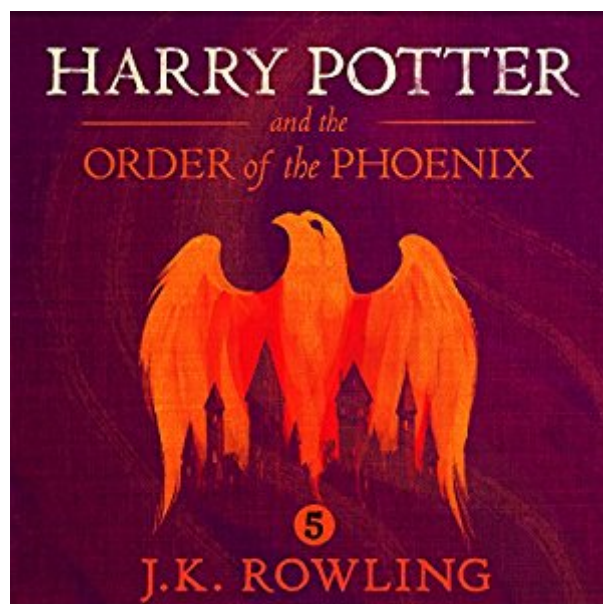


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Harry Potter And The Order Of The Phoenix, Book 5



Synopsis

"You are sharing the Dark Lord's thoughts and emotions. The Headmaster thinks it inadvisable for this to continue. He wishes me to teach you how to close your mind to the Dark Lord." Dark times have come to Hogwarts. After the Dementors' attack on his cousin Dudley, Harry Potter knows that Voldemort will stop at nothing to find him. There are many who deny the Dark Lord's return, but Harry is not alone: a secret order gathers at Grimmauld Place to fight against the Dark forces. Harry must allow Professor Snape to teach him how to protect himself from Voldemort's savage assaults on his mind. But they are growing stronger by the day and Harry is running out of time....

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

ORDER OF THE PHOENIX could well be my favorite book of them all, if Azkaban and Deathly Hallows weren't as good as they were. For all the talk about GOBLET being the one where Rowling really hikes up the intensity and the complexity in the series, it is here, in PHOENIX, she gives us Potter's darkest, and most complex, adventure of all. The second most complex novel in the entire Potter sequence (the first being Book 7), this book is probably the second best one, though I still like Azkaban better. This novel introduces the Order of the Phoenix, a whole litany of new characters and a more indepth look at the Ministry For Magic. Potter has been having bad dreams about a locked door. So he must find out what to do about that. While at home with the Dursleys, he and Dudley are attacked by dementors, and so he stands trial before the Ministry for the inappropriate use of underage magic. He ultimately must appear before the Ministry, and it is only by Dumbledore's appearance he is saved. But the Ministry is not finished yet. Still under staunch denial that Voldemort is back, Cornelius Fudge sends a new teacher, Dolores Umbridge, to bring Hogwarts

