

Hogwarts for the Holidays Part 2



22 December 2020

Brilliant Event

INTRO

HARRY

Grim's surge has returned. Once again, it appears to be centered around his memories of Christmases spent at Hogwarts with the House portraits and ghosts... supposedly, at least. Constance and Hermione are skeptical of Grim. They suspect he may be using this surge to mislead us.

GREENGRASS

And you disagree?

HARRY

Grim has been integral in helping us understand the capabilities of the Calamity and the extent to which it can be manipulated. If he's a part of a cabal of Dark wizards and witches, why would he communicate with us at all?

GREENGRASS

To throw suspicion off himself? Or perhaps this is some elaborate plan to get revenge against us for closing the London Five investigation? Only Grim knows for certain.

All I'm saying is be careful, Harry. It seems more than mere coincidence that a surge has come along to steal your attention away right as this sinister activity in the Calamity has reached a head...

BRILLIANT GODRIC GRIFFINDOR PORTRAIT

HARRY

It's been difficult explaining to James, Lily, and Albus why I haven't been home to bake gingerbread or hang stockings. Ginny has been painting me as some Godric Gryffindor-esque figure, bravely and selflessly working to fight evil. But truthfully? I would much rather be celebrating Christmas with them.

So why don't I take Hermione and Constance up on their offer and take the rest of the holidays off? Hermione theorised that I'm pushing myself out of a sense of obligation. She's absolutely right.

Desperation drove Grim to start the Calamity, desperation he might not have felt had I handled the London Five investigation better.

No matter how much I'd love to drop everything and spend the holidays entirely with my family, I can't in good conscience do so. Not while Grim and Penelope's children go another Christmas without their parents.

BRILLIANT ROWENA RAVENCLAW PORTRAIT

CONSTANCE

When I was a student at Hogwarts, I'd rub Rowena Ravenclaw's portrait before every exam, in the hopes that I could absorb some of her intelligence.

Unfortunately, the only thing that wore off on me was paint.

NEARLY HEADLESS NICK

HERMIONE

Professor McGonagall, you're back again! Has Grim sent a false memory to another Hogwarts ghost?

MCGONAGALL

Yes, apparently he asked Sir Nicholas to stand guard in the Grand Staircase 'until he's been found.'

HERMIONE

First Grim instructs the Fat Friar to 'mind the portraits,' now this... Is he trying to tell us someone's hiding in or behind one of the portraits in the Grand Staircase? Is that even possible?

MCGONAGALL

My dear, if there's one thing I've learned in all my years at Hogwarts, it's that anything is possible.

GREY LADY

MCGONAGALL

I apologise for showing up unannounced again, but it seems Grim Fawley has once more reached out to one of Hogwarts' resident ghosts. This time, he's apparently contacted the Grey Lady.

HERMIONE

What did he say?

MCGONAGALL

We're not sure. The only reason we know Grim spoke to the Grey Lady at all is because she told a curious Ravenclaw as much. Apparently the student spotted her canvassing the Grand Staircase. When asked what she was up to, she said she was 'helping Grim search' and left.

HERMIONE

Could I speak to her?

MCGONAGALL

I'm afraid that would be impossible. You see, the Grey Lady... she's gone missing.

MRS. NORRIS

CONSTANCE

Many students consider Filch to be a heartless menace. But I saw the way he cared for Mrs Norris. No one who loved an animal that much could possibly be all bad.

MYSTERIOUS NOTE

1ST PIECE

CONSTANCE

Look, another fragment of a note! I'd bet my wand it's from Grim. Think we'll get a straight answer about why he started this surge once we reassemble all the pieces?

HERMIONE

I think he'll give us an answer. Whether or not it'll be a truthful one... Well, that's the million-Galleon question, isn't it?

5TH PIECE

CONSTANCE

I can make out part of the note now. 'I found one' is written in Grim's handwriting.

HERMIONE

Found one of what?

CONSTANCE

I'm not sure, but I'm going to go out on a Whomping Willow limb and say it's probably not the perfect Christmas present.

FINAL PIECE

CONSTANCE

I wish I could say that everything's been cleared up now that we've reassembled the entire note, but I might be even more confused than before. 'He'll be waiting for you where the Prince of Enchanters is enthroned. The rest is up to you.' What kind of message is that?

HERMIONE

An encoded one, no doubt.

CONSTANCE

Grim is nothing if not cryptic, isn't he? Still, I can't help but wonder why, for all his posturing of needing our help, he continues to be so frustratingly vague. The riddle is one thing, but we don't even know who this 'he' is.

HERMIONE

Perhaps he wants to prevent the information from falling into the wrong hands? Though I'll admit it's also quite possible this is some elaborate distraction intended to take our minds off whatever has been keeping Harry up at night... Merlin's beard, Grim, what have you gotten yourself into?

Hold on, Merlin... Could it be...? I'll have to look into this.

END

HERMIONE

I think I've figured out Grim's message. The emphasis on portraits, the comment about 'the place where the Prince of Enchanters is enthroned,' advising Nearly Headless Nick to patrol the Grand Staircase... he's trying to tell us someone's hidden in Hogwarts' portrait of Merlin.

HARRY

As usual, Hermione, you're spot on. An urgent owl from Professor McGonagall just arrived. Apparently they found the Grey Lady... and Kit Gerrard! Nearly Headless Nick spotted him inside the portrait of Merlin in the Grand Staircase, just like you said. It's all here in her letter.

CONSTANCE

Kit Gerrard? As in the Kit Gerrard, the reporter who went missing with the rest of the London Five? But it's been years! I thought... I mean, I assumed he'd...

HERMIONE

Died? Me too. But, sure enough, the man sealed inside the portrait does indeed appear to be Kit... Though he curiously doesn't seem to be able to remember anything about himself or how he got there...

HARRY

This is incredible! Truly, Grim has delivered us and the Gerrard family a Christmas gift we'll never forget.