

## Super Neat and Kreatively Efficient Scheme

### Divination Classroom Schematics, that We Obtained Totally Legally, I Promise

#### The *Real* Story of How Things Went Down:

A shriek from the greenhouse was the first sign that something was wrong. Professor Sprout never panicked.

The second sign that something was wrong was a Patronus streaking from the greenhouse to the castle.

The third sign was the five unconscious students being floated toward the castle.

"Uh-oh," Sara whispered to her study group.

"What happened?" Audrey whispered.

Rhino shrugged. "Won't know until you ask," he said, and started jogging toward Professor Sprout. "Hey! Professor!" Sara and Audrey hesitated, then followed,

"I'm a little busy, Mr. Bot."

"I can see that. What *happened*?"

"Never you mind - actually..." Sprout paused, clearly thinking. "How would you like to earn some extra credit?"

"What did you have in mind?"

Sprout took a deep breath. "My Longbottomy Fungi have escaped."

"What? That's awful! Er...what are Longbottomy Fungi again?"

Professor Sprout sighed. "This is why you need the extra credit," she said. "Can either of you girls fill him in?"

Audrey and Sara exchanged guilty looks.

"Really? Did I not cover them with you yet? Oh, I should just retire, if I'm forgetting- no. What you three need to know is that Longbottomy fungi are a new breed developed by a former student of mine. They're strong - broke the locks on the greenhouse and hit these five until they were

unconscious. What I know about them is that not only are they strong, they *hate* direct sunlight. They're probably in the castle somewhere. I'll find them and tell you their locations. I'll need you to collect at least one of them."

"How?" Audrey asked.

"Longbottomy fungi hate sunlight, but also decaf coffee, the Muggle song Baby Shark, and interacting with strangers - that's probably why they broke out, actually, I overwhelmed them with so many new people at once. They have the mental capacity of a five-year-old human child, so anything your standard five-year-old likes, they like. You can use that to lure them out."

"Okay," Audrey said slowly, "but what do they *look* like?"

"They're about the size of my pinky," Sprout said, holding out her hand to demonstrate. "They have a - well, it's a thumb without any other fingers, just kinda hanging off the side."

"Ew."

"They use it to climb trees, mostly," Sprout said. "Oh! They also emit chloroform when stressed, so I strongly suggest a Bubblehead Charm. And, most importantly...if this gets out, people will panic. Not a word to anyone unless you need their help, got it?"

"Got it," they chorused.

"Perfect. Now, if you'll excuse me, I need to get these five to the hospital wing...."

They watched her move off. After a moment, Rhino said, "Kinda funny how she just stood here talking to us instead of taking care of five unconscious students."

"Yeah," Sara said thoughtfully. "That's not like her. And why were there only five students in the greenhouse anyway?"

"Think we're being set up?" Audrey asked.

"Dude," Rhino said, "a professor just gave us permission to wreak *absolute havoc* in exchange for finding *one plant*. Who cares if it's a setup?"

Audrey grinned. "We're not doing this subtly, are we?"

"Not in the slightest," Sara said, smirking.

"Race you to the common room," Rhino said.

"Rhino!" Audrey yelled. "Your backpack's still out here!"

"Ruin all my fun, why don't you," he grumbled, and trudged back to the lakeside to pick up his school supplies.

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"Listen up!" Falcon yelled. The chatter of the Slytherin common room died down. All eyes were on Falcon.

"Professor Sprout has given us a task," Falcon announced. "Well, really she gave Rhino, Sara, and Audrey a task, but they're roping all of us in on it."

"Why?" one of the second-years said plaintively.

"Because it'll be *fun*," Falcon said. "Our mission, should we choose to accept it - and we already have - is to capture the elusive Longbottomy Fungus, which is currently hiding in the Divination Tower!"

"Capture a plant?" someone asked. "That's all?"

"Ah, but wait! There's more! We cannot be seen capturing the plant...and we have to capture it during a class."

"*Why?*" the same second-year said.

Falcon shrugged. "Who knows? This is the way Sprout wants it done. Be glad they didn't pick McGonagall's office while McGonagall's *there*."

Half the common room sucked in a breath at the thought of trying to find a plant in McGonagall's office undetected. At least Trelawney was distractible.

"We'll need a distraction," Justine said after a few minutes' thought.

"Great! You're in charge of planning that. We'll have to go in through the window once everyone's distracted - Quidditch team, you're on that one, got it covered?"

"We got it," Silver said, and beckoned her teammates over to discuss.

"We got a distraction," Falcon muttered, "we got a capture team...what's missing?"

