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# Canon Derailed

## Chapter 1

### Standard Disclaimer:

Bob peeked his head out from between the curtains. His hair was mussed and his expression was a bit wild. He had a nervous tic under one eye.

"I'm sorry to announce that our usual disclaimer has been canceled for this short story. We had plans for a disclaimer that shock and awe you, but I'm afraid it, like our canon story, got derailed. You see Alyx has taken an intense interest in two television networks of late and I'm afraid the results have been rather... well strange. I strongly suggest you do not watch Animal Planet and the Home Improvement channel to the exclusion of everything else."

Behind Bob the sound of a power saw started up. It was accompanied by much screaming and cursing. Bob's eyes darted around nervously as if he were looking for an avenue of escape. He glanced over his shoulder and then looked at the audience appealingly.

"We don't own Harry Potter!" Bob blurted out.

Alyx screeched something incomprehensible in the background and Bob flinched.

"I don't think the world is ready for a fourteen foot tall bionic Gerbil," Bob muttered, then he jerked violently and vanished from sight.

A moment later Alyx appeared. In one hand she held what appeared to be an ostrich leg and in the other hand she held a power saw. "Bob's busy at the moment. We hope you enjoy this little plot bunny that wouldn't go away."

### Canon Derailed

#### Hogwarts Deputy Headmistress's Office August 10th, 1991...

Minerva reached for her cup of tea and then picked up a pile of parchments and paper. It was part of the job that she hated the most. As Deputy Headmistress, it fell to her to see that the school letters went out and the appropriate responses had been received.

*Dear Professor McGonagall,*

*My parents and I would like to extend our thanks for your visit on the 20th. Your demonstration put to rest the worry my parents and myself had concerning the strange occurrences that I had been experiencing for the last two years. While I never would have assumed them to be magical in origin, you answered the question that had been bothering us for the last few years.*

*As per your letter, please consider this as my acceptance reply. I look forward to starting at Hogwarts on 1st September.*

*Respectfully,*

*Hermione Jane Granger*

Minerva smiled broadly and placed the letter on top of the pile of previously read letters, then she checked off the name from her list. She had visited the Grangers and had come away most impressed with the young lady. She couldn't help but be reminded of another muggle born witch who she had visited so many years earlier. She, too, seemed eager to learn the craft.

With that remembrance, she grimaced. She had not yet come across a letter from another certain student. Against her better judgment, she had allowed the Headmaster to send Rubeus Hagrid to visit Harry Potter and his family.

While she liked Hagrid personally, she felt he was a bit too intimidating to send to a magic hating muggle family.

Hagrid had told her that young Harry seemed extremely interested in the magical world and in particular, Hogwarts. He had given the lad his vault key and had assisted him in obtaining his first year supplies. So where, then, is his acceptance letter?

She rooted around in her pile of unread letters. She checked every one that was printed on paper, since Mr. Potter was muggle raised. Not finding the letter, she turned to the parchment letters. To her surprise, his letter had arrived on parchment.

*To whom it may concern,*

*Thank you for your kind offer of acceptance to Hogwarts School of Witchcraft and Wizardry. However, I find myself unable to attend an institution led by Albus Dumbledore. For ten years I have known the name of the man that condemned me to live with this family and I will not allow myself to be near such an evil individual.*

*For ten years one name has received the bulk of the blame in my being placed with the Dursleys. I have heard the name of Dumbledore all my life and had to deal with the fact that my relatives hate him only slightly less than they hate me. My loving Aunt and Uncle have made it patently clear that they hate me and the man that forced them to take me in. That I have never seen, nor heard, from Mr. Dumbledore in the past ten years only proves his callous and uncaring attitude in regard to my care.*

*The Goblins at Gringotts have graciously informed me of other schooling options and I have been accepted to a year round boarding school*

that isn't in this country. They also helped remove something called an Owl redirect that forced my owl mail to go to another location. The Goblins were quite insistent that I report the illegal redirect to the Department of Magical Law Enforcement and I have allowed them to do so on my behalf.

My guardians have given me permission to attend school elsewhere and agree with my decision not to attend Hogwarts. The fact that I would leave and not see them again until I had passed the age of majority is a major bonus in their mind. They are for anything that will remove me from their home and, frankly, it's one opinion I share with them.

