

Episode 131 - A Very Potter Sequel Act 1 (Part 1)

w/ Tessa Netting

PM = Past Mike

EM= Editing Mike

TN = Tessa Netting

If there is a mistake or mis-translation in this transcript please feel free to reach out to Mike for clarification! (potterlesspodcast@gmail.com)

PM

Hey, it's me your COVID-19 facemask. I know I can feel irritating at times. But, if you actually want me to be a bit more comfortable while you're wearing me, you should also be listening to an episode of this podcast.

[Announcements 0:10 – 2:51]

PM

But, without further ado, let's get into Episode 131 of Potterless covering the first part of Act I of A Very Potter Sequel, guest starring, Tessa Netting.

Intro Music

PM

Hello, internet, and welcome back to another episode of Potterless; the tale of a 28-year-old man who didn't read the Harry Potter series as a kid. He read them as an adult. He watched the movies. And he's going beyond all of that fun stuff into the A Very Potter trilogy. I guess that's what it's called. My name is Mike Schubert. I'm that grown man, and I'm here joined today by a Harry Potter YouTuber, podcaster, overall, lovely human being, it's Tessa Netting. Tessa, how's it going?

TN

Hi. Hello. I'm so excited to be on this podcast. You don't even know, because we were supposed to do something together at LeakyCon.

PM

We were.

TN

And I was so pumped for that, but then I couldn't make it. And, so, now, it's finally happening. And it's happening around A Very Potter, like, trilogy. So, that makes me happy.

PM

Yes, I think it's destiny that it happened. Of course, it's unfortunate that we couldn't make the LeakyCon thing happen. But it was great that, when I messaged you about trying to get on

the show, I was like, "Oh, do you want to do anything else? Like, I'm doing A Very Potter Musical right now, but there's other stuff." And then you were like, "Yeah, I'm engaged to Snape. So, I'd love to do one of the things, if possible." I was like, "If possible? Of course." So, what?

TN

I know, man. It's the best.

PM

I don't know if this is me being out of the loop or if this is like very public knowledge, but I had no idea that this was the thing. And that's very cool.

TN

Yes. Yes. So, I have known Joe Moses for a long, long time. We've been together for, like, eight years now. And we got engaged last year.

PM

Congratulations.

TN

Oh, thank you. We met through Pat Brady, which is StarKids manager and my current agent. So, she introduced us. Told us not to date each other, which meant we pretty much had to. So --

PM

Yeah, that's how it works.

TN

We just hit it off right away, and I just love him. So in love with him. I have a really, like, funny story about StarKid as well. So --

PM

Oh, please, let's start it right off the top.

TN

Yeah. So, it was 2010. I was 19. And I was actually on Broadway at the time.

PM

Whoa.

TN

Yeah, I was in Billy Elliot the Musical in the original cast. And my two favorite things in the entire world was musical theater and Harry Potter. So, people just kept telling me over and over to watch this musical, but I was just so busy. And it was so long. And then, when A Very Potter Sequel came out, everyone in the Potter fandom was just, like, talking about it. So, I finally watched them back to back and I absolutely just fell in love with it, because it was the

first time that I had seen anything, like, poking fun at Harry Potter in, like, a lovable way. Like, coming not from a place of hate, but coming from, like, a place of love. And StarKid was actually what inspired me to make my own Harry Potter content on the internet.

PM

That's so good.

TN

Yeah. So, they just started it all for me. And, now, that's like a big part of my job. So, it's really, really cool that they just started that all. And, now, that I'm engaged to Joe, I just know them all so well. They're so talented, kind, just loving people. And I just love them. They're the best.

PM

That is fantastic. I am very excited, because, hopefully, I will be able to have some of the StarKids on the show to talk about the trilogy --

TN

Yes.

PM

-- because I emailed your friend, Pat Brady.

TN

Oh.

PM

The best was I sent her an email, because I found out that information online just like looking up how do I get in touch with StarKid.

TN

Mhmm.

PM

And then I sent her an email like, "Hi. I host a podcast. I'm getting to A Very Potter Musical. People really want me to cover it. I think it'd be really fun." And then I was not expecting it to work. And then, like, eight minutes after I sent the email, she was like, "Yep, just forwarded it to the whole team." And, so, okay. So --

TN

She's the best.

PM

She seems like a wonderful human.

TN

She is.

PM

I've talked to Nick a little bit about getting some StarKids on. So, that will, hopefully, be coming in the future. But, for now, we're here to talk about A Very Potter Sequel --

TN

Yes.

PM

-- which a lot of people told me is their favorite. And a lot of people said that they thought I might like this one more than the other one. But, a couple of people said, I think you'll like everything except for one part. And that was true. And I think we should just address it right off the top is that the Umbridge depiction is not great or ideal.

TN

Mhmm.

PM

And, especially given the timing, it feels especially rough. But I know that Nick has apologized for that depiction on Twitter. Nick, one of the writers and the director. And you told me before recording that you're going to dress it a little bit. So, I feel like they know this has not aged well and is not a great look. So, I don't know if you have any additional insight. But, aside from that, I really enjoyed it. But I felt gross watching it.

TN

Yeah, it's a very, very big part of this musical. So, it's something that you can't really ignore. Joe told me that it was not meant to be a trans joke. And they were really just making fun of Joe Walker being fitness crazy and getting super ripped. And he's playing, like, a buff woman. And then Umbridge falls in love with Dumbledore, but doesn't realize that Dumbledore isn't into women. And then Dumbledore thinks that Umbridge is a man. So, the joke is supposed to be this, like, total misunderstanding. But, now looking back, they understand how it could definitely be seen the wrong way, taken the wrong way, and just be super problematic. It was just not their intention at all for Umbridge to be this sort of, like, negative portrayal of a trans woman. And Nick even made a statement on Twitter recently like you talked about. And he was just like, "You know, the truth is, if I could do it again, I wouldn't portray umbridge at all in the way I did." He's like, "I see now how hurtful and thoughtless it was." And he's just, like, really sorry for it. And he said, "I've made mistakes. There's no excuse for them. I learned that -- listen, learn, and do better." And, for me, even though I love Joe Walker so, so much, like, Umbridge was just always a little too much for me.

PM

Yeah.

TN

It never really sat well with me. But some people, like, love his version of Umbridge. And I've seen just like incredible fan art and cosplays. But, like you said, I think it's important to recognize that it's uncomfortable for a lot of people when they're watching this. And it's good to talk about.

PM

Yeah, I reached out. I've made a post in the Potterless Facebook group just asking, "Hey, any trans or non-binary folks out there? How do you feel about this?" Because I don't want to be, "Look at me, a straight white man --

TN

Right.

PM

-- getting offended on your behalf." But, yeah, I think most people, from what I'm reading on the comments here, have agreed with what you're saying in that, yes, you realize that it was 2009 - 2010. So, it's a bit of a product of its time. And people can tell that they weren't necessarily trying to go, "Oh, let's dunk on trans people."

TN

Right.

PM

If anything, it's a joke about drag queens and stuff like that. But it didn't really land.

TN

Mhmm.

PM

I don't think anyone is -- most of these comments say that they don't like it, but they're not super upset by it. Mainly the fact that Nick has apologized and that you can tell that they weren't trying to have bad intentions. But, all of that being said, people still do not seem to be big fans of this portrayal. And it really is one of the elements that has aged the worst from the whole play.

TN

Yeah, definitely. I agree. And it's just unfortunate, because it's such a huge part of the --

PM

Yeah.

TN

-- part of the sequel. And it's, like, you can't ignore it, because it's just -- it's right there. So, I'm -- I'm glad that we talked about it. And I think that it's important to keep talking about things that make you uncomfortable, that you don't think are, you know, the right portrayal of things. So, I think this is good.

PM

Yeah. And I think it can happen for things that we love and, on Potterless, I've never shied away from pointing out things in the Harry Potter books that aren't good.

TN

Yeah.

PM

The books are fat phobic at times.

TN

Mhmm.

PM

There's a lot of things that, even in the canon stuff, we look back in our big yikes moments. So, I think it's okay to still be able to love and appreciate something, whether it's the books, the A Very Potter Trilogy, whatever it is. But I think it is still important to talk about those things that we don't like. And I tried to get on that in the A Very Potter Musical episodes. And that's what I'm trying to get on here. It's that you can still like the thing.