"A plan," Ratch said. "Come on, knuckleheads. Let's figure this out."

### *Step One: The Setup*

"Once we get all these pieces in place, how are we going to find the actual plant?" Rhino asked.

"We could use a Magic Detection Spell," Sara suggested.

Ratch turned to stare at her. "Hogwarts," they said, "reshapes itself hourly. Using "detect magic" in a classroom in the largest magical castle in Western Europe will be about as useful as using light-amplifying goggles in the Sahara Desert at noon."

"What do you suggest, then?" Sara asked.

"We already know the Quidditch team is coming in through the window, right?"

"Yeah," Ratch said slowly.

"And we know the plant hates decaf coffee."

"Right," Rhino said.

"What if we splatter the walls with decaf coffee? It'll have to leave its hiding place. It's only five, so if we can get something five-year-olds like-

"Unicorns!" Rhino said. "Kids love unicorns!"

"How are we gonna get a *unicorn* into the Divination Tower?"

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"Professor Trelawney?" Hissy said.

"Yes, Miss 29?"

"I read about a type of divination using unicorns. Is that something we'll be doing?"

"I've long wanted to," Trelawney said in her typical long-suffering tones, "but alas, I have never convinced a unicorn to climb the ladder to this tower."

"Why can't we just go down to the Forbidden Forest?"

Trelawney blinked through her oversized spectacles. "Well - that is to say - I..."

For a moment, Hissy thought she'd managed to clear the classroom without the need for a flash mob. But then Trelawney seemed to seize upon an excuse that didn't involve her being an idiot and said, "The incense in this tower opens up the Inner Eye, my child. To attempt Divination without their assistance would be to doom yourself to failure."

"Oh," Hissy said. "Well, if I can convince a unicorn to come up, can we do it?"

“Certainly,” Professor Trelawney said. “Now run along to your next class.”

Hissy plotted and schemed the whole way down to Charms. If she was going to do this, the first thing she needed to do was gain the trust of a unicorn.

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“Unicorn in the Divination Tower,” Rhino said. “Justine’s working on the distraction, right?”

“Right,” Falcon said. “Audrey’s helping her by teaching our Malazaarina Sedusa plant, affectionately named Audrey IV, to sing ‘Baby Shark’.

“Makes sense,” shrugged Rhino. “What better way to catch a plant than to use our own?”

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“Ugh,” Justine groaned. “Who knew choreography would be this hard?”

“I still say we turn it into a waltz or garrotte-”

“Those are hideously out of fashion in the Muggle world, and you know it.”

“Why bother with making it Muggle, though?”

“Because it’s a *Muggle song*. You know what? Screw it. One dance move for each verse. They’ll do it and they’ll *like it*.”

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“Come on, Audrey IV,” Audrey whined. “You’ve gotta learn this thing!”

“Why?” it asked. “Why can’t I just stick to ‘It’s Rainin’ Men’?”

“Because we have a job to do,” Audrey said. “Come on. I’ll get you a rooster.”

Its snake-like vines quivered. “A whole rooster?”

“A whole rooster. Just for you.” Audrey started thinking about how she could get a rooster without Hagrid knowing about it.

“I’ll do it! How does it go again?”

*“Baby shark, do do do do do do do do....”*

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"What else do we need?" Falcon asked.

"A way to find it when it camouflages itself," Sara said immediately.

"Glitter," Rhino said promptly.

"*Glitter?*"

"It sticks to everything, right? And it never goes away!"

"Which is gonna make cleanup impossible. We're trying *not* to get caught, remember?"

"What's your idea then, genius?"

"Spray paint. It should come off the floor or whatever with a simple *Tergeo*."

"What if it's still hiding when we come in?"

"Well, that's simple. We just spray decaf coffee on the walls."

Everyone stopped and looked at Ratch.

"What?" they said. "It *hates* decaf. It'll run away from the coffee and toward the unicorn. Spray it, bag it, tag it, run."

"*Tergeo* to clean it up?"

"It'll come off with the spray paint."

*Step Two: The Day Of*

Hissy grumbled as she levitated the unicorn foal up the ladder and through the trapdoor. Way too many people had stopped to ask where she was going with a baby unicorn, and the baby was skittish. She clambered up after it and spent a few minutes soothing it, offering carrots and apples until the unicorn was calm again.

She was stuck in the Divination Tower all day with the unicorn. Maybe not literally, but she didn't trust the other classes not to scare the poor thing. She'd also convinced Trelawney to give all the male students the day off to help lessen the stress on the foal, claiming that a stressed unicorn was unable to give accurate readings with its horn. (And *why* did Trelawney believe her? She didn't even believe herself!) That meant the class was only half-full, which would (hopefully) make it easier for their plot to succeed.

