start to impose on others in a way that limits who they can be. You know what I mean?

Vanessa: Ya! It’s like too much pride, you start to take up more space than you’re entitled to. It’s too much pride is a lie. Which is why it ends up biting you in the butt. Right?

Casper: Exactly!

Vanessa: I just remember one moment, I had studied really hard for a few exams and then I’d done much better on the exams than I thought I would do and I’d gotten them all back on a-you know on one day and I was feeling sooo proud of myself. I mean like, I was on cloud 9. And I basically was like I guess this is what brilliance looks like. And I called my boyfriend to come pick me up and I was waiting outside of my apartment, like, so gleeful and he pulls up and I get into the car and it’s not him, it’s someone else. And it was not a car that looked anything like his car and the person was like excuse me! And I was like uhh. Then my boyfriend pulled up and was like why were you getting into that stranger’s car? Anyway! It was just like I was so full of myself-

Casper: This is what genius looks like!

Vanessa: Ya! This is what genius looks like and I think part of it is that you’re distracted by having to tell yourself this fictional story about how great you are. I was so grateful to learn that lesson so quickly and so innocently of like, ok not a genius.

Casper: Everybody, get back out of the car and chill.

Vanessa: Casper, it is time for your favorite spiritual practice of sacred imagination. And so what I’m gonna ask you to do is-I’ve actually picked a very short passage-but I think it packs quite a punch. And so I’m gonna ask that you center yourself however you find helpful to concentrate and open your mind and really just imagine what it would feel like to be in this room. After we go through this experience, we’ll see what really imagining the sights and smells and touches of being in this room allowed you to see differently.

“It is not a lie.” said Harry, “I saw him, I fought him.” “Detention, Mr. Potter!” said Professor Umbridge triumphantly, “tomorrow evening, 5 o’clock, my office. I repeat this is a lie. The ministry of magic guarantees that you are not in any danger from any dark wizard. If you are still worried, by all means, come and see me outside class hours. If someone is alarming you with fibs about reborn dark wizards, I
would like to hear about it. I am here to help. I am your friend. And now, you will kindly continue your reading- page 5 of Basics for Beginners.”

Casper: mmm.

Vanessa: So, who were you?

Casper: I was Draco Malfoy.

Vanessa: Oooh!

Casper: And now I’m suddenly realizing that Slytherins didn’t take Defense Against the Dark Arts.

Vanessa: Ha!

Casper: But I feel like Draco had a remedial class, like he had to miss something, he was traveling. And so he’s catching up, he was sitting in on this class, let’s work with it.

Vanessa: Totally understandable, nobody saw him so it didn’t like change the way the class unfolded, but he was in there.

Casper: Exactly! So bear with me. So you know, on the first hearing I was like well Draco’s loving this, Harry’s getting his comeuppance. But then I thought well hang on, Lucius may be extremely useful to Voldemort, but he is not particularly loved. He didn’t go looking for Voldemort in the way that other Death Eaters did. And then there’s the question of like how much does Draco know about everything that’s happening? Is he actually a little bit afraid of Umbridge? Right, like Umbridge still represents the Ministry. And on the face of it, although she’s saying Voldemort isn’t back and probably knows better, the Ministry on the face of it is still against Voldemort at this point. So I was just suddenly feeling this very complex cocktail of emotions-of like happy that Harry’s getting this comeuppance, but on the other hand also a little bit worried of like what if I get in a situation like this…does my father have enough influence to stop me from getting attacked? Like, there’s, it was one of those awkward situations where you’re kind of sitting there looking at something that happens to somebody else being like oh thank god it’s not me. But also a little bit scared of what could happen to me.

Vanessa: Ya and it’s also interesting to think about how much Lucius trusts Draco. Like if I were Lucius, I probably wouldn’t tell Draco that Voldemort is back or that I witnessed one of his school mate’s murders. It has to be confusing to not know which side anybody is on. You’re constantly wondering about the politics of a situation.

Casper: Ya, 100%. And like who knows if like Blaise Zabini is secretly queer and like someone else is like dating a werewolf and like who knows what other reasons that people might feel worried that they’re going to be attacked by this authority figure. Ya, it was interesting to sit in the seat and watch this scene between Umbridge and Harry and feel like am I next? And I think that’s what-that’s something that’s going to be more and more important in this book is seeing how Umbridge’s power is growing and as a student feeling like well what if I do something wrong or get on the wrong side of her? You know what I mean?
Vanessa: Ya. What struck me about it is like how simple her language is. She doesn’t spend a lot of time like thrashing him. There’s only one exclamation point in the entire paragraph. It’s detention, Mr. Potter and then it’s all these facts, right? Tomorrow evening, 5 o’clock, my office.

Casper: And the chilling line, I am your friend.