TN

Yes.

PM

But it is still important to recognize the parts that are at fault and learn from them, because we all have to learn. And these kids wrote it when they were in college. So, that was a big learning time. We all did stuff back then that we are not proud of.

TN

Yeah.

PM

And I am very happy to know that StarKid has moved beyond this. They've become more accepting. Nick has apologized for it and owned up to it. Unlike a certain person that needs to own up and apologize and seems like she never will.

TN

I know.

PM

But, instead of talking about her, let's talk about A Very Potter Sequel.

TN

Yes, please. Let's, let's talk about A Very Potter Sequel. Oh, man. Okay.

PM

So, it opens with I think my favorite portrayal of a character, at least, a new character. It's the way they did Lucius Malfoy --

TN

Yes.

PM

-- is absolutely fantastic, because I've always been a fan of Lucius being one for the theatrical being so dramatic. That's why I love Emily's Cartoons' depiction of him in My Life as a Background Slytherin. All that kind of stuff is fantastic. So, it opens with Lucius talking to Yaxley about Voldemort being dead. And, right off the bat, the first thing I noticed is that the production quality jumped from A Very Potter Musical to A Very Potter Sequel is really good.

TN

Yeah.

PM

It's a significant jump. And it made me, as a viewer in 2020, excited.

TN

So, A Very Potter Sequel was kind of like a StarKids Summer Camp, because most of them had already graduated at that point and moved away from Michigan.

PM

Okay.

TN

But they all came back to do the sequel together. So, it was like a really, really, like, emotional time for them.

PM

That's so sweet.

TN

Yeah, isn't that? I was like, "That's the best." And, yeah, the quality went up a lot. So, we are thankful.

PM

Yes.

TN

And Lucius is played by Tyler Brunsman, and he just set the standard so high just right off the bat, because he is a professional musical theater performer, and just such a good dancer, and just like prancing around the stage. And that was the joke of Draco always falling over, because he's trying to emulate his father's dancing.

PM
Ooh.

TN
And it's just, like, he can't do it. And, also, Lucius just, like, looks like David Bowie in Labyrinth. So, I love.

PM
It's really good. It's a very solid outfit, wig, costume, all of that. And I still watch this one with the captions on to make sure I heard all of the lines properly.

TN
Right.

PM
But one of my favorite things about the YouTube video is that they've put in some captions, where they describe the stage direction things that are happening. And it's very funny. One of the earliest ones is, "Lucius prances over," which I just think is fantastic to show up in close captioning in brackets.

TN
Yes. He's prancing all around.

PM
He prances all around. I also appreciate that, in one of these lines and throughout the rest of the play, they never call Aurors, Aurors. They always called them the Wizard cops --

TN
Yes.

PM
-- which I always think is very fun.

TN
Yeah, they say, "Damn those wizard cops." So, A Very Potter Sequel said, "All cops are bastards." And it's beautiful, and it's ridiculous to me that Harry Potter becomes a cop. I always hated it.

PM
I never enjoyed it.

TN
Right? He has to be a Hogwarts professor. It's like meant to be. He loved teaching. It -- I always -- I always hated that.

PM

I always didn't like him being a auror, and I never enjoyed in Cursed Child that Hermione, who famously said that she didn't want to work in government, becomes the Minister for Magic.

TN

Nah. No way, man. Hate it.

PM

So, right away, it goes into an upbeat song. And I looked at the clock. It's like a minute and a half into the play. I'm not a musical expert, but that felt very short. Like, we're singing right off the bat.

TN

Yeah. Well, I think I got some, like, slack in the last one, where it's like, there's not enough songs. So, they just, like, jumped right into it. It's, like, here's a song. Here you go.

PM

You want some songs? Here you go.

TN

Yeah, exactly. And Darren wrote all the music for this one.

PM

Wow.

TN

So, these are all Darren Criss songs.

PM

Good for him. He is a talented boy.

TN

He is.

PM

So, the song, though it did come in pretty quick, there was background music going on the whole time from the jump. So, it, at least, fit. And then all the Death Eaters join in. And the first thing that I realized is that the cast feels huge.

TN

Yes.

PM

Did it get larger? Or did they just decide everyone is going to be random Death Eater before we start the play?

TN

A lot of people were playing Death Eaters that aren't like Death Eaters later, that are different parts.

PM

Got it.

TN

Like, Joe was a death theater. Like, everyone was kind of coming in and saying evil plans. It was great. And that's actually one of the things from the sequel that's, like, really memorable. I remember quoting it to all my other, like, Potter friends. Like, we would always be like, "We are making evil plans." So, it just stuck in my head for some freaking reason. And it's great.

PM

It's really good.

TN

It is.

PM

Now, something that made me, at first, upset, but then I remembered that this came out in 2010, is that they, very early on, establish that the crux of the plot revolves around the time turner. And, having just covered Cursed Child for way too many episodes on this podcast, I was furious. But then I realized, "Wait. This came out six years earlier."

TN

Right?

PM

And this is – there's – we've already talked to – spoiler alert, if you've not seen Cursed Child skip ahead. But I already talked about, in the first one, how they allude at the Bellatrix-Voldemort relationship. And, now, there's this time turner thing, and then there's later stuff going on with like, "Oh, not your real dad stuff."

TN

Yeah.

PM

What – did StarKid sue J.K. Rowling, because there's a lot of coincidences?

TN

It is, like, so exact, it's so funny. I remember when Cursed Child, like, first happened, and everyone was just like, "This is StarKid. This is A Very Popular Sequel. This is like the same thing."

PM

It's wild. It's even Lucius who has the time turner. It's everything.

TN

I know.

PM

Theodore Nott walks through, "What's up, guys?"

TN

They say that, like, there's literally no way to move forward from this point. And that's kind of, like, what they --

PM

Mhmm.

TN

Just from looking at everything, they're like, "You know what? We just have to go back." And that's kind of what Cursed Child did as well.

PM

I can't imagine being a StarKid fan when Cursed Child came out, because that just had to have been the funniest thing.

TN

Yes. Yes, it's still hilarious. It's absolutely hilarious. I can't get over it.

PM

So, the song continues. And I have fully 180'd on the song at this point, because it gets great. And I just think all of the musical elements in this one combined to be better. I think that the writing is better as a whole.

TN

Mhmm.

PM

I think the background music is better as a whole. Obviously, the higher quality of the recording and the production itself helps. But I just found myself enjoying all of the songs in this one so much more.

TN

Yeah, I think it was helpful that, like, because they did the first one, they -- and, because it -- they knew that people were watching it now, you know.

PM

Right. That's a huge factor.

TN

Yeah.

PM

I don't know if I stated enough in the A Very Potter Musical ones. It's, now, at this point, they go, "Ah, people are watching this."

TN

Right. Because, the first one, they were just putting online to just show their friends and family. They had no idea --

PM

Right.

TN

-- that it was going to blow up like it did or that people would even care. So, now, they're like, "Oh, people actually care." So, we have to put in, you know, a little more effort into this, because people are gonna watch it.

PM

I heard. And there were a couple people posting about this in the Potterless Facebook group. People said that, originally, when they uploaded it, it was just called Harry Potter the Musical.

TN

Yes.

PM

And then they got into legal trouble from Warner Brothers. And they had to take it down. And then they re-uploaded it. And, apparently, when they re-uploaded it, they took out some of the more distasteful jokes as well.

TN

Yes.

PM

Okay.

TN

That is correct.

PM

Shame that a few more didn't make the cut, but, you know, 2009.

TN

I mean, honestly, it's one of those things where they just had to keep cutting things, because it was too long. It was – like, this is long in itself.

PM

They're both really long. And, if they're edited down, they're still very long.

TN

Exactly. That's what I mean. It was even longer before. So, I'm actually glad that they cut some stuff, because it's just so long to begin with. And just wait until senior year, man. Oh, man, that is so long.

PM

Oh, no. I figured that will would be shorter, because it was at a LeakyCon.

TN

No, it's longer. It's so much longer. I remember sitting there --

PM

Ooh.

TN

-- in the audience and watching it. And we were all just like, "We need to go to the bathroom. They need to take a break there."

PM

Was there no intermission?

TN

They finally had one, because we all were like, "We need to go bad."

PM

Please let us pee. Please let us pee.

