

Hogwarts: Years to Remember

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Submitted: September 20, 2008

Updated: November 11, 2008

Possibly I will be writing this. I'm going to see if anyone is interested in it. Starring my character, Taylor Short, and a cast of OCs people give me. Sign up, if you want. Just no relatives of Voldemort, kay?

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0 - Prologue

**(Hm...I just realized...
...Sirius isn't Kitty's father anymore, is he?
I'll have to change that, I guess.)**

Two men were walking down a dark, deserted street. There was a chilly fog in the air, obscuring any light that might have been cast by the street lights lining the road. The grey-green clouds above hung motionless. The moon could not be seen at all. It was the day before Halloween.

The man on the right was the tallest and had short red-brown hair. He had an excited air about him. The man on the left was shorter, with wispy brown hair. He seemed tired. Both were on the young side, but too old to be teenagers. Both were wearing a blue shirt with a golden bird emblazoned on it.

"Ah, that was fun." The man on the right said with a grin, placing his hands behind his head as he strutted down the path, "Those Death Eaters had no idea."

"As usual, Archimedes, you show an utter disregard for any kind of well-being." The man on the left said. His voice had a chuckle in it, but it seemed to be tired to actually come out.

"And you, Remus, continue to show a complete lack of excitement." Archimedes said, "If only Sirius and James could have made it. They could sometimes get you to show some enthusiasm."

"Well, you could hardly expect them to have shown up. They have children now, after all. And there is this business of He-Who-Must-Not-Be-Named being after them."

"I was here, you know. And Angelica is having a wonderful time looking out for Taylor."

"But You-Know-Who is not looking for you. And it isn't as if Angelica has any idea what is actually going on."

They had made it to one of the houses' front porches. And it became apparently clear that something wasn't right. The door was open, creaking slightly on its hinges. Archimedes froze. His brown eyes flicked upwards. But there was no sign in the air, no ghostly skull hovering above the roof. He looked back at Remus, who looked as worried as he did. Without another word, the pair of men rushed into the dark house.

"Angelica?" Archimedes shouted, "Taylor?"

"Ah, how good of you to come, Archimedes." Came a cold voice. There was a man standing in the center of the room with a baby sitting underneath him, wailing. The man had a stick pointing straight at the little girl, who couldn't have been more than a year old, "I have a matter of business to discuss with you."

"You." Archimedes hissed. The man laughed.

"Yes, me. Surely you saw this coming. You are, after all, one of the most talented aurors in the ministry, I believe. How convenient of you not to have told your pretty little Mudblood wife of what you were really up to. She let me straight into the house with no complaints."

There was a woman sitting in a chair. She had long brown hair and blue eyes. She was tied up and in a chair. She made an odd sound through the gag around her mouth.

"What do you want?" Remus asked, calm as always. He knew how easily Archimedes lost his head in situations like this one.

"Nothing from you, Half-Breed, you can be certain of that." Laughed the man, "I want to ask this Pureblood to join me. Come now. You have the skills. The only problem is that you had the bad taste to marry this woman. And conceive this half-blood brat. But the Dark Lord is always quick to forgive. Your

family will, of course, have to die. But you will find a new one. A better one. One more befitting to a wizard of your noble blood-status."

"Never." Archimedes growled.

"You would give up the life of your family?"

"You're just going to get rid of them anyway."

"And he won't be giving them up, Tom." Came a new voice. The man in the center of the room whirled about. A tall man with a crooked nose and a long beard was standing the corner. There was silence. And then the Dark Lord disappeared.

"You have not gotten away from me, Short. I will return, and woe to you and your family. Not even Albus Dumbledore will get in my way. As always happens to those who dare defy Lord Voldemort."

1 - Diagon Alley

The day was sunny and without any breeze to stir the flowers and trees lining the still empty walk up to the house. A girl on the inside of the house sighed. She had remained a sentinel at the large bay windows for days now, silently staring at the path until it had become too dark to see. Clutch in her small, 11-year-old fist was a yellow piece of parchment. The girl's eyes, one brown and one blue, fixed on it and traced the letters for yet another time.

HOGWARTS SCHOOL of WITCHCRAFT and WIZARDRY

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Headmaster: Albus Dumbledore
(*Order of Merlin, First Class, Grand Sorc., Of. Warlock,
Supreme Mugawup, International Confed. of Wizards.*)

Dear Miss Short,

We are pleased to inform you that you have been accepted at Hogwarts School of Witchcraft and Wizardry. Please find enclosed a list of all necessary books and equipment.

