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**Fan Fiction and its Sources of Inspiration in
the Canon with Reference to the Harry
Potter Series**

Bachelor's Thesis

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I hereby declare that I carried out this bachelor thesis independently, and only with the cited sources and literature.

In:

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I would like to thank my supervisor, PhDr. Petr Chalupský, Ph.D., for his help and all fan fiction authors for their stories.

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Abstract

The aim of the thesis is to discuss the relations between fan fiction and the canon (the primary text it is based on). Due to the large amount of fan fiction based on the Harry Potter series, it is focused on the Harry Potter fan fiction and canon.

In the introduction, the main concepts of “fan fiction” and “canon” are explained and they are further elaborated upon in the theoretical part. At the beginning of the theoretical part, a brief history of fan fiction and its definitions are described, including comments on the secondary literature. The second half of the theoretical part focuses on the premises of fan fiction, the difference between “canon” and “fanon” and the subdivision of canon into “open” and “closed”. Furthermore, it explains two principles on which writing of fan fiction is based – the “more of” and “more from” principles.

The main part of the thesis analyses actual stories. It divides fan fiction according to the time in which they are set, that is into prequels, sequels and missing scenes. It further explores their different relations with the canon and other texts. It also describes the connection between different genres of fan fiction and the characters, places and phenomena that fan fiction authors borrow from the canon.

In each chapter, practical examples of fan fiction are presented, extracts of which are to be found in the appendices. All findings of the thesis are summarized in the conclusion.

Keywords: fan fiction, Harry Potter, canon, fanon

Abstrakt

Tato bakalářská práce pojednává o vztazích mezi fan fiction a kánonem (prvotním textem, ze kterého vychází). Vzhledem k velkému počtu fan fiction, které vycházejí z kánonu Harryho Pottera, se tato práce zaměřuje právě na tato díla a tento kanonický svět.

Základní pojmy, „fan fiction“ a „kánon“, jsou vysvětleny již v úvodu práce, více se jimi však zabývá část teoretická. Začátek teoretické části je věnován stručné historii fan fiction, jejím definicím a obsahuje komentáře k sekundární literatuře. Druhá polovina této části se zaměřuje na výchozí předpoklady fan fiction, rozdíl mezi „kánonem“ a „fánonem“ a na další dělení kánonu na „otevřený“ a „uzavřený“. Vysvětluje i dva různé principy psaní fan fiction, a to principy „navíc“ a „více od“.

Hlavní část práce se zaměřuje na konkrétní díla. Rozlišuje fan fiction podle doby, do které byla zasazena, a to na „předkračování“ (prequely), pokračování a chybějící scény. Zabývá se rozdílnými souvislostmi mezi nimi, kánonem a ostatními texty. Dále tato část popisuje vztahy mezi různými žánry fan fiction a určitými postavami, místy a jevy, které si autoři fan fiction vypůjčují z kánonu.

V každé kapitole jsou rozebírány vybrané povídky. Ukázky ke každé z nich jsou uvedeny v přílohách. Veškeré poznatky jsou shrnuty v závěru práce.

Klíčová slova: fan fiction, Harry Potter, kánon, fánon

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Introduction

The title of the thesis, *Fan Fiction and Its Sources of Inspiration in the Canon with Reference to the Harry Potter Series*, may be misleading if the terms “fan fiction” and “canon” are not understood correctly. In order to avoid that, very brief definitions of the terms are placed at the beginning of the introduction.

Fan fiction is fiction written by fans of a work (mainly a book, a movie or a series) that is still copyrighted at the time of the fan fiction being written. It takes characters, places and other concrete or abstract phenomena from the original text and uses them in a new, unofficial one.

Canon is a term used to refer to the source text on which fan fiction is based. It is a set of all information, characters and settings that can be found in the source text and that fan fiction works in or out of line with.

Fan fiction is unofficial literature since it is not published professionally and no money is made from it; however, it exists side by side with the officially published literature. The amount of fan fiction written is growing every day and some of the works are of a very good quality. Fan fiction works in a different way, though. The sources of inspiration and the transfer of ideas in fan fiction are based on different principles than today’s professional literature. The main interest of the thesis is to demonstrate how fan fiction and the canon are connected; however, the relationships within fan fiction itself are of importance as well.

The canon chosen for the thesis is the Harry Potter series. The main reasons are as follows: the Harry Potter fandom (a term including fans and their fan work, be it fan fiction, fan art, fan videos, meta-essays and others) is one of the largest fandoms today¹ and the books themselves are written in such a way that

¹ FanFiction.net, the biggest website dedicated to fan fiction of all kind, counts more than 500 000 stories listed under the label of Harry Potter, which is an incomparable number when

they are an ideal material for fan fiction. How they are written and what makes them so popular and inspirational is tightly connected to the way fan fiction works, which will be explored in the thesis, too. Moreover, writing about fan fiction in the Harry Potter universe allows for my first-hand experience as described in the thesis.

The theoretical part describes what fan fiction is more deeply, how it works on the theoretical level, why and how it is different from the official literature and the postmodern pastiche, and how it can be divided in time and place with reference to one canon.

The main part is divided into chapters reflecting different categories of fan fiction stories according to what is taken out of the canon, how it is worked with as a raw material, how it is interpreted and incorporated in the stories. Examples of such categories are prequels, sequels, missing scenes, fixing, certain characters' points of view, places, abstract phenomena not discussed in the canon etc. It is based on how different genres work in fan fiction, how they are perceived, why they are written and what they mean as references back to the canon. Extracts of fan fiction stories are presented as practical examples. However, they cannot be seen as a fully representative sample of all fan fiction written. Fan fiction itself is a very diverse and broad category of literature and it is not possible to give an exhaustive study of all the works which keep being written, changing and developing. This thesis outlines the main principles of fan fiction with practical insights into the issue, and that is only with reference to one specific canon of the Harry Potter series.

seen in the context of fan fiction written in other fandoms. See <http://www.fanfiction.net/book> (accessed May 30, 2011).

1 Theoretical Part

1.1 A Brief History of Fan Fiction and Its Definitions

Almost everyone who has read or written fan fiction would be able to provide a simple definition of what fan fiction is. The problem is, though, that if it is placed in a broader literary context, the once clear definitions become blurred. Derecho (62) outlines two basic approaches to fan fiction, one being too broad and the other too narrow: a) “Fan fiction originated several millennia ago, with myth stories, and continues today”, which would include the mythology and theatre of Ancient Greece and Rome and the intertextuality and the understanding of originality in the Middle Ages. b) “Fan fiction should be understood as a product of fan cultures, which began either in the late 1960s, with *Star Trek* fanzines², or, at the earliest, in the 1920s, with Austen and Holmes societies”, which would exclude authors writing fan fiction and not feeling attached to any fandom.

However, the term fan fiction appeared in the 1960s (Derecho 63) as the first stories based on *Star Trek* and *The Man from U.N.C.L.E.* were written (Coppa 44). At the same time, though, works such as *Rosencrantz and Guildenstern Are Dead* (in 1966) by Tom Stoppard or *Wide Sargasso Sea* (in 1966) by Jean Rhys were published. The main difference between fan fiction and professional literature is not the quality of the text (even though the majority of freely published stories on the Internet today are not worth reading) or an affiliation of a fan fiction author to a fandom (although intertextuality within fan fiction itself and the concept of fanon, which will be explained later, are important). It is the

² Fan magazines publishing fan fiction and other fan-related articles. The authors were not paid for their work; all money made by sale covered the printing expenses. It was published semi-officially and irregularly. Some are still published today; however, the Internet reduced their significance in the fan culture.

fact that the canon on which fan fiction is based is still copyrighted (unlike of *Hamlet*, 1601, or *Jane Eyre*, 1847).

Fan fiction appears to be a kind of interpretative mycelium. The reader interprets the canon and instead of writing non-fiction or not writing anything at all, she (or he)³ creates a work of fiction. It is therefore unpublishable, though it exists nevertheless, it is rooted in the reading public and it keeps the readers' eyes open. Nothing less could one expect of the postmodern and contemporary readership.

Busse and Hellekson (6, 31), Derecho (65), Willis (156-8) all refer back to the work of Roland Barthes and his theory of texts and intertextuality. Coppa (242) quotes his famous essay "The Death of the Author" (1977), "as soon as a fact is narrated ... the voice loses its origin, the author enters into his own death, writing begins", which is definitely true about fan fiction.

Moreover, Abigail Derecho presents a new name for fan fiction in her essay "Archontic Literature: A Definition, a History, and Several Theories of Fan Fiction" (61-78). She rejects other names given to fan fiction, such as "derivative" and "appropriative". She claims that the word "derivative" "indicates a poor imitation or even corruption of an original, pure work" and the other one, "appropriative", "connotes 'taking' and can easily be inflected to mean 'thieving' and 'stealing'" (64). She supports her opinions with Jacques Derrida's work *Archive Fever* (1995/1996) and his ideas of every "archive" being always incomplete and open to new entries.

Fan fiction, and all fan work in general, has its supportive non-profit organisation called Organization for Transformative Works⁴. Their definition of

³ Most of the fan fiction writers tend to be women even though there are exceptions in each fandom and the *Doctor Who* fandom has more male fan fiction writers than female ones (Pugh 7).