TN

I swear. It's like five hours, man. It's long.

PM

Whoa.

TN

It's long.

PM

Okay.

TN

Yeah.

PM

Thank you for telling me that, because I've made the mistake both times while prepping for these episodes. Today, it worked. But I came close to the wire, where I was like, "Oh, I'll wake up in the morning and watch A Very Potter Musical." And then not realize like, oh, I woke up at 9:00 my time. And we're recording at 2:00. I was like, "Oh, I have five hours to watch and take notes on a three-hour musical."

TN

Yeah.

PM

And I keep pausing to take notes. Fuck.

TN

Yeah, leave a whole day for A Very Potter Senior Year and make sure that you do it in multiple episodes, because there's a lot in that as well.

PM

Oh, yes. Oh, yes. And we'll be – we'll be taking a ton. And I'm sure the listeners will be very happy that I do more episodes about A Very Potter Musical.

TN

Yes.

PM

So, no problem there. So, Harry enters asking about Platform Platform 9 3/4. And, again, right off the bat, one of my favorite lines in the whole play is by the guy working at the train station. He goes, "Platform 9 3/4? There ain't no such thing. You're the 700th kid to ask me that today." It's so good.

TN

It is. And Harry is just wearing, like, the dorkiest hand-me-down clothes.

PM

It's really good.

TN

And, like, Darren is just such a little baby there. It's – it's the best. It's great.

PM

So, then the Weasleys all enter very obnoxiously, portraying all of the different Weasleys. I do especially love the Percy rendition with the ridiculous wig and the over-the-top nerdy speak. Big fan. Big fan.

TN

Yes. And Arthur Weasley's voice, Nick Lang, it's just the Mad Hatter.

PM

That's – I literally had that in my note. I said Arthur is just talking like the Mad Hatter.

TN

Yep, 100 percent. It's brilliant.

PM

Mhmm. So, of course, Ron comes in being anti-Ginny as his character is established to be, which, me, as a big Ginny fan, it always makes me sad. But she's not in the rest of the place. So, it's fine. But then there's a line that I'm a little confused about when you think about the age. It's that, after she leaves and it's just Ron and Harry, he goes, "God, I hate her. She's such a..." And then Harry goes, "Butterface." Ah, she's 10. What is happening?

TN

Yeah, it's – I – they're just making jokes. I like – I don't know. It's absurd. It's ridiculous.

PM

Again, it's, like, collegey stuff, but the more that I think about some of the more sexual jokes – when you remember the kids are 11-ish. Not great. But, you know --

TN

Yeah, for sure. It's like one of those things where they're balancing out like, "Oh, yeah, they're kids." And then, "Oh, yeah, this is like college. And this is still us, like, goofing around." But --

PM

Right.

TN

-- you have to remember that.

PM

It's like when people write fanfiction. And then it's just like, "Everyone assume they're 18 over."

TN

100 percent. Yeah. Yep. Yep.

PM

It's an alternate reality where Hogwarts is a college now.

TN

Totally. You have to think that sometimes.

PM

Yeah, I mean I had to do that. I did live shows where I did Wizarding World, The Bachelor and The Bachelorette. And the first thing I said was everyone's 18.

TN

Yes. Yep.

PM

Everyone's consenting at 18. Let's have fun now.

TN

Mhmm.

PM

Then they established a new bit, because, in the first one, there were lots of snacks. But, in the sequel, all snacks are Red Vines now. And I do appreciate that Ron always looks the camera dead in the eye and shows Red Vines. Did they get – did Red Vines sponsor this?

TN

Okay.

PM

Because it felt to a point where like Red Vines might have paid them.

TN

So, this is hilarious. And this is just such a ridiculously iconic thing from this musical. So, StarKid wasn't given any money for this. What happened was a fan was the daughter of an executive at Red Vines that just sent them boxes.

PM

Oh, the daughter of Steven Red Vines.

TN

I don't know who it was. But they sent them boxes and boxes of candy. And the joke was that StarKid just sold out so shamelessly for just a piece of candy that they just, like, played the jokes so hard of it being kind of, like, a commercial. And I think they even did, like, a commercial for Red Vines or something, like, on, on their YouTube channel. And, now, it's one of those things that I cannot look at Red Vines without thinking of StarKid.

PM

That's – I mean I don't blame you.

TN

It's absurd.

PM

Now, here's a part that makes me confused though is I don't think Red Vines tastes good at all.

TN

Oh, no.

PM

I think they're vastly inferior to Twizzlers, but, for some reason, they seem to have more of a cultural presence than Twizzlers. Parks and Rec, I've been bingeing through and they like Red Vines there. The StarKid Red Vine stuff. The Improv Theater I did improv with in Seattle had Red Vines.

TN

Ooh.

PM

I think they taste like those wax lips, you know --

TN

Yeah.

PM

-- but, like, with slightly more flavor. I will say that the advantage of Red Vines is that, since they are more hollow, they are better to use as a straw for stuff.

TN

Mhmm.

PM

But I think that's the only thing they really have going for him besides having a superior name. It is a better name.

TN

They are disgusting.

PM

Okay. It's so -- this is like the VHS Betamax. How did Red Vines make more of a cultural impact? Because they're even in Lazy Sunday, the Andy Samberg SNL thing, Mr. Pibb and Red Vines equals crazy delicious. How is something that is so much worse taste wise, so much better in references in pop culture? It's baffling to me.

TN

I don't know. Maybe it's like the marketing. Maybe just this executive just sent boxes and boxes of candy.

PM

Steven Red Vines has just sent boxes of Red Vines to everyone that makes digital radios in the late 2000s.

TN

To everyone.

PM

He's just like, "We got to send them to Andy Samberg in SNL."

TN

Hey.

PM

We got to send them StarKid.

TN

Who knows?

PM

Today's episode is brought to you by Pull 'n' Peel Twizzlers.

TN

Like – and people really like sort of take aside. It's like, "Oh, do you like Twizzlers or Red Vine?"

PM

Yeah, it can become a heated debate. I think that the way to settle it is that Pull 'n' Peel Twizzlers are vastly superior to anything.

TN

Oh, yeah, I agree.

PM

Yeah.

TN

But, you know, favorite way to say red wines in a German accent.

PM

Oh, god. That was very funny.

TN

It's – it's just great. I just love how they just keep bringing it up over and over.

PM

Mhmm.

TN

And that's such a StarKid thing. It's that they just like ram the joke into the ground, like, to the point where it's not funny anymore. And they do that --

PM

Yeah.

TN

-- just anyway. It's just like hanging out. That's what they do all the time. It's infuriating, but so funny.

PM

I, I agree with infuriating. So funny, the jury is out on. I think sometimes it works, but I'm not a fan of callback for the sake of callback.

TN

Fair.

PM

But I think the Red Vine one is funny. And there's one later on here that I think is funny. I think the callbacks worked better in this sequel than they did in the first.

TN

Yes, I agree.

PM

So, Harry has a headband on and Ron asks about the headband. And he says it was to cover his scar. And he says that the Dursleys told him that he got into a car crash with an alligator, and the alligator ate his parents, and then stabbed him. So, I love that they've turned the line to this completely ridiculous situation.

TN

Right. Well, because it's ridiculous to begin with, like, in the books. Like, you know, the car crashes, the whole, like, sort of thing that the Dursleys tell him. It's like, "Oh, that's what you could think of of getting this, like, specific cut on your forehead?" So, they just like took it and just, you know --

PM

Ran with it.

TN

-- made it ridiculous.

PM

So, when Harry removes the headband, everybody realizes that he's Harry Potter and becomes obsessed. We get introduced to some new characters, Seamus Finnigan, who is not Irish but incredibly Cockney, which I think is still fun and works.

TN

Mhmm.

PM

But then there's a depiction that I was less fond of, which is Dean being the most stereotypical black ever with a sideways hat, and a rolled up pant leg, and the way that they talk. I was not the biggest fan of the Dean portrayed.

TN

I mean, again, they did it on purpose, because they were showing how there's just no black people in Hogwarts. How it's like --

PM

Okay.

TN

How J.K. Rowling, like, depicted, you know, the -- like, had the token black person as Dean Thomas. And they're like, "Okay. Like, this is -- we're gonna make it -- if this is what you're doing, then we're going to just show how ridiculous that is."