Term begins on September 1. We await your owl by no later than July 31.

Yours Sicerely,

Minerva McGonagall

Deputy Headmistress

Yes, Taylor Short was a witch. Or at the very least, a witch-to-be. A witch in Training. It had been nearly 10 years since He-Who-Must-Not-Be-Named had visited her house, nearly 10 years since You-Know-Who had failed to get Taylor's father on his side, nearly 10 years since Taylor's mother had learned of the secret world of magic, and nearly 10 years since a baby boy had managed to defeat the most powerful dark wizard of all time.

Taylor had been ecstatic when her letter had come. Her mother had been, too. Together they had sent the family owl to the school only minutes after the letter had been received.

"Still not here yet?" Asked a woman as she sauntered into the room. She was Angelica Short- Taylor's muggle mother. Taylor had inherited her mother's gender, wavy hair, and eye color in one eye, but everything else of her's she had inherited from her dad.

"No." Taylor sighed again, shaking her head and causing her chin-length red-brown hair to flare out.

"Don't worry, your father will be here."

"That's what you said yesterday, mum." said Taylor. After You-Know-Who had come to visit, Dumbledore had insisted that Archimedes explain he was a wizard to Angelica. Angelica had wanted to leave and take Taylor with her, but luckily Dumbledore had calmed her down. The very next day, You-Know-Who had been defeated and their house no longer needed a secret keeper. Taylor had been raised, for the most part, like any other wizard child.

"Your father has never let you down before." Angelica chuckled and sat on the window seat next to her

daughter.

"But if he doesn't come today, what will I do? The train leaves *tomorrow*."

Because there was another part of Taylor's letter: the supply list. Not being a witch, Taylor's mother could not take her daughter to get her school things and her father had been too busy with his job to take her.

HOGWARTS SCHOOL
of WITCHCRAFT *and* WIZARDRY

~

UNIFORM

First-year students will require:

1. Three sets of plain work robes (black)
2. One plain pointed hat (black) for day wear
3. One pair of protective gloves (dragon hide or similar)
4. One winter cloak (black, silver fastenings)

Please note that all pupils' clothes should carry name tags.

COURSE BOOKS

All students should have a copy of each of the following:

The Standard Book of Spells (Grade 1)

by Miranda Goshawk

A History of Magic by Bathilda Bagshot

Magical Theory by Adalbert Waffling

Beginner's Guide to Transfiguration by Emeric Switch

One Thousand Magical Herbs and Fungi

by Phyllida Spore

Magical Drafts and Potions by Arsenius Jigger

Fantastic Beasts and Where to Find Them

by Newt Scamander

The Dark Forces: A Guide to Self-Protection

by Quentin Trimble

OTHER EQUIPMENT

1 wand

1 cauldron (pewter, standard size 2)

1 set glass or crystal philes

1 telescope

1 set brass scales

Students may also bring an owl OR a cat OR a toad

PARENTS ARE REMINDED THAT FIRST YEARS
ARE NOT ALLOWED THEIR OWN BROOMSTICKS

It was a long list and Taylor did not know what she would do if her father came home late again. Just as she was thinking this, a roaring sound came from the other end of the sitting room. Both girls turned around just in time to see the fireplace fill with emerald flames and a tall man step into the room. "Daddy!" Taylor squealed, running at the man. Still in his aurur robes from work Archimedes looked tired but happy to see his family.

"There's my Tayby!" Archimedes said, snatching his daughter by the waist and depositing her on his shoulders.

"You can't call me Tayby anymore!" Taylor laughed, "I'm all grown up! I'm going to Hogwarts!"

"You will always be my Tayby, no matter how old you are, young lady." Arcimedes looked at his wife, "Shall I take our daughter to get her school things?"

"Have fun, you two." Angelica said. With Tay still perched on his shoulders, Archimedes ducked into the fireplace.

"Can I do the floo powder, dad? Can I?" Taylor asked as her mother took a jar full of green powder of the mantle.

"Be my guest." her father said. Angelica lifted the jar up to Taylor's level and Taylor dug her fingers into the powder. Then she threw it into the fire and shouted:

"Diagon Alley!"

All Taylor could see was a stream of endless fireplaces and even that stopped eventually. Then she was spinning quickly and her father stepped into Diagon Alley.

