Harry Potter AND THE CURSED CHILD

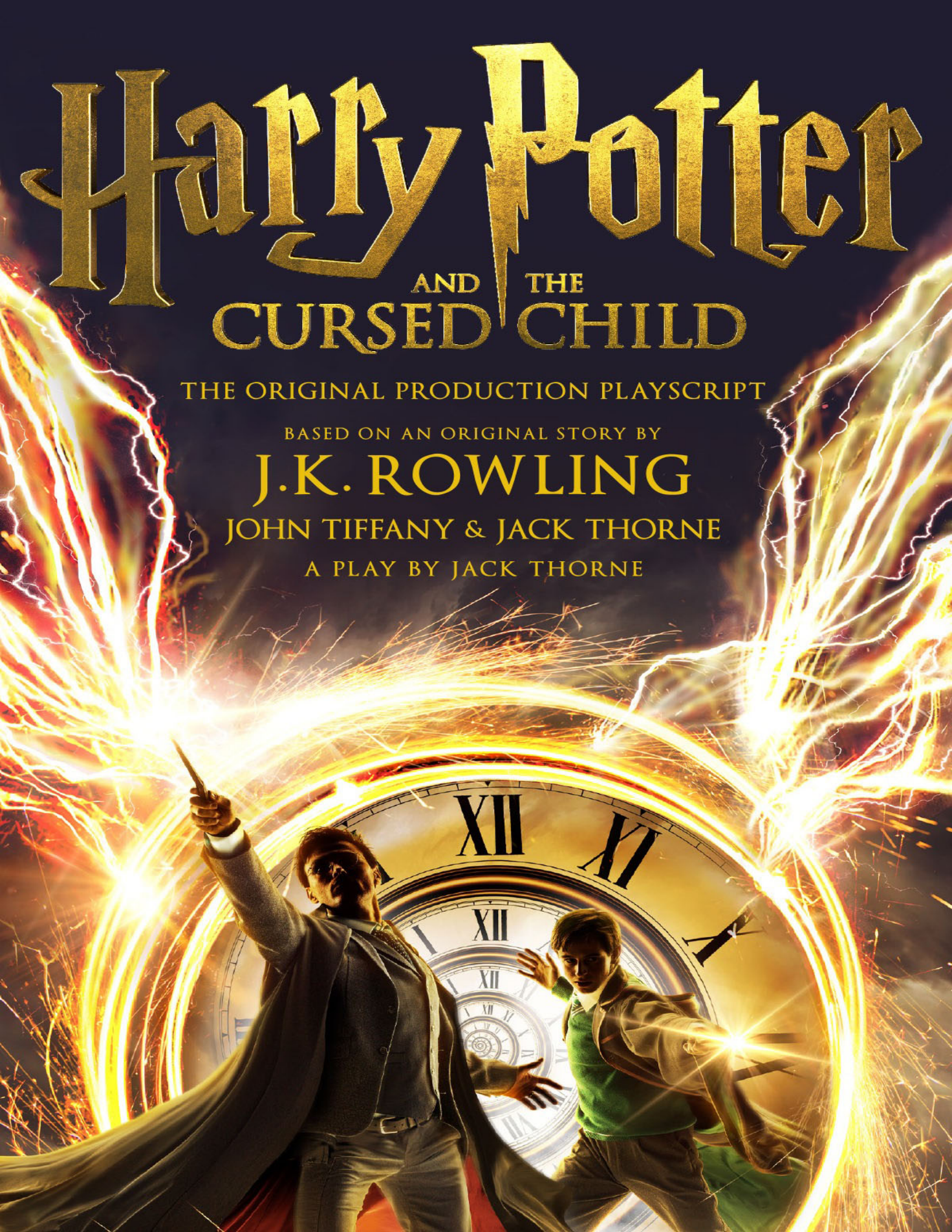
THE ORIGINAL PRODUCTION PLAYSCRIPT

BASED ON AN ORIGINAL STORY BY

J.K. ROWLING

JOHN TIFFANY & JACK THORNE

A PLAY BY JACK THORNE



J.K. ROWLING'S

Harry Potter™

AND THE CURSED CHILD

PARTS ONE AND TWO
PLAYSCRIPT

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 PLAYSCRIPT

Pottermore
PUBLISHING

WIZARDING
WORLD

To Jack Thorne
who entered my world
and did beautiful things there.
— J.K. Rowling

For Joe, Louis, Max, Sonny, and Merle . . . wizards all . . .
— John Tiffany

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

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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 theater 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 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 visualize 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 realized 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 theater.

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?

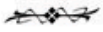
JOHN: As you say, in prose you can express the truth of how someone feels through internal monologue and give visual detail through rich description, whereas we have our actors and creative collaborators who work with us to bring these elements to life on stage. Even then, we often rely on the audience's 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 theater; 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 audience's 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.

HARRY POTTER AND THE CURSED CHILD

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 — 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 good-bye 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 barreling up to him. He picks her up into his arms.

RON: If it isn't my favorite 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: Ta-da!

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?