⁴ Available at <http://transformativeworks.org>.

the word “transformative” and “transformative work” can be found in their glossary:

Transformative works are creative works about characters or settings created by fans of the original work, rather than by the original creators. Transformative works include but are not limited to fanfiction, real person fiction, fan vids, and graphics. A transformative use is one that, in the words of the U.S. Supreme Court, "adds something new, with a further purpose or different character, altering the [source] with new expression, meaning, or message." A story from Voldemort's perspective is transformative, so is a story about a pop star that illustrates something about current attitudes toward celebrity or sexuality.

(<http://transformativeworks.org/glossary/13#term441>, accessed May 31, 2011)

That definition is short, simple, and accurate. It does not imply any hierarchy with negative connotations or stealing. Fan fiction is a play with the authors' favourite toys which are borrowed and mostly carefully looked after. It does not diminish the qualities of the original work. Fan fiction enlarges it with new ideas, means of expression and interpretations of the canon.

1.2 On Fan Fiction, or the Secondary Literature

The author of the thesis has first-hand experience with reading and writing fan fiction and much information comes from the experience and her own knowledge. Although fan fiction is a genre unknown to majority of the reading public and scholars, a few books on fan fiction have been written nevertheless.

In order not to be outdated, the only relevant sources were published in the 2000s, since fan fiction changed its essence in the 1990s as it moved from printed fanzines and private notebooks hidden in drawers to the Internet. Almost everyone can publish their stories and get comments on their stories almost instantly; the number of fan fiction written has increased and stories are inspired not only by the canon anymore but by other fan fiction as well.

That is why two books have been consulted for the thesis: *The Democratic Genre: Fan Fiction in a Literary Context* by Sheenagh Pugh, published in 2005, and a series of essays *Fan Fiction and Fan Communities in the Age of the Internet* edited by Karen Hellekson and Kristina Busse, published in 2006. The most influential book up to the 2000s, *Textual Poachers* by Henry Jenkins, is not referred to in the thesis for two main reasons: it is not a literary study of fan fiction but an “ethnographic account” (Jenkins 1), focusing on the writers rather than on their stories, and it was published in 1992 and in that time the world of fan fiction looked completely different than today.

Among many articles written on fan fiction, one is relevant to the topic of the thesis and that is “Fan fiction a tzv. Kanonický prostor” (Fan Fiction and the Canonical Space) by Markéta Pytlíková, which deals with the space of the Hogwarts castle as it is represented in the canon and in fan fiction.

For further reading, the dissertation *The Global Playground: Fan fiction in Cyberspace* by Alison Evans is recommended (published in 2006). An exhaustive list of “Bibliography of Critical Works” on fan fiction can be found

in *Fan Fiction and Fan Communities in the Age of the Internet*. Moreover, many fan fiction writers are capable of writing meta-essays as well.⁵

⁵ An example of one of them is Aja whose essays are available online <http://www.notquiteroyal.net/topgallant/rants.html> (accessed June 5, 2011).

1.3 How Fan Fiction Works

1.3.1 The premises of fan fiction

Being given a definition of fan fiction, it is possible to explore further what makes fan fiction possible. Sheenagh Pugh came up with two premises of fan fiction, which must be valid so that it is possible to acknowledge fan fiction as a thinkable genre. They are “believes that (a) fictional characters and universes can transcend both their original context and their creator and (b) the said creator cannot claim to know everything about them” (222).

The life of readers and the death of the author have been already discussed and here it is referred to by the transcending of the creator. The rest of these premises shift it a little further. The transcendence of the original context is very important. The Harry Potter series is usually regarded as books for children and teenagers; yet many adults read them as well. Moreover, they write fan fiction. Many stories are written by twelve or thirteen year old girls but it is not all what the Internet offers. Majority of adults writing fan fiction do not publish their work at such umbrella-servers as fanfiction.net and they prefer smaller sites and blogs, such as LiveJournal.com, for example. There is no age limit for writing fan fiction and even women in their thirties, forties and even fifties who are married and have children write fan fiction happily. Frances Potter⁶ is one of them. The fact that they are adults – and their writing is mostly mature, complex and beautiful – is not the only difference between the books and the fan fiction. They work with characters borrowed from books for teenagers but they write about adult topics (and/or topics the books at the borderline between children’s and teenager’s literature dares not cover), such as romantic relationships in general, sex, religion, homosexuality, social conditions etc. Frances Potter, the author mentioned above, writes mainly about the gay relationship of Harry

⁶ Her home-site is her LiveJournal blog at http://dragon_charmer.livejournal.com.

Potter and Draco Malfoy, she puts them in different settings and explores what happens. The stories easily justify the choice of such a topic within a canon originally written for children and young teenagers. The change of context and the (b) premise allow the fan fiction author to present her ideas, interpret the canon and, more importantly, add something new to the canon in a way the canon itself cannot do.

1.3.2 Canon and Fanon

Fan fiction is based on a canon (or canons when so-called “crossovers” are written and two or more canons are mixed together). A canon is a shared knowledge of both a fan fiction writer and her readers and it works in a similar way as the common knowledge of the Bible, for example, did in the past.

However, as readers of a canon become writers of fan fiction, readers of fan fiction are, very often, writers of fan fiction as well. That creates a new and unusual situation. In addition, if a concrete idea or interpretation is presented in a very well-written way or it is popular and many readers agree on its validity, it becomes a part of the shared knowledge as well, even though it is not literally said in the canon. This is called “fanon”.

Examples of the fanon are: Severus Snape is an Animagus in the form of a bat; Draco Malfoy is (especially in their seventh year at Hogwarts) the “Prince of Slytherin”, a handsome, charming, elegant and clever young man, whereas the descriptions given in the canon (which are very black-and-white, though) do not support this idea; the Astronomy Tower is popular among students as a cosy place for dates. The authors of these ideas are not known and facts like these appear throughout fan fiction and it does not matter whether they are well or poorly written.

Frances Potter parodied the Prince of Slytherin idea and described Harry Potter as the Prince of Gryffindor in her story “Resolution”⁷.

One of the biggest Harry Potter archives, FictionAlley.org, has four main sub-archives according to whether the fan fiction is a novel-length story, romance, humorous or drama and mystery fan fiction. The archive for romance stories is named Astronomy Tower⁸.

An unusual situation also happened when what used to be fanon turned to be canonical information. It used to be a fanonical myth that Severus Snape was in love with Lily Evans as they were still at school and that it explained Snape’s behaviour towards Harry. J.K. Rowling revealed it as a canonical fact at the end of the last book, *Harry Potter and the Deathly Hallows*, chapter The Prince’s Tale (2007 529-553).

For a story to be canonical, it is possible that it incorporates some fanonical information, yet the author must be aware of it, and it is more than feasible that the author challenges the canon within certain limits. Writing out of line with the canon is also possible, of course, and the author writes an AU (alternative universe) story.

What still is canon and what is not is sometimes arguable and it depends on whether the movies and the additional books (*Quidditch Through the Ages*, 2001; *Fantastic Beasts and Where to Find Them*, 2001; *The Tales of Beedle the Bard*, 2007) are regarded as a part of the canon or not. For most of the fan fiction writers and for the purposes of this thesis, only books and additional interviews written and given by J.K. Rowling herself are considered canonical. One of the best sites for canonical reference is The Harry Potter Lexicon⁹, which collects all

⁷ http://www.fictionalley.org/authors/frances_potter/resolution05.html (accessed May 31, 2011)

⁸ <http://www.astronomytower.org> (accessed May 31, 2011)

⁹ <http://www.hp-lexicon.org> (accessed May 31, 2011)

canonical information with references as to where in the books or interviews a particular fact was found.

1.3.3 Open and Closed Canon

Once a fan fiction author begins her writing, she writes and bases her stories on whatever has been written already. Depending on the fact whether the canon (the seven Harry Potter books in this particular case) has been finished or not and what has been written, it can be divided in time.

Sheenagh Pugh divides canon into open and closed (26). An open canon is an unfinished one by its original creator; a closed canon is a finished one. In 2011, the Harry Potter canon may be considered closed. All books have been published and no other is likely to be written. The appearance of the seventh book, *Harry Potter and the Deathly Hallows*, in 2007 is not the only borderline in the universe of the Harry Potter fan fiction, though.

The publication of the fourth book, *Harry Potter and the Goblet of Fire*, in 2000, was the last book to be published until 2003 (*Harry Potter and the Order of the Phoenix*) and during those years, the Harry Potter fan fiction literally flourished. Many archives were created, such as FictionAlley.org¹⁰ and SugarQuill.net¹¹ in 2001. The internet has been a recognised medium at that time¹² and the time gap between the books made the readers write their own stories while patiently waiting for the rest of the books.

¹⁰ More information about FictionAlley.org can be found here

<http://www.fictionalley.org/press.html> (accessed June 3, 2011).

¹¹ The history and purpose of The Sugar Quill website can be found here

<http://www.sugarquill.net/index.php?action=spew> (accessed June 3, 2001).