Even though she had been raised a witch, it was the first time Taylor had come to Diagon Alley. There were lots of wizard places she had never visited because, Taylor expected, her dad didn't want to hurt her mom's feelings.

The wizard market was alive with sound and color. People in bright robes were selling things on corners, kids were clinging to their parents' hands. Taylor clambered off her father's back and stood blinking at the sight in front of her.

"Got your list?" Her dad asked.

"Yep!" Taylor said. And they set out across the street. Taylor had never seen so many wizards in one place. Her senses were on overload.

First they went to Gringotts to withdraw money from the family account. Then they went to Madam Malkin's Wizard Robes for all Occasions and got Taylor's school uniform.

They visited Florish and Blotts, where Taylor got all of her school books. They bought parchment and quills at the shop next door and then went across the street to the apothecary to get a basic potion kit.

Taylor marveled at the barrels and barrels of unicorn horns, beetle eyes, and toad spleens. They even went to Eeyelop's Owl Emporium, where Taylor's dad bought her a marvelous barn own she immediatly christened "Sebastian".

Then it was time to buy the most exciting thing on the list: Taylor's wand. The sunw as setting and Daigon Alley was quickly emptying when Taylor and her father set out fro Ollivander's. Taylor was bouncing up and down with excitement.

"Ah, hello, Archimedes."

"Oh, Professor Dumbledore!" Archimdes said, shaking the hand of an older gentleman with a long silver beard and half-moon glasses, "How are you?"

"Fine, fine." Dumbledore chuckled, "It seems I have some last minute school shopping to do."

There were two girls with Dumbledore who looked about the same age as Taylor. One had shockingly purple hair and eyes the exact same color. The other girl had violet eyes and brown hair that was

underneath a large witch hat.

"Same here. I've been so busy at the Ministry that I haven't had time to take Taylor to get her things."

"Oh, so this is your daughter. You've grown a lot since I last saw you, Taylor."

"Have we met before, sir?" asked Taylor. She was standing in front of her father, who had his large hands on her shoulders.

"Just once, when you were a baby. This is my granddaughter, Katherine-"

"It's Kitty, grandpa." The purple haired girl said, tugging on her grandfather's sleeve.

"Excuse me. This is my granddaughter, Katherine, who, as you've seen, prefers to be called Kitty."

Dumbledore laughed, "And this is her friend, Molli Hawk."

"It's nice to meet you." Taylor said politely.

"Well, we've got to get Taylor her wand." said Taylor's father.

"Yes, we should be getting along as well. I'll see you tomorrow, Taylor."

Taylor nodded and Dumbledore walked away down the street, Kitty and Molli right behind him.

"Professor Dumbledore is the headmaster of Hogwarts." Archimedes explained as he and his daughter set off again.

"I know," Taylor said, "It's on my letter."

"He's an amazing wizard, Taylor. He's the only person You-Know-Who was ever afraid of." Taylor listened to her father wax poetic about Professor Dumbledore until they got to Ollivander's.

The sign above was peeling old, the window display blanketed in several years worth of dust. Taylor thought that a place that sold wands would at least look a little less...neglected.

A bell tinkled somewhere in the depths of the shop when she opened the door and stepped inside. There was no one to be seen in the front. There was just an antique desk and shelf upon shelf of dusty, rectangular boxes.

"Ah, Miss Short." Taylor squeaked and whirled around. There was a man a few steps away from her, stopped, pale eyes shining eerily in the dim store lights, "Here to get your wand, I assume?"

"Yes, sir." Taylor said.

"And here's your father." Mr. Ollivander said, turning to Archimedes, "Mahogany. 14 and a half inches, phoenix feather core, I believe?"

"Yes," Archimedes said with a grin, "Got me out of a lot of jams, it has."

"Good, good." Mr. Ollivander said vaguely. He looked at Taylor, "Which is your wand arm?"

"My right." Taylor answered. Mr. Ollivander closed the distance between them in an instant and started measuring Taylor's arm, head, and nose. Then he took out a ladder and withdrew several boxes from the top of the closest shelf.

"Now let's see which wand you favor. Of course, the wand chooses the wizard. Give it a wave." He handed her the wand, "Holly, 10 inches- unicorn hair."

Taylor waved it- nothing. Mr. Ollivander handed her another.

"Ash, 16 inches- phoenix feather." Nothing. "Oak, 12 inches- unicorn hair." Nothing.

