**Harry Potter and the Cursed Child**

“Harry Potter and the Cursed Child Parts One and Two” was originally a two part theatre play staged at the Palace Theatre in London, to which only a few (rich) and lucky people have been able to get tickets. The rest of us have had to make do with the special rehearsal edition script that was published as a 343 page book by Little, Brown Book Group.

The play is written by playwright Jack Thorne based on an original story by Harry Potter-author J.K. Rowling, Jack Thorne and the theatre director John Tiffany. It picks up where the seventh Harry Potter book “Harry Potter and the Deathly Hallows” left off on King’s Cross Station in London, Platform 9 ¾, as Harry Potter and his wife Ginny are sending off their second son Albus Severus to Hogwarts in September 2017. So it’s actually science fiction…

Anyway, a lot of diehard Harry Potter fans have waited patiently for a new story about Harry and the rest of us have been mildly interested as well, but I’m sad to say that in my opinion the play is not worth the wait. Maybe it is a good play to watch on stage – at least there are several scenes with special effects that I can’t figure out how they’d do on stage! – but it is a rather lousy read. In fact, the story is extremely predictable, it has massive plot-holes and most of the characters are boring, annoying and one-dimensional.

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The story takes place in 2017, 2018, 2019 and 2020 as well as in 1994, 1995 and 1981 and in three different dimensions. It’s not as interesting as you’d expect, though, as most of the story takes place in 2020 and the other dimensions are only used to revisit The Triwizard Tournament in 1994 and 1995 again and again. Yawn.

It is as if the authors can’t really let go of the old Harry Potter universe, but they can’t use it for anything new either, so we just go back and forth, back and forth. It is of course very repetitious and you can’t help thinking that this story is an easy way to cash in, because people will for sure watch the play and buy the book because it is Harry Potter, but it does absolutely nothing for the original story, so why do we have to go back?

If “Harry Potter and the Cursed Child” does anything to the original Harry Potter universe, it is to drag it down. Because now we know that Harry Potter grows up to become a jerk with an almost invisible wife (Ginny), a stupid son (Albus), and a joke of a friend (Ron) who has absolutely nothing in common with his one-dimensional Minister For Magic-wife (Hermione).

They have all turned into very boring grown-ups and extremely poor parents, especially Harry, but it just doesn’t ring true that he wouldn’t be able to understand his troubled son Albus, who has so much in common with himself, whereas he is fine with his oldest son James who is a bit of a bully like Harry’s dad. In fact, I don’t buy the whole father/son-story, especially as Harry’s poor parental skills are explained by him lacking a father himself, but he had excellent father figures, hadn’t he? In Sirius Black, Remus Lupin and Albus Dumbledore just to mention a few.

In any case, Draco, who had Lucius Malfoy and Voldemort as his father figures, has turned out to be a much better and more empathic father than Harry and his son Scorpio is the only nice, believable character in the entire play. Scorpio and Albus even have a nice little bromance going to the extent that Scorpio probably has a bromance crush on Albus, although they are both into girls: Scorpio being into Ron and Hermione’s daughter Rose and Albus being into the much older Delphi.

As for Delphi, she so obviously isn’t who she pretends to be and I guess Albus is the only one not realising. At least the readers are well aware of it and everything that happens after she is introduced in act one, scene six is predictable beyond belief. Not only is it obvious who and what Delphi is, it is also obvious what is going to happen when Albus steals a Time-Turner, as we all know that if you change the slightest bit in the past, it is going to affect the present in ways beyond your control.

It doesn’t explain, however, how Albus and Scorpio gets from 1995 to 1981 in the fourth and final act. The Time-Turned has just been destroyed in the maze during The Triwizard Tournament in 1995, so how they (and Delphi) end up in 1981 on Halloween is beyond me.

Anyway, because of all this going back and forth in time, we get to meet some old characters, some in the past and some in the presents, like Dumbledore, McGonagall and Snape, but others we are not allowed to meet. Personally I would have LOVED to see the 2020 versions of the rest of the core of Dumbledore’s Army, that is Luna, Neville and George, but no. George and Neville are mentioned several times in the story, but that’s it. If they have become as boring and one-dimensional as the rest of the main characters, it may be for the best, though.

Finally, I’m wondering what’s the deal with the logo/cover of The Cursed Child? Why is Albus (or whoever it is) sitting in a round nest with black wings behind it? Maybe you get to see why on stage, but it certainly isn’t explained in the printed play and the only explanation I can think of is that he is sitting in an Augurey nest. The Augurey is described in the book “Fantastic Beasts and Where to Find Them” as the Irish Phoenix, but it doesn’t quite add up, because aren’t their nests tear-shaped and if it is an Augurey nest, shouldn’t the child be Delphi, then?

I don’t get it and I don’t quite get “Harry Potter and the Cursed Child”. To me it did nothing good to the Harry Potter universe, on the contrary, and it smells a bit like a money maker and nothing else. Because of that I can only give it two out of five stars; one for Scorpio and one for Snape: \*\*

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