¹² Non-specified fan fiction server, FanFiction.net, has been created in 1998 (Buechner, 1) and LiveJournal.com, a “blogging platform and online community”, in 1999, which is very popular among fan fiction writers who publish their stories (and art and meta information) on their blogs

Most of the stories written during the still open canon are sequels, mostly stories taking place in the seventh year at Hogwarts (which could never happen since Harry, Ron and Hermione were not attending Hogwarts in *Harry Potter and the Deathly Hallows*), dealing with their student's lives or with the final battle with Lord Voldemort. Other authors, such as Rhysenn, wrote "alternative universe"¹³ stories, in which, for example, Harry Potter was sorted into Slytherin in his first year and his life was completely different from what we know from the books.¹⁴

As the canon is closed already in 2011, prequels and alternative universe stories are popular; sequels, however, are still written but they are continuations of all the books and in some cases, the next generation of wizards and witches is more appealing to the authors than Harry Potter in his thirties and forties. Some stories in particular will be analyzed in the main part of the thesis.

1.3.4 More of vs. More from

Another aspect according to which fan fiction can be described are the "more of" and "more from" principles recognised by Pugh (42-32). Sequels are a typical example of "more of" stories. Readers do not want the books to end, they want to read more about their favourite characters and if it is not possible, they write it themselves (42). Authors of the Harry Potter fan fiction passed the time, as they were waiting for another book, writing fifth, sixth and seventh year sequels. Today, as the canon is already closed, they write sequels as well, though they shift the plot more into the future. Prequels are another possibility how to write "more of".

The "more from" principle is a more interesting one. Pugh explains:

or in LiveJournal "communities". More information about LiveJournal.com is here <http://www.livejournalinc.com/aboutus.php> (accessed June 3, 2011).

¹³ Stories based on the "what if" principle, which are out of line with the canon.

¹⁴ Slytherin Pride http://www.fanfiction.net/s/118490/1/Slytherin_Pride (accessed June 3, 2011).

And then there is canon material which, although its readers or viewers in, strikes them as being far from perfect or fully realised; they see possibilities in it which were never explored as they might have been. They want “more from” their canon, and again, who else will give them that if not themselves? Sometimes, indeed, there is something they cannot accept about the canon as it stands and want to “fix” by finding an explanation for it which, for them, makes it fit the canon better. (43)

Fan fiction written as “more from” stories are the proof why the Harry Potter books are so popular not only among readers but mainly among fan fiction writers and why fan fiction was written not only in the early 2000s but is still written even today. Moreover, new ideas come to the authors’ minds and new possibilities are available, as the canon is closed, to those writers who want to explore the “old-school fan fiction” topics in new ways.

2 The Main Body

2.1 Sequels

One of the main reasons why fan fiction is written is that readers do not want the story to end. Once identified and almost living in the story, most people are sad when they reach the end, others wonder how it might continue – and some of them write down their own ideas. When searching for fan fiction, it is almost impossible not to come across sequels. However, it depends on whether the canon was still open or closed when the story was written.

2.1.1 Sequels in the Open Canon

While waiting for the following books to be published, many readers of “Harry Potter” became active fan fiction writers. It took three years before the fourth and the fifth book were released and it is understandable that the readers, who found something in the canon that they wanted more of, could not wait until Rowling writes – or they could not hope that she would write – what they want to read.

Most of the stories took place at Hogwarts and mostly in Harry’s seventh year. After the fourth book, novel-length, chaptered fan fiction was very popular. One of the most famous stories is the “Draco Trilogy” by Cassandra Claire (see Appendix 1 and 2), now a published author Cassandra Clare. Even though the story has been removed from the internet owing to a few plagiarism issues and the fact that the author moved from being a fan fiction to fiction author, it is still available on the internet since its fans have saved it. The story develops from a seemingly unimportant accident in Potions class, as Harry Potter and Draco Malfoy switch their bodies and cannot reverse it, to a massive story involving not only places outside Hogwarts, the mysteries of magical inheritance and the myths of the past and the Founders of Hogwarts.

It must be considered an AU (“alternative universe”) story today as it was written before the last three books and some of the characters do not exist in the

story (for example Luna Lovegood who appeared in *Harry Potter and the Order of the Phoenix*), some are still alive (Sirius Black died in “The Order of the Phoenix”, Albus Dumbledore in *Harry Potter and the Half-Blood Prince*), the family relationships are different (Sirius Black and Narcissa Malfoy are not cousins in the story and they are romantically involved) and Ginny is still named Virginia and not Ginevra, as the readers thought before Rowling explained it later¹⁵.

Its popularity was so immense that the fanon idea of Draco Malfoy, an elegant, irresistible young man and “Draco in leather” vision became widespread through the fan fiction universe. Even in the first chapter of “Draco Dormiens”, the first part, Draco is different from what readers knew from the books (which, by the way, ended with Draco being fourteen years old and now he is older in the story): “‘I was just thinking that I really am astonishingly handsome,’ said Draco in Harry’s voice. ‘I could kiss myself. I mean, seriously, in this particular situation, I could kiss myself’” (Cassandra Claire).

Moreover, even though it did not feature any Harry/Draco¹⁶ relationship, it helped other authors unleash their imagination and write their own Harry/Draco stories. The tension between the two rivals is canonical since the first book. Draco was given more space in the text now, which showed the readers that he is not such a black-and-white character how he was presented in the canon through a biased point of view of Harry Potter.

A friend of Cassandra Claire’s, Rhyseenn, wrote a Harry/Draco novel-length romance “Irresistible Poison”, in which she explored the relationship of Harry and Draco in their seventh year beginning with a clichéd theme of a love potion

¹⁵ At her website http://www.jkrowling.com/textonly/en/extrastuff_view.cfm?id=7 (accessed June 9 2011).

¹⁶ Name/name signals romantic relationships between characters in fan fiction, or at least indirect implications and thoughts.

but resulting in an unorthodox twist in the plot. Such a “sub-genre” is called “slash” in fan fiction and it features homosexual relationships between the characters, regardless of its explicitness. Slash can be only implied or mentioned, it might not be the main theme in the story; on the other hand, a complex story may include sex scenes or it may consist only of sex scenes. However, such stories are not any pornographic material but a device used for another interpretation or a “metaphor for intimacy” (Busse 212) between the characters; they reveal their hidden weaknesses and they explore the characters’ inner selves by putting them in different environments and relationships and testing their limits. Moreover, there is no stereotypical hierarchy between two men and the hierarchy is based on other principles and facts regarding the characters. Except for that, slash stories are exceptionally appealing to many women and women are the ones who mostly read and write fan fiction.¹⁷

Other slash stories written in approximately the same time were, for example, “Resolution” by Frances Potter (a seventh year story spanning long into the future with additional “futurefics”), “Underwater Light” by Maya (whose Draco is similar to the one in the Draco Trilogy and Harry seems more damaged by his early life with the Dursleys than he does in the canon, which can be seen as a kind of “fixing” the canon), “A Plague of Legends” by Ishuca and last but not least, “Transfigurations” by Resonant.

“Transfigurations” (see Appendix 3) is an example of a post-war story. It skipped the fifth, sixth and seventh year and it takes place five years after the war. It was clear enough after the fourth book that there must be a final war with Voldemort, probably in the last book. Resonant did not write about the war; however, she must have known the whole back-story of “Transfigurations”. In 2011, it is AU story as well, though some facts stayed valid even after the canon was closed (for example, Severus Snape and Albus Dumbledore are dead even

¹⁷ More on slash can be found in Pugh, for example, chapter 10 “Male Sorting”, 90-115.

though the circumstances about their deaths are AU). In order to explain new and clearly non-canonical facts, the story begins with Harry coming back to England after five years after the war spent in America. He does not know what happened during that time and the changes in characters' nature are as new for the readers as for Harry. His view is as limited as in the canon but he is an adult now and it is obvious that his view is not everything the wizarding world offers. In addition, slash helps with the characterisation, his inner change and maturing.

The story is filled with details, which contribute to the reader's persuasion that the author knows what she writes about and that the scenes are not there only for the sake of an action but because a story is being told. As opposed to the canon, though, in which details are sometimes piled without any justifiable reason (mostly in *Harry Potter and the Deathly Hallows* and the depiction of Harry, Ron and Hermione camping).

As opposed to thought-through novel-length fan fiction, one of the tiniest stories is the other side of fan fiction: a drabble of exactly one hundred words¹⁸. The challenge of writing a drabble is to write as much as possible with as few words as possible. The advantage of fan fiction written in a hundred words is that it is based on wide shared knowledge. The words are not alone there, since the writer and the readers know what is behind.

One of the best examples is "Red" by Frances Potter (see Appendix 4). Obviously, it is a sequel. However, it is not clear whose point of view it is until the sixth line – for a reader who does not know Frances Potter. Every reader of "Harry Potter" knows the colours of Gryffindor (red and gold), the colour of Harry's hair and eyes (black and green), the clothes of wizards (robes) and what a Snitch is (one of the balls in the play of Quidditch). Those are known facts, though their juxtaposition makes the reader think of why Draco is thinking of

¹⁸ They are called after the writer Margaret Drabble who used this form and made it famous (Pugh 34).

Gryffindor and Harry, which, without a second thought, seems highly uncanonical. The second half of the drabble opens into a new universe for the reader and they are forced to think about the back-story of what has been happening. Knowing the date of its publication, 12th November 2006, it is easy to claim that the drabble is based on all the books except the last one, since “Harry Potter” fans usually know the publication dates of the books.

All that in mind, the drabble is a small window into the seventh year after the six books, with a flavour of Harry/Draco tension, which can be fully understood and appreciated only by readers of not only “Harry Potter” but of fan fiction as well, especially of stories by Frances Potter.