Four wands later and Taylor was beginning to worry that she wasn't a witch after all. Mr. Ollivander muttered to himself and then withdrew one from the very bottom of another shelf. He walked back to Taylor and gave her the wand.

"Willow. 13 inches- Dragon Heartstring."

Taylor grabbed it, heart beating. Almost instantly, she felt something connect, as if the wand had been waiting for her hand. She gave a quick movement and sparks exploded from the end.

"Very good, very good." Mr. Ollivander said.

They bought the wand and headed home.

Taylor was going to be a witch!

2 - The Hogwarts Express

The rest of that night passed quickly and soon Taylor's mother was shaking her awake. After a hasty breakfast of porridge and after stuffing her things in her mother's car trunk, Taylor climbed into the backseat with Sebastian and his cage in her lap. As her mother drove off (her father couldn't drive a car to save his life), Taylor turned in her seat and waved goodbye to her house.

A good twenty minutes later, they parked and disembarked at King's Cross Station. Try as she might, Taylor couldn't see any wizards or witches. She also couldn't see a platform labeled "9 3/4" and people were starting to stare.

Taylor couldn't see why they would be staring at her. Her mom had made sure she was dressed like muggle. Taylor was wearing a knee-length jeans skirt and brown turtle-neck sweater. She decided that they were more likely than not staring at her owl.

Sebastian gave out a raucous squawk and Taylor realized she had nearly smashed his cage into her parents. They had stopped quite suddenly in between platform 9 and platform 10.

"Where is it?" Taylor asked, swiveling her head around. There was no Platform 9 3/4.

"It's beyond that pillar." Her dad answered, "We have to conceal it so that the muggles can't see it."

"How do I get in?"

"Just run at it."

Taylor laughed. The idea of running full tilt at a black pillar of stone was ridiculous. Her laughter died out as she realized that her dad was serious.

"You go through now and I'll come with your mother after." said Archimedes, giving his daughter an encouraging pat on the back. Taylor turned back to the pillar. Deciding that getting it over with was a better idea, Taylor gripped her luggage carrier in both hands, squeezed her eyes shut, and ran.

She never hit anything. Her eyes popped open after she was sure that she had passed the barrier. In front of her was an enormous hall, packed to bursting with wizards of all colors. On the far side was a long, scarlet steam engine. Kids were boarding, waving to their parents on the ground.

A few feet away, she saw two girls embracing. Both looked to be Taylor's age. One had a bushy mane of brown hair and large front teeth; the other had sleek light brown hair that pulled into a ponytail and still managed to have a small braid coming out of it on one side. The latter was wearing a school uniform of sorts, consisting of long sleeved pale blue-silk dress and matching lace up boots. A hat made of similar material was perched on her head.

"I'm going to miss you so much, Amanda." The bushy-haired girl said.

"I'll miss you more!" Said the other girl, who's name was apparently Amanda, "Write me everyday!"

"I will!"

"Well, are you ready to go Taylor?" Taylor's parents had made it into the platform.

"Yeah." said Taylor. A hard lump had formed in her throat now that the time had come to leave.

"We'll miss you, Taylor." Her mother said, wrapping her arms around Taylor.

"I'll miss you, too, mum."

"Write as often as you can."

"I will."

Her mom let her go and Taylor squeezed her dad, pecked him on the cheek, and scuttled off to the train. She paused before boarding it and looked back. Her dad had his arm around her mom's waist. Taylor gave a small wave and they waved back. She climbed on to the train, lugging her things behind her. The doors slammed shut and the whistles started to blow. Taylor joined the throng of students

congregating at the windows. As the train pulled out of the station, she thrust her head out the window and waved.

"Good-bye!" She shouted, "I love you! I'll miss you!" Her parents waved back and then they got smaller and smaller until Taylor couldn't see them anymore.

The crowd dispersed and Taylor drew her head back inside. The train seemed to consist of alternating open chairs near windows and private compartments. Taylor grabbed her stuff (Sebastian had fallen asleep despite all the noise) and made her way towards the back of the train.

Most of the compartments were full. Taylor saw a lot of people, most of them in higher grades than her. A lot of squealing was being done by friends excited to see each other after the summer break. When she got to a compartment with only two people inside, Taylor opened the door.

"Can I sit with you?"

The two girls occupying the compartment looked around at her. Taylor was surprised to see they were the same two girls she had met in Diagon Alley.

"Sure." said the purple-haired girl, "What's your name again?"