under the Ministry's control. Much of the storyline revolves around Umbridge as she takes over Hogwarts, eventually ousting Dumbledore, who goes on the run. Her end is very well justified. I remember when I read the book back in 2003 when it initially came out being rather disappointed. I wasn't a big fan of GOBLET, and I couldn't wait to spend more time in Harry's universe, being back at Hogwarts with characters I know and love. But when I read PHOENIX, though, I felt even more lost and rather alienated. Hogwarts was being taken over. Hagrid was missing for half the book. Dumbledore is extremely distant (for reasons explained at the end of the novel). The Ministry is taken over, and it's run by a man who doesn't know what the hell is going on. There was a lot going on in this novel, and it was all rather depressing. Harry became angry and had severe mood swings, and was always snapping at the people around him. On the positive note he did get some romance, but ultimately even that fizzled out. Harry even had to take "Defense Against the Dark Arts" underground, as Umbridge refuses to even acknowledge Voldemort at all, as per Ministry order. When I reread it in 2007 in preparation for DEATHLY HALLOWS, my stocks in this book absolutely soared. This is a dark, dark book, and while I still felt rather alienated and cut off from Rowling's magical world and the Ministry Interference, this time around I realised how masterfully crafted this novel truly is. ORDER, as far as I'm concerned, is where Rowling truly stopped writing children's fiction, but crafting a dark, bitter book about dark, bitter times in her character's lives. Reading ORDER, and especially about Umbridge, keeps reminding one of Orwell and his horrific visions in 1984 and ANIMAL FARM. Umbridge is easily one of her best characters she ever wrote, and one of the most despicable characters in all of fiction. It is people like Umbridge that brought Hitler to power in the early 1930s, and who would enable him to commit the many atrocities that he did during WWII (and I thought that for a long time before HALLOWS came out, in which Umbridge has turned into a type of Nazi who fully subscribes to Voldemort's racial genocide). It is here, with ORDER, in which Rowling shows us the evil of bureaucracy, of how Voldemort isn't the only person in which massive evil lurks. I also love how Rowling greatly expands her environment from the previous novels. We see for the first time St. Mungo's (and have a rather morose encounter with Gilderoy Lockhart from Book 2). We get to go inside the Ministry For Magic, and a very impressive place it is. Grimmauld Place, along with Sirius, is also very entertaining. And we get some great new characters. Thestrals. The beautifully bizarre Luna Lovegood. Gwarp. Kingsley Shacklebolt. And a personal favorite, Nymphadora Tonks. The series also has one of my favorite scenes in all of literature: when Dumbledore brings Firenze on during the rainstorm as the new divination teacher (a scene I was so disappointed they cut on the movie. The seeds were there but they cut it damn it.). The climax of the book is great, with Dumbledore's Army truly coming into their own as they fight

against the Death Eaters, who are trying to take the Prophecy from the Hall of Prophecy in the Ministry For Magic. I love that whole end sequence. And the death Rowling includes is just brutal, not really how she kills off the character but the fact she killed him off at all. Interestingly enough, Arthur Weasley, who survives an attack in this novel, was originally slated to die, but Rowling could not bear to kill him off. He was also supposed to die in Book 7, but she couldn't kill him then either, and he was the only real normal fatherfigure in the series, and a good father at that. And naturally, we get to learn some vastly important information about Neville Longbottom. Following the trend of other installments in the series in regards to introducing apparently non-essential characters and information,, he turns out to much more important than you would suppose. We also begin to learn Dumbledore isn't as flawless as you would like to think. Another thing I really like about the book is you really do feel like the stakes are really high, which you should as we're only two books away from the end. In fact, HALF-BLOOD PRINCE seemed almost a step back in terms of complexity and highs takes atmosphere from this one. One thing that should be noted is this is a real doorstop of a book. At a quarter of a million words (half as long as Tolkien's LORD OF THE RINGS), this is easily one of the longest children's books ever published. Rowling has even said she wish she could go back and edit this book down, as she feels it is too long. But what would she cut? Great stuff, but very long for kids. Speaks to the amazing appeal these books have that children have read something as long as this. Overall, one of my favorite Potter books. I think it's even better than AZKABAN on a literary level, but I still prefer Azkaban to this as a personal preference. Still, this is one of Potter's best. Don't go in thinking you'll have as much fun at Hogwarts. These are dark times, and the war really is beginning. We can only hope Potter and his friends will pull through.

Every Once in a while, a book comes along that spellbinds millions. Like The Hobbit, You certainly know Bilbo Baggins, and you know all about Tolkien. A new book has come, Harry Potter. I love this book. I inhale all of the information exhales. Please say my vote was helpful. I am 82 years old and nothing would please me more than to be a top reviewer.