PM

Yeah, I think it's similar to the Cho Chang joke that they did in the first --

TN

Yeah, exactly.

PM

-- one, where --

TN

Mhmm.

PM

I can see what they were going for if you look at it that way.

TN

Mhmm.

PM

I do think it would have been benefited if they do made it a little more clear that --

TN

Totally.

PM

-- that's what they were going for, because, on the surface, you could just say, "Oh, that's a bad portrayal of a black character." But, if there were more jokes in the Cho Chang thing where they more brought to light that Cho Chang is just an amalgam of different Asian cultures. She's -- her name is just a combination of two different Asian last names.

TN

Right.

PM

They could have done the same thing with Dean here. So, I think -- and, of course, hindsight 2020, we're more aware to this stuff now. If they made it a bit more clear that that's what they were going for, it could have landed a little better.

TN

Mhmm.

PM

Because I think it's easy for some people to, at first, just think, "Oh, he's the black one. So, he says I and wears a sideways hat."

TN

Right. Totally. That's fair.

PM

So, then they launch into a Harry freakin' Potter song, which I appreciate as someone that called him Harry freakin' Potter a lot.

TN

Really?

PM

Yeah, it's purely by coincidence. A lot of the things that I've said throughout the podcast in my notes, I always call Harry, HP. I always call Voldemort, Volde. I always call Dumbledore, Dombe. I've said Harry freakin' Potter a lot. And, now, I think I'm starting to realize why so many people told me that I was going to love A Very Potter Musical, because just these little things are things that I accidentally did.

TN

Wow.

PM

That they do. And we share some kinship and I appreciate it.

TN

Oh, my god, destiny.

PM

Mhmm. But I really enjoyed the song. And I also really enjoyed that there's choreography now --

TN

Oh, yeah.

PM

-- in a lot of the songs, and it's pretty good.

TN

Mhmm. James Hubbard did the choreography. And they just -- you know, they stepped it up. And --

PM

They really did.

TN

And they're not, like, musical theater people. Most of them are just theater people. So, it's, like, they really dedicated themselves to this, and I appreciate it. The effort is there.

PM

Definitely. And it comes through that it's not just them half assing it.

TN

Right.

PM

It's them really trying and really putting together some solid effort. I appreciate it.

TN

Yeah. And I love the song so much, because it's sort of when Harry discovers that he's famous and like, you know, totally awesome. And he just immediately turns into a douchebag after this song.

PM

Yep. Yep. Yep. Yep. Mhmm.

TN

He's just, like, immediately cool, and it's so perfect.

PM

It's like the coming of douchebags story.

TN
Yes.

PM
The coming of douchebag moment for Harry.

TN
Yeah, it's beautiful.

PM
So, then Rita Skeeter comes in very Rita Skeeter.

TN
Rita Skeeter here.

PM
Love the voice, the hair, the outfit. It's fantastic. And, also, the actress that plays her has some pipes. Was this the same girl that did Ginny in the first one?

TN
Yes. Yes.

PM
Okay.

TN
Mhmm.

PM
Because Ginny was I think the best singer in the first one. And, as Rita, also very good.

TN
Oh, yeah. Jamie Lynn has an incredible voice. And she's also really, really good at like voices and accents. So, this was just, like, perfect. And she just nailed this.

PM
She really did.

TN
Mhmm.

PM
And then I just have a note in my notes that I wrote. "Okay. Darren Criss is really fucking good at singing. Holy shit."

TN

Yeah. Oh, yeah, he is. He's like a pro.

PM

He was solid in the first, but, in the second one, I think he really comes into his own and whether it's the songwriting or he just got better. I don't know. I found his singing to be super impressive in this one.

TN

Oh, yeah. He's just such a good performer. I was lucky enough to see him in Hedwig when he was on Broadway. He just absolutely killed it. It was so good. When he like really focuses on something and just goes for it, he can nail it. And this is just one of those things that you see and you're just like, "You know what? He is owning Harry Potter. He's owning the doucheness and the music." And this was, you know, like, his baby, because he wrote all the songs for this. So, you can just tell.

PM

Yeah. Did you say he was in a play called Hedwig?

TN

Yeah.

PM

Is it about the owl?

TN

No. No, it's the musical about – it's based on Hedwig and the Angry Inch. It's that movie that they made into a musical. And Neil Patrick Harris was in it.

PM

Oh, my. OK.

TN

And then some other people were in it. And then he sort of, like, took over as the lead. And he was just, like, so, so good.

PM

That's amazing.

TN

Yeah, look it up. It's --

PM

I will.

TN

Like, watch the movie. The movie is great.

PM

So, the next scene has Harry and Ron entering the car of the Hogwarts Express with the sleeping Lupin. And Darren Criss, he can sing. He cannot pantomime. His miming, for opening and closing the door, horrendous. I know I have high standards, because I did a lot of improv and that is a very hard thing to do. And it's one you have to practice a lot, but, Darren, oh, boy, rough.

TN

Well, especially compared to Joey, what he does.

PM

Yeah, that's the next thing. It's that Ron has a great bit where it's not just opening and closing a door. It's security codes, and a big circular gear to unlock, and swiping, and pushing it open, and prying it open. It was hilarious. His work, very good. Darren Criss, opened the door, walk through the door that he had just established, then closed it, and it goes through his legs, it was ridiculous.

TN

Well, then Hermione just walked through the door too. So, it's like --

PM

Yeah.

TN

-- a ridiculous thing of like, "Oh, so this is just like Ron being absurd."

PM

It was really fun. I appreciate it.

TN

It's -- it's good. Uh, huh.

PM

It made me feel a lot better inside. Oh, no, bad pantomiming. And then, ah, really good stuff. Great. Great. Great. Great.

TN

Yes.

PM

So, then this is when Harry officially gives Ron the headband as a gift. And I still want to talk to the StarKid team, because my theory is that the actor that played Ron couldn't keep the wig on. So, they gave him a headband. That's my tinfoil hat through.

TN

Oh, I actually have no idea. I don't know why, like, he had the sweatband or what was the joke behind that. But, honestly, I do think that the Very Potter universe or whatever did the Harry and Ron relationships so much better than the movies did.

PM
Yeah.

TN
Because I always loved Harry and Ron's friendship. Like, Harry loves Ron. And Ron, like, loves Harry. And we don't see that in the movies a lot.

PM
Ron is too incompetent in the movies.

TN
Yeah, it's so – I hate it. And, so, like, when we see Harry and Ron just like being, like, buddy, buddy friends, I just love it.

PM
And, of course, there's some moments where they call people bitches and ugly. And that's not great.

TN
Oh, yeah. No.

PM
But I think, at its core, you have them actually acting, like, teenage boys --

TN
Mhmm.

PM
-- with a normal teenage boy friendship. And that is something that did not translate to the movie very well.

TN
Yeah. No. They just don't seem like friends sometimes in the movie.

PM
Umm. Umm. Nope.

TN
It's no weird.

PM
Very strange.

EM

Oh, Past Mike, it is strange that they don't seem to be friends. And I wanted to clear the air here. I know that, sometimes, it seems like we're not friends, but I wanted to let you know that deep down I do value you as a friend. But I do want to tell you that you got to stop for a second, because we have to take a break for WINGARDIUM-AD-READ-OSA!

[Ads 33:21 – 35:55]

PM

Ron has Scabbers. And it's just a little rat stuffed animal. Just great. They also eat Bertie Botts. And I love that the two flavors that they eat are broken computer and defeat. It's really good.

TN

Oh, yeah. It's disgusting.

PM

So, then Ron tries to get some Red Vines out of his bag. And this is the beginning of a recurring bit that I really enjoyed, which is Crookshanks just showing up inside of stuff. They pull out a Crookshanks, which is just a stuffed tiger.

TN

Yes.

PM

And then Hermione comes in to retrieve Crookshanks. Ron calls her a night troll, which I feel like the dunking on Hermione is just so much. I feel so bad for her.

TN

Oh, yeah. So do I. And this is, like, even worse, like, on the dunking on Hermione even on the first one. Again, it's just because of the joke of how shitty Harry and Ron were towards Hermione, like, at the beginning of the first book. Like, they were. Like, especially Ron. Ron was not nice to Hermione. And, until that sort of like troll moment where they all became friends, like, everyone was mean to her. So, they just kind of took that and just really, really, you know, went to the extreme.

