HARRY POTTER

AND THE CHAMBER OF SECRETS

BY

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CHAPTER ONE

THE WORST BIRTHDAY

Not for the first time, an argument had broken out over breakfast at number four, Privet Drive.

Mr. Vernon Dursley had been woken in the early hours of the morning by a loud, hooting noise

from his nephew Harry’s room.

“Third time this week!” he roared across the table. “If you can’t control that owl, it’ll have to

go!”

Harry tried, yet again, to explain.

“She’s bored,” he said. “She’s used to flying around outside. If I could just let her out at night—”

“Do I look stupid?” snarled Uncle Vernon, a bit of fried egg dangling from his bushy mustache.

“I know what’ll happen if that owl’s let out.”

He exchanged dark looks with his wife, Petunia.

Harry tried to argue back but his words were drowned by a long, loud belch from the Dursleys’

son, Dudley.

“I want more bacon.”

“There’s more in the frying pan, sweetums,” said Aunt Petunia, turning misty eyes on her

massive son. “We must build you up while we’ve got the chance…I don’t like the sound of that

school food…”

“Nonsense, Petunia, I never went hungry when I was at Smeltings,” said Uncle Vernon heartily.

“Dudley gets enough, don’t you, son?”

Dudley, who was so large his bottom drooped over either side of the kitchen chair, grinned and

turned to Harry.