

Hogwarts for the Holidays Part 1



1 December 2020

INTRO

HARRY

Hermione, I saw you paid a visit to St Mungo's. Have their Healers been able to restore any of the informant's Obliviated memories?

HERMIONE

Unfortunately not. His mind is badly damaged, possibly irrevocably. We may be able to identify him using the wand he had on him... But Harry, I want you to let me and Constance handle the investigation - and this new surge, for that matter - until the holidays are over. You look positively exhausted...

HARRY

I appreciate your concern Hermione, but I can't just sing Christmas carols or trim the tree while The Unforgivable are out there-- Did you say another surge has begun?

HERMIONE

Yes, centered primarily around Hogwarts' portraits of the Founders and the House ghosts. I assumed, given your connection to the Calamity, that you already knew and had sensed it starting, like the past few surges.

HARRY

All I sense is whatever Lethifold and Barghest set into motion in October. It's become a deafening roar since then, capable of drowning out any other noise in the Calamity. Compared to the dread emanating from that, this surge seems almost harmless. But I can't help but feel that it's important...

BRILLIANT HELGA HUFFLEPUFF PORTRAIT

CONSTANCE

This may come as a shock, but I wasn't the most popular witch at Hogwarts. In fact, over the course of my seven years there, I probably spent more time socialising with the school portraits than my classmates.

My favourite to talk to was Helga Hufflepuff's. We'd spend hours sharing recipes and gossiping about the professors' love lives.

In retrospect, my reputation as an odd bod makes a lot of sense.

BRILLIANT SALAZAR SLYTHERIN PORTRAIT

CONSTANCE

When I first got word that a new surge had begun, I lost all hope of having a peaceful, jolly Christmas. But this surge seems surprisingly mild. Perhaps we'll be able to stamp it out quickly and enjoy our holidays after all.

HERMIONE

It is rather inconspicuous, isn't it? Almost suspiciously so, considering what we know about The Unforgivable and the Calamity's recent behaviour.

CONSTANCE

Like the cabal gave this surge an innocuous facade to hide some sinister scheme? I suppose that does sound more probable than my theory that they're taking the holidays off, doesn't it?

HERMIONE

It's just a theory... Either way, we should put an end to the surge as soon as possible. Poor Harry's been running himself ragged trying to get ahead of whatever The Unforgivable are plotting. Giving him one less thing to worry about is the best Christmas present I could think to give him.

BLOODY BARON

CONSTANCE

Harry, what are you still doing in the office? I thought Hermione told you to go home and put up Christmas decorations with your family.

HARRY

Decking the halls can wait. I've just received an owl from Neville. Apparently he overheard the Bloody Baron grumbling to himself about Grim Fawley 'invading his mind.'

CONSTANCE

You don't suppose Grim is responsible for this surge, do you? That he implanted a memory in the Bloody Baron's Foundable?

HARRY

That's exactly what I think. Unfortunately the Bloody Baron refuses to speak any further about it. For now, we'll just have to speculate why Grim is reaching out to him and why Grim may have started this surge.

FAT FRIAR

HERMIONE

Professor McGonagall! What brings you to the Ministry? Rose isn't in any trouble, is she?

MCGONAGALL

No, no, she's fine. I've actually come to discuss the Fat Friar. He says he just had a conversation with Grim Fawley, in which he was advised to 'mind the portraits.' I told him that was quite impossible, as there were no signs of Grim in the castle, nor any other intruder, but he insists it happened.

HERMIONE

I wonder if Grim attached a false memory to the Fat Friar's Foundable? The Calamity's been used this way to communicate before, but never with a ghost. Apparently the target need not currently be alive to receive these messages... fascinating.

MCGONAGALL

Just to be safe, I'll still increase patrols around the castle and tell Sir Cadogan and the other portraits to look out for anything unusual.

HERMIONE

Please do. Every time Grim reaches out to us, he seems to deliver invaluable information about the Calamity. I suspect this time will be no different.

ARGUS FILCH

CONSTANCE

Filch! To what do we owe the... er... pleasure?

ARGUS FILCH

I was in my quarters, polishing my chains, when suddenly I remembered a talk I had with a grown Grim Fawley. Only I couldn't have had it, seeing as I haven't seen him since he was a filthy little beast tracking muddy footprints down the halls of Hogwarts.

CONSTANCE

That's why you're here? To pass along a message from Grim? Thank Merlin! I thought you had finally realised I was the one who put the Flobberworm in your can-- Er, I mean, can you tell me what he said?

ARGUS FILCH

He made a big fuss about telling you lot that this is his doing. Said these 'Foundables' are his memories from the Christmases he spent at Hogwarts, with just the portraits and ghosts for company. He also wanted you to know he was 'getting close.' Whatever that means. Normally I'd refuse to be anyone's messenger owl, but... Grim always made sure me and Mrs Norris had a present waiting for us under the tree at Hogwarts and, well... Suppose I'm getting soft in my old age, eh?

END

HARRY

Filch, the Fat Friar, and the Bloody Baron all received false memories from Grim. Clearly this surge is a message from Grim wrapped in a Christmas bow made of his memories of the holidays at Hogwarts. Could he be trying to tell us something important about the Calamity or The Unforgivable?

CONSTANCE

I'm not so certain. Hermione's right, there's something suspicious about this whole situation... If Grim had an important message for us, why not just come out and say it? Why relay cryptic teases through Filch and ghosts?

HARRY

It is the holiday season... Perhaps he's feeling nostalgic? Grim lost his parents to Death Eaters when he was young. It's possible spending Christmas with his Hogwarts family - no matter how unconventional it was - gave him a sense of normalcy... Normalcy that he might be craving right now.

CONSTANCE

No offense, Harry, but are you sure you're not letting your own feelings and experiences cloud your judgement? Let's not forget that there's a good chance that Grim is the 'Barghest' character mentioned in the note we intercepted in October. If that's true, he might even be a part of The Unforgivable.

HARRY

You might very well be right. Even so, I can't help but think Grim is on our side... Hopefully, when the second wave of the surge begins, we'll get a clearer picture of Grim's reasons for starting it.