Last but not least, two more examples of sequels in the open canon are presented. Fan fiction is mostly regarded as fun both among its readers and writers. However, making fun of fun is still possible as in “Magnum Opus” by Frances Potter (see Appendix 5) and “Snape’s Worst Nightmare” by Draco664 (see Appendix 6).

“Magnum Opus” is an illustration of meta fan fiction and not only do the characters know that books are written about them, Harry Potter himself is the true author of the saga in it. It plays with the information Rowling once gave, the last word of the last book being “scar” (Vieira). Rowling changed it in 2007 and even though Frances Potter could not have known how the last book would end in 2006, the adult-themed fan fiction (even though “all is well” at the moment) makes a fine contrast to the perhaps too sweet ending “The scar had not pained Harry for nineteen years. All was well” (Rowling 2007 607).

“Snape’s Worst Nightmare” is an AU sequel as well, written a short while before the publication of *Harry Potter and the Half-Blood Prince*. It is a humoristic story in which the next generation of the Weasleys and Potters are born in the same year and they start attending Hogwarts in the same year, all being sorted into the Gryffindor house. Such a situation is one of the clearest examples of the tentative “what if” principle in fan fiction, in which the author

can come up with completely different ideas and she can write them all, creating absurd scenarios only for a temporal amusement of the writer and her readers.

2.1.2 Sequels in the Closed Canon

Surely, it is possible to write sequels in the closed canon because the story does not end with the last page of the book. *Harry Potter and the Deathly Hallows* almost invites its readers to imagine more – there is a 19-year-long gap between the last chapter and the epilogue which might be filled with canonical post-war stories or they might focus on new characters that were introduced but not properly characterized in the last book (because they were born at the end of the book).

One of those stories is “The Rules of Being a Godson” by Sam Starbuck (see Appendix 7), which follows the childhood and young adulthood of Ted Lupin, the son of Remus Lupin and Nymphadora Tonks and the godson of Harry Potter, who was born in the second half of the last book (Rowling 2007 415). Some scenes fill the gap between the last chapter and the epilogue – as, for example, James Potter, Harry’s oldest son, was born but they mainly focus on Ted and his heritage – growing up as an orphan, though with his grandmother, being a Metamorphmagus¹⁹ like his mother and feeling calm and safe mostly alone and at night, owing to his father being a werewolf.

In the canon, Ted Lupin as a baby might distract the reader and they might feel that Rowling is changing the subject, somehow replacing the protagonists or adding unnecessary details again. In the story, though, Ted becomes a fully developed person that is sufficiently characterised even though by means of short scenes only. He is no parasite any more but an interesting character that many would like to read more about.

¹⁹ A wizard having an uncommon ability of changing his looks.

The author managed to keep a narrow line between Ted Lupin and Harry Potter, too, not only by including Harry in the story, which is understandable, but by implying a parallel between Harry the eleven-year-old orphan and Ted the eleven-year-old orphan. Every reader of “Harry Potter” knows that Hogwarts were the first real home for Harry and he was looking forward to it every summer. Ted, on the other hand, does not like the idea of attending a boarding school. Those little parallels connect the worlds of Harry and Ted for the readers and yet allow for a story with another character of another generation.

Sometimes the most interesting pieces are created in a writing challenge, such as “The Moon King” by Vaysh (see Appendix 8) written on twenty-five Christmas picture prompts. It is a set of twenty-five drabbles, which create a continuous story together; however, each drabble depicts a single scene. It does not contradict the books, yet the information from the epilogue is not commented on at all and one might choose whether they want to include it or not. The story implies Harry/Draco relationship in the end, which, of course, does not have to last and it would be possible for the epilogue to happen – or they might keep it a secret. Draco has a fiancée in the story, Astoria Greengrass, whom he married in the canon. Many readers do not like the epilogue, though, and they do not include it in their sequels, so it depends on the readers’ preferences.

Vaysh managed to write a lyrical drama, in which she plays with allusions at Ludwig II of Bavaria and draws a parallel between him and Draco – Draco’s mantel looks the same as Ludwig’s coronation mantel, Draco owns a hut in the Alps as Ludwig did and last but not least, both of them were accused of “moral insanity”, which is finely incorporated in the story. The Malfoy Manor and other estates were not described in detail in the canon, so that the author played with the canonical information, her own imagination and allusions to Ludwig II, which helped to make a contrast between Draco, Ludwig and the rest of the

wizarding world, adding another flavour to the already diverse fan fiction universe.

The last sequel of the closed canon presented is “The Silent Auror” by Vaysh (see Appendix 9). As “The Moon King”, it was inspired by an artwork. The plot does not take place at Hogwarts but at St Mungo’s, the wizard’s hospital. It was introduced and described in the canon but in the story, Harry is blind as a patient and he perceives all he knows about his surroundings by all senses but sight.

For Vaysh, the story did not end happily with “All was well” as for Rowling (2007 607). The country has been damaged and needs reparations; moreover, even the society of wizards and witches must develop. Harry’s former teacher and friend, Remus Lupin, was a werewolf, who are still considered beasts, and his friend Dobby was a house-elf, who are creatures next to slaves. That is the reason why he decided to lead a campaign for the rights of werewolves and house-elves. Hermione came up with the “Society for the Promotion of Elfish Welfare” in their fourth year (Rowling 2000 198) and even though Harry was not very much thrilled by Hermione’s enthusiasm at that time, it is highly unlikely that they would not continue in their attempts.

The story is short and the atmosphere seems peaceful even though it is filled with facts and emotions. Moreover, it ends happily. Vaysh has a talent for complex stories even though they are short as “The Silent Auror” and they are not unequivocally black or white and they feature subtle canonical information in completely new situations.

Sequels are the broadest category in fan fiction and that is why the largest space was dedicated to them. It is also important to distinguish between sequels written in the open canon, which end being AU stories when the canon is closed, and sequels written in the closed canon, both including and excluding the epilogue. There are many possibilities how the canon may continue and the

inspiration might come from many sources, some of which were explored in above.

2.2 Missing Scenes and Filling the Gaps

If sequels are the largest category in fan fiction, “missing scenes” and “filling the gaps” in the canon are the most interesting one. If readers of the canon think about it instead of being passively pulled by the story, it is possible to make gaps in the canon that fan fiction is able to fill.

It would be redundant to write about Harry’s taking shower and cleaning his teeth before going to sleep if nothing extraordinary happens but sometimes fan fiction writers feel there is more to tell – perhaps a storyline that Rowling decided not to write about at all. The easiest way to add a new story into the existing one is writing about minor characters that do not get so much space in the canon, except for the occasions on which they are confronted with the protagonists. Such a story is “I See Monsters (That’s When I Reach for my Revolver)” by Hackthis (see Appendix 10).

It was written shortly after the publication of *Harry Potter and the Half-Blood Prince* and it takes place during their sixth year as a parallel story to what Harry was experiencing at that time. It is not a sequel because clear allusions to the sixth book (compare Rowling 2006 749-751) are obvious in it, such as “Neville has nothing against Snape's parents, he doesn't even know who they are, but he's not sure what sort they must have been to create a child like Snape” (Hackthis).

Since it is based on the canon the readers know, they get a satisfactory characterisation of Neville already in the first paragraph including the description of his (lost) pet and the Lake of Hogwarts. Neville’s fear of Professor Snape is widely known, too. The difference is the point of view, which is Neville’s, and the added emotions, which such a point of view allows for.

After the readers finished the first part that is fully appreciable only for those who know the canon, the story begins more traditionally in the second part. Additionally, it connects the world of Harry and Neville through Snape and,

again, it draws a simple parallel between them, Snape and their (dead) parents. It helps “Harry Potter” fans to transfer their attention to a minor character without their feeling cheated in a way and to recognise that minor characters have their own world which is worth writing and reading about as well.

The story is slash – a mild one but there is a growing friendship and relationship between Neville – a Gryffindor who is often laughed at – and Theodore Nott – a Slytherin and a son of a Death Eater. No one would expect these two to talk, let alone something else and more. Hackthis shows that not only is Neville different from what is known about him in the canon but also all Slytherins are not the same (evil) as it is slightly illogically presented in the canon.

The space in which the story is set is mostly the greenhouse since Neville feels safe there as he is good at Herbology and it is different from the rooms and corridors in which Harry is found in the books. It is one of the places where students from different houses can meet and have a little privacy for talking (the friendship of a Gryffindor and a Slytherin would cause a scandal in the canon, which is, by the way, the appeal of writing Harry/Draco stories). The slash element, however, makes Neville less confident because he is jarred, and less competent because he is flustered, and the author might play with and explore the characters deeply in tense situations.

Last but not least, it plays with allusions to the canon as in “Neville will never be mistaken for Harry Potter, even inadvertently” (Hackthis). It was stated in the *Harry Potter and the Order of Phoenix* that both Harry and Neville could be “the chosen ones” but Voldemort chose to kill Harry instead of Neville (Rowling 2003 742).