I wish you and your school well, but I fear that as long as you have a man as evil as Dumbledore running it, you will have problems.

Sincerely

Harry James Potter

Minerva sat, frozen in shock for several moments before bolting to her feet and running from her office.

### Hogwarts, Headmaster's Office August 11th, 1991...

Albus Dumbledore looked up in surprise and shock when his deputy entered his office without calling first. His surprise only deepened when he realized just how furious she was and that her anger was directed at him.

She stormed over to his desk and glared at him. "Do you know what you've done?" she hissed. "Are you aware of the damage you've caused?"

He blinked at her. "I beg your pardon, Minerva? What has you so upset?"

"I just came back from seeing Mr. Potter," she replied through tightly clenched teeth.

He frowned. "I thought I made myself clear that you were not to meet with Mr. Potter," he replied, a bit angry that she would disobey him.

She shook her head and gave him a scathing look. "So you would just wait until the first of September to discover that he is not attending Hogwarts?"

He stared at her, trying to comprehend what she had said.

"You don't understand, do you? I told you they were the worst sort of people and they were. I spent most of yesterday talking with Mr. Potter and I have learned a number of interesting facts. Like the fact that his relatives hate him and have spent the last ten years belittling him and blaming you for dumping him on them.

"Or the fact that while he hates his relatives, he hates you even more. He knows about Voldemort and he told me that you're just as bad. He refuses to attend a school run by an 'evil wizard'. His words, not mine."

"Mr. Potter is nothing like his parents, thanks to his upbringing. And thanks to the Goblins, he's well aware that he wasn't supposed to be placed with his Aunt and Uncle. This is the damage you created! You turned that loving, wonderful child into a bitter, sarcastic cynic."

Dumbledore leaned back in his chair and pinched the bridge of his nose tiredly. He knew the Dursleys would not provide a loving environment for Harry. He'd been counting on that fact. It had been his hope that it would make Harry all the more eager to embrace the magical world in order to escape his family. Nothing in all his plans had ever prepared him for this.

He stood. "I will go speak with him. He'll be coming to Hogwarts on the first," he stated confidently.

"You can't," Minerva replied a bit smugly. "He's gone. He's already left for his school."

He looked at her sharply. "Explain!"

"I just returned from escorting Mr. Potter to his portkey point. He's been accepted to the Rocky Mountain Institute of Spells and Sorcery."

He collapsed back in his chair. *RMI!* he thought with a groan. *That school's hidden by a fidelius charm and holds classes year round, which means the boy's out of my reach. The next time he emerges in the magical world he'll be a fully trained wizard.*

"Why didn't you try to talk him out of going there?" Dumbledore asked in a strangled voice.

"Why should I? He's seen his parent's will. So have I, by the way. I could have been his guardian. My name was on their list, Albus. But you refused to listen to reason. You thought you knew better and you placed him in a home full of hate. For all of his unhappy outlook on life, I think he'll do well at RMI. He'll make friends and be free of your influence. Hopefully, he'll find the nurturing at RMI that he needed so desperately from the Dursleys."

She watched him with satisfaction. She had been shocked to discover that her name was one of the handful listed as possible guardians for Harry, and it had been the primary reason why he had been willing to converse with her in the first place.

She had spent most of the day talking with the boy before helping him get to the place where his portkey would activate. She found him intelligent, but a bit cynical. It also became apparent in their conversation that he had little trust in any adult.

"Mr. Potter tells me that an illegal owl redirect was placed on his home, preventing him from receiving all mail that wasn't keyed properly. The Goblins have reported that fact to the DMLE. They also have Harry's permission to tell the press where he is and why, once word gets out that he

Isn't attending Hogwarts.

"He considers you to be an evil man, and considering what I learned yesterday and today, I'm not sure he's wrong. I know full well that you had old lady, Figg, watching over him, so you knew he wasn't being treated right, yet you did nothing to stop it."

She turned and moved towards the door. Once there, she stopped and turned to face him once more. "This is your fault, Albus, and our world is going to destroy you for doing this. I don't want to be you when you finally meet up with Lily and James." With one last, scathing look, she opened the door and walked out.

### **Rocky Mountain Institute of Spells and Sorcery, August 14th, 1991...**

Harry finished unpacking his things in what would be his room for the next eight or more years. He had been told he could extend his stay at the school by enrolling in various Mastery level classes, but he had years to go before he had to worry about that.