PM

Ran with it very far.

TN

Yeah, I think they went too far, personally. I --

PM

I agree. I agree.

TN

Like, I feel bad for Hermione a lot in this. I feel bad for a lot of characters. This musical actually is very – it's so much darker. And the humor is just – like, it's sad. Like, you are sad. I'm sad when I watch this.

PM

Yeah, it's a lot of – it's a lot of jokes made at the expense of other people.

TN

Right.

PM

And, sometimes, it's funny, especially if you're making fun of fictional elements or things about the books. But other times, when you look at the core of it, it makes me feel a little uncomfortable when it's things like calling Hermione ugly or Dumbledore being upset that Umbridge isn't actually a man. When you make these kinds of jokes, it just makes me feel bad inside.

TN

I know. Me too. I don't – I'm not a huge fan of, like, dark and twisted humor. Some people are and they, like, love that type of humor. And, if you do, then this sequel has, like, a lot in it. But, for me, I just sometimes – like you said, I feel, like, uncomfortable. I feel sad and, like, bad characters. And, so, it can – it can just be a little much for me sometimes. And Hermione is one of those things, where it's a little too much.

PM

Yeah, again, it's – I see what you're going for, but I don't know that the execution is there kind of joke.

TN

Right. Mhmm. Totally. Totally.

PM

So, the trolley witch comes by and then is abducted and is taken over by a Death Eater with a deep voice. But then Lupin fights it off. Then there's some Lupin homeless jokes, which, okay, yeah, weh, weh. But then he also calls Hermione a night troll. And it's like, "Why is he getting in on the dunking? Can't we just have nice Lupin?"

TN

If you want nice Lupin, that is not what this --

PM

Not what this play.

TN

Not.

PM

I'm a big Lupin fan. And he is --

TN

Oh, no.

PM

-- portrayed a little differently in this one.

TN

Oh, yeah. Brian Holden portrayed Lupin just so -- okay. So, Brian Holden is one of those actors where he is just not afraid to just go there and make himself look ridiculous, which is the joke of Lupin a lot where he's like, you know, "Oh, it's like you think you look bad or something?" And he's like, "Yeah, he does bad."

PM

Right.

TN

He looks really bad. But, yeah, his portrayal is like Lupin is not a good person.

PM

Yeah.

TN

He's, like, a huge, like, asshole. He's a prick. He's just -- but they did that to kind of like counteract Joe's, like, Snape character, because, like, Snape and Lupin have, like, a lot of back and forth in this. And Joe just, like, loved interacting with Brian. He said it was just so freaking fun for him. And just, as like in the scenes, he, he always loved when he was in a scene with Brian, because you just thought it was so funny. And Brian is just, like, so funny. Like, Lupin is just absurd in this. It's not -- there's no -- it's almost like it's not even Harry Potter at this point.

PM

It's just a different character.

TN

Yeah.

PM

But he's also named Lupin.

TN

Yeah, there's like hardly any of, like, the Lupin that you'd love Lupin. The reasons that you love Lupin is not in this at all.

PM

Mhmm. Mhmm.

TN

He's like, "Oh, that's piss. Was I drinking piss? You must be Harry Potter."

PM

Yeah. Yeah, it also gets into a bit where Lupin's bit is that he curses a lot.

TN

Yeah.

PM

And I've never been one for, ha, ha, he said a bad word. That's funny.

TN

Right.

PM

I think this is one of the – of the StarKid taking the joke and just – you know, instead of running a 5K with it, running 12 marathons consecutively with it.

TN

Always.

PM

And it's like, "Okay. We get it. He curses."

TN

And, if you notice like the kids only put their hands over their ears only when Lupin curses, not when, like, anyone else curses.

PM

Yeah.

TN

Only when Lupin curses.

PM

I did appreciate that, but it did feel like it was done quite a bit.

TN

Oh, yeah, it's – it's a lot.

PM

So, Lupin tries to ease Harry's nerves about Hogwarts. And then he ends it with, "No one at Hogwarts hates you." And then immediately enter Snape, which I think that this play does such a good job of it. They did a little bit of it in the first, but this one especially of people entering on particular lines that either --

TN
Yes.

PM
-- contradict or go 100 percent along with what the previous person just said. And that was one of the things I found the funniest in the books. It's that everyone has such perfect dramatic timing. Everyone enters a room at the perfect line. Voldemort comes in with the, "Can't I, Potter?" right at the right moment.

TN
Right.

PM
So many things. Snape does it all the time. So, I really appreciated that, in this play, they nailed that, because I think that's one of the most ridiculous things in the book. So, I love that they made fun of that.

TN
Oh, yeah. And I can tell you a little bit about how Joe sort of, like, created the character of Snape.

PM
Oh, please, because I got to say -- and this is not just because you are the fiancé of Snape and you're on this podcast right now. But one of my favorite portrayals in the whole thing, but especially in this second one is Snape. Snape kills.

TN
Yeah, this is like really, like, a reason why I wanted to come on for the sequel is because Joe is, like, featured a lot more in this one.

PM
Yes. Yes.

TN
And, like, Snape is one of like the main parts of this musical. And he just, like, is so freakin' funny. So, for Snape, they knew that they wanted him to have, like, a specific voice because of Alan Rickman. So, they were thinking, like, something along the lines of, like, a vampire version of John Lennon. And then Joe had some professors at Michigan that had a really weird way of talking with their hands and were very theatrical. And then he mixed that with, like, Captain Jack Sparrow. So, that's like --

PM

Oh, okay. I can see it.

TN

So, that's kind of where, like, the eyeliner and the wobbly walk came in, especially, like, in this one. It's more prevalent. And then his face is just, like, an encapsulation of, like, Snape always being so miserable and not trying to hide it, like, at all. But, yeah, he's just, like, this creepy, weird vampire man. And, whenever Joe like puts on that wig, he just transforms into this different person. It is completely disturbing, but it's so funny because Joe did some other stuff with the character of Snape. He did, like, the Potion Masters Corner on YouTube if you look that up, where he --

PM

Oh, I have to look into that.

TN

Oh, my gosh. So, he is Snape and the character of Snape. And he is interviewing the different actors in StarKid as actors, but he is just totally -- like, it's -- it's very much like a in Between Two Ferns type thing.

PM

Yeah. Yeah.

TN

So, that's like a whole series that he did. And then he also did a live show called The Joe Moses Showses or Joe Moses One Man Showses. And, when he did that, he did a lot of Snape stuff there. And he would always do, like, live interviews. And he's interviewed me before as Snape, and it is always just so uncomfortable for me, because he's just like such an asshole, such, like -- this like weird character. And I'm just -- like, I have no idea what he's gonna do, like, as Snape. Like, I just have no clue, but it is so funny. And he --

PM

I hope he doesn't just do it around the house.

TN

No, god, I couldn't -- I couldn't take it. I can't. But -- but I have, like, put on the wig before. It is fun. I have dressed up as Snape. It is fun.

PM

That's very good.

TN

Yes. But it's brilliant.

PM

Oh, it's absolutely fantastic. Yeah. One of the notes that I did have is that Snape's eyeliner is much more prominent in this production.

TN

Yes. Yes, again, with the Captain Jack, he just took it to the next level.

PM

Yes. So, Lupin goes on to call him Sour Grapes Snape and Butt Trumpet, which becomes a recurring insult thrown towards Snape throughout the play. I do like that they are playing on the fact that Snaphilis is supposed to be this thing that makes a grown man so upset.

TN

Yeah.

PM

Because I always found that to be ridiculous. So, the fact that they go the next level and call him Sour Grapes Snape, which does not roll off the tongue at all, and then the Butt Trumpet thing. Making fun of that I think is really funny.

TN

Yeah, it's good.

PM

And then they have such a childlike fight with the name calling and the whole, "I'm gonna expel you." "You know, you can expel me." "I've expelled you." It's just I've always thought that the Marauders not liking each other still as adults is so childlike.

TN

Right. Uh, huh.