Rewriting the canon from another main character’s point of view is another possibility how to play within the canon itself. Sweetthing10 rewrote the plot of *Harry Potter and the Half-Blood Prince* in “Standing Offer” (see Appendix 11) and used the same narration method as Rowling did – the limited omniscient 3rd

person narration but from Draco Malfoy's point of view, not Harry's. Draco does not know what Harry is doing in his free time which he does not spend with Draco (the author incorporated slash in the story without violating the canon) and all he can do is to guess. It might be a point of view of another student at Hogwarts who only observes Harry without being friends with him. However, Draco's world is not one of an ordinary student's as he is Voldemort's "chosen one" who has to accomplish a few tasks and let Voldemort's Death Eaters in.

The final scenes from "The Half-Blood Prince" are especially paid attention to. In the extract, the direct speech is quoted from the book (compare Rowling 2006 690, 694) but the impressions the book and the story give are poles apart. Draco's words in the canon sound like boasting; in the story, on the other hand, they are accusations why Dumbledore did not help Draco if he knew what was happening. Harry's interpretation of Draco's words in the canon is likely to be wrong – as he did not understand that later in the scene, Dumbledore did not say "please" to beg for his life but to command Snape to kill him (Rowling 2006 703) – and it supports alternative interpretations such as the one in this story.

Rewriting it from Draco's perspective shows how limited and biased Harry's point of view is; it is the author's creative attempt at interpretation of the canon and a dangerous proclamation that Harry's knowledge and his own interpretations of the wizarding world might not be what it seems at first sight.

Another fan fiction, "The Owl Chronicles" by Mouse with a subtitle "A story implied by correspondence" (see Appendix 12), is hard to define since it is not clear whether it is a canonical "missing scene" only or an "alternative universe". The author labels the story as AU, yet it is listed here among the "missing scenes". If one tried hard enough, it would be possible to squeeze it in the canon (even though it is strange that Rowling would not record such an experiment).

It is set in Harry's second year and all the readers get are the letters exchanged between Albus Dumbledore and four teachers, Severus Snape, Gilderoy Lockhart, Minerva McGonagall and Sibyll Trelawney, who take the

second years to a school trip in order to get to know the Muggle world. For readers of “Harry Potter”, it is sufficient only to mention these names and they know what a humorous disaster the trip must have been. The teachers’ perspective shows the differences between the point of view of twelve-year olds, as in the canon, and the adult wizards.

Sequels are a typical category of the “more of” fan fiction. Missing scenes and stories filling the gaps in the canon are the “more from” fan fiction. They play with the narration and points of view. They might only be humorous stories, as “The Owl Chronicles” mentioned above, or they try to interpret the canon in a way, show the canon in a different light and make readers think, as in “I See Monsters (That’s When I Reach for my Revolver)” or “Standing Offer”. Either way, the canon is not perceived as a given, stable text but as such a text that even its author might not know everything about.

2.3 Prequels

Prequels are not as frequent as sequels and missing scenes in fan fiction, yet they have become very popular. There are several moments set in time before the canon that were mentioned in the canon but not described in detail as many fans would like to. One of them is the era of Harry's parents and their friends, of which there are references in the canon but only in snatches as Harry himself collected the random information.

“Map of the Problematique” by SullenSiren (see Appendix 13) tells about the lives of the Marauders and Lily Evans (Potter) as they were still young and wild but they already graduated from Hogwarts. The boys share a flat for two years before James Potter and Lily Evans's wedding, Peter Pettigrew's betrayal, Sirius Black's imprisonment and Remus Lupin's remaining alone.

As a matter of fact, it is not a long continuous story but a mosaic of short chapters and additional pictures of pieces of parchment on which the characters wrote rules of the flat and their own comments. Sometimes the rules and the comments add information and dialogues to scenes of certain chapters – as if the pictures were fan fiction in fan fiction – and they make the story seem more life-like and detailed. At the end of the story they become more independent, which makes the unhappy (canonical) ending more intense and painful, since there is no main text in a chapter, but only a few scribbles on an old piece of parchment. Knowing the canon, it is clear for the readers what is happening and how it ends.

The story begins very merrily and it is obvious that the boys are still teenagers; however, as the social situation around them changes, it makes them grow up finally and the ending is much more adult-themed than the adolescent beginning.

The author also plays with the scattered information from the canon and adds some more which the canon logically implies – such as a mention of Lockhart, their former schoolmate, who appeared in *Harry Potter and the Chamber of*

Secrets as a teacher but who must have attended Hogwarts in approximately the same years as the Marauders.

Another era that many writers of prequels prefer is the summer of 1899, when young Albus Dumbledore met, fell in love, planned the future and finally broke up with Gellert Grindelwald. Their short-termed relationship is canonical (Edward) even though the books do not mention it literally and the slash in the stories does not spring from fan fiction writers' minds.

One of the most powerful "angst" Albus/Gellert stories is "In Fragments Unsettled" by Oudeteron (see Appendix 14). It is set in years after 1945, when Gellert, a dark wizard terrorizing the whole Europe at that time, was defeated by Albus and put in the Nurmengard prison, and it spans to 1998 as Voldemort comes searching for the Elder Wand and kills Grindelwald.

To the wizarding world, Dumbledore only appears either as mad or calm and wise, yet in reality he is neither. Rowling herself described him as highly emotional and with a weakness of longing for power. Similarly, Grindelwald was not only a heartless dark wizard. Oudeteron managed to express their outer look and inner feelings and thoughts, as the points of view change from Albus's to Gellert's and vice versa. Moreover, Oudeteron's language flows like poetry and such a short story (of two thousand words) can contain so many details that it all feels very grave and real, much more than a long saga would be able to fulfil. One has to think about Dumbledore's life, secrets and problems – how they are related to but completely different from what Harry Potter is experiencing and that Harry does not know the most important facts about Dumbledore even though he thinks he does know him. Once again, fan fiction proves that Harry Potter's experience is not all that the wizarding world has to offer and that there is much more that is worth looking into.

Another story by Oudeteron, "Theatre of War" (see Appendix 15), depicts two encounters of Albus and Gellert – one on 16th September 1940 and the second on 31st October 1976 – mirroring each other. It is known from the books

that Grindewald was defeated by Dumbledore in 1945 and Oudeteron incorporated the “Muggle” history into the story, making Hitler only Grindewald’s executive and stretching the scattered canonical information to extends the canon could never do.

Provided they are written well, prequels may play with the canon in such an interesting way as “missing scenes” and they offer as much space as sequels. The pleasure and fun of writing prequels is the challenge of writing a detailed story out of a few hints mentioned in the canon as if at random. Moreover, some fan fiction writers do not want to make the canon longer but they enjoy writing pieces of the mosaic that led to the events in the 1990s, starting with a few details given and ending with the canon – what is in between is only up to them.

Conclusion

The amount of fan fiction based on the Harry Potter series is large and uncountable and that is the reason why all fan fiction mentioned in this thesis is only an example of what might be found on the Internet. On the other hand, such a number of stories allows for a diverse, yet still consistent choice of examples.

The “Harry Potter” fan fiction is fortunate that it started to be widely written in and after 2000, especially in the three-year gap between the publication of *Harry Potter and the Goblet of Fire* in 2000 and *Harry Potter and the Order of the Phoenix* in 2003. The “Harry Potter” fans wanted to spend the time with their favourite characters and to write their own continuations and as a result, the “Harry Potter” fan fiction started to flourish in those years. As fan fiction moved online in the 1990s, more fan fiction has been written because more fans than before have learned about its the existence and they need not only write for themselves now but it is possible to publish almost anything on the Internet.

The fan fiction online does not only refer to the canon but to the fanon as well. It is not based only on the canon-fan fiction hierarchy but on a net of ideas, characteristics and other phenomena that the readers and writers sometimes accept as a part of the canon/fanon. Moreover, external influences on fan fiction are of importance, too, such as lyrics, history, prompts and challenges from the fellow-readers and writers.

There are several possible approaches to fan fiction, according to which it can be divided. The one chosen in this thesis is the time in which the fan fiction is set, which results in three main categories: prequels, missing scenes and sequels.

Sequels are the largest category, which was caused by the three-year gap between 2000 and 2003 and the fact that the canon was still in progress until 2007. The novel-length sagas written in the open canon and based on the “more of” principle enabled the writers to guess what was to come and entertain the fans while waiting for another book. The sequels in the closed canon are mostly

shorter and they fill the nineteen-year-long gap between the last chapter and the epilogue, focusing either on the protagonists as before or on minor characters and the next generation.

Missing scenes and filling the gaps category is not as large as sequels but it is as much or even more interesting. The canon might be rewritten from another main character's point of view, which reinterprets it completely since Harry's canonical view is limited and biased. Alternatively, the writers focus on minor characters and their experiences, which are somehow connected to the view of Harry Potter and which imply the reinterpretation or even criticism of the canonical black-and-white view.

Prequels bring people's interest in history into fan fiction. Many fans like to explore what happened in the past that led to the events of the present (canon). They can write about anything in the past; however, two of the most popular topics are the era of the Marauders, Harry's parents and their friends (1971-1981), and the canonical relationship of Albus Dumbledore and Gellert Grindelwald, the first dark wizard of the 20th century before Lord Voldemort (1899-1998). Prequels are based on both "more of" and "more from" principle, since it is a reversed sequel, more or less, but the ultimate ending is given and the authors have to find out how to write as much as "more from" the canon in order to fully describe the past. It is also a play with details as the fan fiction authors have to hunt for any information mentioned in different and often unrelated parts in the canon. The fewer the hints and the more random information given, the more fascinating the process of writing prequels is.