He stepped from the room and looked around. Each student was given a room of their own in the dorm. Surprisingly, it was a coed dorm, but the bedrooms were charmed to keep the sexes from mixing. Large common rooms were set up to allow the students plenty of space to study and socialize.

"Hi," said a soft voice behind him. He turned to see a small Asian girl who was even shorter than he was.

"I'm Ling, from San Diego. I guess you're new here, too?" she asked timidly.

He nodded. "H-H-Harry, from England," he stammered.

She smiled shyly at him and held out her hand. "Well, shall we explore our new school, Harry from England? It's going to be our home for a long time."

He grinned at her, taking her hand in his own. "Why not, Ling from San Diego."

It was an unusual feeling, something about this girl made him want to trust her. The only person he had even come slightly close to trusting was that Professor from Hogwarts who'd been a friend of his parents.

Ling took off at a brisk pace with Harry in tow behind her. As they walked, she told him what she knew about the school and about her own family. Harry followed behind, bemused. He wondered if this strange new feeling he felt was what it was like when making a friend. He never had a friend before. Maybe that could change now.

### **The Years That Followed...**

In the first year of Harry's schooling, his friendship with Ling helped him learn to trust others. Slowly, he found acceptance and friendship among the other students and a mentor in his Charms professor. He continued to correspond with Minerva McGonagall, who told him tales about his parents and their friends.

Albus Dumbledore didn't weather the storm of the Boy-Who-Lived refusing to attend Hogwarts well. The public outcry when Gringotts revealed that Harry had left the country had burned up much of Dumbledore's political capital.

The British made a few tentative overtures to the American Department of Magic concerning Harry Potter and were firmly rebuffed each time. The Rocky Mountain Institute was one of their newer schools and highly respected by the government. They weren't about to force a single student back to a country he didn't want to be in over an issue of schooling, especially when the boy had the approval of his guardians.

The near death of a muggle born girl by a troll in Hogwarts was the final straw for the Board of Governors and, in a fit of common sense led by Augusta Longbottom, Dumbledore was removed from his position as Headmaster and his position was given to Minerva.

Minerva removed the traps from the third floor and destroyed the Sorcerer's Stone. Her announcement concerning the stone was enough to make Voldemort flee Quirrel's body, killing him in front of hundreds of students and staff and forcing the government to acknowledge that Voldemort was not dead.

Stung by his disgrace at the school, Dumbledore worked from his position as Chief Mugwump to force RMI to release Harry Potter to his custody. He managed to get several laws passed making it mandatory that all British Wizards must attend British schools. That poorly conceived law resulted in Hogwarts' student population tripling, but it failed to budge Potter out from behind the wards of RMI.

The Wizengamot quickly repealed the new laws, letting the school populations return to normal and Dumbledore was censured, although they refrained from removing him from the position of Chief Mugwump.

Failure on the political front caused Dumbledore to make a really bad decision. He was caught attempting to enter the United States illegally with the intent to break the RMI wards and capture Harry Potter.

The United States Department of Magic sentenced Dumbledore to five years in Leavenworth Magical Prison and refused all diplomatic efforts on the part of the British to have him released. Despite the black eye Dumbledore had given the British Ministry with his plans and plots to get Harry back, the Ministry refused to give up on their leader of the light.

In Harry's second year, his Charms professor, Professor Hillman, noted that Harry had a soul fragment attached to him like a leech and he helped the boy undergo a painful ritual to remove it. During his recovery, he became very close to Professor Hillman's wife, who taught English Composition at RMI. It wasn't an easy transition for Harry, but eventually the Professor and his wife found themselves in the role of parental figures

In his life.

Under their influence, Harry became more easy going and trusting. Old habits learned under the Dursleys were slowly forgotten. Privately, the Hillmans were surprised to find themselves in such a role, but they happily accepted it. They had realized early on that Harry had been mentally abused much of his early life and were glad that he was willing to reach out to them.

After the ritual was complete and Harry recovered, he helped his Charms professor perform another ritual to summon any objects with a similar soul signature as the one that had attached itself to Harry.