"Taylor." Taylor said, entering the compartment and putting her bags and owl on a top rack, "Taylor Short."

"Kitty Dumbledore." said Kitty, smiling.

"Molli Hawk." said the girl in the overly large hat, "Did you get your wand?"

"Yup." said Taylor, now settled in her seat. She withdrew her silvery wand from her pocket, "Willow and dragon heartstring."

"Mine's willow, too." Molli said, "Only it's got a griffin feather core."

"Are you guys nervous?" Taylor asked.

"Of course not!" Kitty said, "I've been wanting to come to Hogwarts for my entire life! I hated the school years. I had to stay with Molli while my grandfather went to school!"

"I'm worried about what house I'll get in." Molli admitted, "What if I get in Slytherin?"

"I'll leave if I get placed in Slytherin." Taylor spat.

"What house DO you want to be in?" Kitty inquired?

"Griffindor!" Taylor exclaimed. She leapt onto her seat and unsheathed an imaginary sword, "Where dwell the brave at heart and Godric Griffindor blesses the steps of all who show courage!"

Kitty and Molli laughed and Taylor sat back in her seat. Then the door slid open and a boy their age walked in. He had a pale, pointed face and white blonde hair. Two other boys came in with them. They were large and not altogether bright looking.

"Why would you want to be Griffindor?" the boy sneered, "Bunch of goody two shoes, the lot of them."

"I don't remember saying you could come in here." Kitty said pointedly.

"Who are you anyway?" asked Taylor.

"Draco Malfoy." the boy drawled, "And this is Crabbe and Goyle."

"Nice to meet you." said Kitty, "Now go away."

"No need to say who you are." said Malfoy, "You're Katherine Dumbledore, that old dotter's granddaughter."

"My grandfather is NOT a daughter." Kitty said hotly. Malfoy ignored her.

"And you two must be her groupies," he said to Taylor and Molli, "What's your blood status?"

"What does it matter?" Taylor demanded.

"You're obviously a muggle-born." Malfoy said dismissively.

"For your information, I'm a half-blood. Pure blood on my father's side."

"And Mudblood on your mother's." Malfoy said coldly.

"Shut up!" Kitty shouted, "You will be leaving now."

"Says who? I'm quite comfortable here."

It was then that an older, rather plump witch walked by their room. Taylor hadn't realized it was almost lunch time until she had come by with the food.

"Is there a problem, dears?" the witch asked.

"No ma'm." Malfoy said, smirking at the angry looks on all three girls' faces. He got up and his two lackeys followed.

"Anything from the cart, dears?"

Kitty, Molli, and Taylor walked over and bought a large mound of wizard candies. They spent the rest of the trip eating, complaining about Malfoy, and talking about their upcoming school year. When it was nearly dark outside and the lights inside had come on, their door opened again.

"Have any of you seen a toad?" Asked the bushy-haired girl from before, "Only Neville's lost his." She had a boy their age with her. He looked a bit startled about being dragged around the train.

"No. No toads here." Molli said around a large chunk of Chocolate Frog.

"Well, thanks anyway. I'm Hermione Granger, by the way. And you are?"

"Taylor Short."

"Molli Hawk."

"Kitty Dumbledore."

"THE Kitty Dumbledore?" Hermione said, her eyes wide, "I've heard all about your grandfather. It's all in 'Hogwarts: A History' and plenty of other books. You're mentioned too. It must be fascinating to have such a famous grandfather. Anyway, I expect we'll be pulling into the station soon, so you all should get in your uniforms."

Without waiting for them to respond, Hermione and Neville left, snapping the door behind them. Kitty, Molli, and Taylor blinked at each other and then stood up. After rumaging around in their bags for a bit, they found their uniforms. Taylor pulled the curtains and locked the door.

They all pulled on their uniforms, which consisted of long black robes, a pair of grey slacks, a pair of black shoes, and a pointed black hat. They would get uniforms reflecting their House once they were placed inside it.

Minutes after they had finished dressing and re-packing, the train slowed. With a shriek of the breaks, it halted. Taylor, Kitty, and Molli grabbed their stuff. Taylor noticed they both had birds as well. Kitty had a small owl, but Molli had a hawk.

"Why do you have a hawk?" Taylor asked as they disembarked.

"I use it instead of an owl. My mum breeds hawks and all sorts of birds of prey." Molli explained, "His name is Crimson."

"My owl's name is Gumdrops." Kitty said, "I saved him two days ago."