Vanessa: Right. And then there’s this demeaning end of like “Basics for Beginners”. I think her strategy is actually very poor here in that if I were a fellow Gryffindor, I would feel incredibly patronized by this. The woman coming into this classroom, telling me to read, that she’s not actually going to teach me how to pass my class, calling me a beginner when I’m a 5th year, saying I’m your friend in like a really patronizing voice. Like, there is a real professionalism in what she’s doing, it’s not sloppy, I just think it is really underestimating the students. I totally understand why Dumbledore’s Army comes out of this type of confrontation.

Casper: Ya, absolutely. And that’s really insightful I think because she’s creating-instead of creating a line of like her and the class against a disturbance, like she’s creating this line between her and the class. And so it’s very easy for the class to bond together in order to resist her. That’s something that happens over and over again in this book. She’s not very, ironically, she’s not very good at playing politics. She knows how to play power, but she doesn’t know how to play politics.

Vanessa: Ya. And so I was imagining myself a little bit as Umbridge here and it’s made me wonder about the times that I have reached for power when I should be reaching for politics. Where I know I’m right and so everybody do X Y and Z and I’m just wondering like, Umbridge doesn’t leave this classroom thinking oh man, I played that wrong. She thinks nailed it! And so I’m just wondering about the times I’ve asserted power in my life, when that actually made me lose long term credibility.

Casper: I feel like I do the exact opposite when I’m like Umbridge’s role. I go for politics and I’m like friend friend, chummy chummy with students when sometimes I should just be like way more comfortable using the power route. And in some ways, Umbridge is in that classic teacher situation where that line isn’t possible to maintain all the time. Like you just can’t. Now, she’s taking it to an extreme, so we’re not advocating for that, but just that experience of like you’re in charge and like you know in any class you run or any room that you’re in front of, like, there’s gonna be moments where you’re mis stepping it from how you want to do it perfectly.

Vanessa: Right.

Casper: And how do you come back from that is the question.

Vanessa: Well and how do you even stay attune enough where you like know that you messed up? When I know I mess up, I apologize, I follow up, I go on walks with students and we like-I’m more terrified of the moments I just don’t know I’ve messed up that I’ve broke trust or broke a relationship in a way that I’m not aware of. And I do think that if you’re an authority figure, I think it’s important to use power sometimes, right? I think it creates boundaries and safety and, you know, I think if there’s a party that’s out of control, it’s my job to go break it up. Not just because it’s a rule, but because most likely kids are drinking way too much way too quickly and it isn’t safe and somebody across the hall is trying to sleep and doesn’t feel comfortable breaking up a party themselves. Right? Like I think it’s important for a sense of safety to have a little bit of authority, but I think Umbridge definitely is going way way far.
Casper: That’s a line we’ll come back to in this book.

This week’s voicemail is from Samantha Harris. Samantha is a member of the tree of life congregation where the horrific shooting happened in October of this year and she offers blessings in a way that I’ve done before to call forth something that maybe isn’t there yet in characters that we’ve gotten to know. An invitation for them to grow into more of who they can become.

(beep)

Samantha: Hi Vanessa, Casper, Ariana, Nick and everybody else who does Harry Potter and the Sacred Text. My name is Sam and I’m from Pittsburgh. Um I’m a member of the Tree of Life synagogue that was attacked last week. I’m not gonna go into a lot of details of what happened, I was not there. But it’s an ongoing investigation. I just wanna thank you guys for giving me the strength, I guess, for-I’ve been listening to the podcast since the very beginning and I met you guys at your New York show and I don’t think that I’d be able to begin to start to forgive is the wrong word, but understand this guy who did this without you guys and your guidance on this podcast and I know that sounds stupid to, like, have something this traumatic be helped along by a podcast, now I’m rambling, but I just wanna bless the Dementors. I know that’s whatever, but I wanna bless the Dementors for their strength to take a break and not follow orders and not follow everything that they hear. I wanna bless Cornelius Fudge for the strength to lead in a way that is right and is just. And last, but certainly not least, I wanna bless Voldemort for maybe seeing that he could be wrong and that mudbloods are people, mudblood is a bad word, but that’s all that I can think right now, I’m having trouble thinking of words. Um mudbloods are people too and he doesn’t have to kill them just because they’re different than him and ya. So, thank you guys, it’s a little over 2 minutes, but you guys are great. Keep doing what you’re doing and thank you for everything. Alright, bye.

Vanessa: Thank you so much, Samantha. I’m-we’re so so sorry for your losses and for all of our losses. We’re also just so glad that we could be a small part of any comfort offered in any hard time. So thank you very much.

Casper: Vanessa, it’s time for us to offer a blessing to someone in the pages of this chapter.

Vanessa: Can I go first?

Casper: *laughs* Sure!

