

SPECIAL REHEARSAL EDITION SCRIPT

HARRY POTTER

AND THE
CURSED CHILD

— PARTS ONE AND TWO —



BASED ON AN ORIGINAL NEW STORY BY

J.K. ROWLING

JOHN TIFFANY & JACK THORNE

A NEW PLAY BY **JACK THORNE**



J.K. ROWLING'S
Harry Potter[™]
AND THE
CURSED CHILD

—
PARTS ONE AND TWO
PLAYSCRIPT
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BASED ON AN ORIGINAL NEW STORY BY
J.K. ROWLING
JOHN TIFFANY & JACK THORNE
A PLAY BY **JACK THORNE**

FIRST PRODUCED BY
SONIA FRIEDMAN PRODUCTIONS, COLIN CALLENDER
& HARRY POTTER THEATRICAL PRODUCTIONS

THE OFFICIAL SCRIPT OF THE
ORIGINAL WEST END PRODUCTION
THE DEFINITIVE AND FINAL PLAYSRIPT

Pottermore

PUBLISHING



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J.K. ROWLING

*To Jack Thorne
who entered my world
and did beautiful things there.*



JOHN TIFFANY

For Joe, Louis, Max, Sonny and Merle . . . wizards all . . .



JACK THORNE

*To Elliott Thorne, born 7 April 2016.
As we rehearsed, he gurgled.*

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A CONVERSATION ABOUT READING SCRIPTS

*between director John Tiffany
and
playwright Jack Thorne*

JACK

The first play I ever read was *Joseph and the Amazing Technicolor Dreamcoat*. I was at primary school and very excited. I can't remember clearly, but think I mainly went through it looking for my lines. Yes, I was an obnoxious little brat and yes, I was going to play Joseph. The next play I read was *The Silver Sword*, a theatre adaptation of the Ian Serraillier classic. I wasn't going to play the lead in that – I think I played 'third boy' or something. I wanted to play Edek Balicki. I would have given anything to play Edek, but sadly my acting career was in terminal decline by then. I was nine years old.

JOHN

The first script I ever read was *Oliver!* aged nine (even at that young age I was vaguely aware that the exclamation mark meant it was a musical – it's Oliver . . . with songs!). I had been cast as the eponymous orphan in the Huddersfield Amateur Operatic Society's 1981 production. I have no memory of attempting to change my accent, so our production must have been a strange reimagining of Dickens's original in which Oliver's mother finds her way to a workhouse in West Yorkshire to give birth. Like you, I read through the script looking for my lines. I remember making a special trip to buy a fluorescent yellow pen so I could highlight Oliver's lines in my script, just like I'd noticed my fellow cast members do. Obviously, I thought, this was what marked you out as a seasoned performer. It was only later that the Artful Dodger pointed out that I not only had to highlight my lines, but also commit them to memory. And so began my lessons in reading plays.

JACK

I wish I'd seen your *Oliver*. And your highlighted script. I always admired

your pristine brown directing notebooks. My scripts are – and always have been – dog-eared, covered in indecipherable notes and smeared with baby puke (okay, the puke is a relatively new addition).

So how do you think scripts should be read? How can they be read? When I was trying to write the stage directions for publication – in those final few weeks of scramble before we opened – I got really worried about all this. I remember in rehearsals we'd delete chunks of the script because the actors were communicating something effortlessly with a look so they didn't need the lines I'd written. This script was created for a particular group of actors, but others need to inhabit the roles too. The reader needs to visualise the characters, as does the director.

When you're reading a script for the first time, what are you looking for?

JOHN

As a director, the first time you read a new script is very precious. It's the closest you're ever going to be to an audience watching a production of this script for the first time. Reading a finished script should allow us access to the story, its characters and the themes the playwright is exploring. A script can make us laugh and cry. It can take us through the joy of its story and also make us feel deep despair for the suffering of its characters. A script builds towards a fully realised production and an experience that can be shared with the audience.

As a playwright, how much of this full experience do you imagine when you are writing a script? Do you speak the characters' lines out loud as you type them?

JACK

I do worse than that, I move like them. Which, when you're working in well-known coffee shops and sandwich retailers, can lead to you attracting some strange looks. I find myself twisting into the character and gesticulating like them. It's all very embarrassing.

The thing that was perhaps most interesting about the process of writing this particular script is that I have never spent more time with actors – ever. Through the weeks of workshops and then weeks of rehearsals we were all in those rooms together for so long, all of us, from the design team to the sound team to the lights. I don't think any of us have

experienced anything like that – I think it probably works out at eight months or so, all in all. What effect would you say that had on what was created? I'm sure it made it all a lot better, but more than that do you think it somehow changed the tone of what we did?