After about ten minutes, students started climbing up the ladder. Hissy took a deep breath and laid a hand on the unicorn's muzzle.

Showtime.

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"All right," Silver said, looking at Sara and Falcon. There were only three of them available - Audrey had to be with Audrey IV, Ratch wanted to be in the middle of the flashmob pandemonium, and Tipsy and blxckfire were both in class. "Bubble-Head Charms?"

"On."

"Spray paint?"

Falcon held up a can of Rust-O-Leum.

"Really?" Sara said. "You couldn't have sprung for Krylon?"

"It's what I had," Falcon said. "You're lucky I even had gold."

"Focus," Silver snapped. "Remember the plan: fly up, wait for the distraction. Go in, spray the walls, coat the fungus in paint, catch it, lock it in the box, clean up, get out."

"We know," Sara said, rolling her eyes. "We've been over this a hundred times!"

"On my mark, then," Silver said. "Three...two..."

They rose up into the air as one. When they passed the History classroom, they saw a little Hufflepuff nudge her friend and point at them.

"Crud!" Silver said. "Disillusionment Charms!"

They vanished from each others' view. All they could see of each other were vaguely human-shaped outlines. They rocketed up to the Divination Tower and paused just outside the window.

Trelawney was running her hands up and down the unicorn's horn. Hissy was next to them, a hand on the unicorn's flank. The other students were clearly stifling laughter at the sight.

Trelawney went on...and on...and on....

"Where's the distraction?" Falcon hissed. "Class ends in ten minutes!"

As though her words had been a signal. They heard Audrey IV's weirdly high-pitched voice start to float through the walls. The two Slytherins in the classroom immediately got up and started dancing on their way to the trapdoor. They disappeared from view. The other students promptly followed,

"What is the meaning of this?" Trelawney cried, dropping her hands from the unicorn horn and following.

As soon as she was out of view, Hissy kicked the trapdoor closed.

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Justine, Audrey, Rhino, Ratch, Vin, Hedwig, Judah, Cait, Bearie, Churro, Mac, Russ, Cynic, DB, Loki, Meddle, Otter, Sensory, Abra, Stock "SP" Parfait, Ara, Twiddah, Squab, Lucy, ZuZu, and Quip gathered underneath the trapdoor.

"Ready?" Justine whispered.

"Ready," they all whispered back.

"Audrey," Justine said, motioning to her.

And Audrey realized she'd forgotten Audrey IV all the way back in the dungeons.

"Run!" Justine hissed, and Audrey flew through the corridors, taking all the shortcuts she knew about, jumping down four stairs at a time. By the time she reached the dungeons, she was wheezing.

Audrey IV was waiting for her. "Remember," Audrey said, "you get a whole rooster, all to yourself, just for singing this song. Can you walk with me?"

Audrey IV raised itself up on its snakelike tendrils. "Lead the way," it rasped. "I'm so thirsty...."

Audrey spritzed it with her wand. "Let's go," she urged.

They hurtled up seven flights of stairs, taking shortcuts wherever they could. By the time they reached the landing underneath the Divination classroom, Audrey was gasping for breath.

"There's only ten minutes left in class," Justine said. "Let's go!"

Audrey IV opened her mouth and began to sing.

### *Step Three: The Heist*

Silver hit the window broom-first.



"It's locked!" she said.

The banging had gotten the unicorn's attention. It was staring at them, eyes wide. Hissy was patting its head and whispering to it.

"*Alohomora*," Silver whispered. The lock came undone; the window opened. All three tumbled in.

Sara wasted no time: "*Decafementi murus!*"

Coffee flew across the room to splatter on the walls. There was a high-pitched whistling sound and something small, green, and fuzzy started rolling across the floor.

Falcon pounced with the spray paint at the same time Sara grabbed for the Longbottomy Fungus. Sara ended up with the fungus in her hands and spray paint all down her arm.

"Really, Falcon?" she complained.

"You got in my way."

"Ugh. Who's got the bag?"

Silver held out a metal box. Sara dropped it in. Silver closed the lid and locked it quickly.

"Well," Falcon said. "That was simple."

"Says the one who didn't get spray-painted," Sara said tartly.

Hissy rolled her eyes. "Song's ending, get gone."

"*Tergeo*," all three of them hissed, pointing their wands at different parts of the room. In seconds, the room was clean, and they hopped on their brooms and sailed away to the greenhouses.