The objects arrived one at a time over the course of several hours and were carefully packaged away. Professor Hillman intended to send them off to the Department of Magic's Mysteries and Puzzles section for destruction. The last item to arrive surprised both wizards. It was a free floating and quite foul mouthed phantasm, which Professor Hillman quickly trapped in a runic container.

The summoning of a certain diary from it's hidden location caused the wards at Malfoy Manor to fail in a spectacular fashion. When the Aurors finally arrived, they found the Manor's stunned occupants sitting in the wreckage, surrounded by many dark and illegal artifacts. It was enough to send the adults to prison for life and to send the Malfoy heir to a wizarding orphanage, since no one wanted him.

During Harry's third year, he worked up the courage and asked Ling to be his date to a weekly dance held at the school. Mrs Hillman taught Harry how to dance, while Mr. Hillman helped him understand the mysteries of girls.

Back in Britain, several scandals caused the fall of the Ministry. Having finally given up on retrieving their Chief Mugwump, the British assigned another wizard to the position. While cleaning out Dumbledore's effects from his office, the new Mugwump came upon hundreds of files detailing corruption in the Ministry going back decades and used them to clean house.

In Harry's fourth year, he began to write to his newly freed Godfather. Strangely enough, he'd been freed based on information found in Dumbledore's files. Why Dumbledore hadn't brought forth information concerning Black's innocence was a mystery.

The fact that Order of Merlin winner Peter Pettigrew betrayed the Potters came as a total surprise to British Wizarding society. Since he hadn't been seen in the past thirteen years, many believed Pettigrew was dead. So when Pettigrew appeared in Hogwarts, kidnapping a student, it came as a complete shock.

Pettigrew was killed attempting a bizarre ritual that he believed would bring his master back to life. His victim had been nearly bled dry in the failed ritual. Ronald Weasley would never fully recover from his ordeal and never returned to Hogwarts to continue his education.

Harry met Sirius and Remus for the first time during the winter of his fifth year at RMI. Minerva, Sirius and Remus had obtained special permission to visit the school over the yuletide holiday so that Harry could learn a little more about his family. Both men were surprised to discover that, while he might resemble his father, he acted nothing like James. It had taken Harry five long years to learn to interact with people without automatically mistrusting them. While he was more trusting now, he came across as quiet and intelligent, rather than loud and boisterous like his father.

Sirius had talked to Harry about returning to Britain, but he'd rejected the idea. He and Ling were already deep into their plans for opening a business in the United States providing custom warding and curse breaking - two of their favorite subjects. To that end, both were planning on staying on at RMI for the extra year needed to obtain the certifications in the subjects.

When Dumbledore was finally released from prison, he appealed directly to the U.S. Department of Magic, asking that Harry Potter be turned over to him immediately. He cited the prophecy held by the British Ministry and explained that Harry was the only one capable of killing Voldemort.

When that didn't work, he appealed to the public at large by granting an interview with the Daily Prophet. When an American publication picked up on the story, they asked Harry what he thought of the piece and the uproar it was causing in Britain. Harry merely shrugged and replied that Dumbledore had to be senile.

Dumbledore, dejected and rejected even by those that once worshiped his image, retired to his family home in Wales and spent the last years of his life trying to tell people that Voldemort would return and only Harry Potter, under his guidance, could defeat him.

Harry knew the full story behind the Horcruxes by this point, but had been sworn to secrecy by the Department of Mysteries and Puzzles. It was felt by the Department that Voldemort's methods should remain secret. Word was spread privately among the leading law enforcement officials in the world that Voldemort would never threaten the public again.

When Harry and Ling finally graduated, two years later than normal, they started what would become one of the most successful magical enterprises in the world.

In a strange quirk of fate, Headmistress McGonagall mentioned a former student to Harry. He looked into the situation and eventually hired her away from the British Ministry. Despite her severe limp, Hermione Granger was one of the British Ministry's rising stars until her career had hit a roadblock over her blood status.

Harry, Ling and Hermione became life long friends and eventually Hermione became a partner in their business and Godmother to one of their daughters.

Harry and Ling raised their family along with frequent visits from Uncles Padfoot and Moony and Aunt Minnie. Eventually, Voldemort's horcruxes were destroyed in an explosion so large, the muggles blamed it on a terrorist attack. As for the free floating phantasm of Voldemort, he was encased in Lucite and functions as a paperweight for Head of the Department of Mysteries and Puzzles.

**FINI**