"My owl is Sebastian." Taylor said, not really understanding why they were introducing their pets to each other.

Most of the students filed to the left and up the road, but the first years were not. Taylor heard the cry of: "Firs' years! Firs' years o'er here!"

She looked to the left and saw an enormous man holding a lantern. They made their way over to him.

"How are ya, Kitty?" The man asked.

"Fine. How about you?"

"Eh, Can' complain. Firs' years! Firs' years over here!"

Once most of them had gathered, the man lead them over to a lake.

"You know him?" Taylor whispered.

"Yeah, he's Hagrid. He's one of my Grandfather's best friends."

"He's huge!"

"So?"

"So...nothing." said Taylor.

After being instructed to get three to a boat, the trio boarded one of the many small boats floating on the surface. They began gliding, as if by magic, towards the enormous dark shape that Taylor knew was Hogwarts.

3 - Unfinished. Do not read.

(I seriously fail at doing Hagrid's voice. Sorry!)

The small boats glided gently over the dark lake and the reflected stars from the dark sky above. After a while, they bumped against the shore and Hagrid got up from his own.

"Okay, off we go." He said gruffly as he took the lantern off its pole, "Up the hill, th' lot o' ya."

The children quickly obliged and began to get out of their boats. Molli and Taylor got out of their own and started to walk up the hill. Kitty made to follow, but froze as a quiet ribbit sounded from the boat behind her. Slowly, the purple-haired girl turned around to see a large toad sitting in the bottom of the boat she had recently vacated. She swiftly snatched it up and turned around.

"Oi!" She shouted, "Neville, is it? This your toad?"

"Trevor!" The snagged toothed boy from the tain cried joyously. He ran up to Kitty and took the toad from her, "Thank you!"

"Don't mention it." Kitty said with a smile. She left him chastising his toad and jogged up the slope to catch up with Molli and Taylor.

After a few minutes of walking, they made it to the large, wooden doors. Hagrid shifted the lantern and then knocked on the door with his dust-pin sized hands. There was a short pause and then they could hear the click of heels coming and then the grating sound as the doors were opened. A strict looking woman with spectacles was at the door.

"Hello Professor McGonagall. I brough' th' firs' years." said Hagrid.

"So you have." Professor McGonagall said briskly and stood aside to let the first years through.

"Bye Hagrid!" Kitty called as she was swept away with the tide.

"Goo' Bye Kitty! An' goo' luck!" Hagrid called back. And then the doors were closed and he was gone.

"Welcome to Hogwarts. The start-of-term banquet will begin shortly, but before you take your seats in the Great Hall, you will be sorted into your Houses. The Sorting is a very important ceremony because, while you are here, your House will be something like your family within Hogwarts. You will have classes with the rest of your house, sleep in your house dormitory and spend free time in your House common room." Said Professor McGonagall,

"The four Houses are called Gryffindor, Hufflepuff, Ravenclaw, and Slytherin. Each House has its own noble history and each has produced outstanding witches and wizards. While you are at Hogwarts, your triumphs will earn your House points, while any rule breaking will lose House points. At the end of the year, the House with the most points is awarded the House cup, a great honor. I hope each of you will be a credit to whichever House becomes yours."

"I will go inform the Headmaster of your arrival. Do not touch anything. And I suggest some of you smarten yourselves up!" Once again, they listened to the sound of her steps as she walked off towards the Dining Hall.

"How do you think we'll get sorted?" asked one of the girls in the crowd.

"Dunno. Fred was going on about fighting a troll." said a tall red-headed boy. This set the crowd into a large amount of muttering.

"Oh please." Kitty sighed, "My grandfather wouldn't make us fight a *troll*."

Just then, several people screamed. About twenty ghosts had appeared through the back wall. They all appeared to be in the midst of a conversation.

"I say we just forgive him. You know, give him a second chance." said one.

"My dear Friar, we have given Peeves all the chances he deserves! He gives us all a bad name and he isn't, after all, really a ghost- I say, what are you all doing here?" A ghost wearing a ruff and tights suddenly noticed them.

"New students!" cried the friar when no one answered, "About to be sorted?" A few of the students below nodded, "Hope to see you in Hufflepuff! That's my House, you know."

"Move along now!" Professor McGonagall had returned, causing several people to jump. The ghosts smiled and glided away once again, "Follow me and leave your things here."