Vanessa: I’m really excited. People on twitter sometimes like to guess who I’m gonna bless because I think I bless pretty obviously. And so I’m gonna stay true to form here and I’m gonna bless McGonagall for one of the most famous moments in this series. The brilliant “have a biscuit, Potter.” And I wanna bless her because I think she was doing exactly what we were talking about just a moment ago. I think that she’s threading this needle of maintain boundaries while subverting them and playing a little bit of politics. And doing this third thing of building a relationship with Harry. She’s having a real conversation with Harry about the greater complications of Umbridge. As we talked about, she admits her own vulnerability here, but she also is, you know, telling Harry through this biscuit that I’m your ally. Even though I can’t formally protect you, relationally I will do everything that I can. So I wanna offer a blessing to anybody who, while in a really tough situation, figures out the exact right thing to do. And I feel like hospitality and dessert is probably a good way to go. What about you, Casper? Who would you like to bless?
Casper: I feel like I want to give my blessing to Harry in this chapter. He—there’s a moment where Harry is trying to read in Umbridge’s class and he reads the same sentence five times. And I feel like this happens to me all the time. My attention span has been twitterized. I really need to like put everything away and sit down with a book for me to properly engage with it. Otherwise I’ll end up reading that same line five times and then feel like I’m a failure and useless and can’t read. So for anyone who struggles with their reading, this blessing is for you.

Vanessa: *laughs* reading is hard!

Casper: It is!

Vanessa: I know. That’s why we do one chapter at a time of a book we already know we love.

Casper: Vanessa, one of the things a lot of people do, and I think we should do it too is to ask what we’re grateful for.

Vanessa: Can I answer that I’m grateful for you?

Casper: Nooooo

Vanessa: No? You are so cute. I was sick last week and you texted me saying I’m going to the grocery store, can I bring you anything? And I will bless you for the fact that you actually did what I asked, but the fact that I felt comfortable saying like yes, these are the two things I need from the grocery store. And then you just came in while I was napping and dropped them off on my kitchen counter, it was so nice. And so I’m grateful for you and for anyone who I feel comfortable saying yes to when I need help, I feel like that is a really nice thing.

Casper: I love you.

Vanessa: I love you too!

Casper: Do you know who I’m grateful for? My friend Lennon who taught me to say “I’m going to the grocery store, do you need anything?”

Vanessa: Ya! That’s what you did. You were like, tomorrow I’m going to the market-

Casper: Because I was going!

Vanessa: Ya. Besides Lennon, is there anything else you’re grateful for?

Casper: Well, I’m really grateful to all of our amazing listeners. We’ve done a bunch of live shows recently and so we’ve gotten to meet a bunch of people. And like, everyone who listens to our show is so nice.

Vanessa: At least everyone who sticks around after and talks to us.

Casper: *laughs*

Vanessa: We don’t know about the rest of you. We suspect you are also nice.

Casper: Exactly. But it’s just such a joy to be able to like travel a country and meet people who are so open and generous and funny. I’m just very very happy and I’m very grateful and none of this would be
possible without our listeners. So from everyone at Harry Potter and the Sacred Text, thank you for listening.

Vanessa: In what is now going to be a grand Harry Potter and the Sacred Text tradition, Ariana’s mom Libby stopped by the studio this week and so we obviously put her to work immediately and had her record the credits. Casper, when is your mom coming by? I want some Suzanne in my life.

Casper: *laughs* sometime soon.

Vanessa: Ok good! In the meantime, take it away Libby.

*theme music begins*

Libby: You’ve been listening to Harry Potter and the Sacred Text. You can follow my amazing daughter Ariana and her team on twitter, Instagram, and facebook. We’ve started a Patreon, go support us there. Leave us a review on itunes, send us a voicemail. We hope to see you at one of our live shows or for our weekend extravaganza in Orlando. Next week we will be reading chapter 13 Detention with Dolores through the theme of obsession. This episode of Harry Potter and the Sacred Text was brought to you by Ariana Nedelman, Casper ter Kuile, and Vanessa Zoltan. Music by Ivan Pyzow and Nick Bohl. Our voicemail is from Samantha Harris. Thanks also go to Julia Argy, Bridget Goggen, Annie Egan, and Stephanie Paulsell.

*theme music ends*

Vanessa: Happy thanksgiving, Casper.

Casper: Happy thanksgiving back.

Vanessa: Thank you.

Casper: Do you know what that’s from? It’s a You’ve Got Mail reference! Easter egg time.

Vanessa: Oh, I get it…

Together: happy thanksgiving back.

Vanessa: Callie from Grey’s Anatomy says it to Tom Hanks. In that scene where he’s being a jerk.

Casper: He’s totally being a jerk.

Vanessa: Ugh.

Casper: Can you just swipe the credit card on the swipey machine?