Some fan fiction is meant seriously; however, some are written only as a joke, a humoristic digression from the canon. In that respect, fan fiction can be further subdivided into stories which contribute to the reinterpretation of the canon in the narrower sense (all fan fiction does in the broader sense) and make it more pluralistic, and stories which play with the canon without being serious,

which only amuse their readers, caricature the characters and events and deliberately exaggerate the canon.

The Harry Potter series is not flawless and it has imperfections; there are unclear passages and things unsaid. One of the main clashes is the complex adult-themed universe and the fact that the books are written for children and young adults from a child's and teenager's point of view. Many topics are censored and not mentioned at all; on the other hand, there are many unnecessary details and characters that are mentioned, named but not further characterized. All of that, however, contributes to the readers' need to write fan fiction and expand the canon which does not have a clear borderline. Writing fans of "Harry Potter" need to be fascinated and frustrated by the canon at the same time, which is the paradoxical ground for all fan fiction.

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Appendices

1. Draco Dormiens by Cassandra Claire (extract)

"Wha -- what's funny?" he said, wincing to hear Draco's voice coming out of his mouth.

"I was just thinking that I really am astonishingly handsome," said Draco in Harry's voice. "I could kiss myself. I mean, seriously, in this particular situation, I could kiss myself."

"You're a stupid prat, Malfoy," said Harry dispassionately, and walked away. He went over to Ron and Hermione, who were busy laughing, although they stopped abruptly when Harry walked up, and gaped at him.

"It's me," said Harry.

...

Harry glanced around and saw that this was true. Everyone had resumed their seats, back in their own bodies. Snape had gone back to lecturing about the uses of Polyjuice Potion, apparently confident that all his students were back to their rightful selves. Harry looked wildly down at himself, then back at Draco.

2. Draco Sinister by Cassandra Claire (extract)

"Then you'll know that I'm not lying when I tell that you look completely ridiculous," said Ron. "Leather trousers, Malfoy?"

"They are flame-retardant dragon hide and extremely useful," said Draco, aiming his nose into the air. "Besides, I look really hot in them."

"Nausea..." said Ron, weakly. "Building...inside me. Must...be sick in bucket."

"You have no taste," said Draco, to him, coldly, and turned to Harry. "You think I look hot, don't you?"

"There is absolutely no way for me to answer that that would not get at least one person angry at me," said Harry diplomatically.

3. Transfigurations by Resonant (extract)

Harry laid his head against the seat back and sighed. Transatlantic travel was faster by portkey than by airplane, but it couldn't be said to be more pleasant, and maintaining the Inconspicuous spell that kept the Muggle world from noticing him required more attention than he had expected. His lower back ached a little, and the first hints of a headache lurked behind his eyebrows. Getting a compartment to himself on the Hogwarts Express was the first thing that had gone right all day.

Beside him, Hedwig climbed through the open door of her cage, hopped onto the back of the seat, and began to smooth her travel-ruffled feathers. Harry smiled at her and she gave a lock of his hair an affectionate tug. "Not the easiest trip in the world," he said, "but we're coming home at last."

It had been restful, Florida. The death of Voldemort, the occupation of Hogwarts, the Dementor Rebellion, the Ministry purges, the Death Eater trials -- in Florida they'd been stories played out in the pages of the International Herald-Divinator. His own name had been less familiar to some of his new colleagues than Viktor Krum's. He remembered gathering up the courage to scrabble back his hair and show the scar to Sunday Coneskey, who had given him a blank look and then touched it carelessly with one long finger...

*

"Maybe we're unusually terrible teachers," Hermione sighed.

Malfoy dropped down beside Ron. He'd broken off most of the Styrofoam cup, but Harry was maliciously glad to see the base still stuck to his forehead.

Malfoy glared at Hermione, who'd been unable to stifle a giggle. "Not one word, do you hear me?"

"What are we doing wrong?" Hermione moaned.

"It's the mix," Harry said. "You just can't mix up the ages like that without trouble."

To his surprise, Malfoy agreed with him. "Not to mention the different ability levels. I have students in my class who've lived with Muggles all their life, and students who've never heard of an automobile. How can I teach them all at once?"

Hermione nodded. "Osborne has had a private tutor since he was six, and he wants to teach all his advanced charms to Jones, only Jones has never spoken Latin before and keeps slipping into French ... and 'noster' and 'notre' mean the same thing, but in a spell the effect is entirely different ..."

"We're going to have to split up the houses," Malfoy said. "What we need to do is test them out and then place them in classes based on ability instead of on house." He rubbed irritably at the bits of Styrofoam on his forehead.

"Want a hand with that?" Ron said.

"I already tried the unsticking spell," Malfoy said. Ron, ignoring him, picked up something with his left hand, gripped Malfoy's face with his right, and began murmuring the spell for taking things apart. "I mean, by all means, you wouldn't be the first bloke who couldn't keep his hands off me, but ..."

The pieces of the cup fell to the table in front of him. He stared at Ron.

"Sometimes you need an unsticking spell and a butter knife," Ron said.

*

"Far too good for me, actually, if goodness were the issue," Malfoy said, still smiling. As Harry went on frowning, Malfoy's smile faded a bit. "You mean to tell me that all this time you've been thinking I was straight? My goodness, Potter," he went on in an exaggerated version of his usual drawl, "which stereotype did I miss?"

4. Red by Frances Potter (drabble)

Autumn reminded him of Gryffindor.

Red robes against blue sky.

Gold of the Snitch just out of reach.

Black hair streaming in the breeze.

Green eyes fixed resolutely on their target.

Draco rested wearily on the wooden bench, his feet crushing the redness from fallen leaves like blood seeping into the damp soil.

He was tired.

Of running.

Of the blood staining his fingers.

Of nightmares that left him shaking with never-ending fatigue.

Leaves crackled. He looked up at black hair and green eyes fixed on their target.

"What do you want?"

Draco closed his eyes. "I want to sleep."

5. Magnum Opus by Frances Potter (extract)

"There..." Harry dropped his pen and heaved a sigh of relief. "Finally, book seven is finished! Now we can spend Christmas without that datted publisher on my back all the time."

Draco looped his arms around Harry's shoulders and nuzzled at his ear. "As your publisher I can assure you that it's not your back I'm interested in. Your magnum opus is destined to be a best seller and make me an obscene amount of Galleons."

...

Draco glanced over the writing and, clearing his throat, read the last paragraph aloud. "And despite everything he'd been told, it wasn't a curse mark after all. It was nothing but a plain, ordinary lightning-bolt shaped scar." Draco raised an eyebrow. "And that's the last word in the 'Harry versus Voldemort' saga? Scar?"

6. Snape's Worst Nightmare by Draco664 (extract)

"I can't believe it," sniffed the emotional Weasley matriarch. "All my daughters are pregnant at the same time."

*

A stamping of feet and a cheering from the Gryffindor table signaled the arrival of the last Weasley. A chant of WE GOT THEM ALL, WE GOT THEM ALL went through the ranks.

Harry sat quietly clapping on the staff table, the only teacher looking at the proceedings. All the others had covered their faces with their hands.

Professor Snape was shaking. "Nine. Nine of them. And three Potters. I can't handle this."

Harry noticed that seemed to be a common complaint of all the teachers. Dumbledore alone smiled to himself.

"What are you so happy about, Albus?" asked the Charms professor.

"Why, Filius! Nothing, except that I'm not teaching any classes this year."

7. The Rules of Being a Godson by Sam Starbuck (extract)

Truth be told, he wasn't certain he wanted to go to Hogwarts.

Well, he wanted to go off to school of course, he was more than eager to start classes and really dig into all the stuff Harry told him about theoretically. He liked his new textbooks and his wand. It was just...

There would be all those people there, on the train and in the Great Hall and in his dormitory at night. Teddy didn't think he understood people very well. He thoroughly liked books and understood them, but people...were loud. And they talked fast, and the ones who knew about his parents always looked at him funny. Which was why he'd started with the blue hair in the first place, because if they were going to stare they might as well stare at his hair instead of the parents he didn't have and hadn't ever known.

Harry and Aunt Ginny and the Weasleys were different, of course, but they'd known him all his life. He was practically raised in this backyard, even if he didn't live here. And now he wasn't going to see it again for months. He'd be trapped in Hogwarts, confined to the grounds and classrooms...just the thought of it made him panic a little. He didn't like being hemmed in.

Sometimes, around the full moon, he'd sneak out and go walking all night. He wasn't sure if it was just that he knew his dad had been a werewolf or if he had a few stray genes that kept him up on full moons, but he couldn't very well go for a midnight walk at Hogwarts, could he? He wasn't supposed to make faces at Hogwarts, either.

The list of things he couldn't do once he got to Hogwarts was, at the moment, much longer than the list of things he could do.

8. The Moon King by Vaysh (extracts – 3 drabbles)

Snowflakes outline the London skyline with a glittering ribbon of fairy-dust. It reaches across the night sky all the way to Wiltshire where snow has been falling steadily for days. A heavy, black-lacquered sleigh is gliding quietly across the endless white. Invisible to Muggles and those innocent of death, four

harnessed Thestrals are running in front of it, their breath like smoke in the frosty air. From the sleigh, huddled in thick layers of cloth, a figure directs their path. The silvery shine of his hair gives him away: the Master of the Manor is riding the countryside again.