JOHN

I love the thought of you sitting in cafés mumbling and contorting yourself into characters from your plays! I think there's probably an audience for this, Jack. It sounds like a very unique style of performance. We could tour it. I know the actors from *Cursed Child* and I would book front row seats. No? Well, okay then . . .

I definitely think that the significant amount of time we all spent together in workshops and rehearsals had a positive effect on what we created. The whole process still seems so vivid, dynamic and clear. From the initial story meetings we had with Jo at the beginning of 2014 through to the audiences who first saw the production in summer 2016, there have been so many actors, creatives, artists, producers, production and technical teams who have contributed to this play. This is the main reason I was so keen to include all their names in the published script. It's also why the published script can only ever be a gateway to the full experience of watching the production in a theatre.

So, as the writer of this script, what do you hope happens inside the imaginations of people reading the play who haven't, as yet, been able to see the production?

JACK

I think that's a difficult question to answer. On the day before the play opened, I wrote a tweet which said 'I'd love people to see it, it's better seen than read – plays are like sheet music, meant to be sung & we've a cast & crew of pure Beyoncé'. So maybe that's the answer: that they imagine the Beyoncés of the acting world – emotional and empathetic titans – killing every line with their subtlety and grace (because that's the reality, our cast are extraordinary) – and staging and movement and costume and lighting and video and sound that are all just sublime.

Or maybe I just hope they're able to read it as I wrote it – with Jo on one shoulder and you, John, on the other – trying my best to express in every single line the emotional truth and honesty that runs through the Harry

Potter books. The difficult thing of course is the subtext between the lines, the way that looks can carry emotion, and the impossibility of truly capturing internal monologue in a script. In prose you can write how someone feels, and in the production the cast reflect the internal monologue on their faces. Plus, there's loads of magic stuff onstage, which I can't explain because it'll ruin watching the show and get Jamie Harrison (Illusions and Magic) thrown out of the Magic Circle! Maybe they can act it themselves in their head? Maybe they can be as mad as me and sit in a café and play all the parts? How would you say people should read it?

JOHN

As you say, in prose you can express the truth of how someone feels through internal monologue and give visual detail through rich description, whereas we have our actors and creative collaborators who work with us to bring these elements to life on stage. Even then, we often rely on the audiences' collective imagination to make a particular moment of storytelling come to full-blooded fruition. It's one of the reasons that I am so passionate about theatre; film has computer-generated imagery but we have the imagination of the audience. Both are extremely powerful.

I think there's something wonderful about the idea of readers acting out the script in their heads. Or with their mates in their bedrooms. Maybe there's a connection between this and our live audiences' imagination. We will work hard so that everyone who wants to see our production of *Harry Potter and the Cursed Child* is able to, whether at the Palace Theatre in London or in new productions elsewhere. In the meantime, I'm genuinely excited about the countless productions that are happening in our readers' imaginations as they absorb your play.

PART ONE





PART ONE

ACT ONE



ACT ONE SCENE ONE

KING'S CROSS

A busy and crowded station, full of people trying to go somewhere. Amongst the hustle and bustle, two large cages rattle on top of two laden trolleys. They're being pushed by two boys, JAMES POTTER and ALBUS POTTER. Their mother, GINNY, follows after. A thirty-seven-year-old man, HARRY, has his daughter LILY on his shoulders.

ALBUS

Dad. He keeps saying it.

HARRY

James, give it a rest.

JAMES

I only said he might be in Slytherin. And he might, so . . . *(off his dad's glare)* fine.

ALBUS *(looking up at his mum)*

You'll write to me, won't you?

GINNY

Every day if you want us to.

ALBUS

No. Not every day. James says most people only get letters from

home about once a month. I don't want to . . .

HARRY

We wrote to your brother three times a week last year.

ALBUS

What? James!

ALBUS looks accusingly at JAMES, who grins back.

GINNY

Yes. You may not want to believe everything he tells you about Hogwarts. He likes a laugh, your brother.

JAMES

Can we go now please?

ALBUS looks at his dad, and then his mum.

GINNY

All you have to do is walk straight at the wall between platforms nine and ten.

LILY

I'm so excited.

HARRY

Don't stop and don't be scared you'll crash into it, that's very important. Best to do it at a run if you're nervous.