PM

So, for the play to make fun of that, I think it's great. And, even when everybody – and this is probably a hot take. When everyone's like, "Oh, man. I hope that J.K. – I mean I don't want J.K. to write another fucking book anymore. But, when people are like, "Oh, man, J.K. should write a spinoff series. I want a Marauders prequel." I don't. I don't find it very interesting. They're are a bunch of immature assholes that never grew up. And Lupin is great, but the rest of them suck. And I don't care. If I wanted anything, it'd be the Teddy Lupin spin off, which would be way better. But I don't know. I, I really enjoyed that A Very Potter Sequel just completely trashed the fact that these grown men act like children.

TN

Yeah, they really do sort of take that – like, why should, like you said these grown men, care anymore?

PM

Mhmm.

TN

But I, I do love the Marauders. So, I'm sorry. I don't agree with you.

PM

No, it's okay. I just --

TN

I just love Sirius and Lupin. I'm a wolf star girl. I can't.

PM

See, I can see that. I really like Lupin a lot. I like Sirius and I feel bad for him since his formative years were spent in prison. But I think that there are more interesting stories to tell than --

TN

There's so many stories. I mean the Wizarding World is endless. Like, you know, there's so many things.

PM

Yeah. And, now, we turn to only fanfiction for those stories.

TN

I know. I know. The thing that I like -- I'm waiting for is just, like, a Ravenclaw lead.

PM

Yeah.

TN

Like, there's never been a Ravenclaw lead.

PM

Yeah.

TN

It's so absurd. It's so ridiculous. And this Ravenclaw eraser, I, I can't. I hate it.

PM

It's very silly. I am a Gryffindor. And I recognize my Gryffindor privilege, which is that the books are about us.

TN

Right.

PM

And all they do is talk about us. And all of the merchandise is for us and all of that.

TN

Mhmm.

PM

And, because I am married to a Hufflepuff, I've now even seen more of the light of how poorly they're mistreated. But, like, it's weirdly – the way that I've – I've seen it. I grew up in New Jersey.

TN

Oh, my gosh, I grew up in Pennsylvania.

PM

Whoa. What part?

TN

Pottstown near Philly.

PM

Oh, boy. Okay. That sounds very Pennsylvania. Like, tiny little town no one's heard of. I mean that's also what New Jersey does. Like, I'm from Robbinsville. No one knows where that is.

TN

Correct.

PM

But, at least coming from New Jersey, growing up I would watch movies and TV shows. All of these things would make fun of New Jersey all the time.

TN

Right.

PM

And, when I moved to Texas, people would ask me, "Oh, you're from New Jersey. People always make fun of it. Does that bother you?" And I didn't, because at least people are making fun of us. So, at least, people know who we are. So, for Hufflepuff, at least, people are making fun of them. At least, people know who they are. Ravenclaw is like New Hampshire, where it's there. But people don't even know enough about it to make fun of it. Like, yeah, we've got Luna.

TN

Yeah, that's it.

PM

And there's Cho Chang and Roger Davies. Like, what is – why is there no – no one talks about Ravenclaw.

TN

I know.

PM

It's so unfair.

TN

I know. Thank god for fanfiction.

PM

And, at least, Hufflepuff has Puffs.

TN

Thank god.

PM

Yeah, the writers of Puffs need to make Claws, I guess.

TN

Oh, my gosh. Yes, I love Puffs.

PM

And then we can just get a really, really nerdy Ravenclaw perspective.

TN

Oh, I would love it. Please Puffs. Please.

PM

Oh, hire me as a contractor. I'll help write it. And then cast me as Ludo Bagman.

TN

I'll talk – I'll tell – I'll make it happen.

PM

Okay.

TN

I'll talk to people.

PM

I'll just email Pat Brady. She gets everything done.

TN

Oh, yeah, she would. She totally would.

PM

So, there's a sentimental moment from Lupin and Harry, which then turns into a sentimental song from Harry Potter about finding his home at Hogwarts.

TN

Ooh.

PM

And it gets really soulful. And I really appreciate anytime Darren Criss gets into a more rhythm and bluesy vibe. And I think he killed it.

TN

Oh, my gosh, this song is so freakin' good. And I'm not gonna lie. It, like, makes me freaking tear up when I think of it in terms of, like, the Harry Potter fandom, because it fits just like so well. And, honestly, like, Home and Not Alone are just such good Darren songs.

PM

Yes.

TN

And it just – aah, it's perfect. Like you say, he's so good at that, like, sort of bluesy, like, emotional, like, taking your feelings and just, aah, making you cry.

PM

Mhmm. Mhmm . So, there's a scene transition, but then the song still keeps going, which I didn't know is a thing. But then he gets sorted into Gryffindor. And then another joke I was not the biggest fan of – and I think this is very 2009 - 2010 of them is the scarf of sexual preference.

TN

Oh, yes.

PM

Which then sorts Harry as metrosexual, which is the most 2010 joke that you could possibly make. I remember that being a thing. I remember people calling me that, because I cared about how I dressed. And everyone's like, "Oh, you must be metrosexual." And I was like, "What's that?" And then people would be like, "Oh, I don't know. You like care about how you look. And your – your buttoned down shirt is pink." I was like, "Okay."

TN

Right.

PM

Why did you say that with a negative tone? I'm very – like, there was an – I was bullied. And that was the one that I just never got.

TN

Mhmm. There's been so many good Scarfy creations though. Oh, my gosh, whenever I go to LeakyCon, there's, at least, like, three different people that have been made, like, a scarf of sexual preference. And it's a puppet, and it works. And it's, like, the creations behind it have been incredible.

PM

I feel like it could work. I think what rubbed me the most wrong about it is that it goes around Harry and says metrosexual, which --

TN

Oh, yeah, for sure.

PM

-- I just fully associate with people being mean and just, like, a very toxic masculinity of, "Oh, you care about how you look. You must be gay."

TN

Right.

PM

And that's bad, because it's 2010.

TN

I mean they're kind of making the comment as well how it's like – it's ridiculous that this hat just like chooses a house. So, it's like, "Oh, we can have a scarf --

PM

That's about it. Yeah.

TN

-- that, like, chooses, you know, the sexual preference. And I'm sure J.K. Rowling would hate that." So --

PM

Oh, god. Oh, boy.

TN

Okay.

PM

I mean, if J.K. Rowling would just be, like, straight --

TN

Yeah, I know.

PM

-- straight -- straight --

TN

Oh, my god. Yeah. Yeah.

PM

-- straight.

TN

And then Dumbledore. Okay.

PM

But it would like whisper it.

TN

All right.

PM

A couple of weeks later, after the books are all done and you don't have to worry about it anymore.

TN

Oh, man.

PM

Oh, you're gay.

TN

Oh, man.

PM

Just kidding, you like boys.

TN

Yeah. And Scarfy would come in and be like, "Psst."

PM

Scarfy would come in years after you graduated Hogwarts. You're married with children. And then the Scarf comes in and goes, "Oh, by the way, you're gay, but I had to wait until a press conference afterwards to reveal this."

TN

Oh, man. Oh, man. God. Okay.

PM

So, then Ron is sorted as bi-curious and Hermione is sorted as wait until marriage, which that's a better joke.

TN

Yes.

PM

I appreciated that one more. And, finally, finally, Draco comes into this play.

TN

Yes.

PM

I was waiting on bated breath and Draco finally enters, because I think Lauren Lopez's rendition of Draco is one for the record books. It's so funny.

TN

Oh, my god. Draco was always my favorite character. I'm sorry, Joe. He knows this. He knows. It was always --

PM

It's okay. It's okay. My wife, Kelly, her favorite podcast is Stuff You Should Know. And, you know, it's just the way we live in.

TN

Yeah. Oh, I sorry, baby. I just can't. Like Lauren Lopez as Draco is just so hilarious and brilliant. And it's like beyond -- it makes the entire musical. Like, both of them. Both musicals.

PM

Yes. Yes.

TN

And it's one of those things where, when Lauren puts on this costume, she just transforms into this completely different person. It's amazing. I just love, like, the rolling around, the physicality of it -- of the humor. It's brilliant. Chef's kiss.

PM

It's really solid. And you're right about the transformation process, because I have tried to send emails to get Lauren Lopez on the show. And I've not heard back from her or her agents. We'll sort that out another day. But I will say that, every time I look at videos or pictures or stuff from her, it's still so hard to put the two together, because, in all of her headshots, she looks so nice and sweet. And then, in Draco, it's just such a different person.

TN
Yes.

PM
And it's so unique. And it's just hard to look at that and then say, "That's the same person."