*

The Master of the Manor is receiving his guests in the restored drawing room. Potter extinguished the fire before the other Aurors arrived. Heaps of half-burned books are left, some so dark their destruction alerted the Ministry. And damn them, for still having a Trace on him.

Draco pulls the heavy robes around himself, he strokes the green silk; the soft ermine caresses his jaw. Weavers and tailors worked for weeks to produce the only garment befitting a room as splendid as the one they're standing in. Potter's eyes are filled with wondrous awe. Draco allows himself a small smile.

*

Glittering garnets fly everywhere. The wine glass shatters on the plans Draco's been working on non-stop for the last twenty-four hours.

He stares at the parchment Robards handed him; it's an official petition in lunacy, sealed by the Minister. They want to remove him as head of the Malfoy family and estate, lock him away in St Mungo's. Draco turns to Potter. How, how could he have betrayed him so?

"The stable-boys talked, Malfoy," Robards says. "You're sick."

"Moral insanity," Greengrass sneers.

Ragnok nods. "Wasting good money."

Potter doesn't say a word. Raising his wand, Draco grabs him and Disapparates.

9. The Silent Auror by Vaysh (extract)

It was a funny thing how Harry's magic tried to make up for the loss of his eye-sight. He could feel it, like warmth or the wind, curling outward from him, into the room. He was at St Mungo's, on the fourth floor. He hadn't needed magic to figure that out.

Hermione had told him he was in a private room on the other end of the corridor that led towards the Janus Thickey Ward. A huge tree stood in front of his window; Harry could feel on his skin the shift of temperature when its shadow moved across the room.

The first time the Aurors had come he had been too weak to sit, with heavy bandages over his eyes. There were no scars, Ron had assured him. And in those early days, Harry had only believed Ron. Everybody else was trying to make him feel better, and Harry knew they would lie to do so. When he touched his eyelids, they still felt hot to him, different than before. But he couldn't really tell anymore. Had there always been that tiny wrinkle in the corner of his eyes? Had it always hurt when he pressed his fingertips against his lids? He didn't remember.

...

Harry hadn't seen it coming, not such hatred against him personally, not even after the editorial in the Prophet. Harold Montgomery had run the paper for years. He was a good man who had supported Harry through his disputed campaign for house-elf rights, through his messy divorce, and his even messier coming-out. Wizarding rights for werewolves, though, seemed to be off limits, nothing that the Prophet (or even The Quibbler) would support. Beasts, Montgomery had called them, mongrels, bastards, creatures of the dark, even before Voldemort's ascent, and still now, after Voldemort was gone. Harry had expected Howlers, a smear campaign against Potter & Associates. They had even put up stronger wards in the offices to be prepared. But he had never expected an attack on his life. These days, he had thought, were finally over.

...

There had been one interview, with only Unspeakables present and the Auror. He and Harry had sat closer to each other than - out of an odd sense of camaraderie in the face of the stiff rustle of Unspeakable

robes. Harry had sensed it then, when the man was only sitting a few yards away, something that Harry's magic brought back to him as it ventured out to collect clues that Harry's eyes could not longer perceive. The man was afraid. Not of Harry, but of what would become of Harry. This Auror wanted ... no, he needed Harry to return to his offices, stand before the Wizengamot and continue to plead his lost causes. It was in the glances he cast at Harry, lingering long and with an intensity that Harry's magic sensed from nobody else. It was not unfamiliar, this undivided scrutiny. Sometimes it felt as if all through Hogwarts, Harry had been watched like this.

10. I See Monsters (That's When I Reach for My Revolver) by Hackthis (extracts)

It rained last night, and the banks of the lake are damp and muddy. Neville can feel the wetness seeping through his robes and the knees of his trousers as he crawls along the edges of the lake looking for Trevor. The mud squishes between his fingers as he inches along on hands and knees, calling Trevor's name, and brushing the reeds out of the way. They blow back at him in the breeze, brushing against his face and tickling under his chin. The pollen makes him sneeze, and he can see the yellow bits sticking to his clothing.

Neville doesn't think Trevor would be out here, but he's not in the dormitories and he's not in the common room, and Neville's worried. He's not harming anything by the lake; he's just looking. There's a slight chill in the air, and the jumper his nan gave him last Christmas makes him itch.

"Lost something *again*, Longbottom?"

The hairs on Neville's arms stand at attention, and he can feel the colour flushing his cheeks even before he looks up. Long black robes billow at the edges of his vision and his stomach clenches as though he's going to be sick.

*

Neville Longbottom has an ingrained fear of Severus Snape, although perhaps "ingrained" isn't precisely the right word. "Ingrained" implies that Neville's fear has developed over a long period of time, and in a matter of speaking it has, but until his first year at Hogwarts, Neville didn't even know of Snape's existence. Snape was never the boggart under Neville's bed or the rats scampering around in the walls of his grandmother's house as Neville grew up. Neville's flushed cheeks and clammy palms just appeared one day, on his *first* day at Hogwarts, and they've been simmering under the surface, just waiting for Snape, ever since.

*

Theodore doesn't try to justify Snape's behaviour though, he just tells Neville that not everyone in Slytherin is the same, because if that were the case then Neville would be just as idiotic as Harry.

*

On one end of the Slytherin spectrum is Malfoy, who is juvenile and petty, and on the other end is Snape, who is malicious and vindictive. Neville never thought there was anything in the middle, but then he met Theodore and he had to reconsider his assumptions all over again.

*

Neville can't fly to save his life, but he loves Quidditch all the same. He loves the Bludgers and the Beaters and the Keepers. He adores the Quaffle and the Snitch and the little blurs the Seekers make when they're way up high. He likes being in the stands with his mates and celebrating a way of life that he knows is dying a little more every day.

*

Neville has spent his entire life being that boy who was too afraid, or too timid, or too much of the wrong sort, but when he sees the hate in Snape's eyes he knows he's found exactly what he's willing to fight for.

11. Standing Offer by Sweetthing10

“Well, well, very good indeed,” Dumbledore replied, “You found a way to let them in, did you?”

“Yeah,” Draco panted, breathing even heavier than before now that he was actually face to face with the Headmaster, “Right under your nose and you never realized!”

Draco heard the accusation in his words. How could the almighty Dumbledore not have known what he had been doing? Wasn't he supposed to know everything that went on at Hogwarts? He was always swooping in to save Harry, why couldn't he have saved Draco this time? Was he not worth the effort?

...

As he explained about the cabinet, he kept one ear on the battle. He went back and forth between hoping Harry was far away from the battle to desperately wanting Harry to burst in and save the day. He gave a half crazed laugh in his mind thinking of the time he teased Harry about his hero complex. Where was the hero now?

Draco focused solely on the old man when he again heard him accuse Draco of being responsible for Bell and Weasley.

“Yeah, well, you still didn't realize who was behind that stuff, did you? Draco spat.

Dumbledore tilted his head, “As a matter of fact, I did. I was sure it was you.”

Draco felt his throat constrict under the pressure of holding back his emotions. “Why didn't you stop me, then?” There was no mistaking the accusation in his words this time. He knew and did nothing to help Draco. The thought was devastating.

12. The Owl Chronicles by Mouse (extract)

Dear Severus,

Er, I'm standing next to a big store that sells shoes. Have you any idea where in the plaza that might be? North end, south end? Funny, isn't it, how all of these shops look alike.

They sell some very cute shoes, however. Er, if you happen to see any of my students, just hang onto them for me, would you? Ta very much.

Sincerely,

Gilderoy Lockhart

*

What a dreadful movie that was. Who chose that, Albus? The children enjoyed it far too much, unfortunately, and are now imitating the two main characters's speech patterns incessantly. I shall have to ban it presently, just for the sake of my sanity.

*

Lost students: 12 (all found)

Lost instructors: 1 (also found, the bastard)

Gigantic stuffed animals won: 1

Useless items of cheap trash won: 22

Violent incidents involving "Carnie" workers: 2

Bags of candy floss eaten: 57 (note that there are only 40 students with us)

Number of corn dogs eaten: 37

Number of funnel cakes eaten: 49

Number of boxes of cheesy taters eaten: 41

Number of times that healthy food was eaten: 0

Number of puking students: 24 (several of those were repeats, however)

Number of puking instructors: 2 (we're both feeling much better now, thank you)

Number of soiled trousers: 4

Combined number of attraction rides taken by Hogwarts students and staff during the course of the day: 972

Number of students able to remain awake during the bus ride back to the hotel: 2 (so it's not all bad)

13. The Map of the Problematique by SullenSiren (extract)

The flat was dingy and gray, scantily furnished and smelling vaguely of old cheese. There was nothing to recommend it, really. Peter lingered in the hallway, eyes narrowed as he stared toward the kitchen. "I don't want to go in there, do I?" he asked, wise from years of exposure to Sirius and James.

"Oh MERLIN. STOP WRIGGLING OR I'LL HEX YOU! This is a rule. There is a KNICKERS RULE!" James' dulcet tones carried the entire length of the flat, the sound of crinkling parchment following a moment later. Peter winced and Remus laughed, leaving that as answer enough as he ducked into the small room that was to be his. He couldn't afford the rent he should pay for a room here, he knew. And Sirius hadn't had to get a flat for the four of them. Soon enough James would be with Lily, and Peter would find a place of his own. But for now... it was nice, having them nearby and not going back to stay in the quiet gray of his home with his mother.