ALBUS

I'm ready.

HARRY and LILY put their hands on ALBUS's trolley – GINNY joins JAMES's trolley – and together, the family run hard into the barrier.





ACT ONE SCENE TWO

PLATFORM NINE AND THREE-QUARTERS

Which is covered in thick white steam pouring from the HOGWARTS EXPRESS.

And which is also busy – but instead of people in sharp suits going about their day, it’s now wizards and witches in robes mostly trying to work out how to say goodbye to their beloved progeny.

ALBUS

This is it.

LILY

Wow!

ALBUS

Platform nine and three-quarters.

LILY

Where are they? Are they here? Maybe they didn’t come?

HARRY points out RON, HERMIONE and their daughter ROSE. LILY runs hard up to them.

Uncle Ron. Uncle Ron!!!

RON turns towards them as LILY goes barrelling up to him. He picks

her up into his arms.

RON

If it isn't my favourite Potter.

LILY

Have you got my trick?

RON

Are you aware of the Weasleys' Wizard Wheezes certified nose-stealing breath?

ROSE

Mum! Dad's doing that lame thing again.

HERMIONE

You say lame, he says glorious, I say . . . somewhere in between.

RON

Hang on. Let me just munch this . . . air. And now it's just a simple matter of . . . excuse me if I smell slightly of garlic . . .

He breathes on her face. LILY giggles.

LILY

You smell of porridge.

RON

Bing. Bang. Boing. Young lady, get ready to not being able to smell at all . . .

He lifts her nose off.

LILY

Where's my nose?

RON

Tada!

His hand is empty. It's a lame trick. Everyone enjoys its lameness.

LILY

You are silly.

ALBUS

Everyone's staring at us again.

RON

Because of me! I'm extremely famous. My nose experiments are legendary!

HERMIONE

They're certainly something.

HARRY

Parked all right then?

RON

I did. Hermione didn't believe I could pass a Muggle driving test, did you? She thought I'd have to Confund the examiner.

HERMIONE

I thought nothing of the kind, I have complete faith in you.

ROSE

And I have complete faith he did Confund the examiner.

RON

Oi!

ALBUS

Dad . . .

ALBUS *pulls on HARRY's robes.* HARRY *looks down.*

Do you think – what if I am – what if I'm put in Slytherin . . .

HARRY

And what would be wrong with that?

ALBUS

Slytherin is the house of the snake, of Dark Magic . . . it's not a house of brave wizards.

HARRY

Albus Severus, you were named after two headmasters of Hogwarts. One of them was a Slytherin and he was probably the bravest man I ever knew.

ALBUS

But just say . . .

HARRY

If it matters to you, *you*, the Sorting Hat will take your feelings into account.

ALBUS

Really?

HARRY

It did for me.

This is something he's never said before, it resonates around his head a moment.

Hogwarts will be the making of you, Albus. I promise you, there is nothing to be frightened of there.

JAMES (*sharply*)

Apart from the Thestrals. Watch out for the Thestrals.

ALBUS

I thought they were invisible!

HARRY

Listen to your professors, *don't* listen to James, and remember to enjoy yourself. Now, if you don't want this train to leave without you, you should leap on . . .

LILY

I'm going to chase the train out.

GINNY

Lily, come straight back.

HERMIONE

Rose. Remember to send Neville our love.

ROSE

Mum, I can't send a professor love!

ROSE exits for the train. And then ALBUS turns and hugs GINNY and HARRY one last time before following after her.

ALBUS

Okay, then. Bye.

He climbs on board. HERMIONE, GINNY, RON and HARRY stand watching the train – as whistles blow up and down the platform.

GINNY

They're going to be okay, right?

HERMIONE

Hogwarts is a big place.

RON

Big. Wonderful. Full of food. I'd give anything to be going back.

HARRY

Strange, Al being worried he'll be sorted into Slytherin.

HERMIONE

That's nothing, Rose is worried whether she'll break the Quidditch scoring record in her first or second year. And how early she can take her O.W.Ls.

RON

I have no idea where she gets her ambition from.

GINNY

And how would you feel, Harry, if Al – if he is?

RON

You know, Gin, we always thought there was a chance you could be sorted into Slytherin.

GINNY

What?

RON

Honestly, Fred and George ran a book.

HERMIONE

Can we go? People are looking, you know.

GINNY

People always look when you three are together. And apart. People always look at you.

The four exit. GINNY stops HARRY.

Harry . . . he'll be all right, won't he?

HARRY

Of course he will.