She led them into the large dining hall. It was the most amazing thing Taylor had ever seen. There were thousands upon thousands of candles floating through the air, all hovering above four different tables. At the back of the room was a very long and elevated table with the Hogwarts seal behind it. But perhaps the most amazing thing about it was the ceiling: It was enchanted and reflected the clear, star-strewn sky outside.

Professor McGonagall directed the first years to stay where they were and then left once more, leaving them standing amidst the stares of the older students. Finally, she came back carrying a four-legged stool and a very old hat.

There was complete silence in the hall and everyone stared at the hat. It twitched and fell still. Then it twitched again and a rip along its brim opened like a mouth and the hat began to sing:

*"Oh, you may no think I'm pretty
But don't judge on what you see,
I'll eat myself if you can find
A smarter hat than me.
You can keep your bowlers black,
Your top hats sleek and tall,
For I'm the Hogwarts Sorting Hat
and I can cap them all.
There's nothing hidden in your head
The Sorting Hat can't see
So try me on and I will tell you
Where you ought to be.
You might belong in Gryffindor,
Where dwell the brave at heart,
Their daring, nerve, and chivalry
Set Gryffindors apart;
You might belong in Hufflepuff,
Where they are just and loyal,
Those patient Hufflepuffs are true
And unafraid of toil;
Or yet in wise old Ravenclaw,
if you've a ready mind,
Where those of wit and learning,
Will always find their kind;
Or perhaps in Slytherin
You'll make your real friends,
Those cunning folk use any means
To achieve their ends.
So put me on! Don't be afraid!*

And don't get in a flap!

You're in safe hands (though I have none)

For I'm a Thinking Cap!

The entire hall bust into applause once it was done. Professor McGonagall glared around the hall until it finally became silent. When it finally did, she unrolled a scroll and cleared her throat before reading, "Abbott, Hannah!"

A blonde girl stumbled out of the crowd and put on the hat. She sat down and after a moment's pause, the hat shouted:

"HUFFLEPUFF!"

The table on the right (which was decked out in black and yellow with a large badger on their banner) cheered and clapped as she went to sit down. Right after, "Bones, Susan" was sorted into Hufflepuff as well.

Several more people were sorted and then:

"Dumbledore, Kitty!"

The Great Hall erupted at the sound of her name. "Did she say Dumbledore? Surely she can't mean-" and "I didn't know he had a granddaughter!" filled the hall. Professor McGonagall once again had to glare around the room until it fell silent.

Kitty took the hat, sat down, and jammed it over her head. A brief pause and then-

"GRYFFINDOR!" Kitty whipped the hat off and grinned as she raced to the boisterous red and gold table. She smiled up at her grandfather who nodded approvingly. Shortly after her "Granger, Hermione!" became a Gryffindor as well.

At this point, Molli was shaking. She practically jumped as "Hawk, Molli!" was called.

Still shaking, Molli sat down and handed the stern woman her own large hat in exchange for the magical one. It seemed to sit on her head for quite a long while before it shouted:

"RAVENCLAW!" Molli smiled sadly at Kitty as she took her own hat and rushed over to the bronze and blue table.

After a few more names were called "Longbottom, Neville", the boy with the toad, was sorted into Gryffindor. He was in such a rush to get there, he forgot the hat and had to jog back and give it to Professor McGonagall amidst much laughing.

"Malfoy, Draco" hardly had to grab the hat for it to sort him into Slytherin. And then:

"Potter, Harry!" Once again, the hall began to whisper amongst themselves. It took even longer than usual to quiet it down. Harry Potter, a thin boy with messy black hair and a lightning bolt scar on his forehead sat down on the stool. It seemed to take just as long as it had with Molli before the hat decided: "GRYFFINDOR!" The Gryffindor table exploded. They stamped and cheered and whistled and a voice could be heard cheering, "We got Potter! We got Potter!"

When finally the cheers died down, Professor McGonagall continued:

"Robbarts, Cassandra!" A girl broke away from the crowd and made her way up to the stool. She had long black hair that contrasted with her skin, which was so pale her veins could almost be seen through it. Her eyes were also a vibrant red and she seemed uncaring as she placed the hat on her head.

"RAVENCLAW!" The hat shouted. As per the usual, the Ravenclaws cheered.

"Robbarts, Pandora!" A girl who could only be the previous girl's twin sister walked up.

"GRYFFINDOR!" shouted the hat.

Taylor was so excited she couldn't sit still.