TN
Yeah.

PM
It's just such a strong performance and such a unique portrayal of a character. And it's just so funny that – yeah, I agree with you that it is just a complete transformation.

TN
And she does that with almost every role that I've seen her in, especially like StarKid wise, because she's played so many different characters. And she just turns into this different person. It's, like, you forget. And then she takes – takes out the costume and you're like, "Oh, my gosh."

PM
Yeah, it reminds me of Heath Ledger as the Joker --

TN
Yes.

PM
-- because, even as I watch Dark Knight, I can't – I can't see the dude from a Knight's Tale. And I can't see the dude from 10 Things I Hate About You. I guess the hairs kind of curly, but I just look at him – even in the one scene where he doesn't have the makeup on, it's just – that's a different person --

TN
Mhmm.

PM
-- because they're so engrossed in the character.

TN
Yeah, it's – ah, it's beautiful.

PM
But Draco comes in with some heat straight up going, "I am a racist. I despise gingers and mud bloods," just right off the top coming in at 100 miles an hour. I love it.

TN
Do you want to be my friend?

PM

Harry then rejects this friendship offer and pushes Draco over. And Draco gets up and goes, "You are not permitted to touch," and then does a spin move. Ah, fantastic.

TN

Oh, my gosh, I just – I love – so, I'm a huge Drarry shipper.

PM

Okay. Hmm.

TN

I love Draco and Harry together. I always have. It's just one of my favorite ships of all time. And, so, I love that moment when Harry and Draco, like, meet for the first time, because it's just so absurd. So, this is, again, them, like, meeting for the first time and having that ridiculous, like, antagonistic moment. And, actually – so, this is a weird little call out, but – so, I'm Harry Potter friends with Lin Manuel Miranda.

PM

Mmm.

TN

And – yes. Yes. And he told me that, in Hamilton when Hamilton meets Burr for the first time, he based that --

PM

Oh, my god.

TN

-- off of when Harry and Draco meet for the first time. And that just completely blew my mind and made my entire life. So, I just – it's the best thing.

PM

Okay. Now, I, normally, didn't think I had any sort of chance to meet Lin Manuel Miranda, but you said your Harry Potter friends with him.

TN

Yes.

PM

My job is Harry Potter. How does one become Harry Potter friends with Lin Manuel Miranda? Because I've got a good start going with a very popular podcast.

TN

Honestly, what it was – it was back in 2010. He was in In the Heights when I was in Billy Elliot.

PM

Oh, so, you're also on Broadway.

TN

Yeah, I'm sorry. And, also, I've put out this YouTube video that he found and he loved. And he messaged me and was like, "This is the most brilliant thing I've ever seen." And then I was like, "Oh my god, I'm obsessed with you." And then we just became friends from there.

PM

Gosh. Amazing.

TN

And he is just one of the most incredible people. He is like my, my hero. I love him.

PM

He seems like it. He seems like the nicest person.

TN

He is.

PM

He is my dream of – it's someone that blows up and doesn't change who they are.

TN

Yes.

PM

Because I love following him on social media, because he just acts like a normal person.

TN

Yeah.

PM

My favorite thing is when he was doing all of this press and stuff for being in Mary Poppins Returns. He was just posting selfies at Disney World, because he's a guy at Disney World.

TN

Because he's a nerd. He's just a nerdy guy. And he loves it. And he appreciates, like, all the fans. And it's just the best. I, uh, what a genuine, like, incredible human. I love him.

PM

We all should aspire to be like Lin Manuel Miranda.

TN

We really should. We really should.

PM

Mhmm. So, Crabbe and Goyle go over to rough up Harry Potter for pushing over Draco. Draco says no one undermines Draco Malfoy. And then, immediately, Dumbledore enters and goes, "Oh, Malfoy, you little shit." And it's great. I love the callback from the first play.

TN

Mhmm. Freakin, Dylan as Dumbledore is just --

PM

So fun.

TN

It's so absurd. I love it.

PM

So, then there's a callback that I'm not a big -- as big of a fan of. I don't find the Draco diaper stuff particularly funny. Like, it's literal potty humor. And I --

TN

But wait. But wait.

PM

Yeah, the draw -- the drawing stuff, very good.

TN

No. No. No. No. No.

PM

Oh.

TN

But wait. So, Draco learning to use the potty and saying, like, all respectable wizards wear diapers, do you remember when J.K. Rowling said that thing about how wizard shit themselves?

PM

Yeah. Oh, did StarKid predict this, too?

TN

Yes. This is, like --

PM

Oh, my --

TN

I'm telling you. They did it again. When she's – when that was, like, announced --

PM
Wow.

TN
-- this is immediately what I thought of when it happened. I was like, "Oh, my god, all respectable wizards wear diapers.

PM
Gosh, the power of StarKid is beyond their own --

TN
Right?

PM
Like, they're too strong for their own good.

TN
They're too powerful. They're too powerful. So, that's like something that I just had to bring up, because, when that was announced – because it was so absurd, I was like, "Oh, my god, StarKid. Oh, my god, the freakin – the potty joke, which is so dumb is like actually relevant."

PM
So, then Dumbledore starts to describe Quidditch. And it's revealed that Snape is coaching these Slytherin team. Lupin is coaching the Gryffindor team, because McGonagall still isn't in this play. What is happening?

TN
Yeah.

PM
Why is there no McGonagall? Does she come up in the third one? I'm gonna rage so hard if she's not. She's perfect. Why is she not in these plays?

TN
Oh, well, you know, because she's traveling through time.

PM
McGonagall just vague age.

TN
She's a Time Lord.

PM
Truly. Truly.

TN

I honestly can't remember if she's in the third one, because the third one is so long.

PM

Oh, boy. Well, hopefully, she gets in there. Otherwise, I will be very upset.

TN

Oh, one other thing I wanted to mention, Neville Longbottom, which is played by Richard Campbell is supposed to be Piglet.

PM

Oh, I can see it. My wife, Kelly watches The New Adventures of Winnie the Pooh to help go to sleep.

TN

Ooh.

PM

And I've been getting some Piglet exposure through that.

TN

Aww. That's so sweet and wholesome.

PM

I know. It's great.

TN

That's the best.

PM

I watch, like, Taskmaster or Basketball Highlights to go to sleep. And she watches wholesome children's cartoons.

TN

That is the best thing. I love that.

PM

Snape then announces that the Hogwarts Astronomy Club will be focusing on the cycles of the moon and how they affect different professors, which, god, that was – I laughed so hard. That's so funny.

TN

It's brilliant.

PM

Oh, it's so good. It's so good. And then Lupin starts to become a werewolf. He's like, "Oh, it's not a full moon. It hasn't been a full moon for 30 de...oh." And then he has to run away, which is fantastic. And Dumbledore goes on to reveal that Sirius Black has escaped. Then he says that he's going to be after a cutie little Gryffindor and then there's more dunking on Hermione, because Harry goes, "Oh, he wouldn't be talking about you. He's talking about me, because he said cute," which is just, aah, Hermione, I feel so bad for her.

TN

I know. I know. Especially like with the stuff coming up with the songs and stuff, it's like poor Hermione.

PM

Mhmm. So, then we get the entrance that I didn't enjoy right away. And it's Umbridge showing up.

TN

Mhmm.

PM

And, right off the bat, the jokes just – they felt like they were in poor taste, especially we're recording this on June 15th, 2020. So, this is right at the point where J.K. is like, "Trans people can eat my shorts."

TN

Right.

PM

So, I didn't feel great. I do love the actor. I thought he was great as Voldemort. And his physique is one to be admired and respected.

TN

Yeah.

PM

For sure.

TN

Mhmm.

PM

But I just – ugh, I just – it didn't really land. I mean there are some funny jokes. One of the jokes is funny where it says I heard once a dementor tried to kiss her and it died. That kind of stuff is funny. And, even Umbridge trying to be, like, a cool fun party mom, I think, is okay. But, when they get into some of the body image stuff --

TN

Yeah.

PM

-- her catchphrase is calling people chubby little fucks.

TN

Yeah.

PM

Which didn't really feel great. Then there's a whole thing about it being a man's world. And then she's mean to Cho and calls Cho a skank. There was just a lot of little things piling up in this first introduction to Umbridge that didn't sit right with me.

