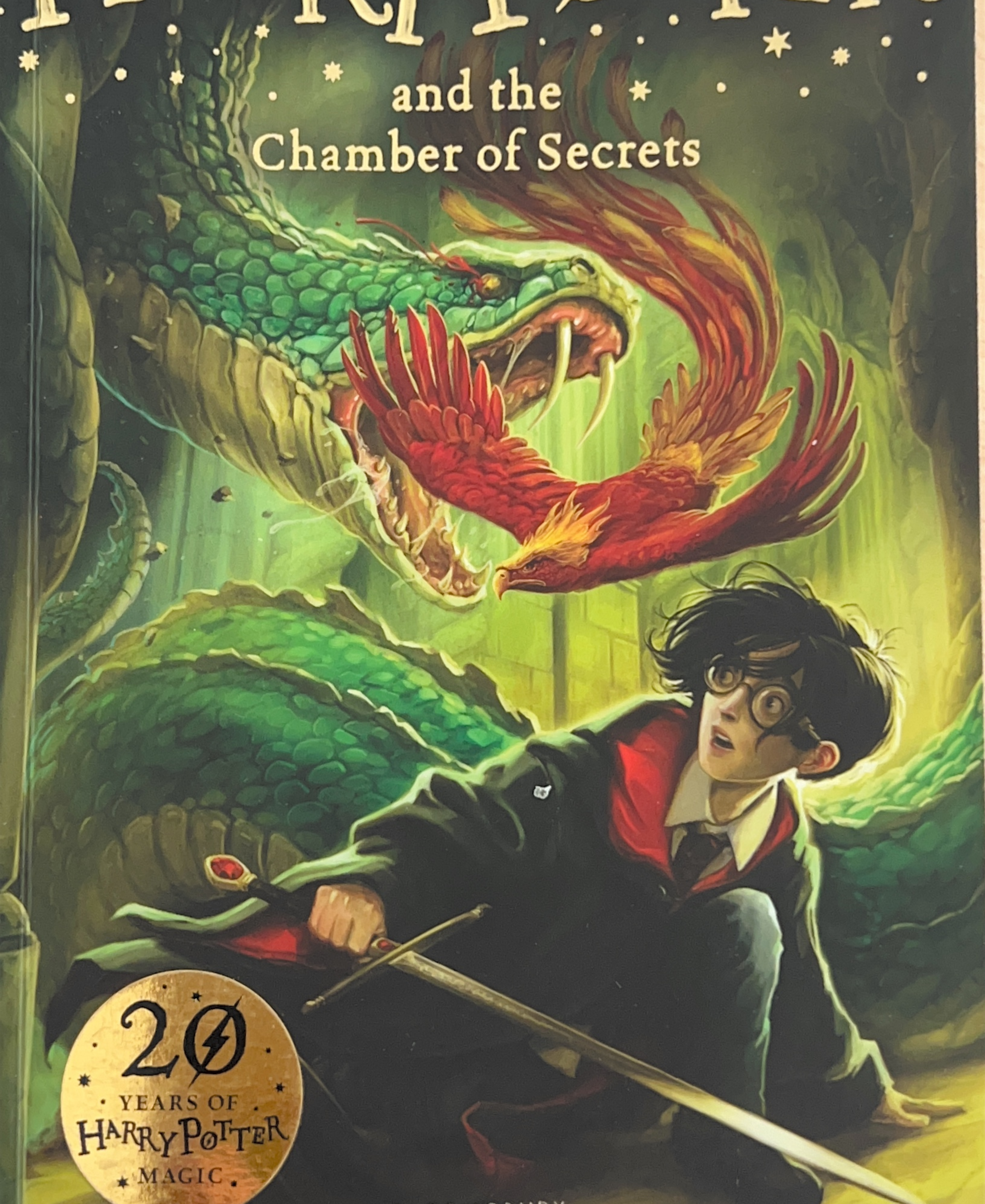


J.K. ROWLING

HARRY POTTER

and the
Chamber of Secrets



20
YEARS OF
HARRY POTTER
MAGIC

BLOOMSBURY

CHAPTER TWO

Dobby's Warning

Harry managed not to shout out, but it was a close thing. The little creature on the bed had large, bat-like ears and bulging green eyes the size of tennis balls. Harry knew instantly that this was what had been watching him out of the garden hedge that morning.

As they stared at each other, Harry heard Dudley's voice from the hall.

'May I take your coats, Mr and Mrs Mason?'

The creature slipped off the bed and bowed so low that the end of its long thin nose touched the carpet. Harry noticed that it was wearing what looked like an old pillowcase, with rips for arm and leg holes.

'Er – hello,' said Harry nervously.

'Harry Potter!' said the creature, in a high-pitched voice Harry was sure would carry down the stairs. 'So long has Dobby wanted to meet you, sir ... Such an honour it is ...'

CHAPTER TWELVE

The Polyjuice Potion

They stepped off the stone staircase at the top and Professor McGonagall rapped on the door. It opened silently and they entered. Professor McGonagall told Harry to wait, and left him there, alone.

Harry looked around. One thing was certain: of all the teachers' offices Harry had visited so far this year, Dumbledore's was by far the most interesting. If he hadn't been scared out of his wits that he was about to be thrown out of school, he would have been very pleased to have a chance to look around it.

It was a large and beautiful circular room, full of funny little noises. A number of curious silver instruments stood on spindle-legged tables, whirring and emitting little puffs of smoke. The walls were covered with portraits of old headmasters and headmistresses, all of whom were snoozing gently in their frames. There was also an enormous, claw-footed desk, and, sitting on a shelf behind it, a shabby, tattered wizard's hat – the *Sorting Hat*.

CHAPTER THIRTEEN

The Very Secret Diary

Hermione remained in the hospital wing for several weeks. There was a flurry of rumour about her disappearance when the rest of the school arrived back from their Christmas holidays, because of course everyone thought that she had been attacked. So many students filed past the hospital wing trying to catch a glimpse of her that Madam Pomfrey took out her curtains again and placed them around Hermione's bed, to spare her the shame of being seen with a furry face.

Harry and Ron went to visit her every evening. When the new term started, they brought her each day's homework.

'If I'd sprouted whiskers, I'd take a break from work,' said Ron, tipping a stack of books onto Hermione's bedside table one evening.

'Don't be silly, Ron, I've got to keep up,' said Hermione briskly. Her spirits were greatly improved by the fact that all the hair had gone from her face and her eyes were turning slowly back to brown. 'I don't suppose you've got any new