This is arguably the most "hyped" book in history, and if J.K. Rowling had to sneak down to the kitchen for a glass of red wine to calm her nerves while writing The Goblet of Fire (as she said she did), one wonders what assuaged her while writing Harry Potter and the Deathly Hallows. The collective breath of tens of millions of readers has been held for two years...and now...was it worth the wait? Did Ms. Rowling live up to the hype? (For that, amongst hundreds of questions, is really the only question that matters.) The answer, most assuredly, is YES. Harry Potter and the Deathly

Hallows is told in a strikingly different style than the previous six books - even different from *The Half Blood Prince*, and, I daresay, it's a better written, better edited, tighter narrative. And while the action is lively and well paced throughout, Rowling found a way to answer most of our questions while introducing new and complex ideas. What fascinated me was this: Some people were right, with regard to who is good, who is bad, who will live, who will die - but almost nobody got the "why" part correct. I truthfully expected an exciting but rather predictable ending, but instead was thrown for a loop. We've known that Rowling is fiendishly clever for years - but I didn't think she was *this* clever. Not since turning the final page of *The Return of the King* twenty-eight years ago have I felt such a keen sense of loss. My love affair (indeed, everyone's love affair, I imagine) with all things Harry began somewhere in the first three chapters of *The Sorcerer's Stone*, and has lasted, on this side of the Atlantic, three months shy of nine years. For all that time we have waited and wondered - was Dumbledore right to trust Snape? Will Ron and Hermione get together? What's to become of Ginny and Harry? What really happened on that tower, when Dumbledore was blasted backwards, that "blast" atypical of the Avada Kedavra curse as we've seen it when used throughout the series. So many more questions than those listed here, and so many devilishly well-hidden hints. The answers, as I hinted above, will shock and awe you. When first we met Harry Potter, he was "The Boy Who Lived", with an address of "The Cupboard Under the Stairs". Who could help but bleed sympathy for Harry, treated abysmally - abused, really - by the only blood relatives he had, and forced to live under said stairs by those awful Muggles, the Dursleys? It was a sensationally brilliant introduction, one that ensured that our heartstrings would be plucked and enchanted to sing. He was The Boy Who Lived. Since reading that first book, we have enjoyed Rowling's spry sense of humor - portraits that spoke, stairways that moved at any given moment, Hagrid jinxing Dudley so that a pig's tail grew from his behind, Fred and George's fantastic creations, etc., etc., etc., and more etc's. There was a sense of wonder and magic in Rowling's writing, so thoroughly captivating that the recommended age group of 9-12 in no way resembled the book's actual audience. It was common to see adults walking about with hardcover copies of the latest book, sans dust jacket (to hide the fact that they were reading a "kids" book, I suppose). It was also common to hear of eight year olds sitting down with a seven-hundred-plus page book! By themselves! If I hadn't seen it with my own eyes, I wouldn't have believed it. As for Harry, we admired him. He wasn't afraid to stand up for what he felt was right, even if he found himself in detention for it. He was brutally honest, and immensely courageous and loyal. Harry came to embody, at times, who we would like to be. He wasn't perfect, of course. He suspected Snape of being the one who was after the Sorcerer's Stone, and in *The Chamber of Secrets*, he thought that Malfoy was the heir of Slytherin. This didn't

diminish Harry in our eyes - it made him more human, more real, and even, perhaps, more enviable. Endless fan sites have been erected. For an adult to go to any of them, and find that thirteen year olds are having an easier time parsing out the books plots, subplots, and mysteries, was (for me at least) humbling, but yet also a testament to Rowling herself, and her remarkable creation. She encouraged an entire generation of young readers to read and to think for themselves. But the time has come to say good-bye, for this is truly the end. So good-bye, Harry. Good-bye Hermione, Ron, Professor Dumbledore, *Professor* Snape, Professor McGonagall, Professor Hagrid, Ginny, Fred, George, Neville, Dobby (and all the house elves), even Lord Voldemort and his Death Eaters. We will miss all of you, every character we encountered, from Muggle to Mudblood to hippogriff and owl, and everything about the world you all so vibrantly inhabit. And to Ms. Rowling: know that you have brought immeasurable joy to millions and millions of Muggles worldwide, and know that we cannot possibly thank you enough. What a tremendous gift you were given. Thank you for sharing it with us.

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