TN

Right. Because, like, Umbridge is a horrible character. But it's, like, she can be horrible without adding all of these like jokes --

PM

Yeah.

TN

-- that are really uncomfortable.

PM

Right. And I think, if the core of the joke is, "Hahaha, big muscley dude is playing Umbridge, you don't have to say it.

TN

Right.

PM

Because that's funny in itself. If it was just big muscley dude playing Umbridge exactly like she is in the book and the movie, that's still hilarious.

TN

Right.

PM

I even think it'd be even funnier if you have giant muscle guy trying to be dainty little old lady, especially because, in the movie, she's this tiny little old woman with a high pitched voice. And I think it would have been funny. I don't think you have to go the next step to be like, "Hey, guys, this is funny, because I'm a boy, you know."

TN

Yeah. Yeah. No, I totally agree. What -- like, watching it back, it really is the thing that makes me, like, just the most uncomfortable out of the whole thing.

PM

Mhmm. So, we've addressed this enough. Let's move on.

TN

Yes.

PM

Ron and Harry are mean to Hermione again. We're back at it before the Quidditch tryout scene.

TN

Yeah.

PM

And then Lupin and Harry has a bit of a sentimental moment about James. And this starts a recurring bit that I actually do enjoy, which is the Lupin fighting to be recognized as James' best friend, which I think is very funny.

TN

Yeah, like, who was James' best friend? They all think they were his best friend.

PM

Yeah, it's – I love it. It's really solid.

TN

Yeah.

PM

And Harry won't drop that he continues to think that it's Sirius, the traitor. And the initial line of it is great, because Harry goes, "I thought it was Sirius." And he – and Lupin waits a beat and just goes, "Nope."

TN

He just hates it.

PM

Yeah, he totally does. And, at this point, I realized that this portrayal of Lupin, whether it's the actor or not, I feel like it had a big Andrew Scott vibes.

TN

Yes. Yes.

PM

And I think he kind of looks a little bit like him too.

TN

Oh, my gosh, I can see that.

PM

Which is probably why I was so attracted to him.

TN

Love it. Amazing.

PM

So, Snape enters. He says that they want the field to train Malfoy as the new seeker. Malfoy slides in under Goyle's legs, which is fantastic. I love it a lot. And then Lupin goes to get the field reservation permission slip and, of course, Crookshanks is inside the bag, which is great. Really support this bit. And then Snape and Lupin go leave to see Dumbledore to figure out who's at the field. Harry busts out his guitar, of course. And Malfoy, after saying Potter five times, brings over a drawing of Harry getting hit with a waffle much like the little drawing from the movies. And, again, the art department is killing it. This drawing is so good.

TN

The drawing bit is so funny to me, especially when he takes it and he goes, "I've stolen your favorite drawing." It's just so brilliant, because he's just like this little boy, this little kid who's like drawing these things. And it's so – because little kids, when they draw things, it like means so much to them. So, it's like this means so much to Draco. And it's just the best.

PM

It's really good. And what makes Draco like it is that he notices that the shading on the sweater is particularly good. So, he wants it back. And I will say the shading on the sweater was very good.

TN

Oh, yeah.

PM

I don't who did the art for the drawings in the first play and this one, but everything that is drawn is really well done.

TN

I mean Nick Lang draws a lot of the stuff. So, I'm guessing that he did it.

PM

Okay.

TN

Anything that's like big Art Department stuff, he did because, his art, it's so good. Like, this man is so talented.

PM

All the props are awesome.

TN

Mhmm.

PM

So, yes, Draco takes it back. And then, unintentionally, rips it. And then says, "Well, now, look what you've done, Potter. Wait until my father hears about this." So, then there's some more diaper stuff.

TN

Yep.

PM

Draco calls Hermione a mud blood. Ron stands up and goes, "Hey," and then says, "Yeah, Herman draw something," which I think that was funnier, because I was surprised. I was like, "Wait. Ron's gonna stand up for her?" And then he doesn't. Classic misdirect. You'll love to see it. But then it gets into a whole song about how Hermione can't draw. And, again, I just feel bad for Hermione.

TN

Oh, man. You do not know how many times the song was sung in the Billy Elliot dressing room?

PM

Oh, no.

TN

I got all the kids to sing this song. And they would not stop singing it. For some reason, this was the song that they loved to do. And they were just like [Inaudible 1:05:11] --

PM

Of all the songs.

TN

Of all the songs, the most annoying one was the one that these children latched onto, because I didn't show them the whole musical. I was just singing the songs that was in my head. And then they all started singing it. So, I like this song, specifically, just, like, has such a Billy Elliot memories for me. And it is just the most annoying song. And it will never get out of your head.

PM

So, then we have Lupin coming back. It turns into Lupin can't sing. He fights back against singing. Then, for a brief moment, goes, "I'm Remus freaking..." And says, "All right. Stop." And he deflects and brings it back to Hermione can't draw, which I thought that was really,

really funny. Especially the little moment where he's, like, about to start a song, and it's just the Harry freakin' Potter song. I thought that was really great.

TN

Yeah, Lupin is just so – he's so uncomfortable.

PM

Yes.

TN

It's just this --

PM

You can feel it.

TN

This entire musical, like, you just – you just feel so – it's so cringy. Like, Lupin is just so cringy. It's very much that like – not Seinfeld, but Curb like humor --

PM

Yes. Yes. Yes. Yes.

TN

-- where it's like it's so cringy, but it's so funny and you can't look away. That's exactly like what Lupin is to me. And this is just like ugh.

PM

For sure. It's really solid. So, everybody leaves. Hermione tosses Crookshanks aside. And, when it lands, there's a glass shattering sound effect, which I found very funny because I did not see it coming. And then she has a song about not fitting in. So, I appreciated that she was, at least, standing up for herself. I do still feel bad for her. But, any moment where she kind of decides to push back against all the hate that is thrown her way, I think is good and makes me feel a little bit better. And I think this is a great point to end this first episode discussing the first act of A Very Potter Sequel.

TN

Oh, my gosh.

PM

Because I want to end on a positive note.

TN

Because – well, I have a lot to say about this song.

PM

Oh, good. Yes.

TN

So, I don't know --

PM

Please go on.

TN

-- if you want to --

PM

Yes, please do and we will -- we'll -- we'll run up the episode with that.

TN

Okay. Perfect. So, this song is my favorite song in this musical.

PM

Okay.

TN

And it's like Hermione's big song and Joe told me that Darren wrote this song to be a musical theater audition song specifically. And, after hearing this song for the first time, I literally used it for my musical theater auditions --

PM

Oh, cool.

TN

-- without knowing, because it really is the perfect audition song. And I just thought it was just, like, so funny, because that's exactly, like, what he meant it to be. And that's exactly what I used it for. But I love this song so much that I, actually, did a parody of it in 2012 at one of the Joe Moses Showses shows. And then I put it on YouTube, where, instead of being like the coolest girl, it was about being the biggest fan girl.

PM

Hmm.

TN

And, so, I liked that this whole parody, like, "The biggest fan girl and dreams and slumber. The big fangirl on all of Tumblr. The biggest fan you've ever seen online." It was like this whole thing.

PM

That's so good.

TN

And, so, I like really connected with the song. And it just – oh, every time I hear it, it makes me so freakin' happy. It's the best. It's such a good song.

PM

It's really, really solid. So, Tessa, thank you so much for joining on to discuss this first part of the first act.

TN

Yay.

PM

We talked about so much stuff that it's going to be more episodes now, which is great. What a good problem to have.

TN

Yay.

PM

Multiple things talking about each part. So, if people want to find you doing stuff on the internet, where can they do so?

TN

Oh, well, you can find me online on YouTube at youtube.com/TessaNetting. I make Harry Potter videos on there. I also post a lot of Potter stuff on Instagram [@TessaNetting](https://www.instagram.com/TessaNetting). And I have a nerdy podcast with my best friend [Brizzy Voices called Fantastic Geeks](#), where we do a lot of sorting and trailer breakdowns and such. And I also play Hazel on the Disney Channel TV show, Bunk'd. So, you might know me from there as well.

PM

Amazing. Awesome. Well, thank you so much for joining and, listeners, thank you so much for listening. And, as they say in the Wizarding World of Harry Potter before they eat a full bag of Red Vines, Wizard On!

TN

Wizard On!

[1:09:13]

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