Remus tucked away his socks to the sound of Sirius laughing, and smiled to himself.

It sounded like *home*.

*

"Why did you PUT the skirt on?" James demanded. Sirius leaned in to bat his eyes, and James snagged Remus' paper, swatting him firmly on the head. "Bad dog!"

Remus hid a smile behind his tea cup and then set it down. "That is the question at hand."

"Because Moony didn't wash my trousers, and Potter said I wouldn't be a pretty woman," Sirius answered, managing to sound petulant and smug at the same time. "Or maybe because now I can say I've been under Evans' skirt when he hasn't."

"I hate you." James' tone was the sort of glum that only came from too much cross-dressing and not enough food. Or so Remus assumed, since he'd never seen the cross-dressing bit before. "You ate the last of that stew, too, didn't you? You're a rotten friend."

Sirius rolled his eyes and got up, attempting to sashay on his way to the fridge, but managing to look more like a dog on stilts. He returned a moment later with a slice of leftover pie.

James' face lit up, and he grabbed greedily at it. "I take it all back. I love you like a brother, even if you are an ugly bloody woman and a bigger ponce than Lockhart."

"No one is a bigger ponce than Lockhart," Peter observed, and Sirius looked at him, throwing his head back and laughing, flashing a wide, amused grin – surprised, as he always was, when Peter got a good one in.

Remus' breath caught and he was very glad, for that moment, that the smile wasn't directed at him, and that he didn't have to respond in any way. Sirius' beauty had nothing to do with the ridiculous skirt, and lately when Sirius smiled like that, he couldn't breathe.

*

"I know how you are," Peter agreed, that strange note still in his voice, and he looked down for a moment before sighing, pushing himself to his feet and flashing a quick smile. "I'll go help James." He disappeared into a room where the thudding was gradually easing.

Sirius would come back. James would calm down. They'd make up and be right as rain soon enough. It was how they worked. It was what they'd always done. Everything came that easily to them - even anger.

Remus just wondered if it would stay that way.

*

17. Write something on here, just so I know I'm not the only one LIVING in this bloody flat. (Sirius)

I came by on Tuesday. You weren't here. This place seems too big, since Peter left. (Remus)

Friday. We could move. (Sirius.)

We should. They know where we live. It's best if we split up, maybe. Tuesday. (Remus)

It's Friday, again. Is that what you want, Moony? (Sirius)

Does it matter? Sunday. (Remus)

18. Stay alive. (Remus)

Paid up until next month. If you want to stay. (Sirius)

Maybe. It isn't home anymore. (Remus)

If it ever was. I'll stop in on Tuesday. Will you be here? (Sirius)

It was. I don't know. (Remus)

You weren't here. (Sirius)

14. In Fragments Unsettled by Oudeteron (extract)

Albus feels completely and utterly inadequate.

Suddenly, jerkily, Gellert staggers to his feet. The chains binding his wrists and his ankles rattle far too loudly for the small cell that seems empty even with both of them for occupants. Albus briefly considers escape, but of course he stays where he is, braced for the blow that will surely come in one shape or another. This time, it is a genuine question.

“Why?” The silence after that is tense enough to start sporting cracks. “Why couldn’t you have joined me? Albus—not even now?”

Albus says what he has to, a well-rehearsed phrase. “It was for the best that I didn’t.”

“Whose best?!”

“The greater good,” he replies, propelling Gellert backwards with the unexpected sting of his own famous catchphrase. A choked sound emanates from the new prisoner—must be a sigh, a cough, some sort of breathing malfunction. It is stifled before it has a chance to develop into anything.

As Albus leaves, the words are ringing in his skull from ear to ear and front to back: the greater good, the greater good. The greater good, a polite handshake with the new master of Nurmengard. Carved above the gate to the prison, THE GREATER GOOD. The greatest evil.

*

Beautiful, Albus is beautiful, with a body that envelops all the tremors and sighs and ideals of youth. They traverse the sweaty summer nights in a smear of undocumented ecstasy; their lips feed off one another like their minds and thrilling natures have done ever since their first encounter. Beautiful, always in Gellert’s cell, as he dreams the dream he cannot help.

*

Sometimes, Albus fancies Gellert could recall the same things as he does and be moved belatedly in the too narrow cell that housed him now, that he might finally understand. But

they were each made of different matter, obvious already when they met. In Albus's mind—he has convinced himself that in his memory, too—Gellert did not brood; he acted with breathtaking single-minded efficiency. He took, he discarded, he ripped into shreds without batting an eye. He had once conquered a large enough part of the world to make Roman emperors envious. As Albus thinks this, he shudders at the persistence of his naivety, at his predilection to always expect something. Gellert had on more than one occasion acted like a monster. He maintained a safe distance: a quality that Albus himself had always lacked. He was more than likely still unrepentant, trapped in that tower of his own making. Albus recalls the unidentified broken sound Gellert made on the day he was imprisoned. It must have been a hitched breath. The youth who had disappointed Albus and the man who tyrannized Europe was ruthless. Malicious, cold. He made it a point. Why on earth would Gellert have cried?

Still too soft after all these years, Albus decides, too philosophical. Gellert always had it simple. He can have it simple in prison.

*

Voldemort rises in power. The world is weary of war. Gellert hears of Albus Dumbledore's death and spends the night in limbo.

One day, the doors of Nurmengard are thrown open and the new Dark Lord approaches the old. The shadows in the corners seem to come alive, curling around their master, sneering at the decrepit old man who has only retained the bare residue of his magical power. Voldemort voices his questions. Gellert has half-expected this.

And he has it simple.

15. Theatre of War by Oudeteron (extract)

Much as Albus tried to ignore it, he could scarcely help comparing the man sitting opposite him to the phantom from years past, checking for differences. They sprang forward at him from every angle. Gellert's hair, though obviously golden in spite of the insufficient lighting, had been cropped shorter and lost the flowing quality Albus remembered from running his hands through it so many times. His face was still elegant, but somewhat more angular, which gave it an aura of severity that disturbed Albus more than anything else. Even Gellert's lips seemed thinner. On the whole, he exuded an ugly feel of malice, of subdued cruelty. For a brief moment it made Albus wish he had never agreed to come here – because his own memories were rapidly getting tainted with this new image and its strange mixture of past and present. Gellert's eyes, if examined without flinching, were the worst of it: as passionate as Albus recalled, but lying beyond the fire and the brilliance was something that could not have been there that lost summer, but it was apparently spreading like the plague. And although Gellert was regarding him calmly now, Albus had no doubt that he could shoot deadly glares when he pleased.

*

He recognised it, although he had never touched it in his life, save those many breathless times when his fingers traced old scriptures that happened to include schematic illustrations if he got especially lucky. Now, watching it quiver on the sturdy table-top, he felt a terrible, penetrating chill grip him like a vice, creeping into his very bones. He could deal with Gellert having obviously beaten him, but learning about it so suddenly with Gellert's prize placed between them like some warped victory sign made the whole thing unbearably drastic.

He asked the inevitable question as soon as he had recovered enough for the entirely predictable answer. “The Elder Wand?”

*

“Sometimes resistance is the only option left to us,” he countered in the typical tone that with anybody but Gellert he could have disguised as wisdom. “Gellert, there is a war. Hundreds of people are dying as we speak, and will die yet no matter what we agree on here. Unless I am very much mistaken, you don’t consider them worth a lot as most of them are Muggles to begin with. And, unless my intelligence is even less capable of gathering information than I, you quietly stir up more conflicts and then step aside for the war leaders to lap up the mud. Clever as you undoubtedly are, do not ask for my assistance. Your plan entails nothing I could do.”

At last, Gellert was visibly taken aback. The air surrounding him swirled as his power almost snapped out of control, but his voice betrayed no emotion except profound indignation. “You have no idea what we could do! We prepared everything we will *ever* need that summer! Do you even remember how –”

“I remember,” interrupted Albus loudly, for the first time sounding forceful, “perfectly. It would have been rather irresponsible to erase my memory on a whim, or to store those particular memories involving you in a Pensieve where accidental onlookers might gain access to them.” Dimly it dawned on him that Gellert had fallen silent. He pressed on. “And I know for certain that if we had been making our schemes for glory now, here in your fortunately dispensable Germany, we would have been left with no hope at all. What we would have gotten our sentence for is up to your informed judgement.”

“That – that’s unless we were wizards.” Gellert seemed to have recovered in the very last second that would allow him to save face, although he suddenly looked paler and his eyes had the unhealthy glint of fever. “Any wizard with an ounce of ability wouldn’t have allowed a lot of Muggle officials to lock him up in prison.”

Albus was merciless. “You do believe it, then? Go to any of those death factories and tell me not a single person in them has magic. Then, perhaps, you will see the flaw in your logic better. Besides, there is no wizard network in Germany anymore. The Nazis have destroyed it with your aid most of all, like everything else except their own system. Magic does not make people safe.” An imploring note was strung on that statement, but no more than that – just a note. Albus had wanted to keep his voice clear of it, too, but constantly working to preserve his detachment was painful enough. He didn’t think Gellert deserved to be spared whatever his conscience could still manage to do to him, anyway.